Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

Guyana Summary Report | May 2020

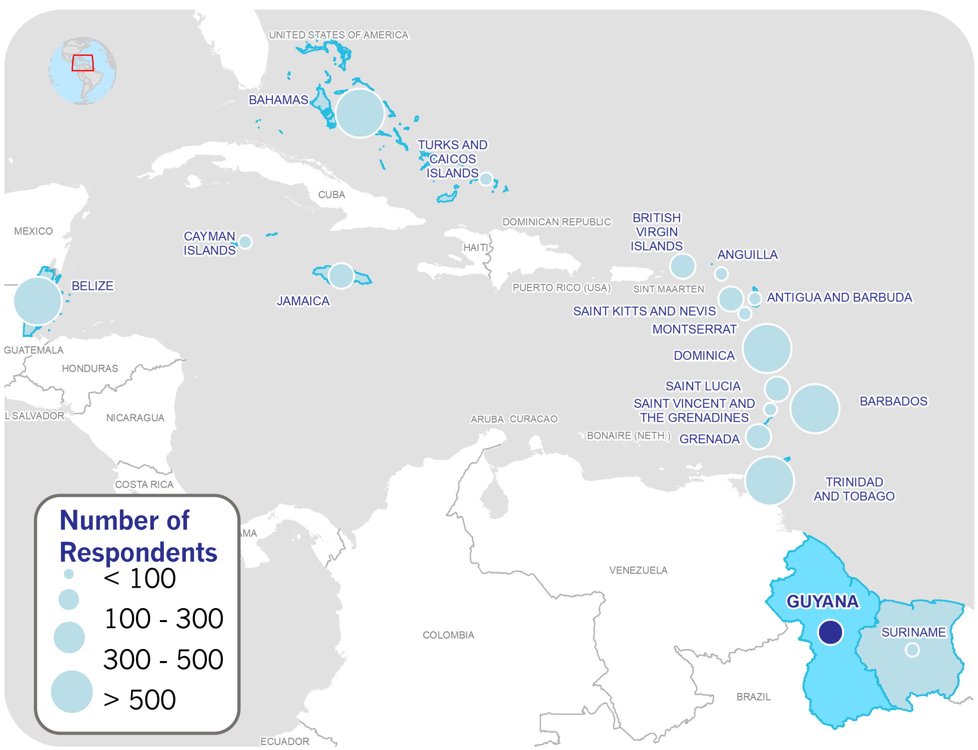
283 Respondents

72|28% Female | Male

36 Average age

4 Average Household size

The COVID-19 pandemic is having far-reaching impacts on how people earn a living and meet critical needs. The Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey was launched by CARICOM to rapidly gather data on impacts to livelihoods, food security and access to markets. Prepared by the World Food Programme with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization, it received 4,537 responses from 19 countries and territories in the Caribbean. The survey was open from 1-12 April 2020 and was shared via social media, email and media.



Guyana summary findings

- Most respondents could consistently access stores and markets, but 20% of reported not being able to access markets at some point between March 25 and April 12, primarily owing to concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak.
- While staple food items were generally available in stores, 80% of respondents reported an increase in food prices. Medicines and hygiene items appear to be less available than usual.
- The vast majority (87%) of respondents changed their shopping behaviour to adapt to disruptions caused by COVID-19, primarily by buying larger quantities than usual.
- Most respondents reported no difficulties eating enough, but one-third have adapted their diets by less preferred foods or skipping meals/eating less than usual.
- Disruptions to livelihoods are widespread, with 77% of respondents indicating that their ability to carry out their livelihood was affected. Movement restrictions are the predominant reason.
- COVID-19 has impacted incomes, with about 38% of respondents reporting loss of jobs or reduced salaries.
- The number of respondents was insufficient for disaggregated analysis between men and women and among age groups. Further assessments are needed to understand impacts across demographic groups.

While the survey contributes to a better overview of impacts, the data is not representative, and the use of a web-based questionnaire limits inputs from those without connectivity.

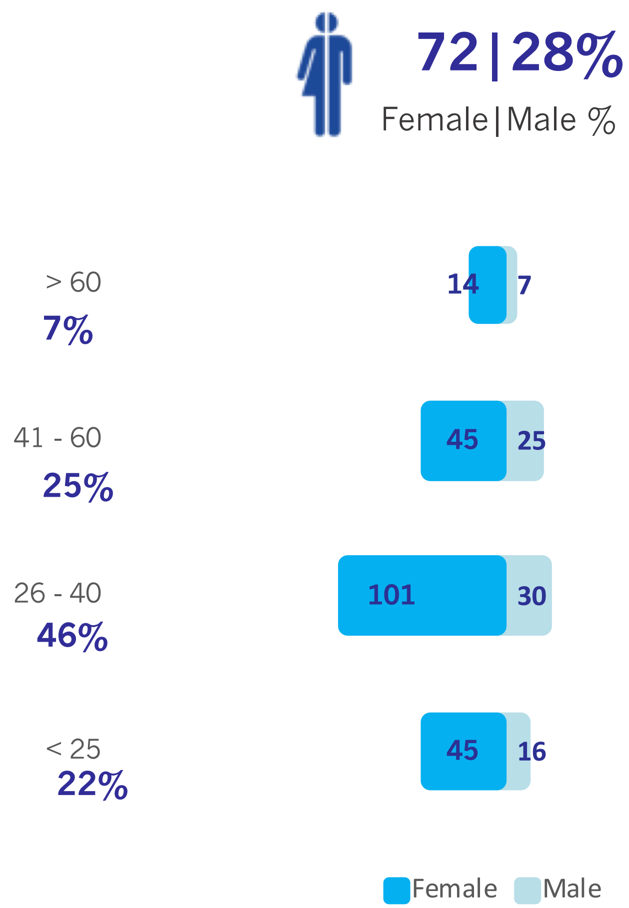
CARICOM CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY A Community for All
CDEMA CARIBBEAN DISASTER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY Resilient States · Safer Lives
WFP World Food Programme
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Funded by European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid
USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Age and sex breakdown of respondents

Age and gender disaggregated analysis will not be provided due to insufficient responses in the subgroups.

Age and sex of respondents

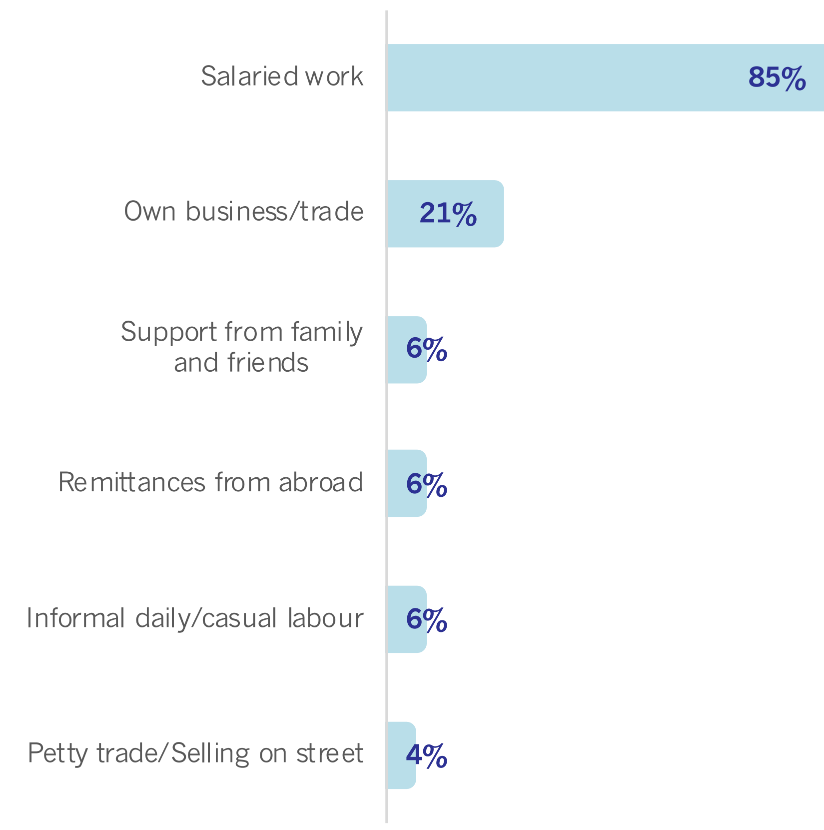


Main household income sources

Respondents were asked to indicate the main income source/s for their household. Disaggregated analysis will not be provided due to insufficient responses in the subgroups.

