Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

SAINT LUCIA Summary Report | October 2020

301 Respondents

78 Female | **22 %** Male

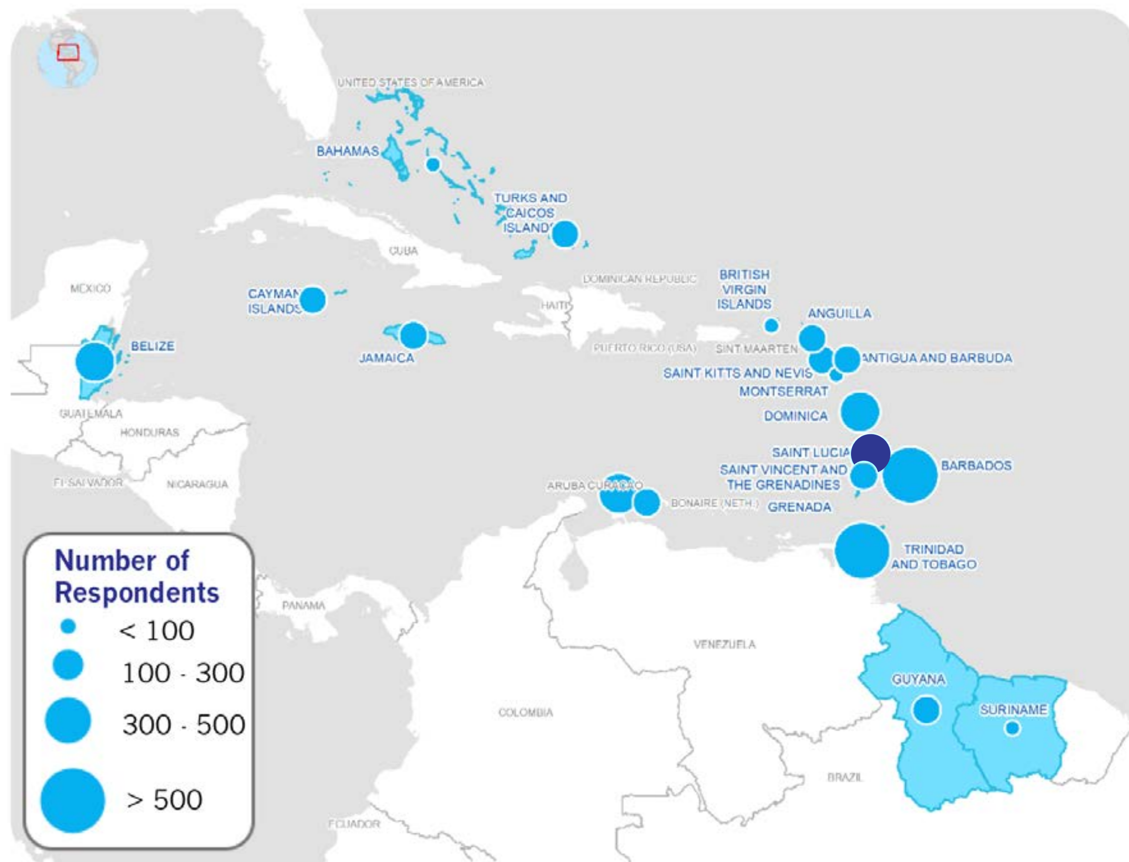
40 Average age

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.

Two rounds of the survey have been carried out, implemented by the World Food Programme on behalf of the CARICOM Secretariat. This summary analyses data collected in the second round, carried out over the last two weeks of June 2020, which received 5,707 responses from 23 countries and territories in the Caribbean. It builds on findings from the first survey implemented in April 2020, which received 4,537 responses from 19 countries and territories.

The survey was distributed and collected using online methods, and the survey link was shared via social media, e-mail, and text messages. In Saint Lucia, almost half of the population is not using the internet, and it is assumed that the poorest, most vulnerable and rural households are underrepresented in the survey results.



Round 1 April 2020 — **4,537** Responses

Round 2 June 2020 — **5,707** Responses

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

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78 Female | 22 % Male

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4 Average household size

- COVID-19 and measures to contain it have resulted in a widespread disruption to livelihoods. While the share of respondents reporting disruptions decreased slightly since April, still three out of five respondents reported that their ability to carry out livelihoods was impacted, mainly owing to movement restrictions, the cost of livelihood inputs, and concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak.

- The pandemic appears to be taking an increasing toll on households' economic wellbeing. Four out of five respondents have experienced job loss or reduced incomes in their households, a much higher proportion than during the April survey (53%) and in the region (69%).

- Nearly all respondents predict that their livelihoods will be impacted in the future, and a third of respondents expect this impact to be severe. Three out of ten respondents expressed very negative sentiment concerning the pandemic and the disruption it caused.

- COVID-19 and measures to contain it have impacted the availability of goods and market access, with some improvements observed in June. However, one out of four respondents still experienced difficulties in accessing markets, mainly due to a lack of cash to spend, and for every third respondent essential medicines and fresh foods were only partially available.

- Nine out of ten respondents observed an increase in food prices and changed their shopping behaviour since the pandemic began. Compared to April, more respondents resorted to purchasing cheaper and less preferred brands (49%) or smaller quantities than usual (44%), while less respondents adapted by buying larger quantities than usual (25%).

