Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

Bahamas Summary Report | May 2020

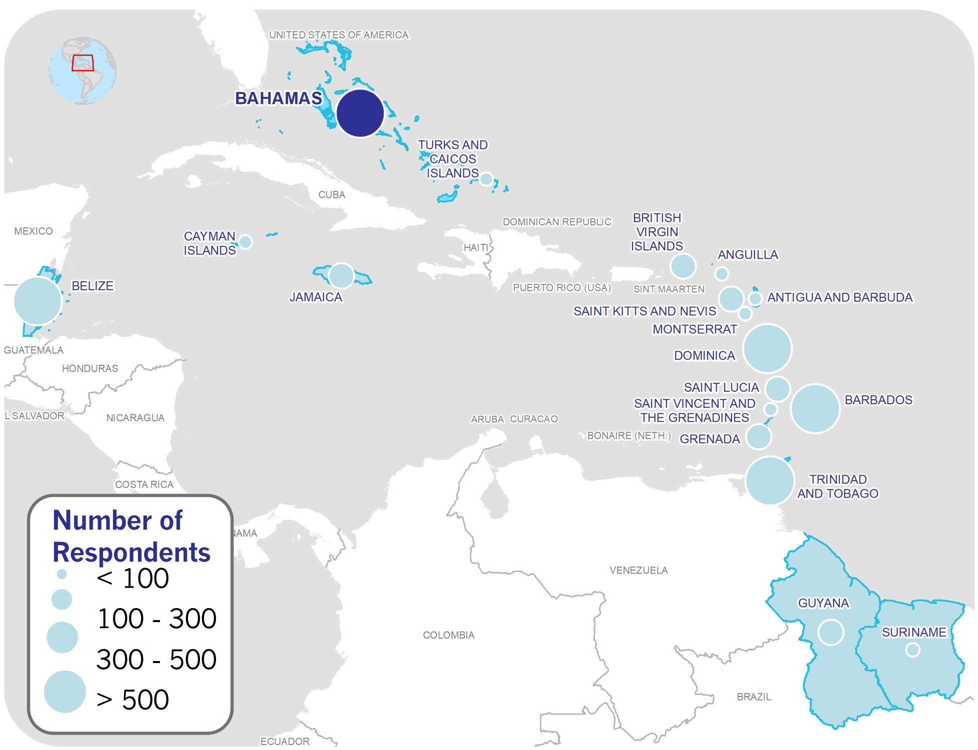
586 Respondents

74|26% Female | Male

48 Average age

3 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.



Bahamas summary findings

- Most respondents could access stores and markets between 25 March and 12 April. However, one-fifth faced a time when they could not, mainly owing to movement restrictions and concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak.
- Food items were generally available in stores, but 66% of respondents reported an increase in food prices.
- Most respondents (81%) changed their shopping behavior, primarily by buying larger quantities than usual. Some went to different stores.
- Food consumption has been impacted, with 14% reporting that they skipped meals/ate less and another 14% eating less preferred foods.
- Disruptions to livelihoods were reported by 72% of respondents, with movement restrictions being the primary reason. Business owners also faced reduced demand and lack of markets to sell their products.
- Incomes have been impacted, with 47% of respondents reporting loss of jobs or reduced salaries. Respondents aged between 26 and 40 and business owners are particularly affected. Impacts were slightly more prevalent among female respondents.
- Overall trends were broadly consistent between women and men and across the age groups of 21-40, 41-60 and over 60 years.

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.

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CDEMA Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency Resilient States · Safer Lives
WFP World Food Programme
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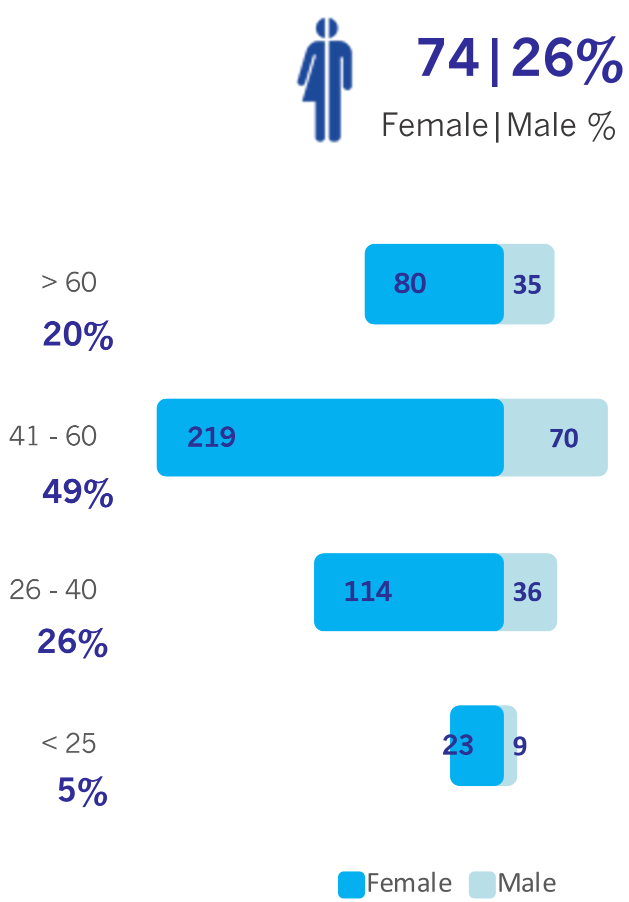
DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Age and sex breakdown of respondents

Age breakdown analysis will only be provided for the age groups of 26-40, 41-60 and > 60 due to sufficient responses in these categories.

Age and sex of respondents

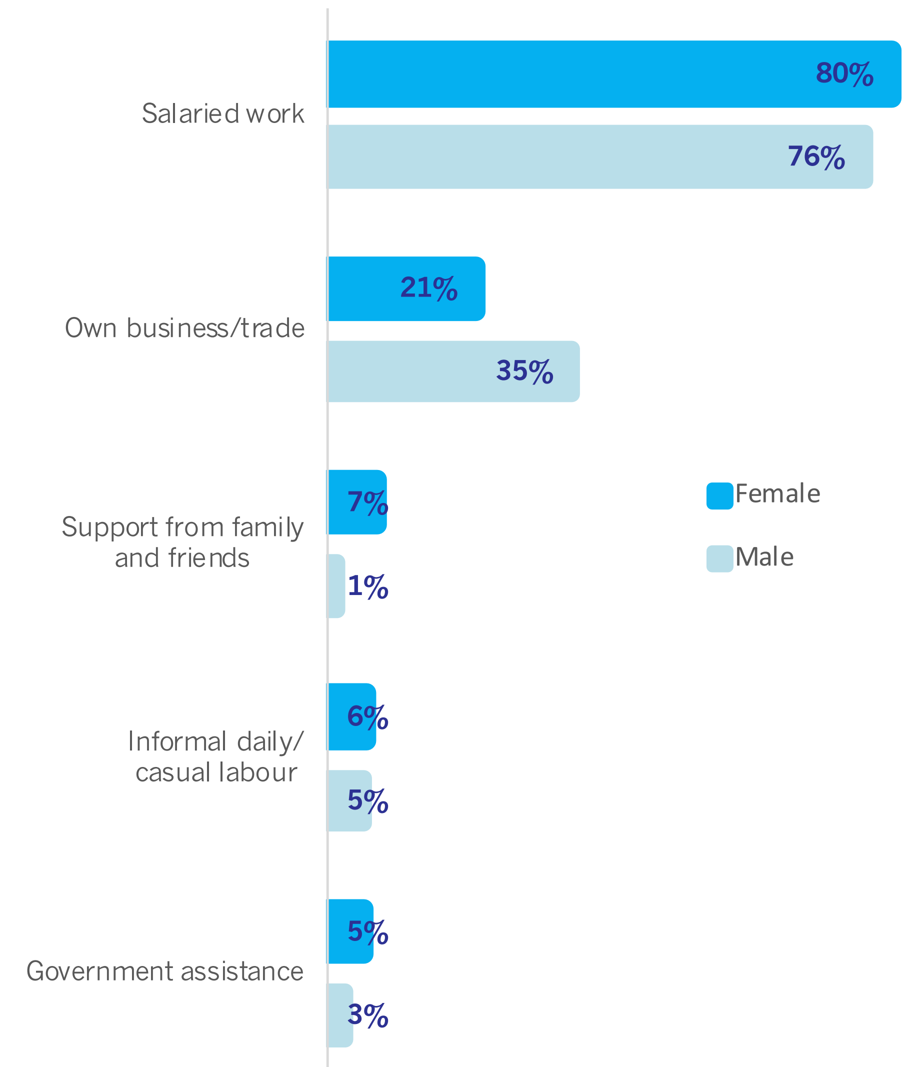


Main household income sources

Respondents were asked to indicate the main income source/s for their household. Disaggregated analysis will only be provided for salaried workers and those with their own business/trade due to sufficient responses in these categories.

Main Income Source | By sex

Multiple choices could be selected.



IMPACT ON MARKETS

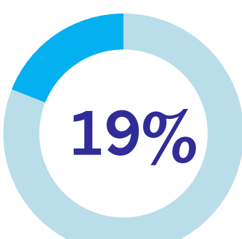
COVID-19 has impacted people's access to markets. Out of all respondents, 19% reported not being able to access markets at some point between March 25 and April 12. This is lower than the regional average (37%), suggesting that people in the Bahamas faced fewer constraints to market access in this period. Movement restrictions to contain COVID-19 were the primary reason, followed by concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak.

People are altering how they shop, with 81% of respondents shifting their behavior, mainly by buying larger quantities than usual. Older respondents more frequently resorted to purchasing smaller quantities. Respondents reported on the availability of key foods, medicines and hygiene items in stores, with the percentage of items across the four groups being reported as 'always available' much higher than regional averages. Out of all respondents, 66% have observed an increase in food prices.

Trends between men and women and among age groups were largely consistent, although more female respondents opted for cheaper brands, and more older respondents purchased smaller quantities.