Main household income sources

Multiple choices could be selected.



IMPACT ON MARKETS

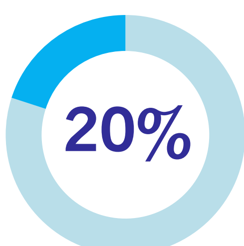
Most respondents could consistently access stores and markets, but 20% reported not being able to access markets at some point between March 25 and April 12. This is below the regional average (37%). Concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak were the main reason, reported by 74% of those encountering difficulties accessing markets.

Key items were less available than usual in stores, particularly hygiene items and medicines. Only 23% of respondents stated medicines were always available, and 9% reported that they were unavailable. While 68% of respondents reported that staple foods were always available in stores, for fresh foods this figure was slightly less (55%). Food price increases were reported by 80% of respondents, which is greater than the regional average (60%).

COVID-19 has altered how people shop, with 87% of respondents shifting their behavior, mainly by buying larger quantities than usual.

Access to markets

Respondents indicated if there was a time they were not able to access the market during the time of the survey.



Reported a time when they could not access markets in the past 7 days

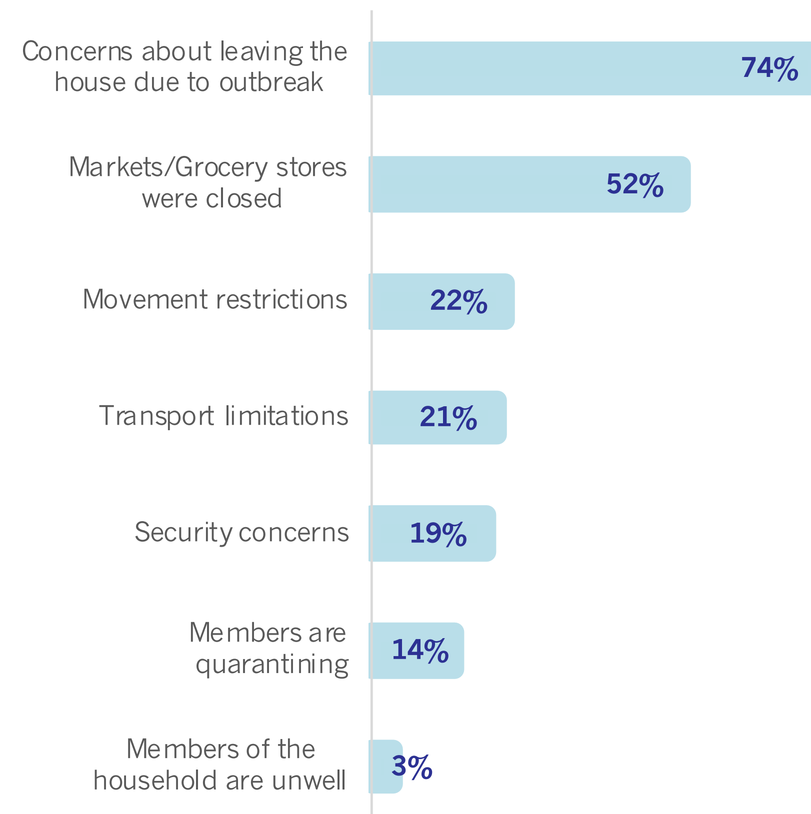
"Travelling to and from work is very risky due to having to take public transportation. Citrus fruits are very expensive to purchase. Due to the kids being home food consumption is high but limit money to purchase same. "

"Cost of basic vegetables and fruits (limes,lemons,bananas) has increased and some markets are closed periodically for cleaning so access is limited."

"Worry about getting no food supplies in markets and stores if the crisis continues. We reduced the number of times we get out of the house."

For those that had trouble accessing markets, the main reasons were...

Multiple choices could be selected.
Low responses may affect accuracy.



IMPACT ON MARKETS

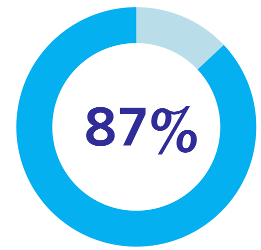
Availability of items in stores

Respondents reported on the availability of key items in stores.

	Staple Food	Fresh food	Hygiene	Medicines
Always Available	68%	55%	48%	23%
Partially/ sometimes available	29%	38%	47%	53%
Not available	0%	1%	4%	9%
Don't know	2%	5%	2%	14%

Shopping behaviour

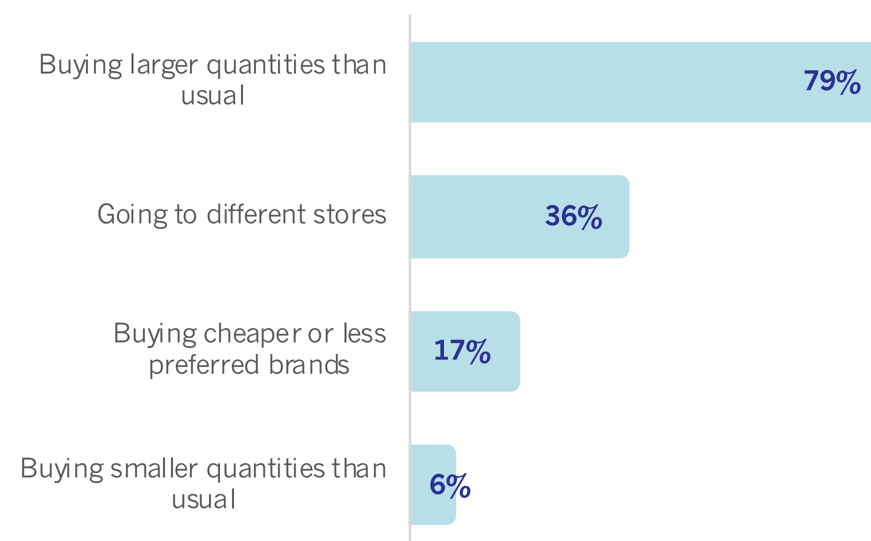
Respondents were asked if they have had to, and if so, how they have altered their shopping behavior.



Changed their shopping behaviour

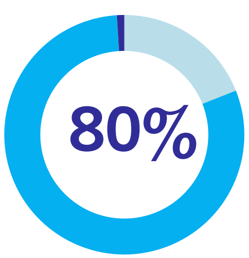
Have you changed your shopping behaviour compared to normal times?

Multiple choices could be selected.



Food prices

Respondents reported on any observed changes in food prices.



Observed an increase in food prices.
19% reported no change and
<1% reported a decrease

Food prices and prices of disinfecting products have increased. Prices of citrus fruits have doubles in the last two weeks. Most business places are closed or only opened for half of the day."