- Food security appears to be deteriorating. In June, 37% of respondents reported that they had no difficulties in eating enough, compared to 47% in April. One out of three respondents reported skipping meals or eating less than usual, and 7% going a full day without eating in the week prior to the survey. Household food stocks also decreased, with 18% of respondents reporting no food stocks in the house, compared to 2% in April.

- For two out of three respondents, job loss is the main worry, followed closely by illness (46%) , and the inability to cover food and other essential needs (45%).

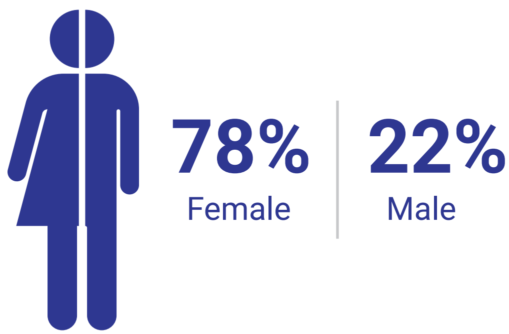
- Respondents were asked how they feel their household's income compares with the rest of the country. The findings suggest that impacts on market access, food security, livelihoods and incomes are more widespread among low-income households than among average income households.

- Impacts on market access, food security, livelihoods and incomes are also more widespread among respondents in the 26-40 age group compared to the 41-60 age group.

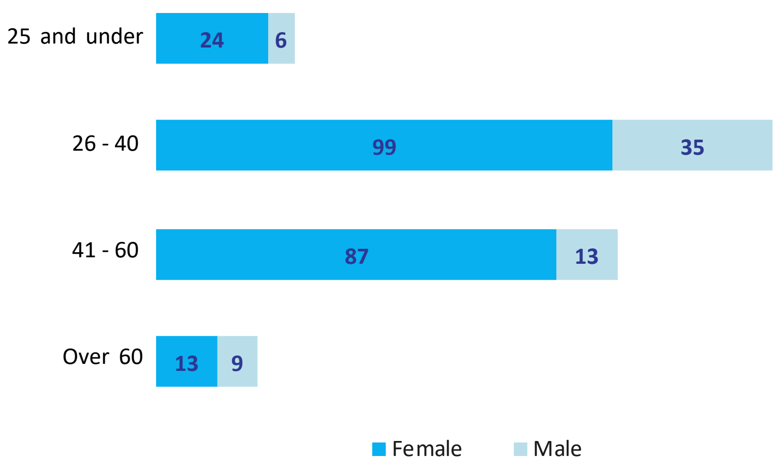
DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Age and gender breakdown shows that the majority of respondents are female and concentrated in the the 26-40 age group. Disaggregated analysis is only provided for the 26-40 and 41-60 age groups due to insufficient responses for the other age groups. Disaggregated analysis by sex could not be provided due to an insufficient number of male respondents.

Sex of respondents

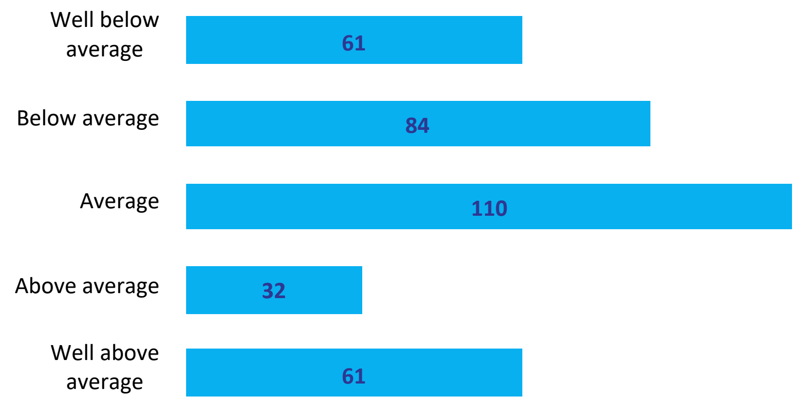


Age of respondents



Perceived household income

Participants were asked how they feel their income compares to the rest of the country. A comparative analysis of findings for households with a perceived average household income and a below or well below average income is provided on pages 16 and 17.