Access to markets

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



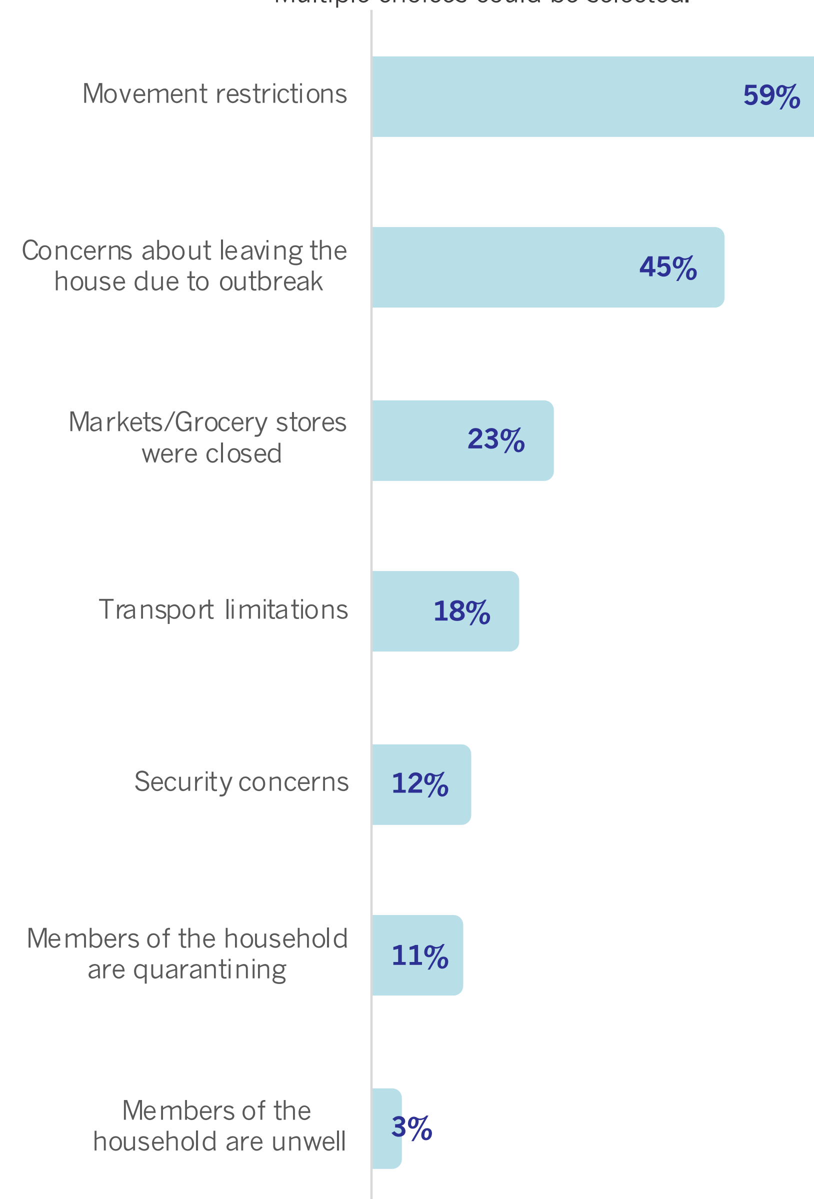
Reported a time when they could not access markets in the past 7 days

"Curfew affects everything. Long lines in stores and essential businesses. Tight crowds with limited social distancing. Price gouging. Limited groceries on shelves"

"Shopping panic increased anxiety and concerned about job..."

For those that faced a time when they could not access markets in the past 7 days, the main reasons were...

Multiple choices could be selected.



IMPACT ON MARKETS

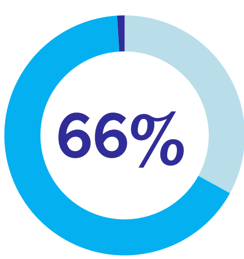
Availability of items in stores

Respondents reported on the availability of key items in stores.

	Staple Food	Fresh food	Hygiene	Medicines
Always Available	80%	71%	79%	53%
Partially/ sometimes available	16%	25%	16%	29%
Not available	1%	1%	2%	1%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%	17%

Food prices

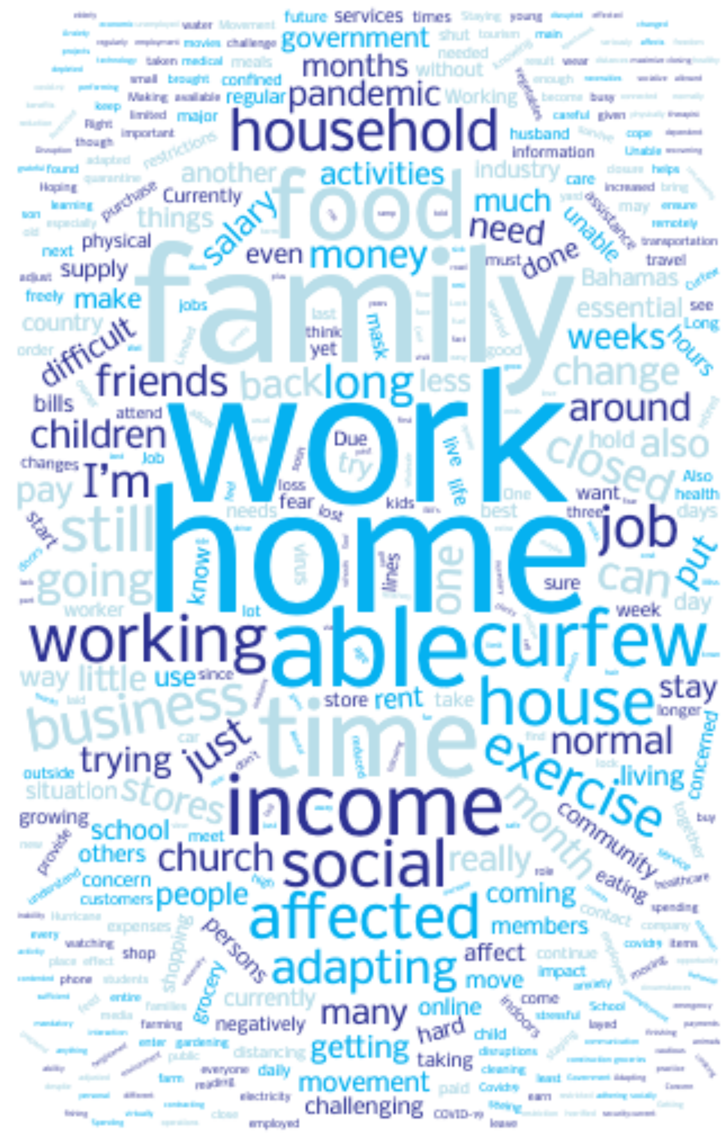
Respondents reported on any observed changes in food prices.



Observed an increase in food prices.
33% reported no change and
<1% reported a decrease

"Mainly shopping online without knowing inventory available....Over a long term these are going to become more difficult"

"I am limited to my movement so I buy more because of lack of transportation and must 'hike' a ride to the store so I buy more..."



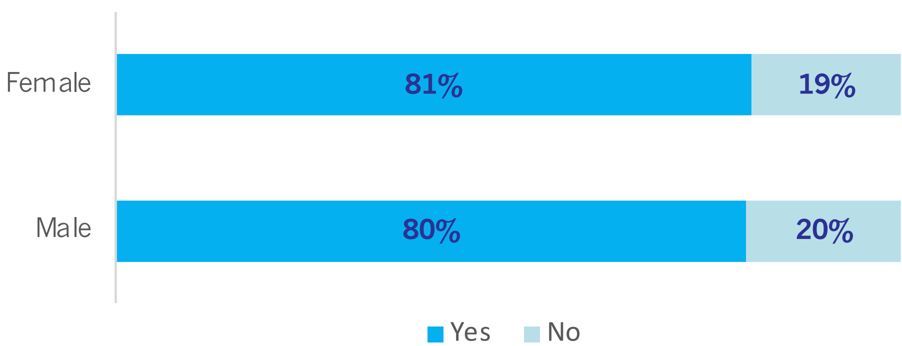
Key themes on how people in the Bahamas are being impacted and are adapting to disruptions from COVID-19

IMPACT ON MARKETS

Shopping behaviour

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

Have you changed your shopping behaviour compared to usual? | By sex

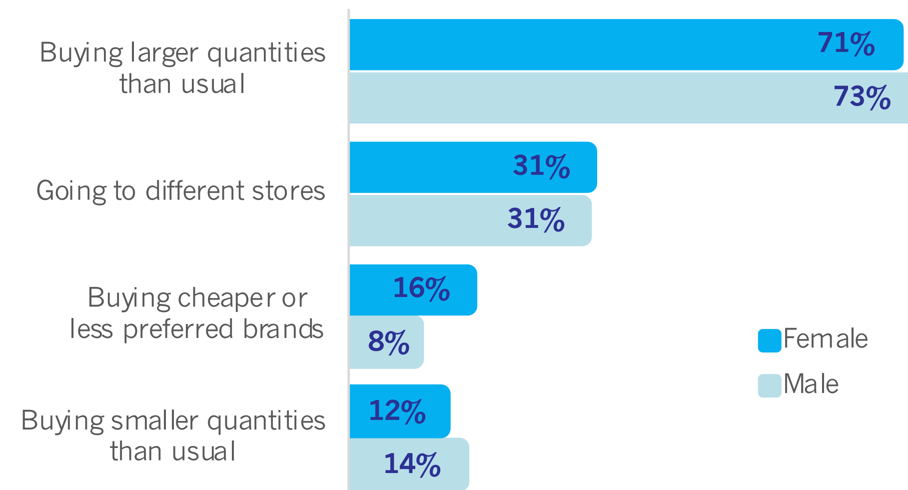


"Limited movement at night with long wait times to enter major grocery stores. Had to resort to community stores for easy access and less people traffic. "

"I'm own a 350000st greenhouse on a 5 acre farm. we supply salads blends, herbs, and greens to the supermarkets. Supermarkets are buying 30-40 % more than normal. "

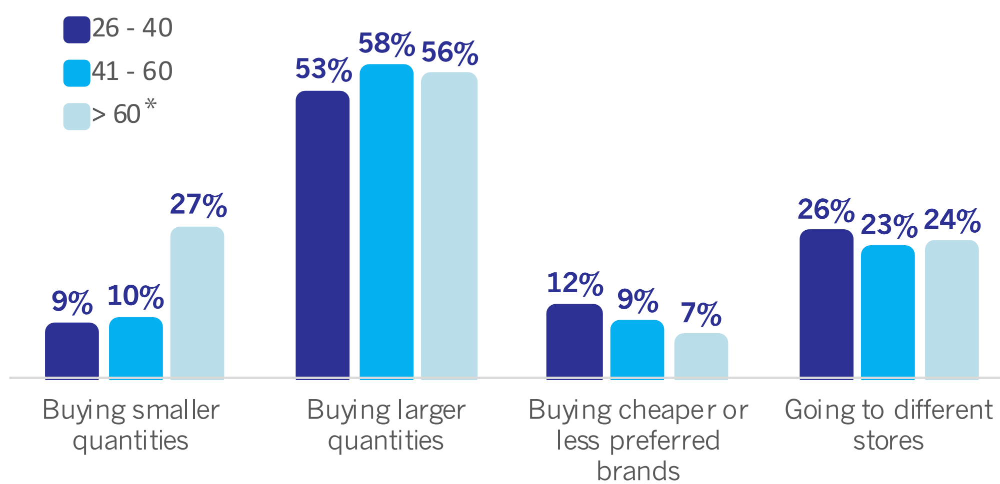
For those that changed their shopping behaviour, they are... | By sex

Multiple choices could be selected.