"Shortage of certain cleaning items"

IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

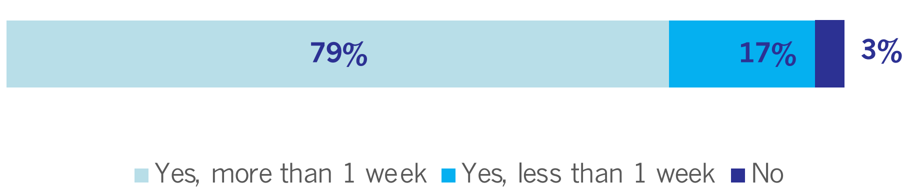
COVID-19 has impacted people's food consumption. While 60% of respondents reported having no difficulties eating enough, 17% have adapted by eating less preferred foods and 15% skipped meals or ate less than usual in the week prior to the survey. Most households are well-stocked, with 79% of respondents having food stocks of at least one week.

These findings are consistent with regional trends.

Food stocks

Respondents were asked to indicate the amount of available food stock for their household.

Does your household have any food stock?



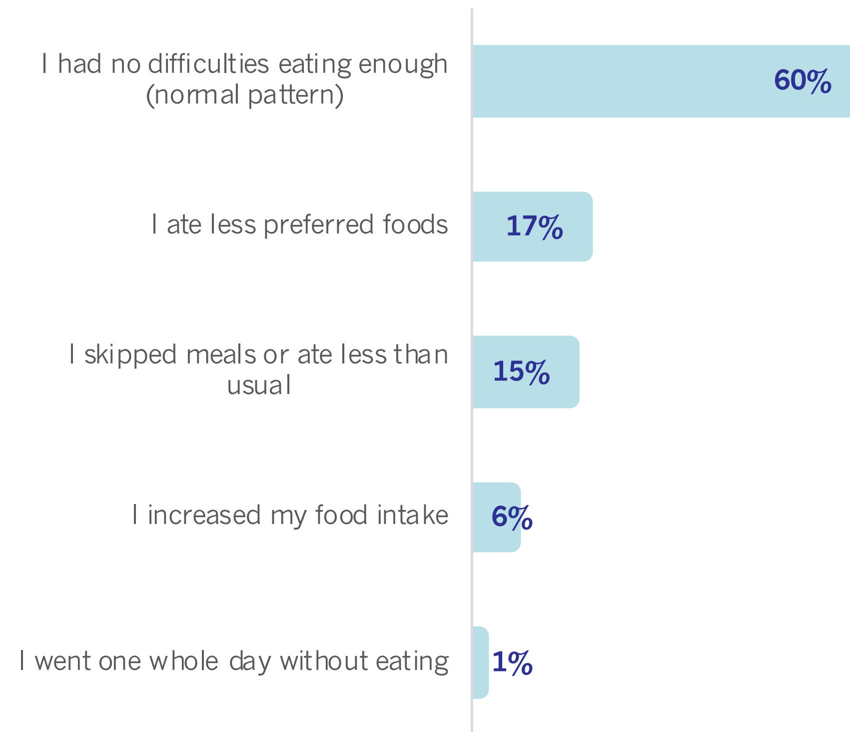
"Quality of fruits and cost, purchasing only very minimum "

"No enough food for my neighbors should the crisis continue. Many children don't have fruits and vegetables on a daily basis due to availability and high cost "

Food consumption

Respondents were asked to reflect on their food situation.

Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days?



"My household has switched to organically produced foods."

"not able to work for a month now and not sure how much longer that will go on. using up savings. expanding vegetable garden. "

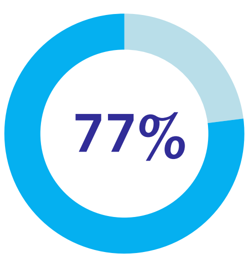
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Livelihoods are being widely disrupted by the pandemic, with 77% of respondents indicating that their ability to carry out livelihoods was affected in the two weeks prior to the survey, which is close to the regional average. Movement restrictions were the predominant reason, cited by 34% of those reporting livelihood disruptions. On a positive note, 19% of respondents experiencing disruptions cited an increased demand for goods and services. At the same time, reduced demand for goods and services was cited by 16%.

Incomes are being negatively impacted, with job losses or reduced salaries reported by 38% of respondents. This is slightly lower than the regional average (46%). The vast majority (90%) of respondents predict that their livelihoods will be impacted in the future.

Disruptions to livelihoods

Respondents reported on any disruptions to their livelihoods.



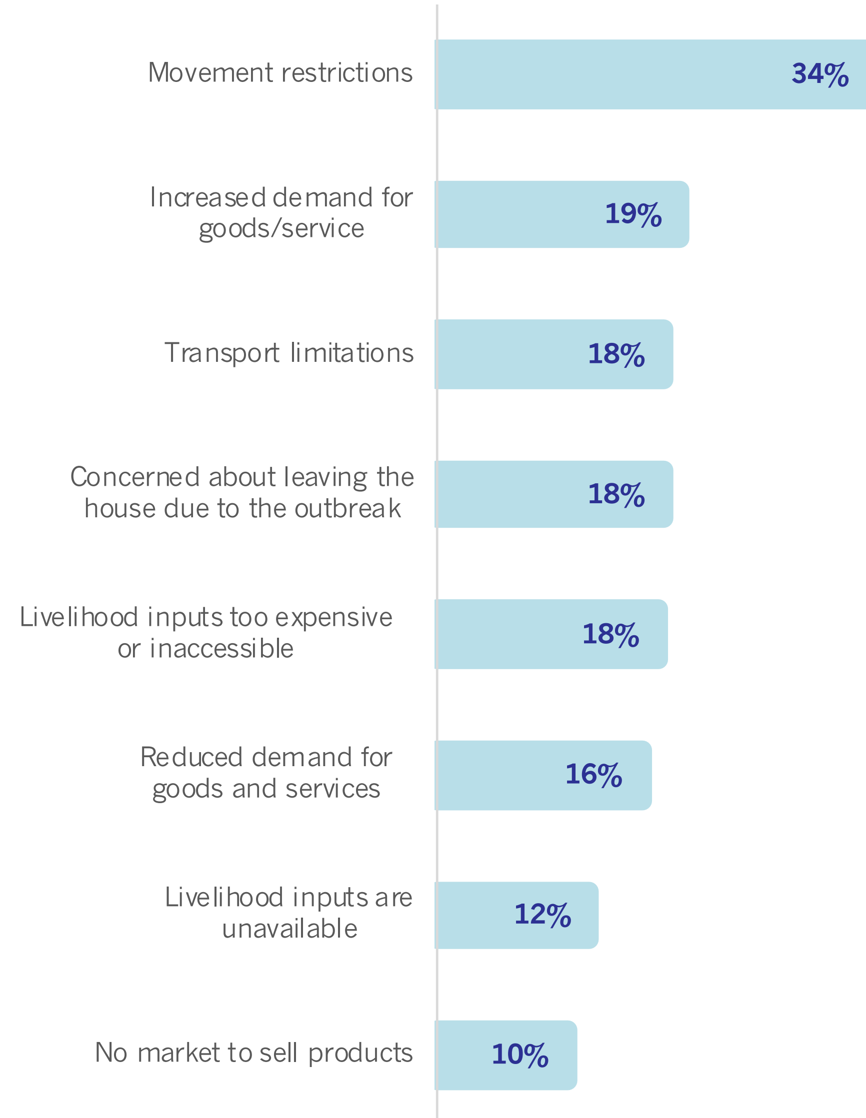
reported livelihood disruptions in the past two weeks

"Has a small restaurant which has closed temporarily due to low demand and fear of further spread."

"Due to Covid 19 I am getting less money from my job and i am not sure if my boss would closedown because its risky to go out and work when he is not even buying sanitising products to clean out the workplace."

For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...

Multiple choices could be selected.