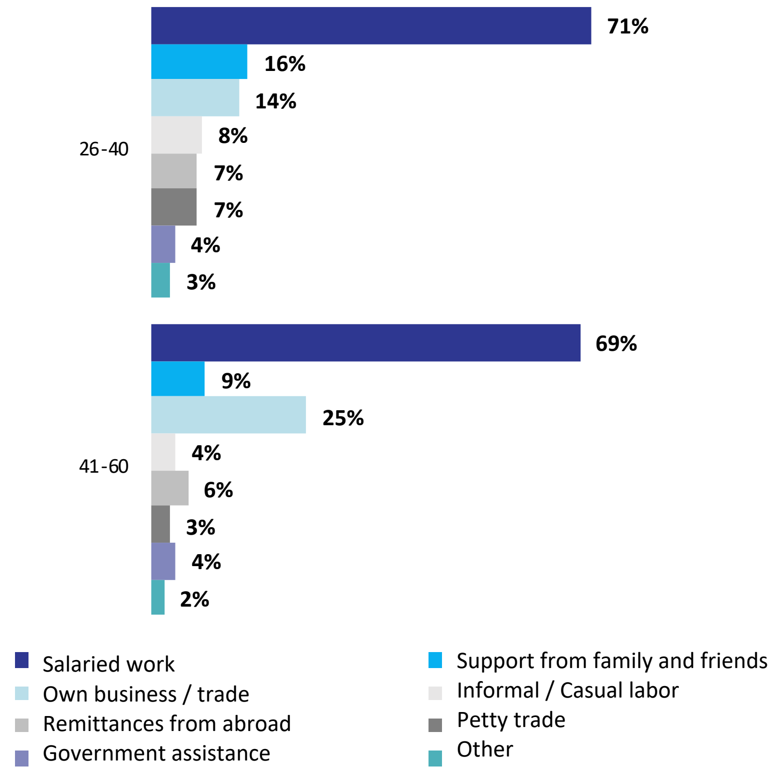


DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

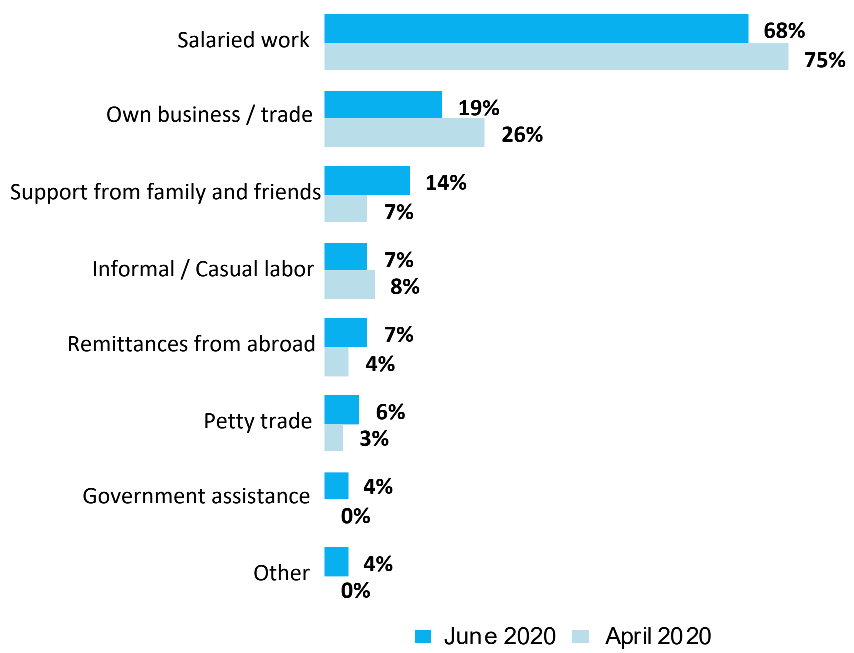
Main household income sources

Respondents were asked to indicate the main income source/s for their household. Multiple choices could be selected. Results are similar to those from April. The main income source is salaried work, with 68% of respondents. The second most common income source is business/trade at 19% of respondents, and more frequently cited by among respondents in the 41-60 age group. A small but increasing proportion of respondents received income mainly from friends and family, remittances from abroad, petty trade, or government assistance.

By age



By survey



No job and won't have one for a long time - Female, Age 19

i have been affected i have 2 children ,no job ,only selling local juice to get them pampers and their needs - Female, Age 26

IMPACT ON MARKETS

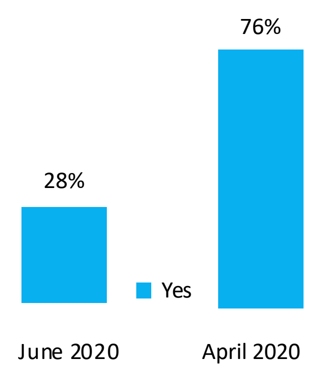
Market access

Disruptions due to COVID-19 have had a negative effect on market access. In June, 28% of respondents indicated they had problems accessing markets in the week prior to the survey, compared to 76% in April. Respondents in the 26-40 age group more frequently reported market access problems (34%) compared to those aged 41-60 years (20%).

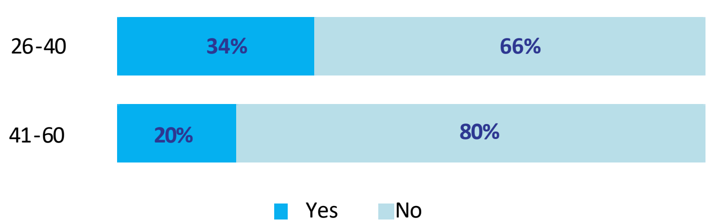
A lack of cash to spend was the most common reason, cited by every second respondent experiencing restricted access to markets. Compared to April, a substantially smaller percentage of respondents reported movement restrictions (18%), concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak (24%) and closure of shops (19%) as a reason for their inability to access markets.

In the past 7 days, was there a time when your household could not access the markets?