For those that changed their shopping behaviour, they are... | By age

Multiple choices could be selected.



*Low response numbers in this age group may affect results.

IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

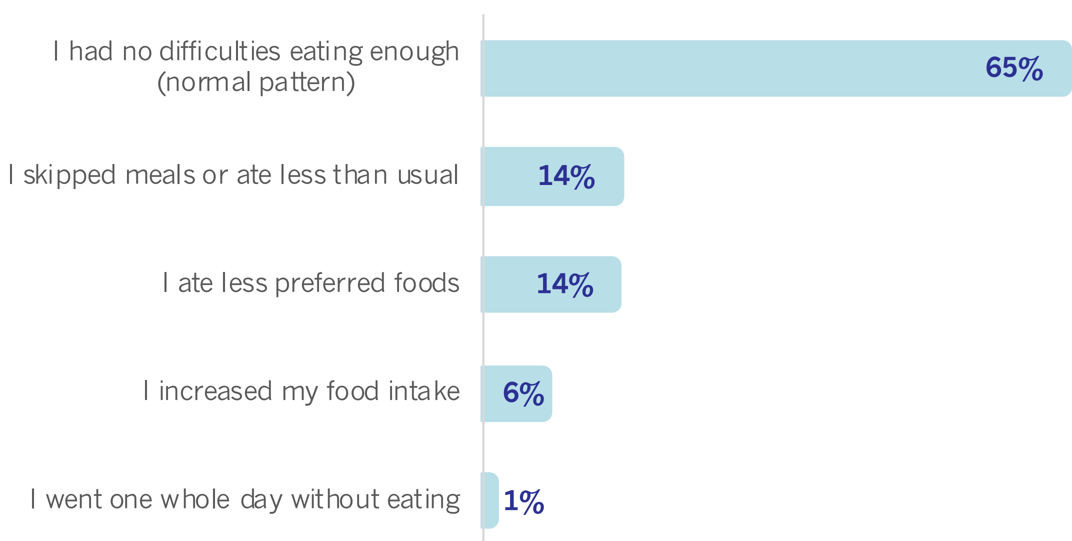
Some people are changing their diets. While 65% of respondents maintained their normal eating habits, 14% skipped meals or ate less, with another 14% eating less preferred foods. These figures are similar to the regional averages. More men than women reported no difficulties eating enough, as did more respondents over 60 years. More respondents 26-60 reported increasing their food intake compared to those over 60.

Most households are well-stocked, with 84% reporting food stocks of at least one week. However, 3% of respondents reported having no food stocked at home. Trends were consistent between sexes and across age groups.

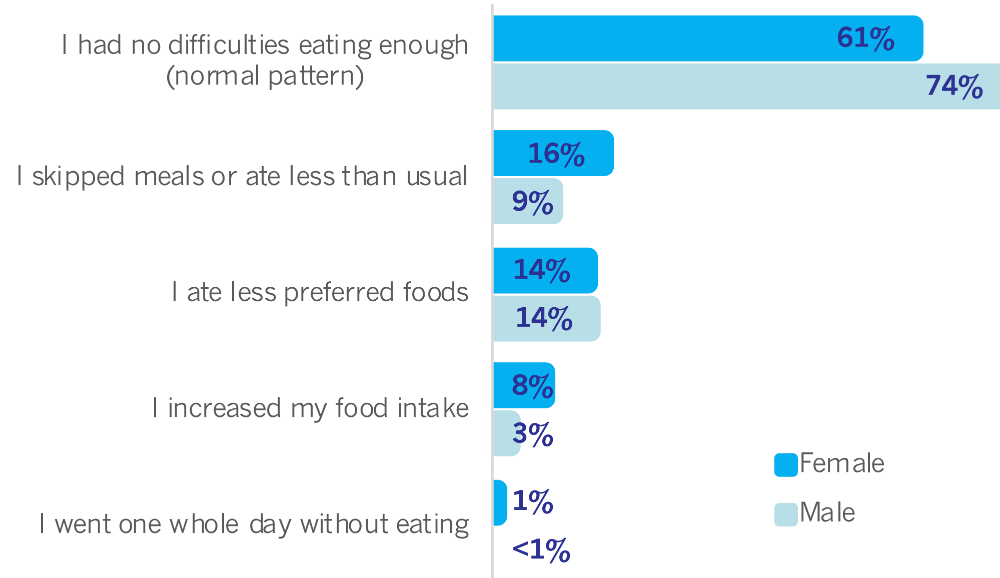
Food consumption

Respondents were asked to reflect on their food situation.

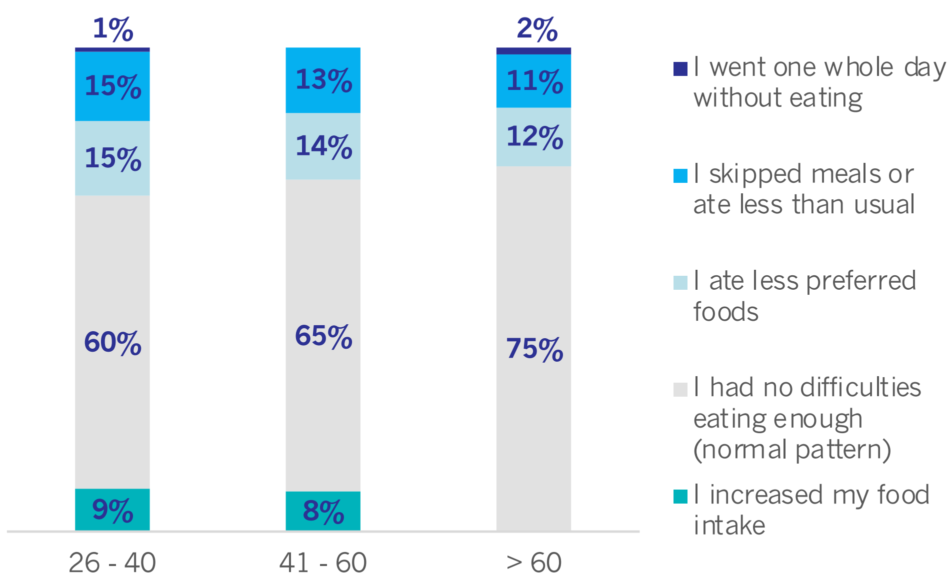
Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days?



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



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

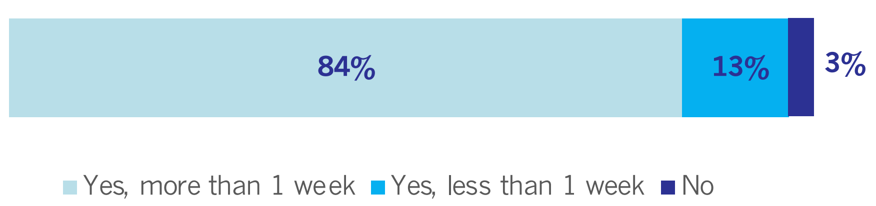


IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

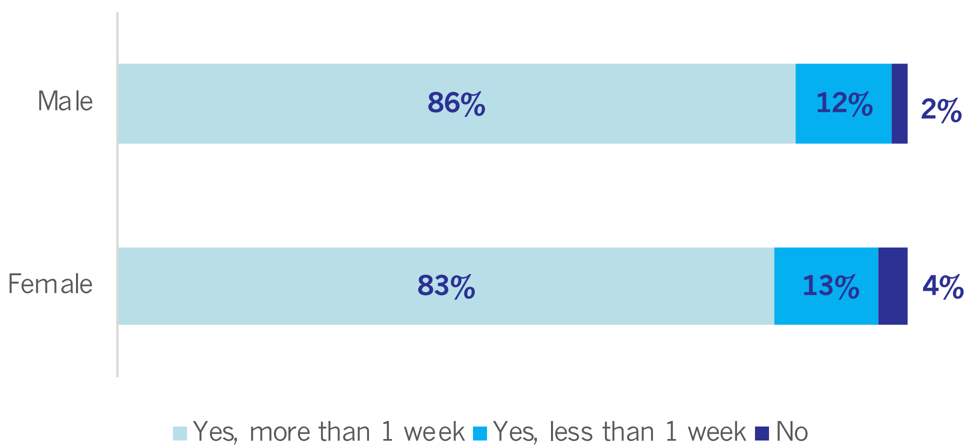
Food stocks

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

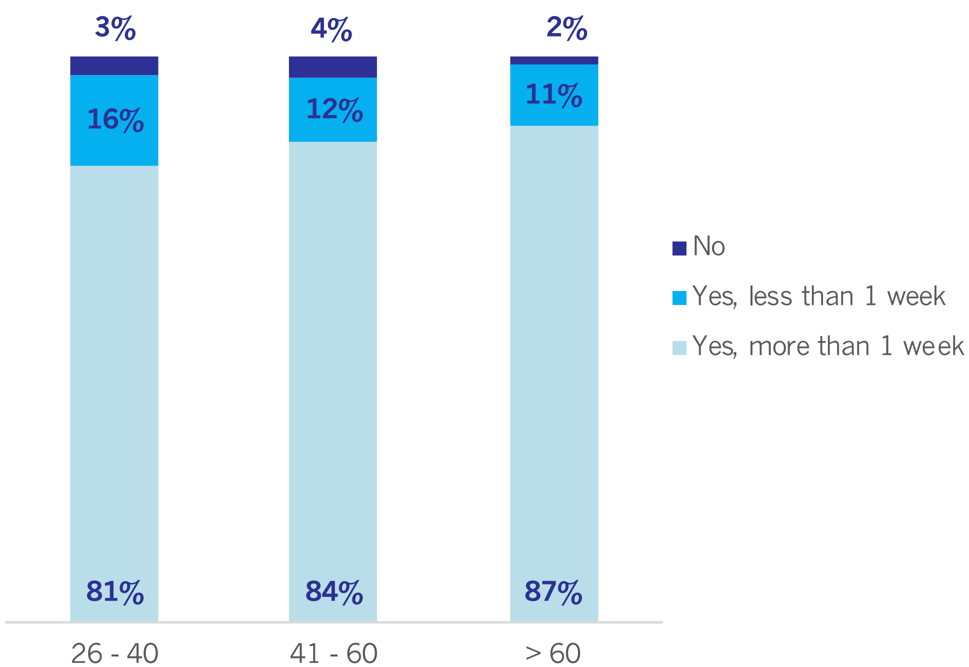
Does your household have any food stock?