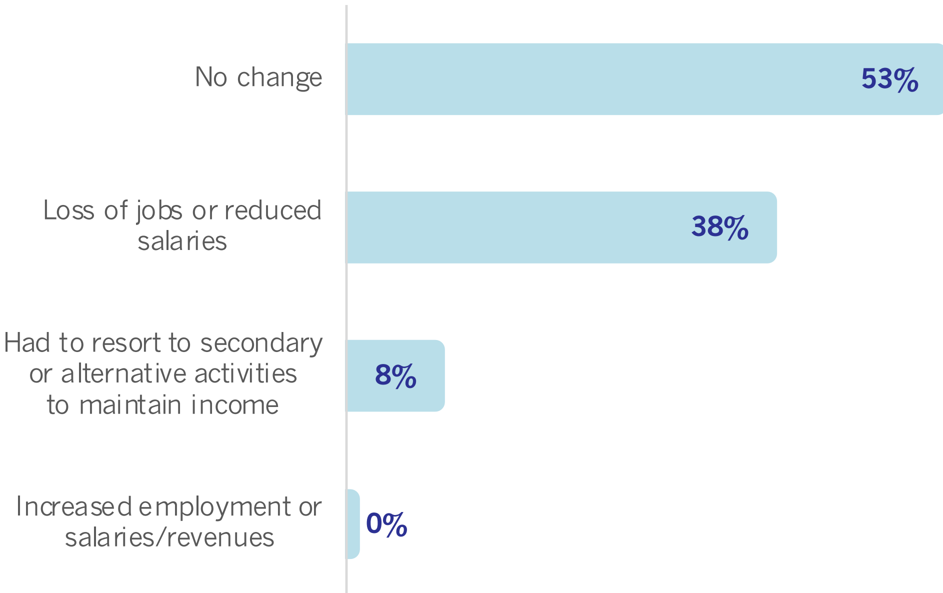


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Income changes

Respondents communicated changes to their income in the past two weeks.

Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks?

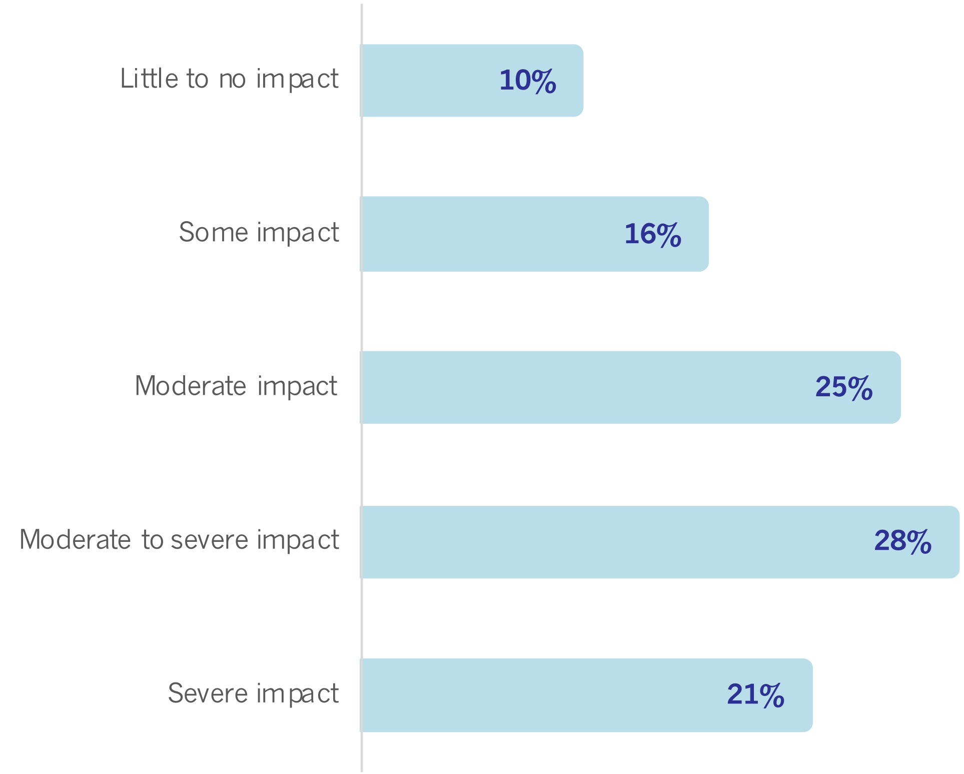


> *"My staff are scared of contracting the disease, but they also fear losing job due to reduced working hours and as such prefer to stay working. If we close, the business will have no income and will find it difficult to provide salary to the staff. Our risk comes from the fact that each customer receives direct service across from our tellers"*
>
> *"Involved in tourism. Seen drastic cancelations and income for future of the business and staff will be severely affected."*

Future livelihood impacts

Respondents were asked to look ahead and predict the level of impact to their livelihoods as a result of disruptions from COVID-19.

How do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19?



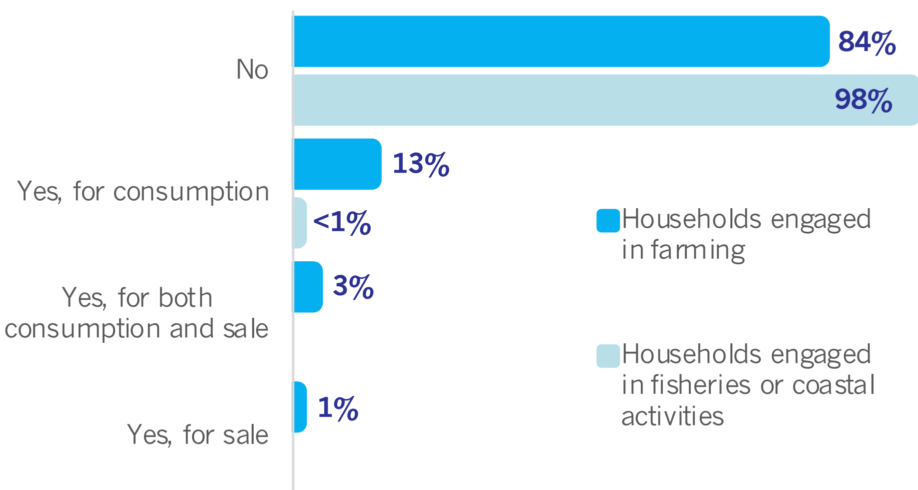
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Households engaged in farming/fishing

According to the World Bank, agriculture in Guyana contributes to 12.7% of GDP and to 18% of employment. Guyana exports food to other countries in the Caribbean.

Given the very limited respondents engaged in farming and fishing/coastal activities, more assessment and analysis on their constraints will be important to gauge how farmers and fisherfolk are being impacted by COVID-19.

Households engaged in fisheries and farming



"My employment contract will likely not be renewed as it expires in June if COVID 19 is still rampant because I'm viewed as non essential staff."

"I am a Real Estate Agent so my business has been badly affected. The market is down, the economy uncertain and people are afraid to invest...."

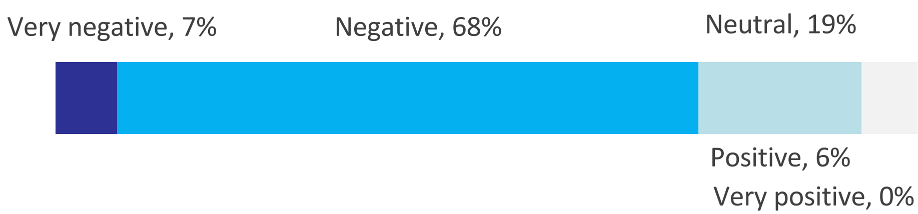
Key themes on how people in Guyana are being impacted, and are adapting to disruptions from COVID-19

HOW PEOPLE ARE COPING AND ADAPTING

Respondents were provided space to give fuller and more nuanced insights on how they are coping and adapting to the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Out of the 283 respondents, 39% responded to the open-ended question resulting in a total count of over 4,235 words.