By survey



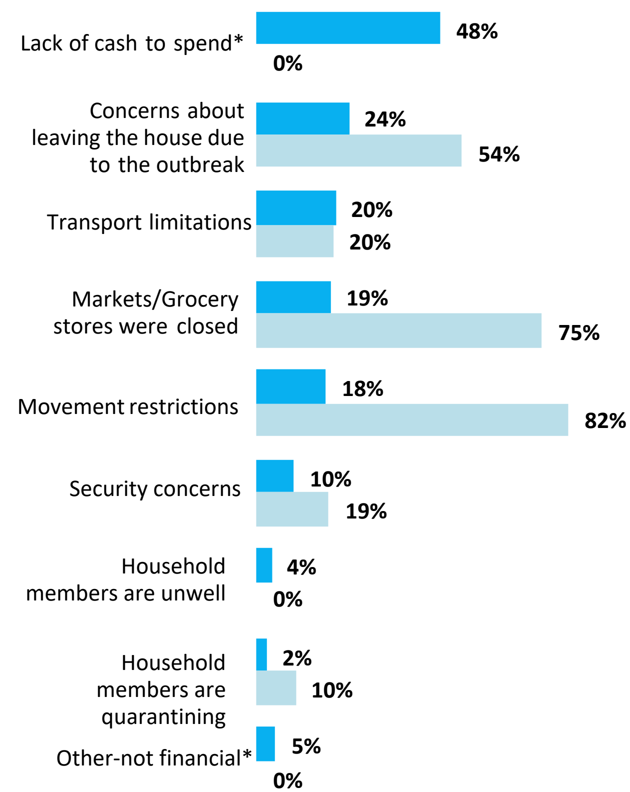
By age



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

By survey

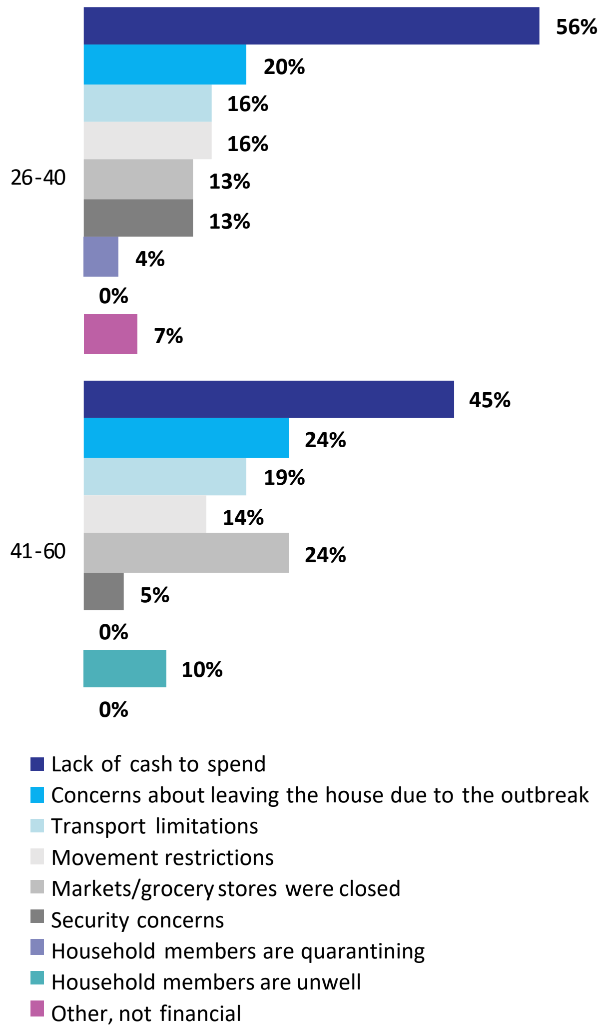
Multiple responses could be selected



*This option was not provided for the April 2020 survey.

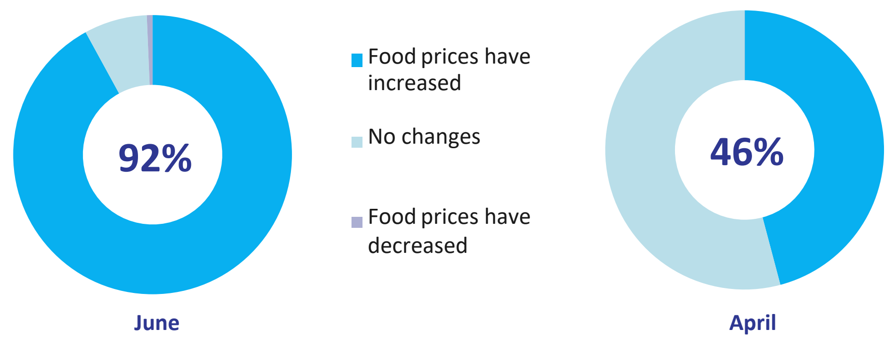
IMPACT ON MARKETS

By age



Food prices

Respondents reported on any observed changes in food prices. The vast majority reported an increase in food prices, a significant increase from April.



I adjust by eating less but still maintain a healthy diet - Female, Age 42

Strategy for sale of vegetables had to be adjusted to suit covid protocol. Having to find alternative markets for produce. - Female, Age 30

My husband has lost his job I am now the sole bread winner. I am concerned at some point, our mortgage payments will become an issue. - Female, Age 49

IMPACT ON MARKETS

Availability of items in stores

Respondents reported on the availability of key items in stores. Availability of goods has improved since April, with at least four out of five respondents reporting uninterrupted availability of basic foods or hygiene items. However, even in June, for almost one third of respondents essential medicines and fresh foods were only partially or sometimes available.