Does your household have any food stock? | By sex



Does your household have any food stock? | By age



"Only effect is the selling of my leafy greens to customers who I deliver to by public transportation. But this gives me more time to grow much more needed food to help feed my country.. "

"Living off farm products and goods brought from food store so my family is adapting to the situation"

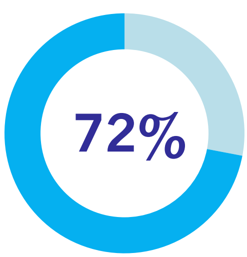
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Livelihoods are being widely disrupted by the pandemic, with 72% of respondents indicating that their ability to carry out their livelihoods was affected in the two weeks prior to responding to the survey, which is in line with the regional average. Movement restrictions were the predominant reason for livelihood disruptions. Reasons for disruptions did not vary significantly between women and men and across age groups. Business owners more frequently cited a lack of markets to sell products and reduced demand compared to salaried workers.

Job losses or reduced salaries were reported by 47% of respondents. Respondents aged between 26-40 and business owners are particularly affected. Slightly more female respondents reported household job loss/reduced salaries compared to men. The vast majority of respondents predict that their livelihoods will change in the future.

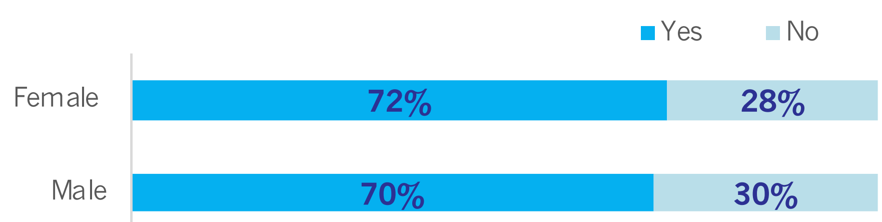
Disruptions to livelihoods

Respondents reported on any disruptions to their livelihoods.



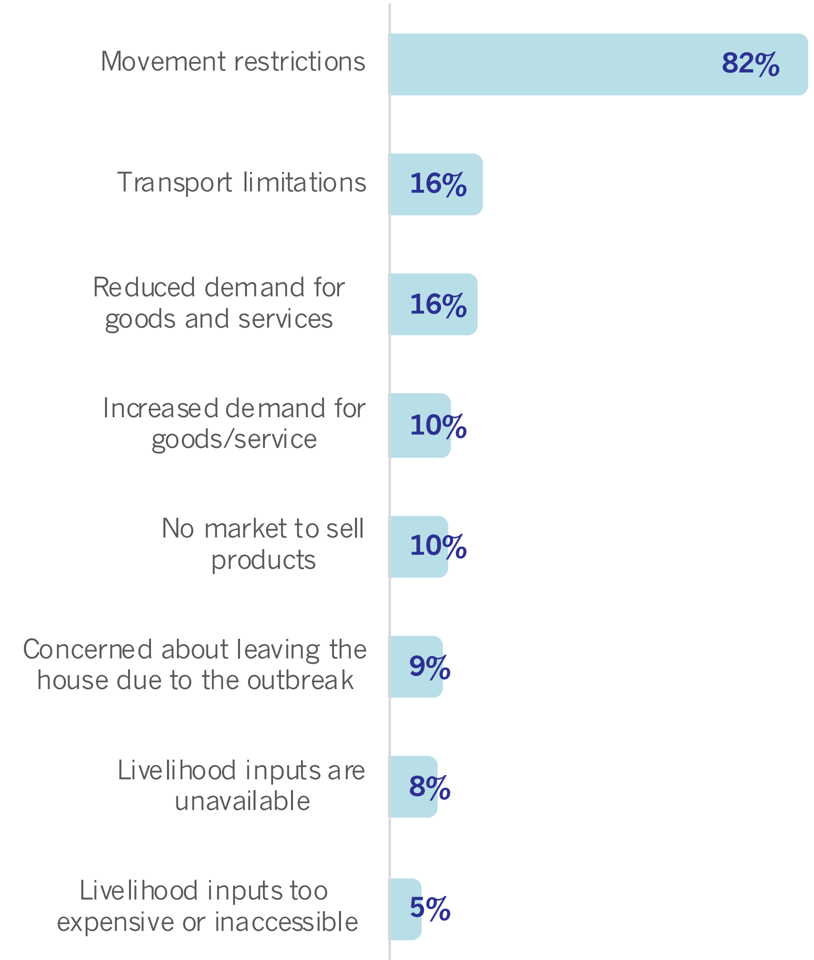
reported livelihood disruptions in the past two weeks

Was your ability to carry out livelihoods activities affected in the past two weeks? | By sex



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

Multiple choices could be selected.



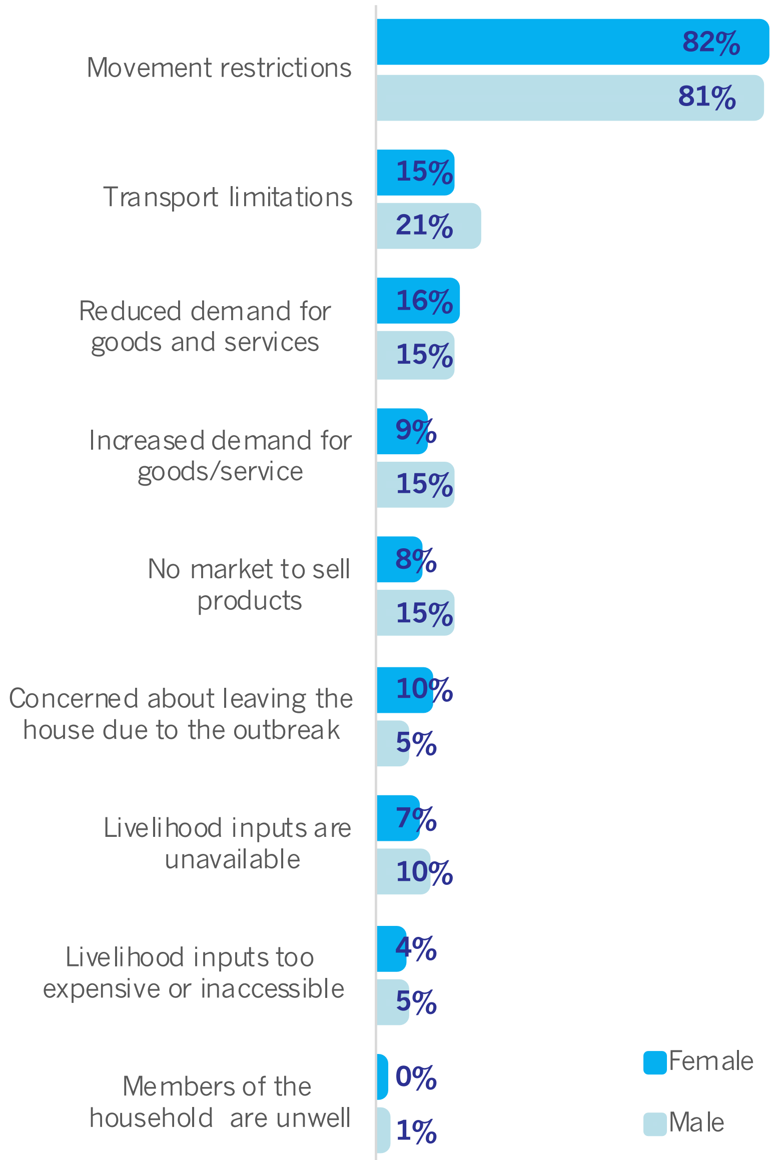
Tourism is important to our economy. One half of my household jobs have been loss due to the COVID-19 shut down

"Well we were affected even before covid19 especially at my job We are waiting to be paid! "

IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

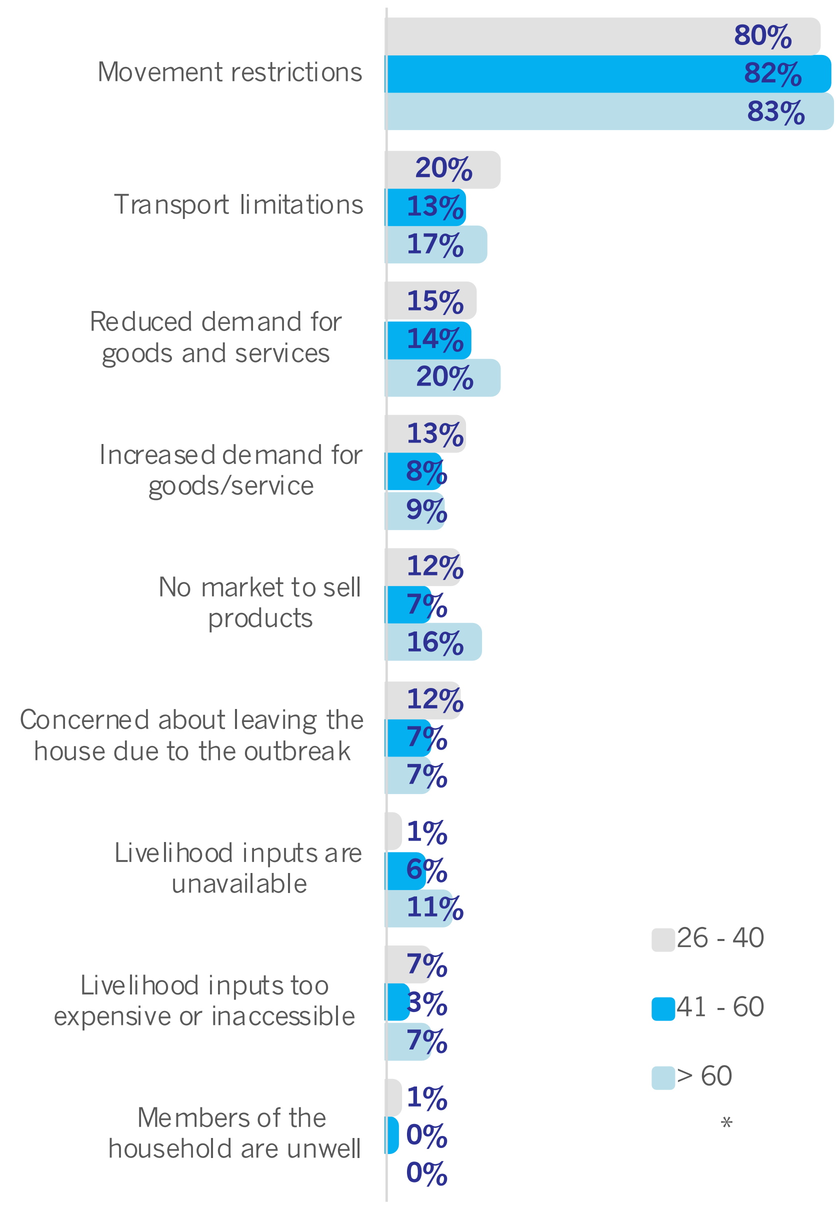
For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were…
| By sex

Multiple choices could be selected.