An analysis of the responses by WFP Caribbean, in collaboration with Google's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Unit, was able to swiftly categorise and interpret the degree of positive and negative emotions within the responses using machine learning.

Distribution of sentiments across open-ended responses



Respondents from Guyana expressed a variety of sentiments in how they are coping and adapting. Of the responses, 68% were classified as being negative, 19% as neutral and 6% as positive.

Many respondents expressed concerns about not being able access markets to purchase fresh foods. Loss of jobs and reduced salaries are causing as there is uncertainty on their ability to meet obligations for rent, bills and loan repayments. Restricting movement was a key theme. A few of the respondents highlighted disruptions to their education. Overall, respondents from Guyana appear to be adapting to social distancing measures put in place to contain Covid-19.

Very negative (7%)

"I'm scared to move around for this virus is detrimental and Everything is stagnating…Food is expensive …And no work coming in per day .So it's very depressing"

Negative (68%)

"I now home school my children. Our inability to interact with others and play out doors is becoming difficult for all of us. I have taken the time to write a book. Also I'm worried about how my lifestyle /work life will be impacted by this in time to come"

"As a working person, battling through the day to ensure safety and at the end of it maintaining a home plus dealing with assignments for university studies have been really frustrating n stressful."

Neutral (19%)

"Lock down of University. Adapting through online classes."

"Now that I'm home 24/7 I've started a kitchen garden over the past week. My son and I are not venturing out of the yard. I hope, by us doing this the infection rate drops and our lives can be returned to normalcy before our food supply runs out."

Positive (6%)

"I think I've adopted quite fairly thus far. Yes I'm nervous and concern about the magnitude of this virus but I'm engaging in activities to keep my mind off it and at the same time I'm trying to keep abreast of what's happening."

Very Positive (0%)

"Adapting to this new 'normal' is challenging. However, knowing that my advice may save lives (including my own); that my lending a listening ear may add to someone's sense of belonging, knowing that they are not alone, gives one some satisfaction beyond professional achievements."

CONCLUSION

This report contributes to a better picture of how COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus are impacting livelihoods, food security and access to markets in Guyana. While trends for Guyana were largely consistent with what was observed at the regional level, impacts on market access appear to be less pronounced, while impacts on food security and livelihoods are in line with regional trends.

Overall, COVID-19 has had widespread impacts on people's lives and livelihoods, translating into loss of jobs or income for 38% of respondents. With food prices reportedly increasing and some respondents eating less, impacts and risks to food consumption need to be addressed before they worsen.

As noted in the regional survey report, local production should be galvanized to meet future demands and trade and supply chains must remain open, as outlined in the CARICOM COVID-19 Agri-Food Response and Mitigation Framework Document. At the same time, financial assistance and other resources to vulnerable populations should be expanded to mitigate economic impacts at the household level.

More in-depth assessment and analysis on the wide-ranging economic and social impacts of COVID-19 will be critical to further inform responses to the unfolding crisis.

More responses from the survey

"Being a salaried worker and working on a staff rotation basis (since COVID 19) has enabled me to be financially comfortable and able to purchase necessities. Living alone also reduces cost significantly.
I maximize my time only shopping and doing all out of the house activities when I'm required to work. Otherwise I remain at home. This has worked well for me.
I am more aware on my surroundings and very careful to exercise all precautionary measures to prevent infection."

"I think I've adopted quite fairly thus far. Yes I'm nervous and concern about the magnitude of this virus but I'm engaging in activities to keep my mind off it and at the same time I'm trying to keep abreast of what's happening."

"Food prices and prices of disinfecting products have increased. Prices of citrus fruits have doubles in the last two weeks. Most business places are closed or only opened for half of the day. Being a salaried worker and working on a staff rotation basis (since COVID 19) has enabled me to be financially comfortable and able to purchase necessities. Living alone also reduces cost significantly.
I maximize my time only shopping and doing all out of the house activities when I'm required to work. Otherwise i remain at home. This has worked well for me.
I am more aware on my surroundings and very careful to exercise all precautionary measures to prevent infection."

"Spending for household has raised because more people are home and salary is basically the same. Basic pharmaceuticals like hand sanitizers and rubbing alcohol not available due to the now increase in demand. Food products have skyrocketed again due to demand yet salaries remain the same."

"I've moved to working from home and the money I saved on traveling was used to buy more fresh food for my husband and I. We typically eat very basic but nourishing meals."

ANNEX. REGIONAL SUMMARY KEY FINDINGS

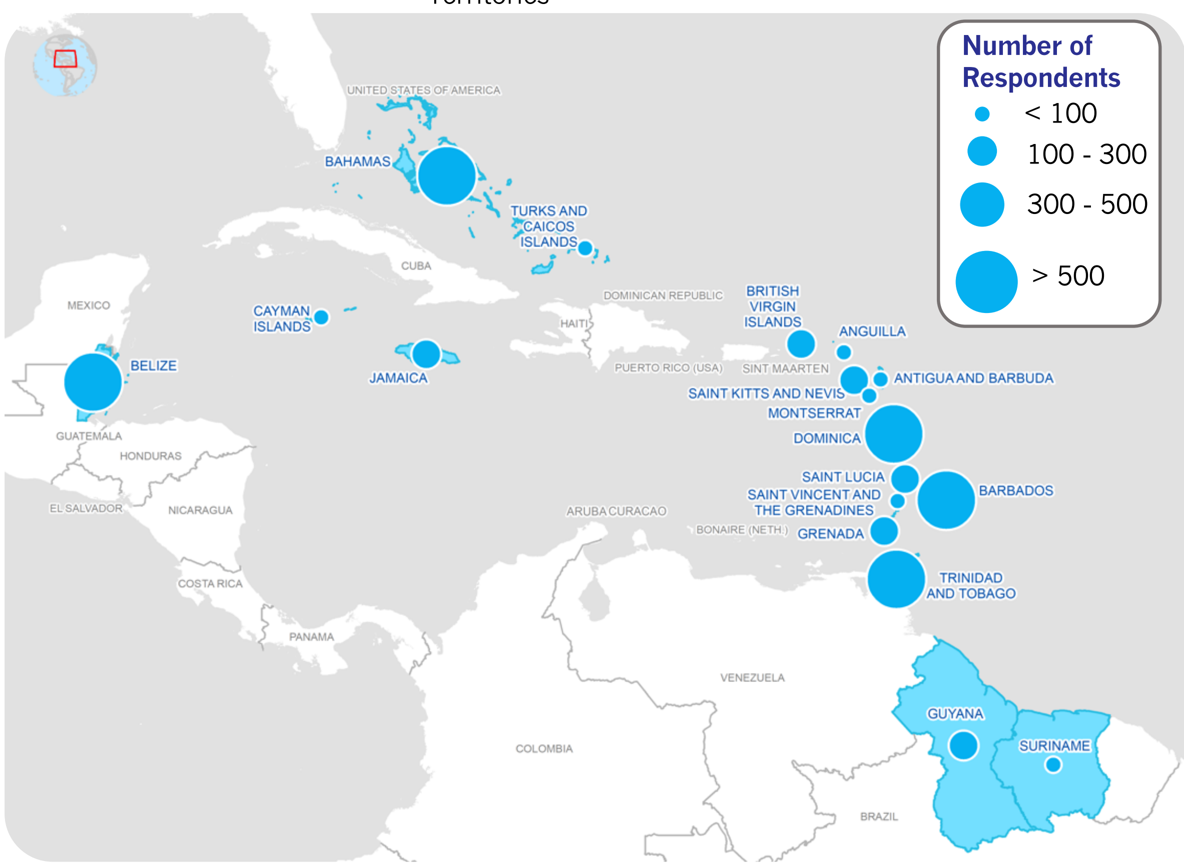
The COVID-19 pandemic is having far-reaching impacts on how people earn a living and meet critical needs. The Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey was launched by CARICOM to rapidly gather data on impacts to livelihoods, food security and access to markets. Prepared by the World Food Programme with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization, the survey link was shared via social media, email and media. This summary analyses data collected from 1-12 April 2020.