How Available?	Fresh food items		Basic food items		Hygiene items		Essential medicines	
	June 2020	April 2020	**June 2020**	April 2020	**June 2020**	April 2020	**June 2020**	April 2020
Always Available	↑ **65%**	44%	↑ **81%**	49%	↑ **85%**	57%	↑ **53%**	33%
Partially/ sometimes available	↓ **30%**	37%	↓ **16%**	35%	↓ **11%**	28%	↓ **30%**	32%
Not available	↓ **0%**	6%	↓ **0%**	5%	↓ **1%**	6%	↓ **0%**	7%
Don't know	↓ **5%**	13%	↓ **3%**	10%	↓ **3%**	10%	↓ **17%**	27%

Shopping behavior

Respondents were asked if they have had to, and if so, how they altered their shopping behaviour since the beginning of the pandemic.

Shopping routines have changed for 93% of respondents, and a significant change in adaptation strategies has been observed. For the respondents who changed their shopping behaviour, the proportion of households who reported buying larger quantities than usual more than halved from 73% in April to 25% in June. At the same time, a larger proportion resorted to buying cheaper or less preferred brands (49%) and buying smaller quantities (45%) than usual. Respondents in the 26-40 age group were more likely to buy cheaper or less preferred brands (57%) compared to those aged 41-60 (41%).

No job... food price gone up. I have four kids to feed and I'm a single parent - Female, Age 40

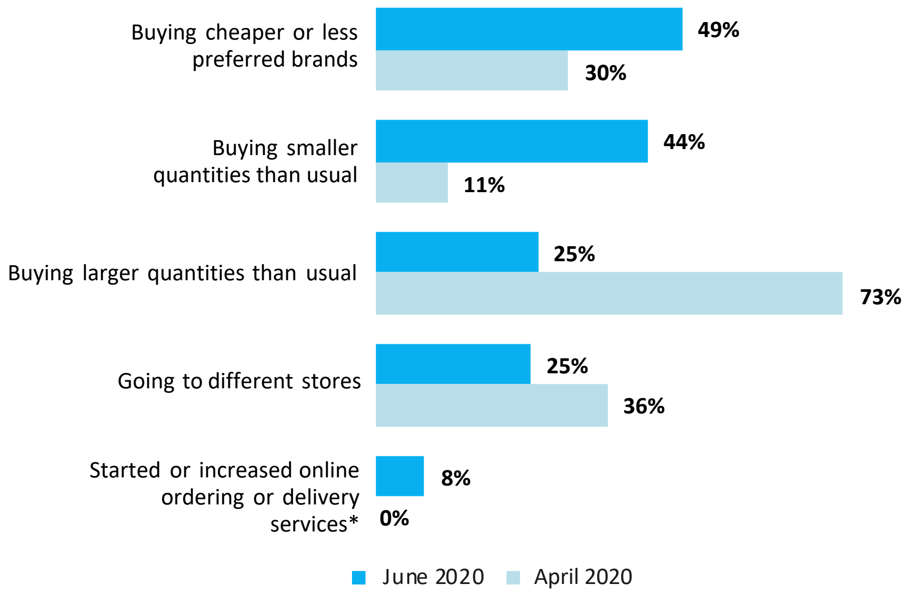
Income of everyone has been reduced. However we have discussed the matter and agreed on strategies to better manage our finances and food/ medical supplies. - Female, Age 61

IMPACT ON MARKETS

How respondents changed their shopping behaviour…

By survey

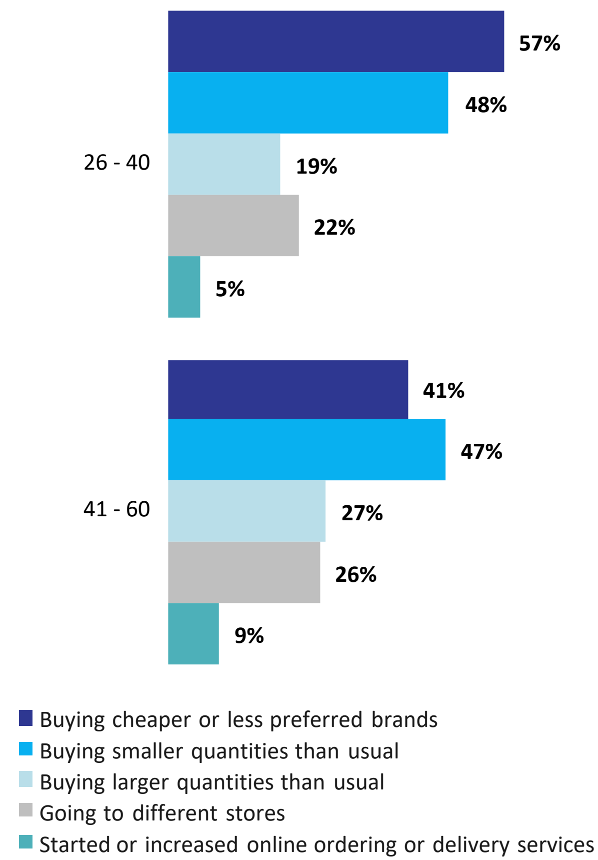
Multiple choices could be selected



*This response option was not provided in the April survey.