For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were…
| By age

Multiple choices could be selected.

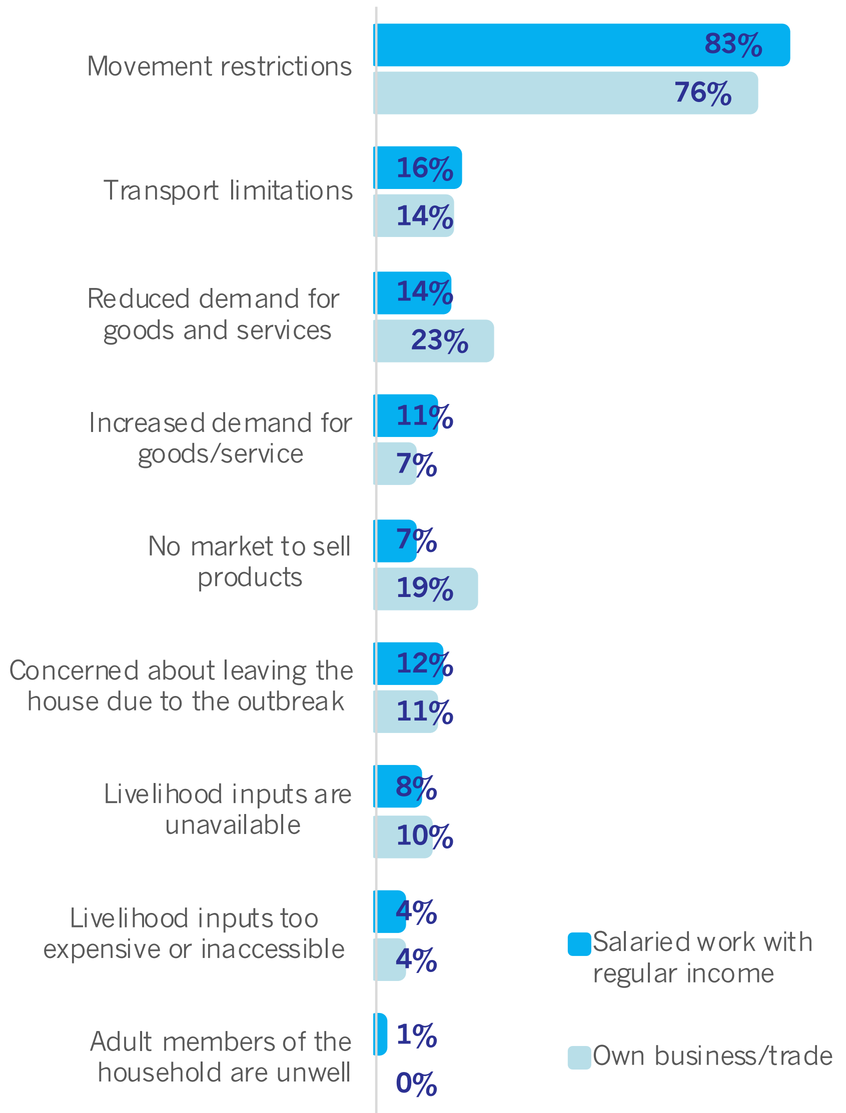


*Low response numbers in this age group may affect results.

IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were... | By income sources

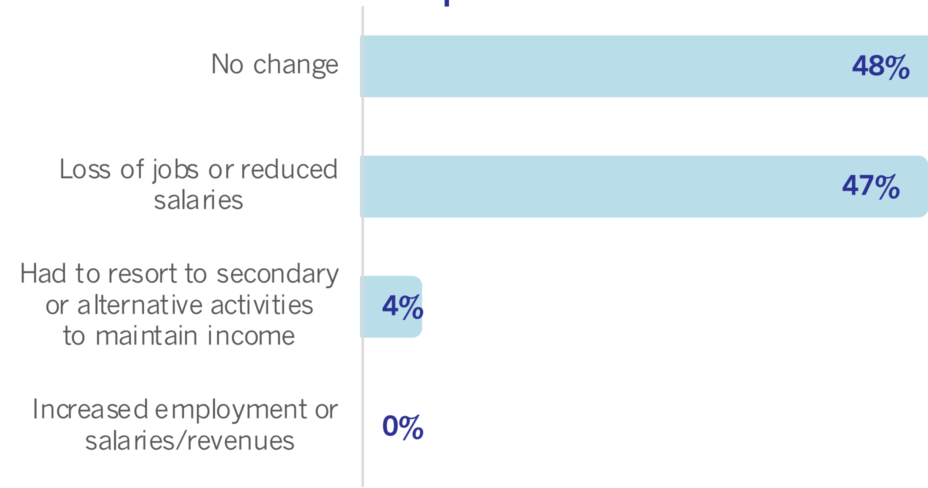
Multiple choices could be selected.



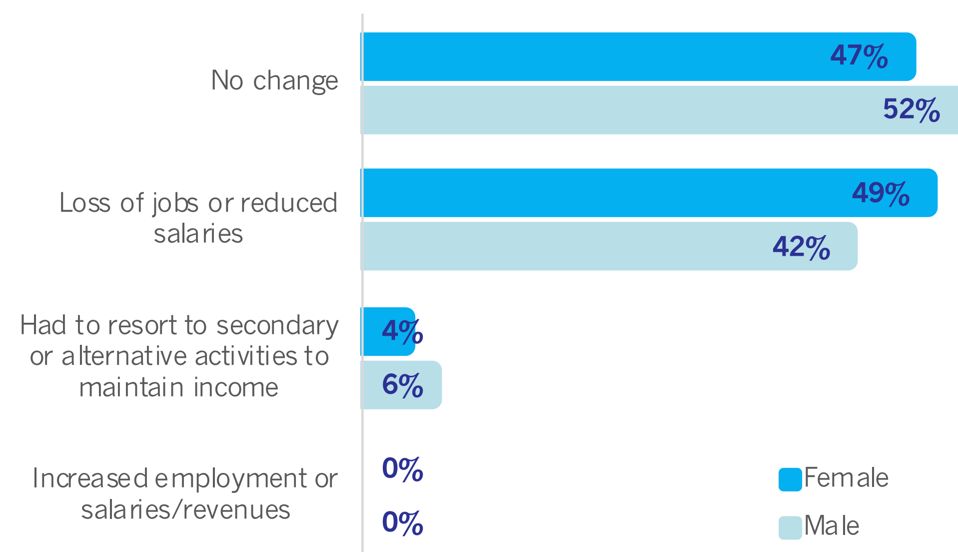
Income changes

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

Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks?