4,537 Respondents

19 Countries & Territories

69|29% Female|Male

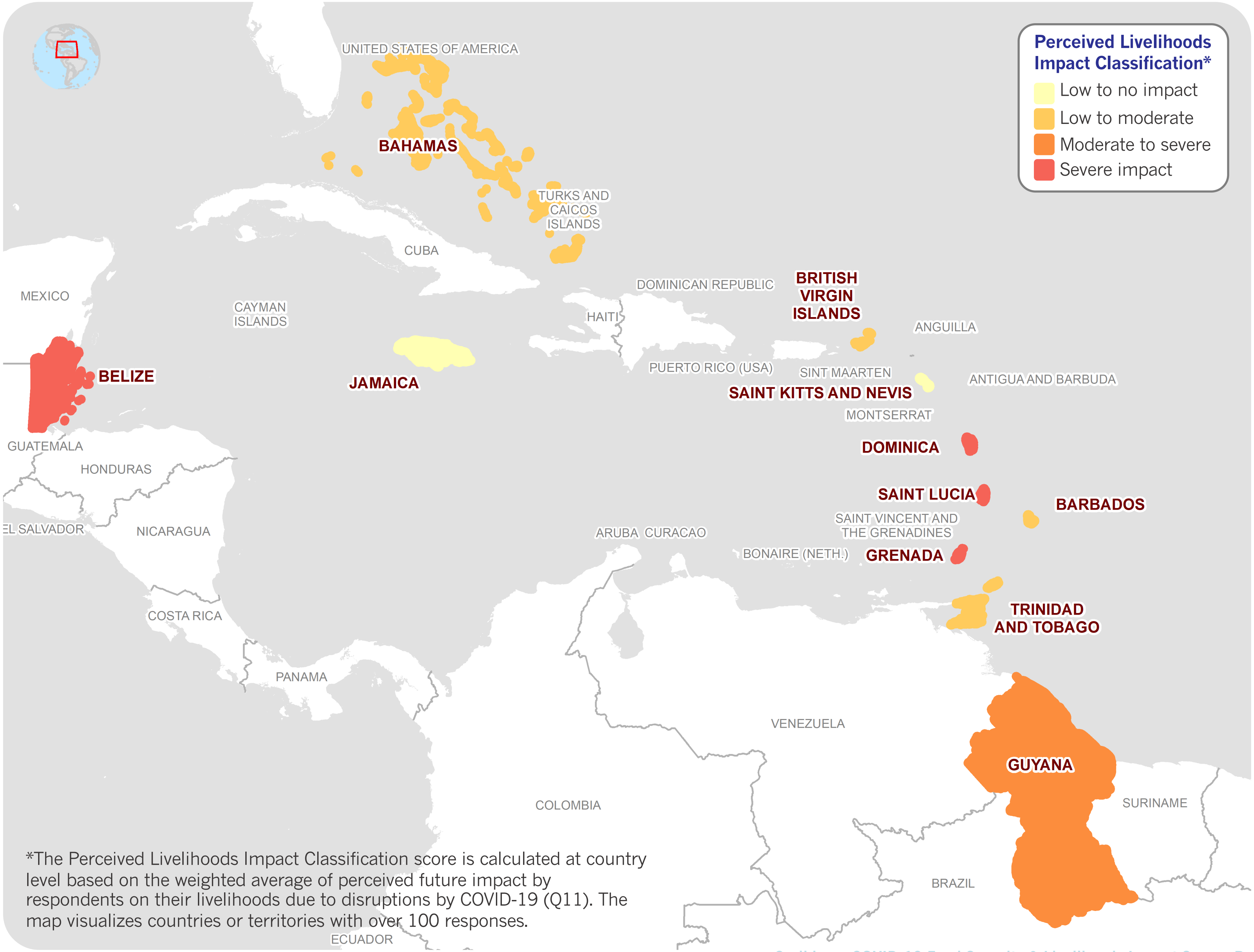
42 Average age



At a glance

- COVID-19 has caused widespread disruption to livelihoods, driven primarily by movement restrictions and concerns about leaving the house.
- Half of respondents have faced a change in income, owing mainly to job loss or reduced revenue/salary. People owning businesses or engaged in casual labour or petty trade appear most impacted.
- Most respondents were able to access markets in the previous seven days but with substantial variations across the region. Those unable to do so cited movement restrictions, store closures and concerns about leaving the house.
- Availability of food, hygiene items and medicines appears to be less than normal, but very few respondents indicated that items were unavailable.
- People are changing how they shop, with most respondents purchasing larger quantities.
- Most respondents are not having difficulty eating enough, but some are eating less preferred foods.
- At the regional level, trends were broadly consistent between male and female respondents, though further country-level analysis may reveal greater gender differences.
- While the survey contributes to a better overview of impacts, the data is not representative, and the use of a web-based questionnaire limits inputs from those without connectivity.