By age

Multiple choices could be selected



Lost of employment , resulting in inability to meet basic needs, pay mortgage payments, utilities and provide for family. - Female, Age 46

So far my life has not changed in terms of my income but cost of living has increased therefore I now have an increase in my expenditure and less sav-ings - Female, Age 43

IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

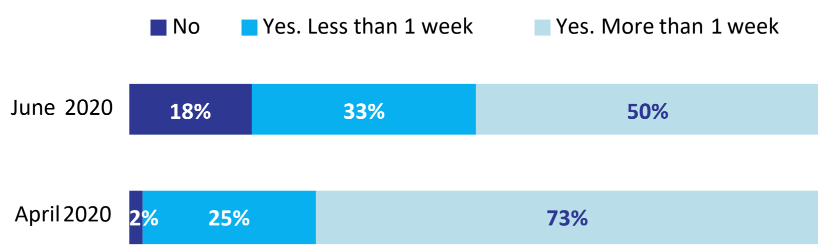
The pandemic and measures to stop its spread have impacted household food security, and the situation appears to have deteriorated since April. Compared to the April survey, household food stocks have declined. Half of respondents said that they had over one week food supply stored up, down from 73% in April and, worryingly, 18% of respondents had no food stocks at all in their house, up from 2% in April.

Food consumption has been impacted, with only 38% of respondents reporting having no difficulty consuming enough food during the week prior to the survey in June. Every third respondent skipped meals or ate less than usual, up from 21% in April, and 7% of respondents went one whole day without eating. Respondents in the 26-40 age group more frequently reported skipping meals or eating less than usual (40%) when compared to the 41-60 age group (23%).

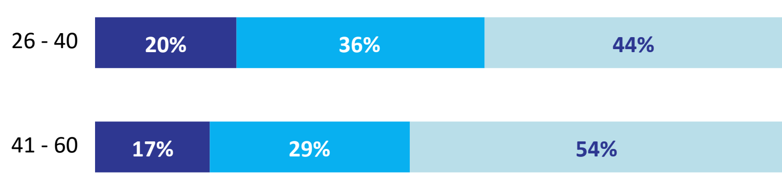
Food stocks

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

Does your household have any food stock?
By survey



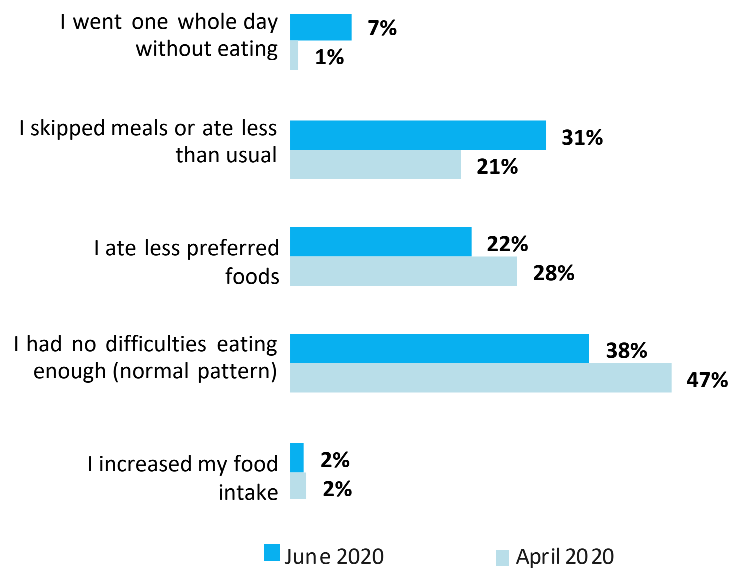
By age



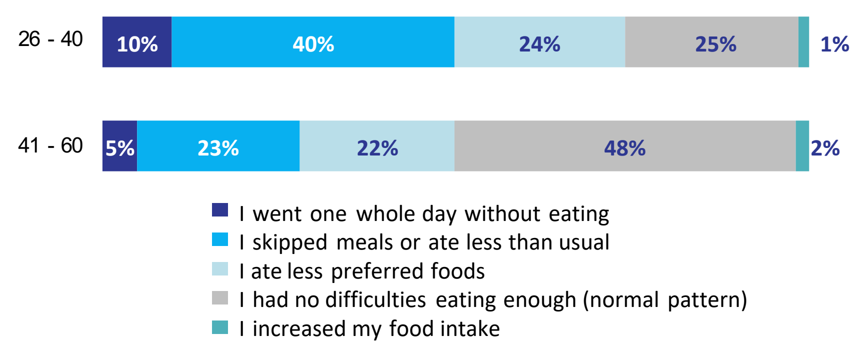
Food consumption

Respondents were asked to reflect on their food consumption during the week prior to the survey.

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



By age



IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus have had a widespread impact on livelihoods and incomes. The majority of people (61%) still faced disruption to their livelihood.

Movement restrictions were still the most common reason for livelihood disruptions, even though the percentage of respondents citing this reason decreased significantly from 83% in April to 30% in June. In return, the price of livelihood inputs became the second most important concern in June, increasing almost fivefold to 28% of respondents. Concerns about leaving the house due to the pandemic were cited by 27% of respondents, down from 46% in April.

Respondents in the 26-40 years age group more frequently reported disruptions than those in the 41-60 years older age group (69% compared to 57%) and more frequently cited the unavailability of livelihoods inputs (23% compared to 8%). Younger respondents also more frequently cited an increased demand for goods and services when compared to the older age group (15% compared to 3%).