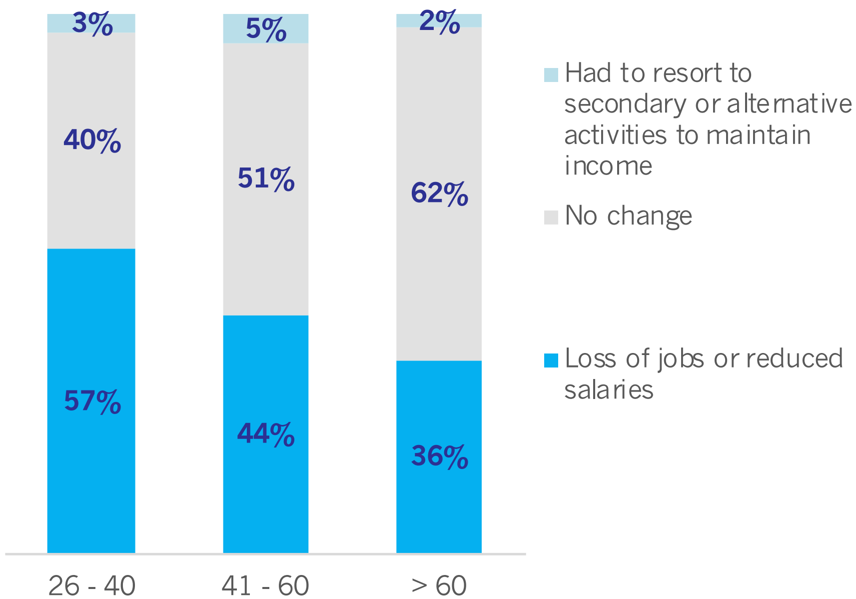


Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks? | By sex

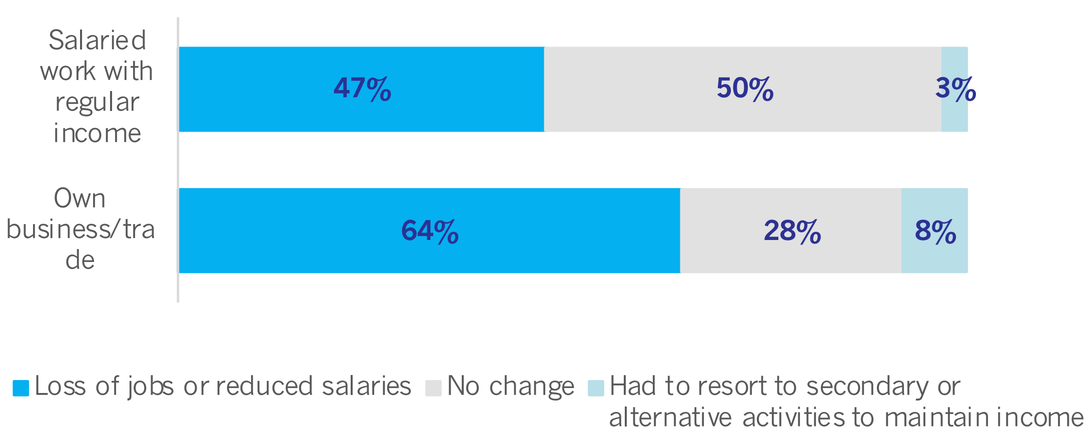


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks? | By age



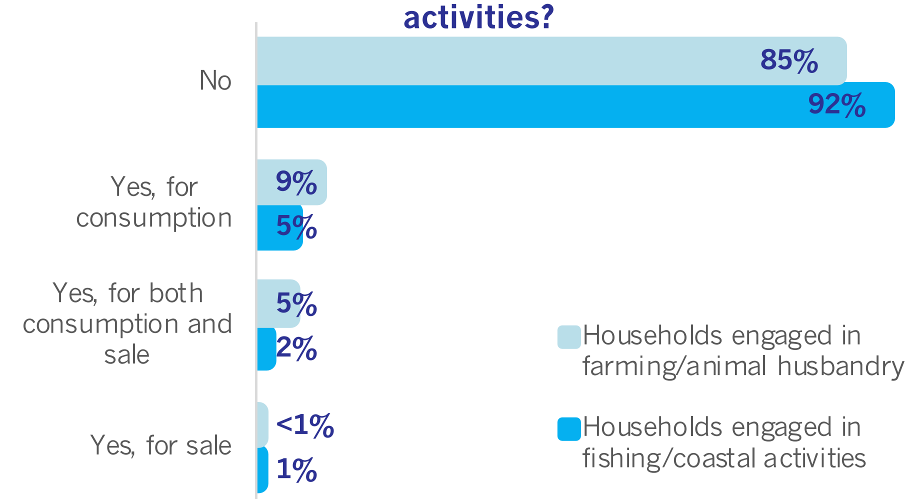
Has your household income changed over the past 2 weeks? | By income source



Households engaged in farming/fishing

According to the World Bank, agriculture in the Bahamas contributes to less than 1% of GDP and to about 2% of employment. Farming is being undertaken by 15% of respondents and fishing activities by 8%, mainly for consumption. Given the limited number of respondents engaged in farming and fishing/coastal activities (particularly commercial), more assessment and analysis on their constraints will be important to gauge how farmers and fisherfolk are being impacted by COVID-19.

Is your household engaged in farming or fishing activities?



"Small business has been affected as well as my son who is a hotel employee"

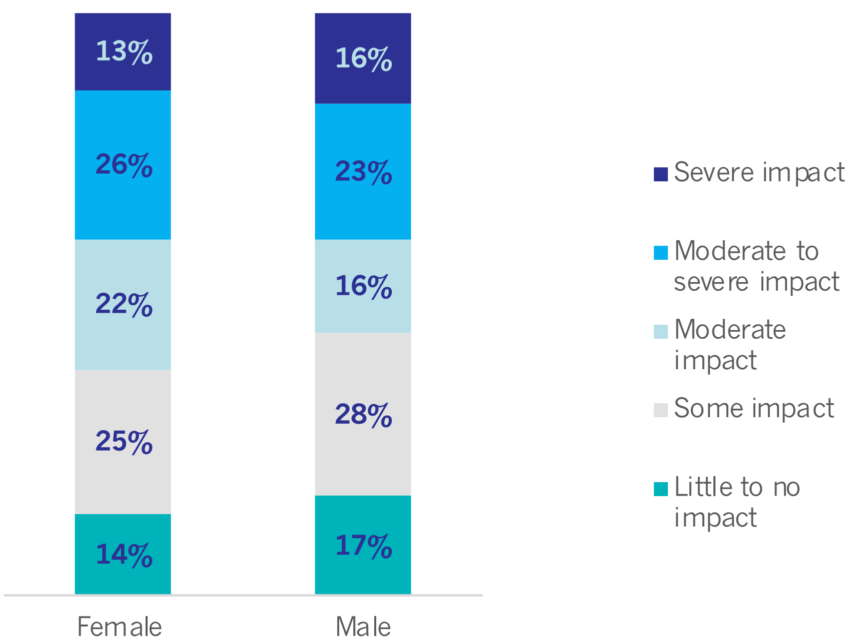
"Don't know how am going to meet some of my previous engagements due to loss of income. Work was slow from before covid19 so I really don't know what's going to happen for us in the coming months."

IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Future livelihood impacts

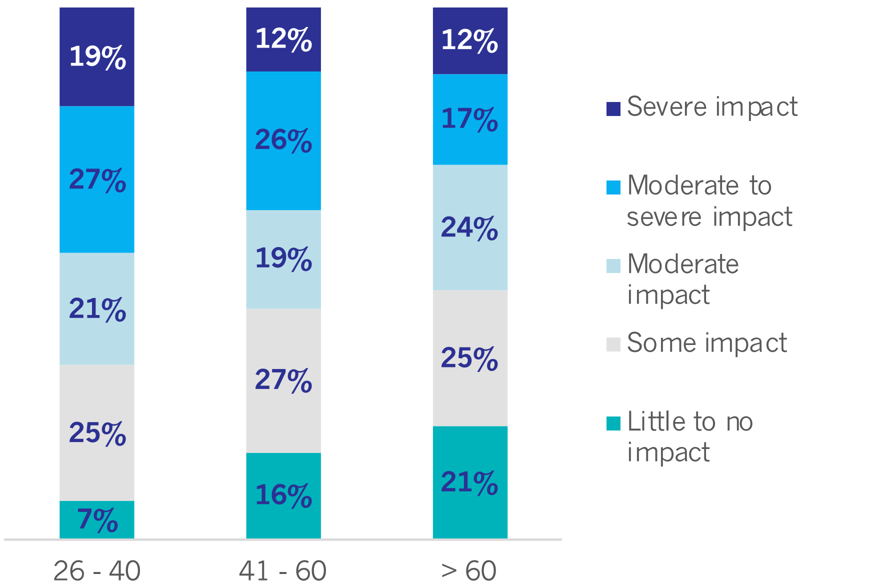
Respondents were asked to look ahead and predict the level of impact to their livelihoods as a result of disruptions from COVID-19.

Looking ahead, how do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19? | By sex

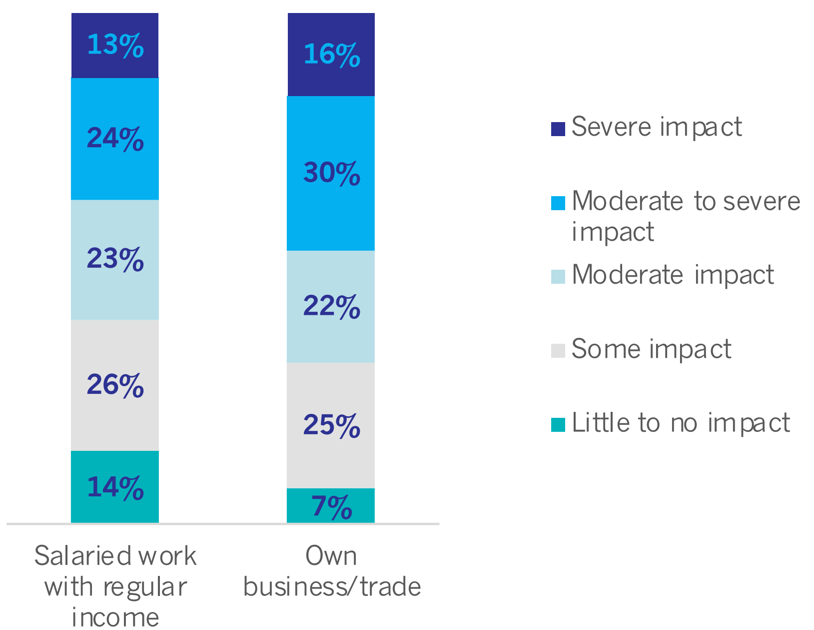


> *"My family will be negatively affected because I lost my job and I am the bread winner. "*
>
> *"Movement restrictions threaten livelihood."*

Looking ahead, how do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19? | By age



Looking ahead, how do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as result of disruptions from COVID-19? | By income sources

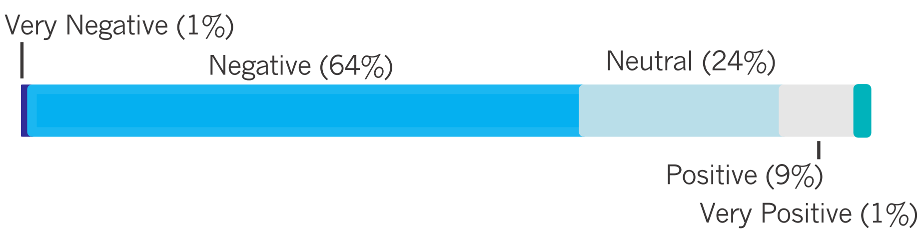


HOW PEOPLE ARE COPING AND ADAPTING

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 586 respondents, (45%) responded to the open-ended question resulting in a total count of over 6,310 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 survey responses



Respondents in Bahamas expressed a variety of sentiments about how they are coping and adapting. Of the total responses, 66% were classified as negative, 24% as neutral and 9% as positive. People expressed concerns over losing their jobs, many as a result of disruptions in the tourism sector, as well as anxiety about finances in general. A few of the respondents are still recovering from impacts from past hurricanes, including Hurricanes Dorian, Irma and Matthew. They highlighted that large portions of their savings are being depleted, which puts them in a difficult situation to pay bills and make loan repayments. A small number of respondents commented on positive aspects, including connecting with family. Some described planting food and expanding their gardens to become more self-sufficient.

Very negative (1%)

"Emotionally drained. Anxiety increased. Fear of the unknown. Working from home."

"Life has been challenging since hurricane plus i haven't worked full time in 10 years. I have had savings which have been severly depleted due to restoring roof over my head plus a business I have invested in… it can't possibly get worse"

Negative (66%)

"I am just depressed about the long lines that are at every business that you have to go to and I think that they should apply number system so that it would cause less confusion "

"I have not received my income for March because they agency that pays me closed operations as a result of the lock down. I will have to hold back on paying some bills to make due until the agency resumes operation."

Neutral (24%)

"The crisis has heightened my concern about the extent to which we are dependent on imports for our food."

"Long term concern for economic recovery and personal income."

"Money transfer from family abroad usually helps me to get through the month."

Positive (9%)

"Staying at home and connected with family. Enhancing my spirituality and relaxing."

"I have prepared my house hold. We are adapting."

Very Positive (1%)

"Great. Have time to do things that my busy lifestyle did not permit"

"Our household is prepared for hurricanes including our food supplies. This helped us to avoid the long lines in the stores."

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 the Bahamas. While market access and availability of food in stores did not emerge as major constraints, many respondents reported that food prices have increased and are changing how they shop.