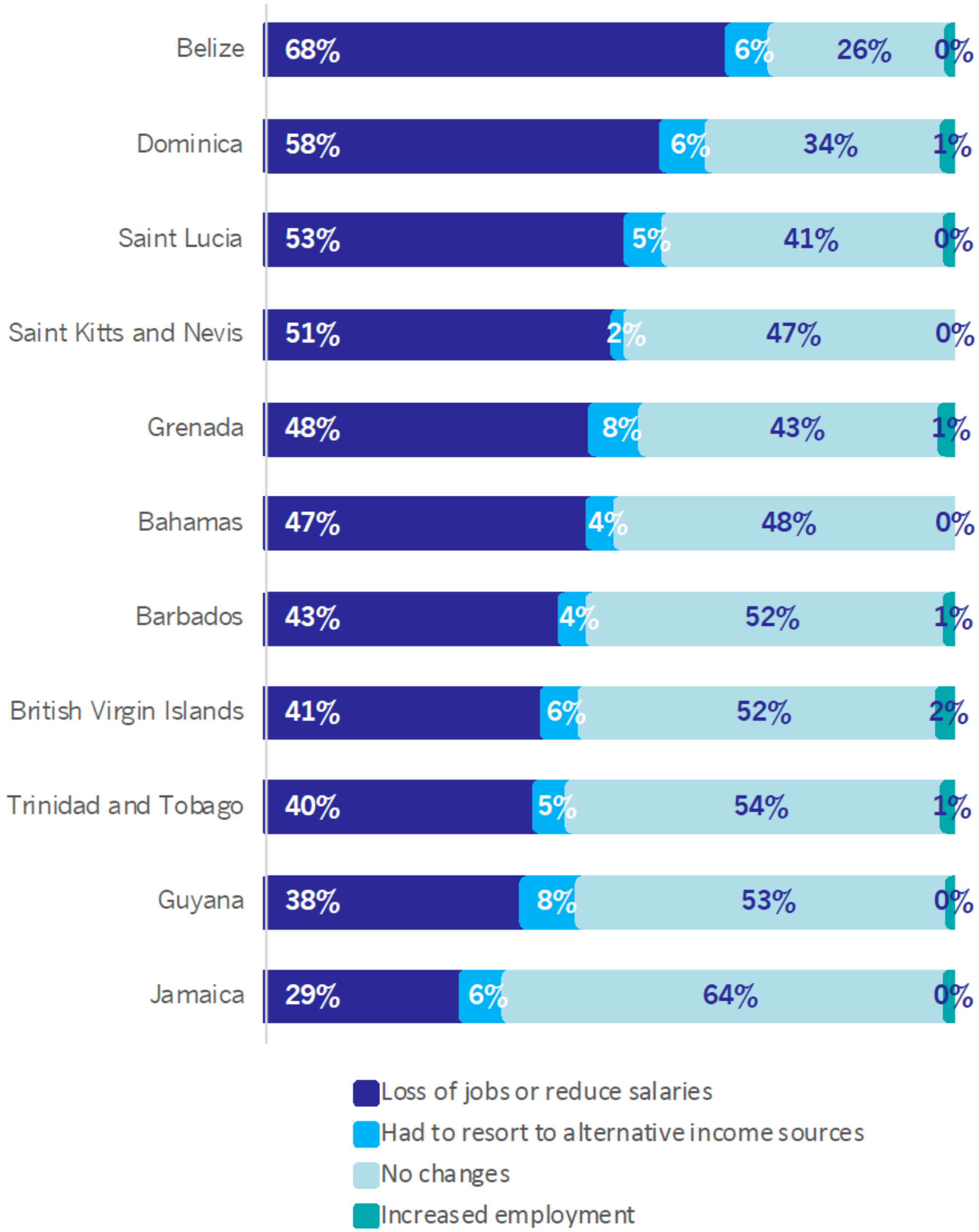
ANNEX. PERCEIVED LIVELIHOODS IMPACT IN THE CARIBBEAN



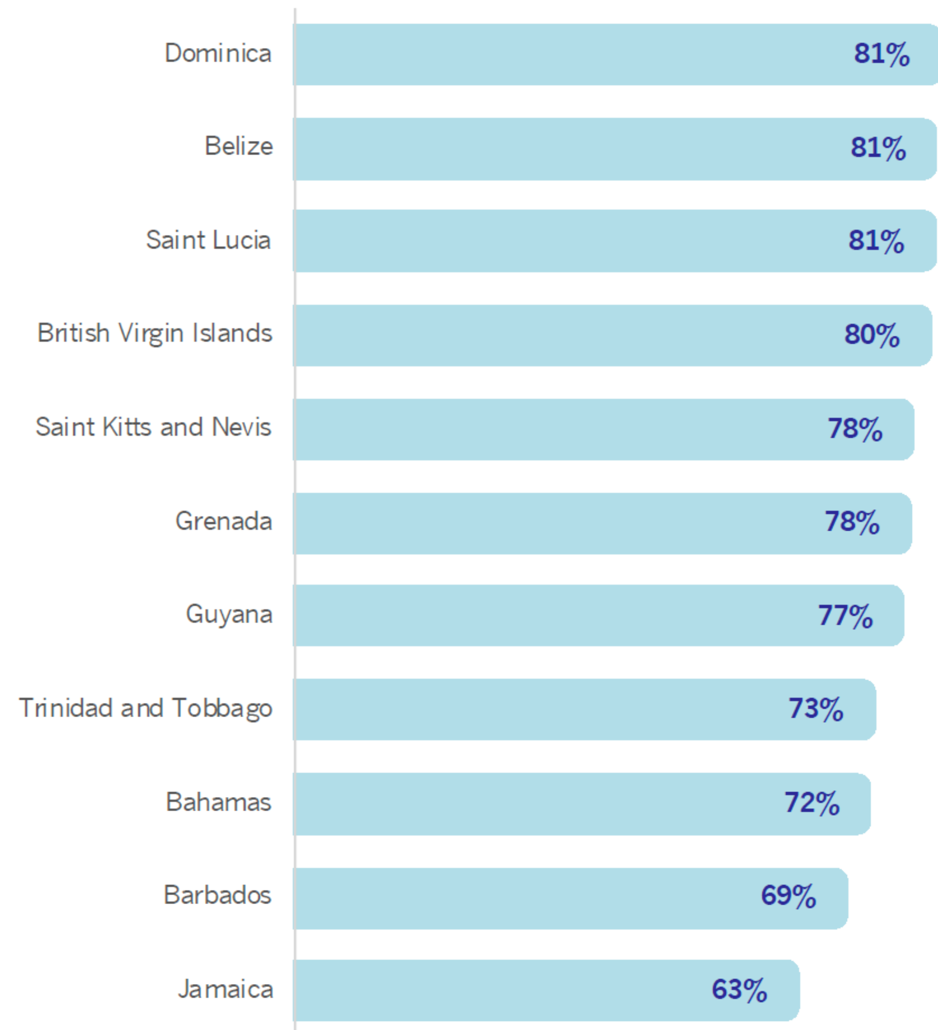
*The Perceived Livelihoods Impact Classification score is calculated at country level based on the weighted average of perceived future impact by respondents on their livelihoods due to disruptions by COVID-19 (Q11). The map visualizes countries or territories with over 100 responses.

ANNEX. DETAILED FIGURES FOR COUNTRIES OR TERRITORIES (WITH >100 RESPONSES)

Income changes



% reporting disruptions to livelihoods



ANNEX. METHODOLOGY

The survey was launched via a webform, which was accessible on mobile/smartphone and PC/desktop. The data collection period was inclusive of 1-12 April 2020.

The survey was circulated widely via email, social media, media and other communication channels by participating ministries including (but not limited to) Ministries of Agriculture, Social Protection, National Disaster Management Organizations, UN agencies and NGO partners.

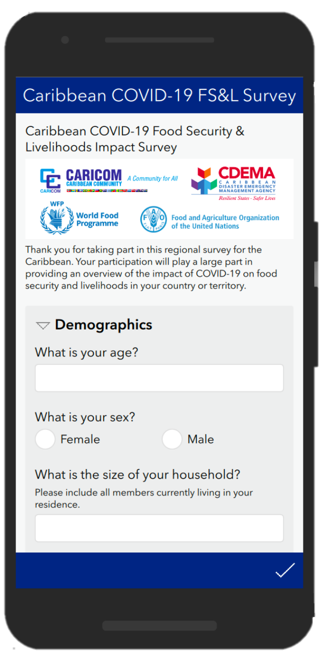
Responses were visualised live on an interactive dashboard and continually monitored to ensure their legitimacy based on cross referencing with prior knowledge and secondary data. Data validation methods were designed into the survey form to mitigate against intentional or unintentional outliers.

WFP Caribbean performed the data collection, monitoring and analysis. Data was analysed according to age groups and sex where there are sufficient responses.

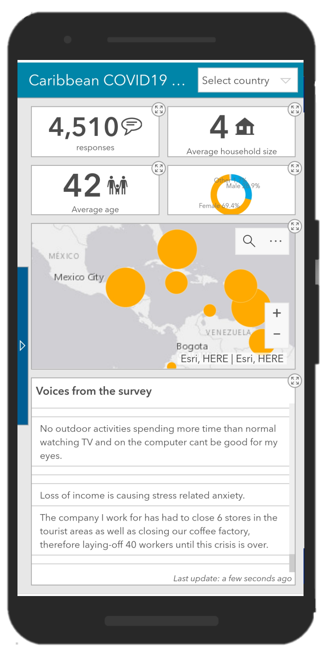
The qualitative analysis was performed in collaboration with Joseph Xu from Google's AI unit using Natural Language Processing (NLP). NLP, a branch of AI which analyses and interprets human languages, provided: (a) a sentiment analysis to determine the number of positive versus negative responses and (b) auto-categorisation of the responses. To moderate the non-representative nature of the data, the analysis team further refined the classifications presented by the algorithms.