I lost my job because I worked in the hotel industry. To make ends meet I do gardening planting vegetables to feed my daughter. - Female, Age 42

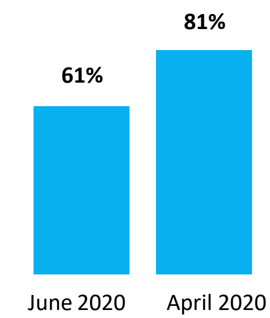
Due to COVID my partner was unable to start off his pressure washing business so that has left the household with one small income. - Female, Age 34

Both members of the household rely in tourism activities for income. We have both not earned a cent since March and our reserves are running low. - Female, Age 33

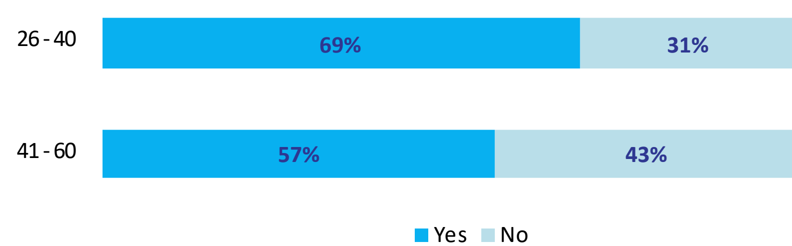
Disruptions to livelihoods

Respondents reported on any disruptions to their livelihoods in the two weeks prior to the survey.

% of respondents reporting that their ability to carry out livelihood activities was affected



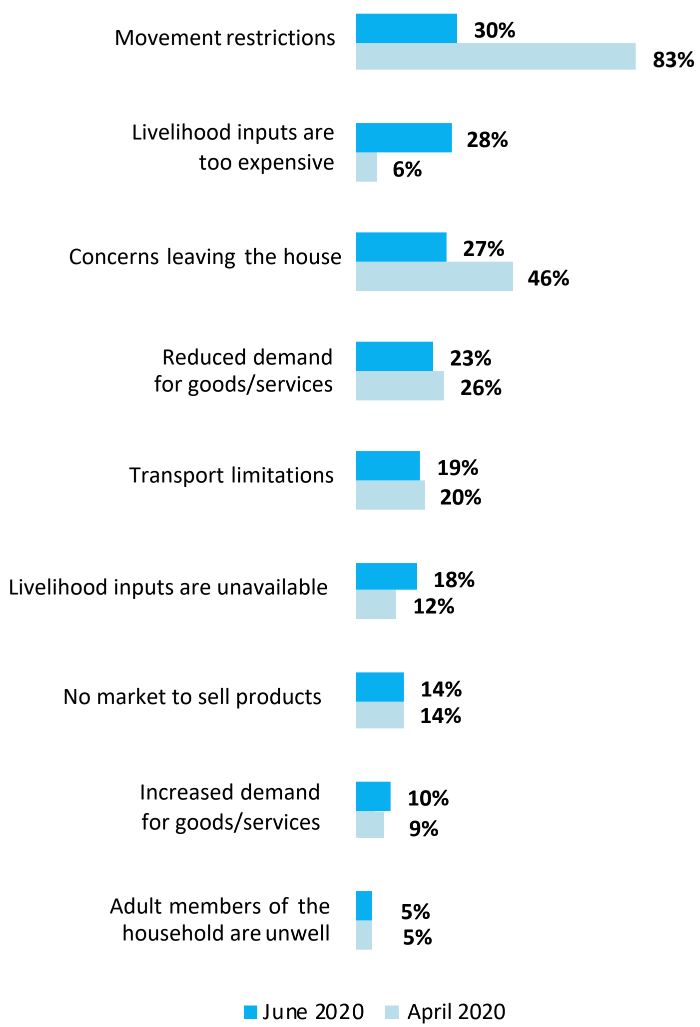
By age



IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

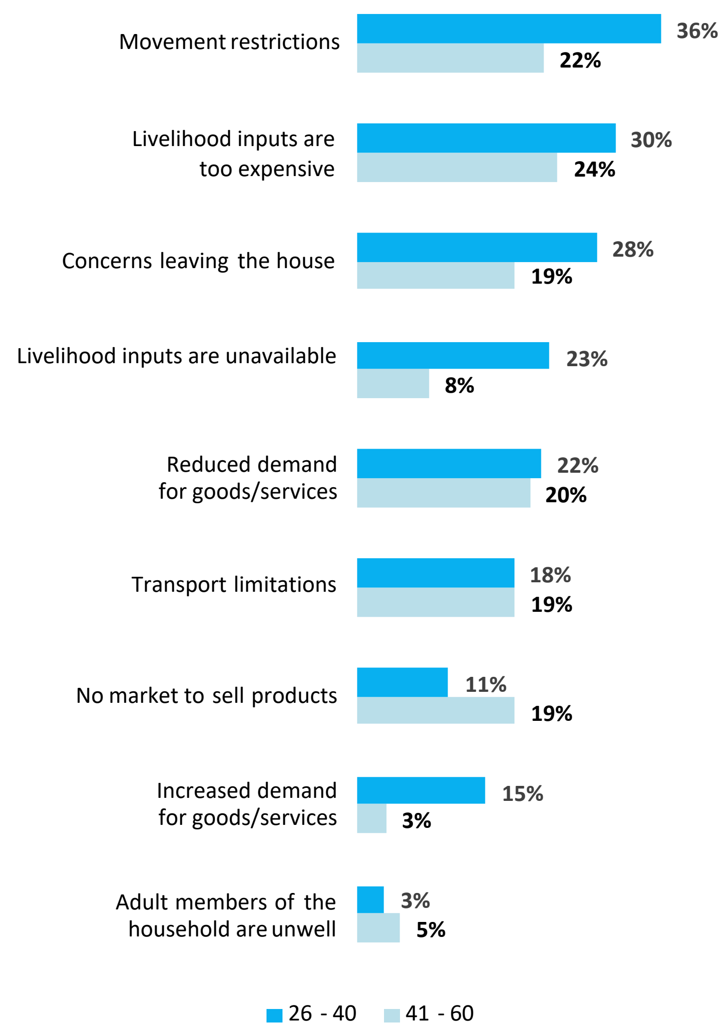
For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were…
By survey