Overall, COVID-19 has impacted people's lives and livelihoods in the Bahamas. Widespread disruption to livelihoods has already translated into loss of jobs or income for nearly half of the respondents, particularly impacting business owners and those aged 26-40. These impacts were also slightly more prevalent among female respondents. With nearly a third of respondents changing their eating habits, 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 the 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

"We mainly bought wholesale vegetables staples and certain spices for cooking to decrease the need to go to the stores. There are no children in the house hold, so everyone can take care of themselves inclusive of cooking.

My sisters added chickpeas to the gardens and are currently experimenting growing squash, zucchini, various herbs and chili peppers. This pandemic has brought home that we are still not self-sufficient in growing food for our household. We have to evaluate how to maximize the space for growing plants in our backyard and what other plants we need (more coconut trees)."

"The impact was not so bad. We have food, and enough funds to sustain us even without being able to work at this time. Schooling is now online. "

"If you don't have a car right now, life could be very difficult. "

"We have planted some vegetables and is hoping that they grow soon. "

"im pretty chill about it...out of work for a few days but back now.....things are normal"

"People are more afraid and their behavior is being affected negatively by this growing fear. There also appears to be few critical thinkers and more persons who ramp up their behavior negatively based on growing complaints about discomfort and change and uncertainty. "

"I have not received my income for March because they agency that pays me closed operations as a result of the lock down. I will have to hold back on paying some bills to make due until the agency resumes operation. "

ANNEX. REGIONAL SUMMARY KEY FINDINGS

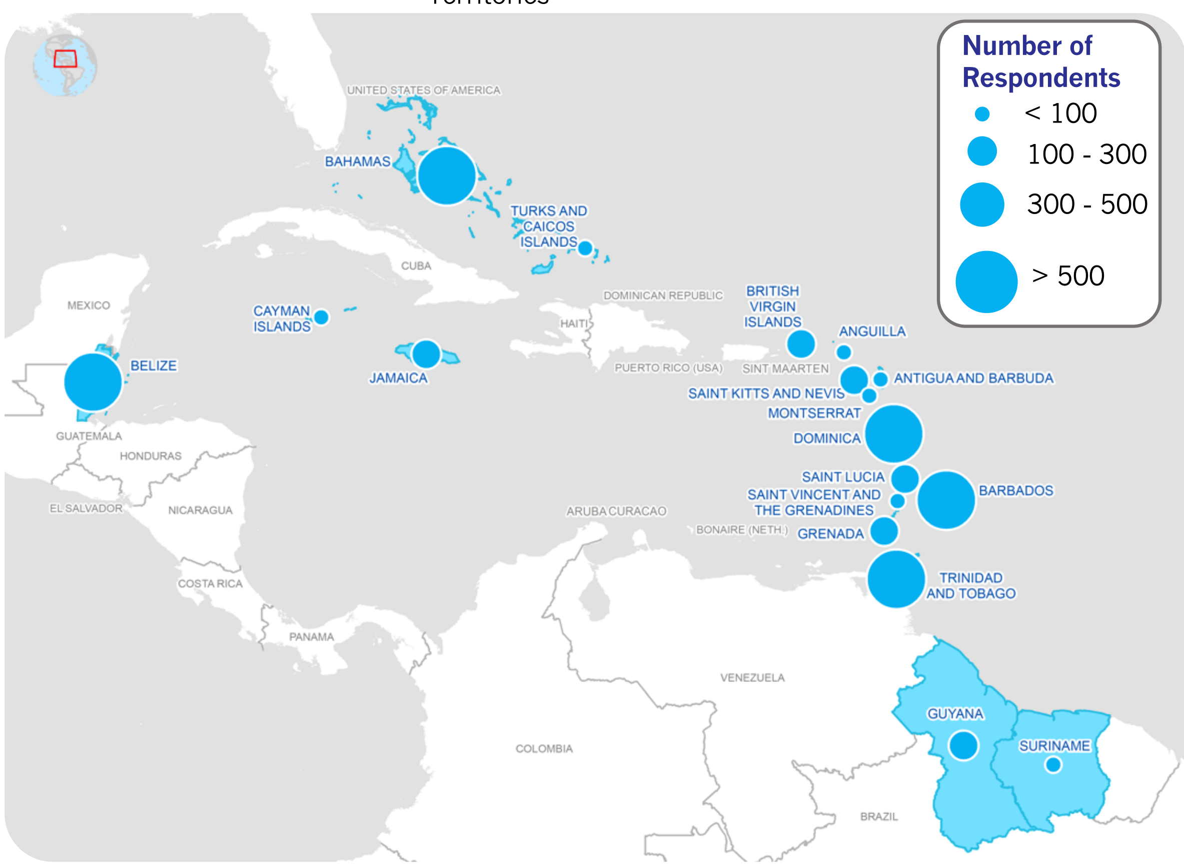
The COVID-19 pandemic is having far-reaching impacts on how people earn a living and meet critical needs. The Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey was launched by CARICOM to rapidly gather data on impacts to livelihoods, food security and access to markets. Prepared by the World 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.

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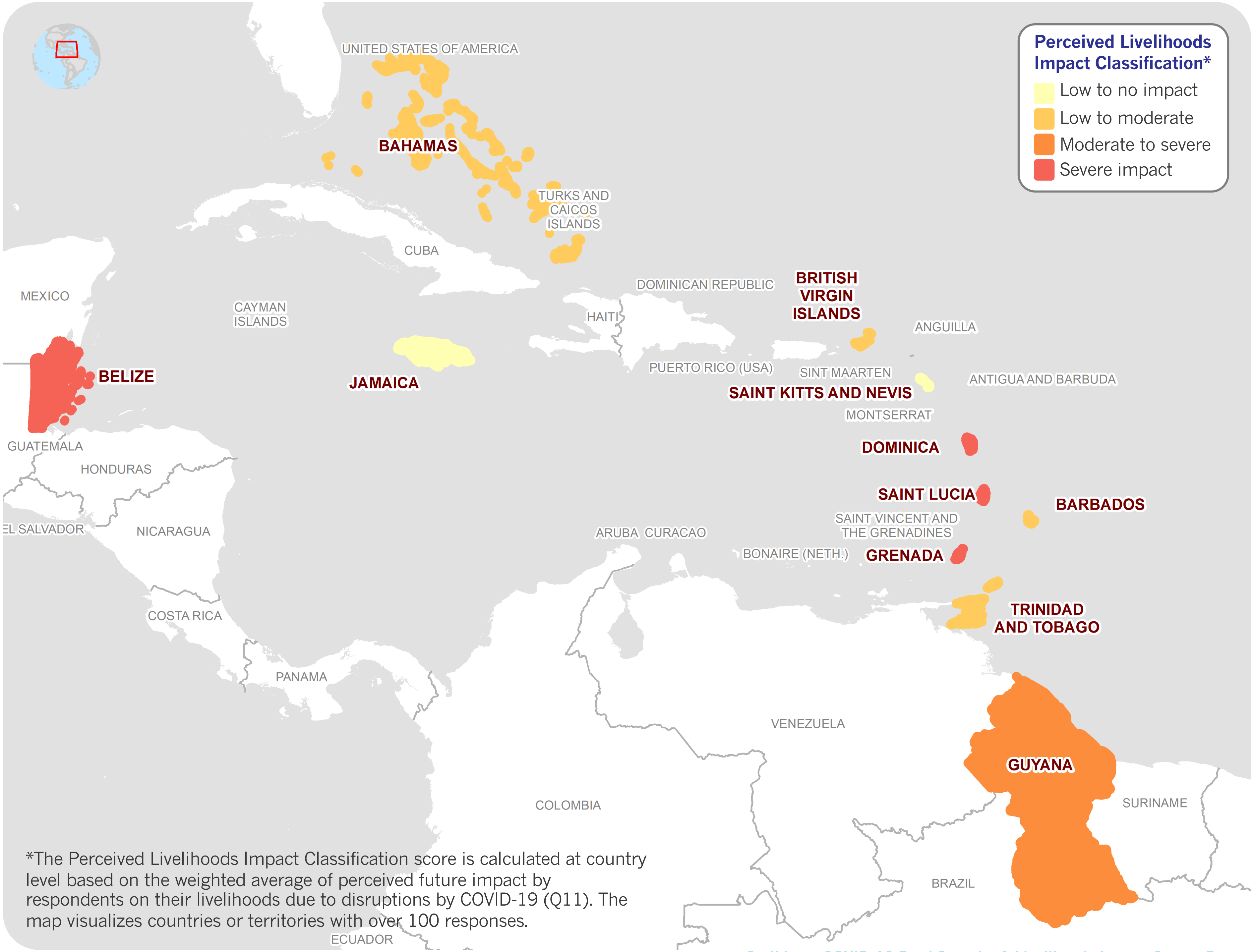
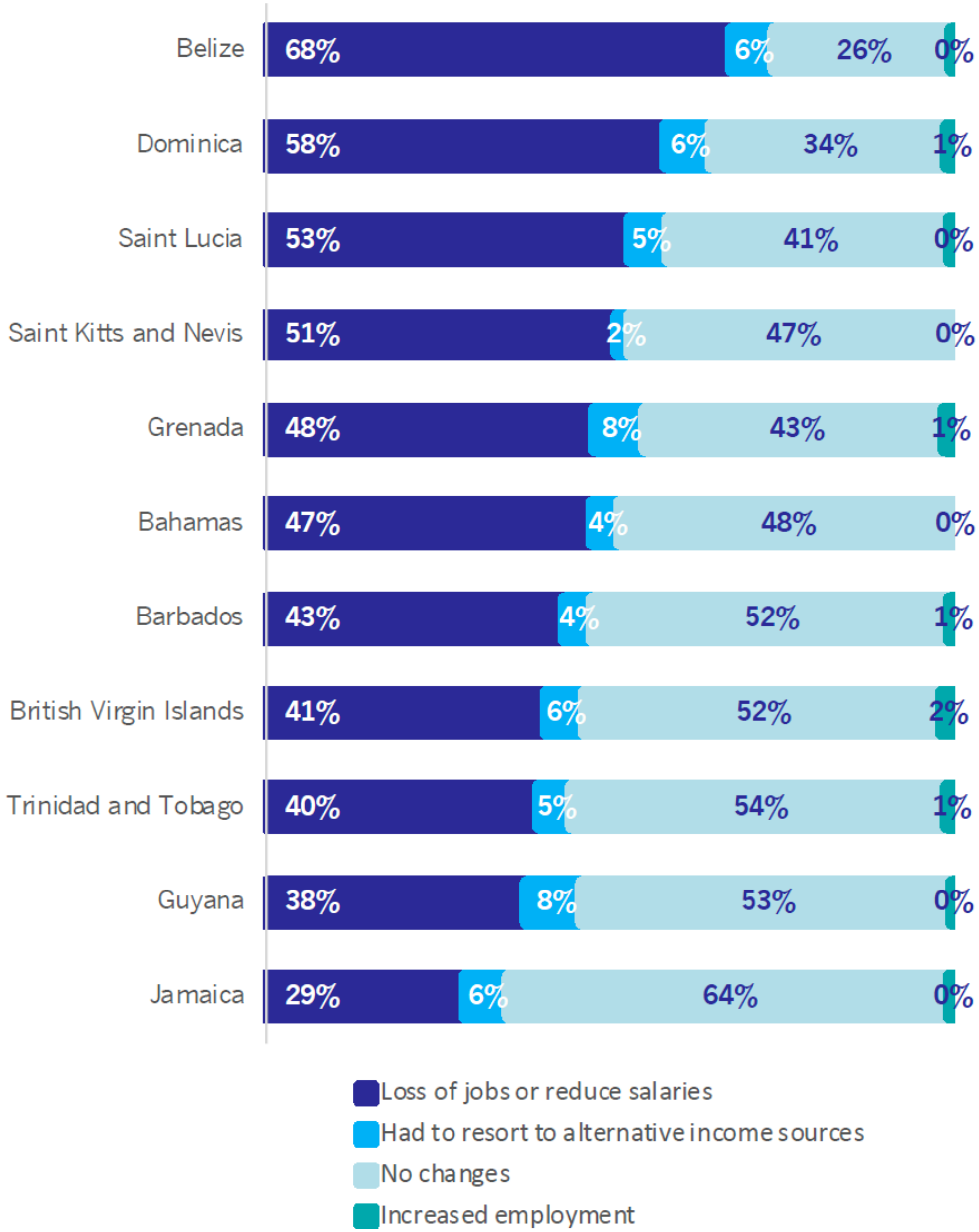
ANNEX. PERCEIVED LIVELIHOODS IMPACT IN THE CARIBBEAN