National level reports are only produced for countries and territories with sufficient responses. Reports are prepared by WFP Caribbean: Amy Chong, Sarah Bailey, Francesca Ciardi, Elisaveta Gouretskaia and Nicholas Grainger.

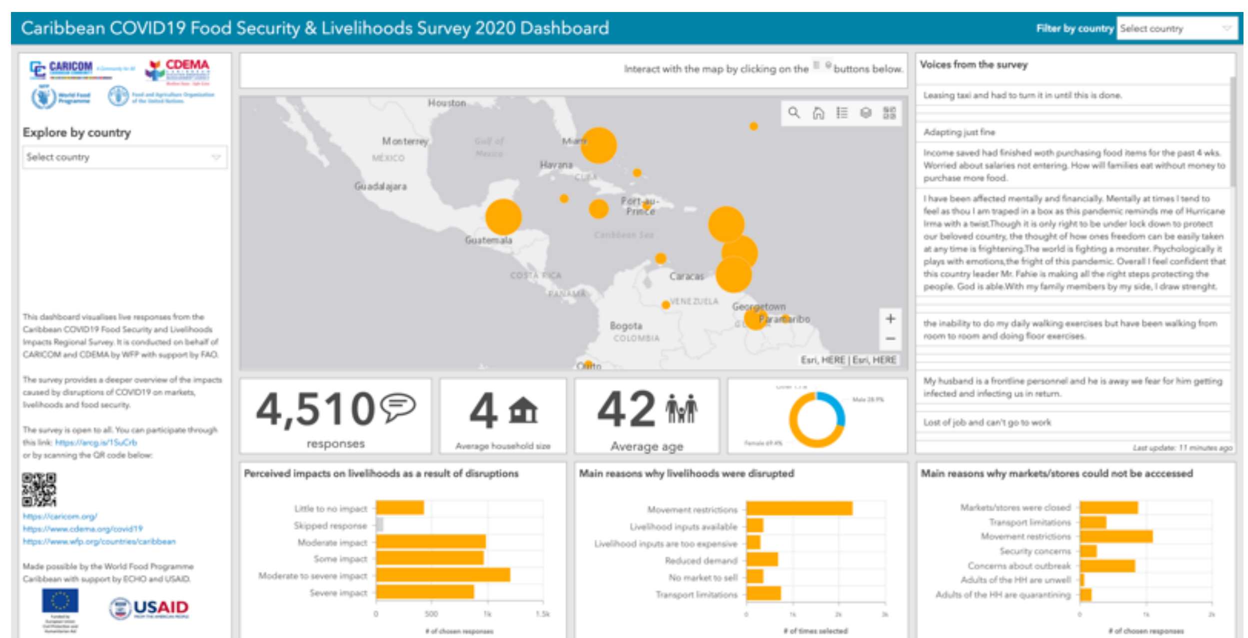
Survey (Closed) http://arcg.is/1SuCrb



Dashboard for smartphones https://arcg.is/izn5H



Dashboard for PC/laptop http://arcg.is/Ca8X0



ANNEX. QUESTIONNAIRE

Caribbean COVID-19 FS&L Survey

Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

Thank you for taking part in this regional survey for the Caribbean. Your participation will play a large part in providing an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on food security and livelihoods in your country or territory.

Demographics

What is your age?

What is your sex?

- Female
- Male

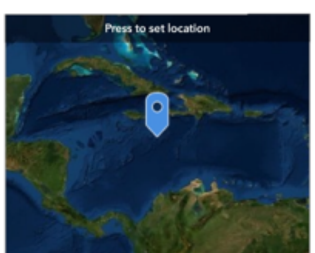
What is the size of your household?

Please include all members currently living in your residence.

Which country do you live in?*

Location

Please click on the target icon on the map if you would like to provide a more accurate location.



Lat: 16.04150 Lon: -75.20324

Markets

1. In the past 7 days, has there been a time when you or your household could not access the markets/grocery stores?

- Yes
- No

What were the main reasons why you or your household could not access the markets/stores?

Please select all that apply.

- Markets/stores were closed
- Transport limitations
- Movement restrictions (eg. curfew)
- Security concerns
- Concerned about leaving the house due to outbreak
- Adult members of the household are unwell
- Members of household are self quarantining
- Other

2. Are fresh food items (eg. eggs, meat, vegetables) currently available in markets/stores?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

3. Are basic food items (eg. bread, rice) currently available in markets/stores?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

4. Are hygiene items (eg. soap, detergent) currently available for purchase in markets/stores?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

5. Are essential medicines available in clinics or pharmacies?

- Always available
- Partially/ sometimes available
- Not available
- Don't know

6. Has there been any changes in the costs of food items over the past 2 weeks?

- Food prices have increased
- Food prices have decreased
- No changes

7. Have you changed your shopping behaviour compared to normal times?

- Yes
- No

How have you changed your shopping behaviour?

Please select all that apply.

- Buying larger quantities than usual
- Buying smaller quantities than usual
- Buying cheaper or less preferred foods than usual
- Going to different stores

Livelihoods

8. Was your ability to carry out livelihoods activities affected in the past two weeks?

- Yes
- No

What were the main reasons for the disruptions to your livelihood activities?

Please select all that apply.

- Reduced demand for goods/services
- No market to sell products
- Transport limitations
- Movement restrictions (eg. curfew)
- Livelihoods inputs are unavailable
- Livelihoods inputs are too expensive or inaccessible
- Concerned about leaving the house due to outbreak
- Adult members of the household are unwell
- Increased demand for goods/services
- Other

9. Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks?

- Loss of jobs or reduced salaries/revenues
- Increased employment or increased salaries/revenues
- Resorted to secondary/alternative source of income to maintain income levels
- No change

10. What are your household's main income sources over the past year?

You may select up to 2 that apply.

- Salaried work with regular income
- Daily/casual labour
- Own business/trade
- Petty trade/selling on street
- Remittances from abroad
- Support from families and friends
- Government assistance/social safety nets
- Other

11. How do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19?

- Little to no impact
- Some impact
- Moderate impact
- Moderate to severe impact
- Severe impact

12. Is your household currently engaged in farming/livestock raising?

- Yes. For consumption
- Yes. For sale
- Yes. For both sale and consumption
- No

Please select all that apply.

- Rice
- Corn
- Vegetables
- Pulses
- Banana/Plantains
- Poultry
- Small ruminants (eg. sheep, goat)
- Large ruminants (eg. cattle)
- Swine
- Other

13. Is your household currently engaged in fishing/coastal activities?

- Yes. For consumption
- Yes. For sale
- Yes. For both sale and consumption
- No

Please select all that apply.

- Small scale aquaculture
- Inland fisheries
- Marine/coastal fisheries
- Processing of fish/fisheries products
- Fishing gear production
- Mangrove/beach activities (eg. shellfish harvesting)
- Other

Food Security

14. Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days?

- I had no difficulties eating enough food (normal pattern)
- I ate less preferred foods
- I skipped meals or ate less than usual
- I went one whole day without eating
- I increased my food intake

15. Does your household have any food stock?

- Yes. Less than one week
- Yes. Less than 2 weeks
- Yes. Less than 3 weeks
- Yes. Less than 1 month
- Yes. More than 1 month
- No

General

Please provide any additional insights into how you have been affected by the disruptions from COVID19 and how you are adapting.

Do not provide any sensitive information.

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Thank you for your participation! Please hit the Submit button.

Individual responses are anonymous. Overall survey results will be publicly available.

Submit

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