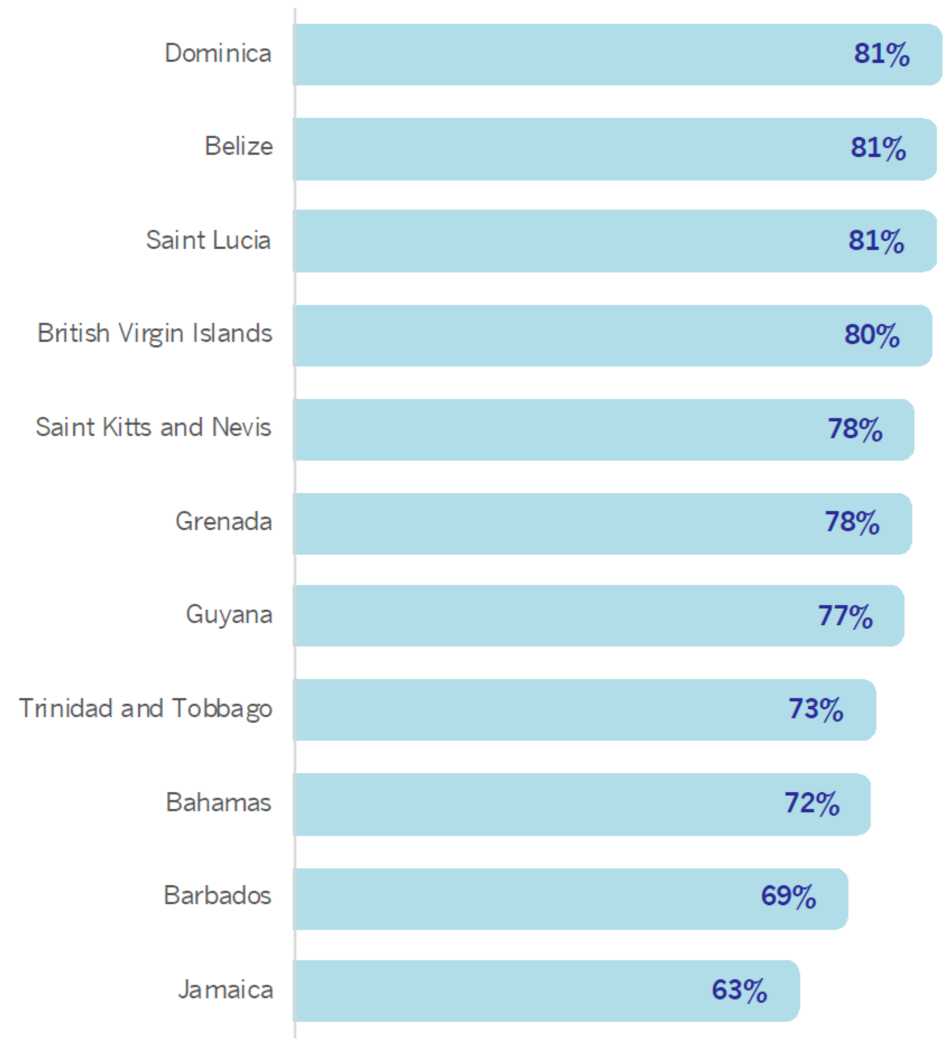
*The Perceived Livelihoods Impact Classification score is calculated at country level based on the weighted average of perceived future impact by respondents on their livelihoods due to disruptions by COVID-19 (Q11). The map visualizes countries or territories with over 100 responses.

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.

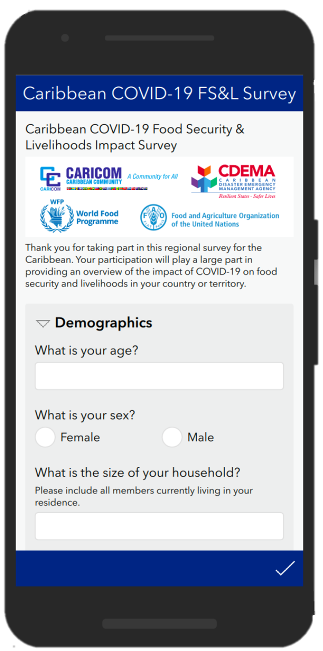
Responses were visualised live on an interactive dashboard and continually monitored to ensure their legitimacy based on cross referencing with prior knowledge and secondary data. Data validation methods were designed into the survey form to mitigate against intentional or unintentional outliers.

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

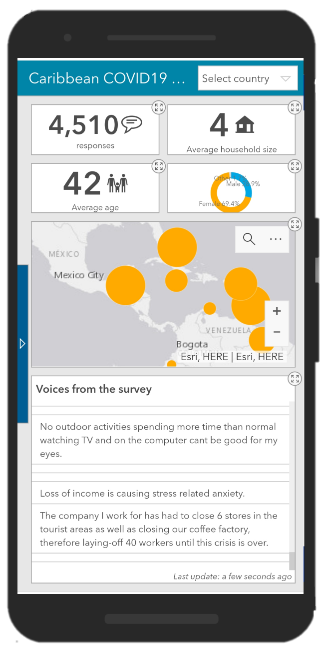
The qualitative analysis was performed in collaboration with Joseph Xu from Google's AI unit using Natural Language Processing (NLP). NLP, a branch of AI which analyses and interprets human languages, provided: (a) a sentiment analysis to determine the number of positive versus negative responses and (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, Elisaveta Gouretskaia, Nicholas Grainger and Francesca Ciardi.

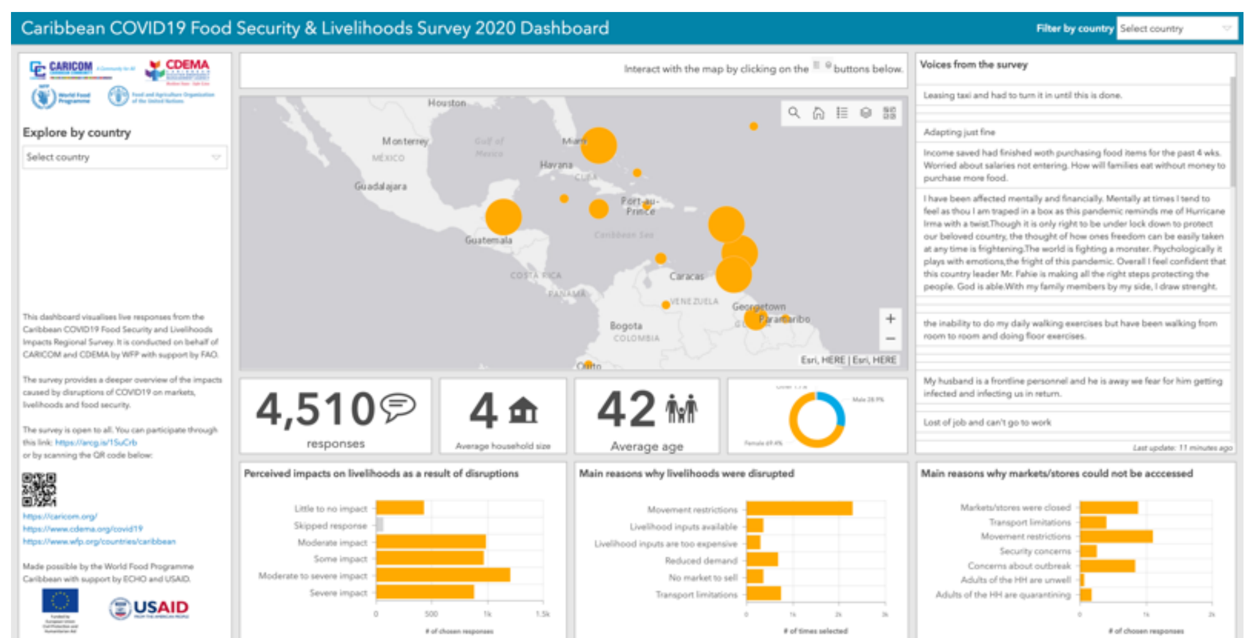
Survey (Closed)
http://arcg.is/1SuCrb



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

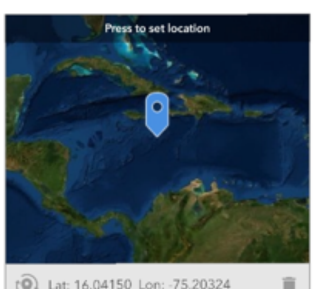
What is the size of your household?

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.



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.

1000

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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