Multiple choices could be selected



By age

Multiple choices could be selected



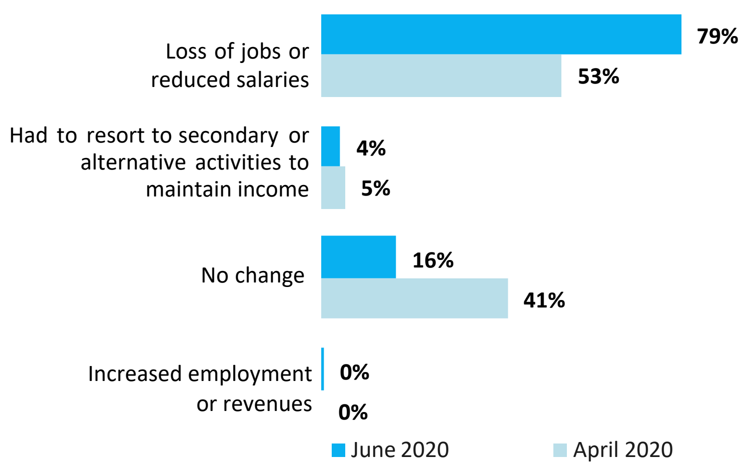
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Income changes

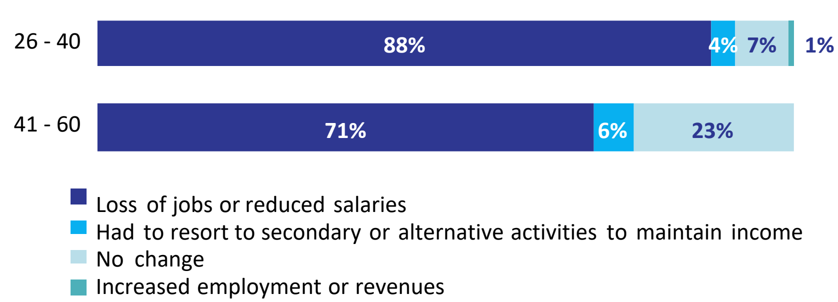
Respondents communicated changes to their income since the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic appears to be taking an increasing toll on households' economic wellbeing. Four out of five respondents have experienced job loss or a reduced income in their households, much higher than during the April survey (53%). Loss of income and reduced incomes were more widespread among respondents in the 26-40 age group (88%) than in the 41-60 age group (71%).

Has your household income changed since the COVID-19 outbreak?

By survey



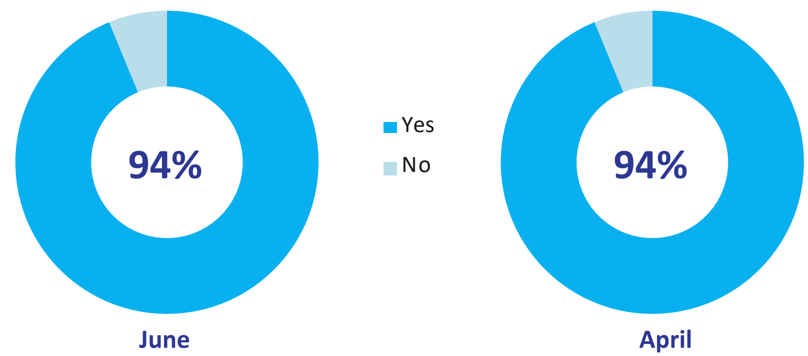
By age



Future livelihood impacts

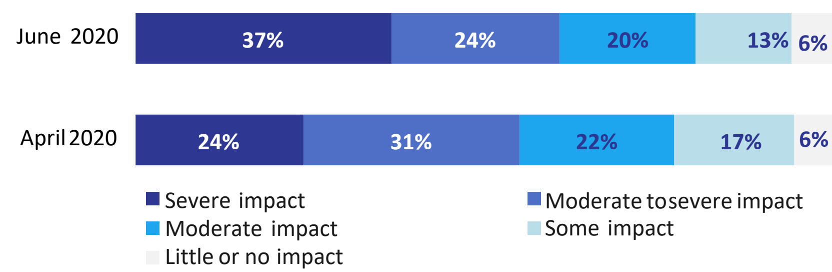
Respondents were asked to look ahead and predict the level of impact to their livelihoods as a result of disruptions from COVID-19. Almost all respondents believed that their livelihoods would be impacted to some degree and every third respondent expects their livelihood to be severely impacted.

% of respondents expecting that their livelihood will be impacted

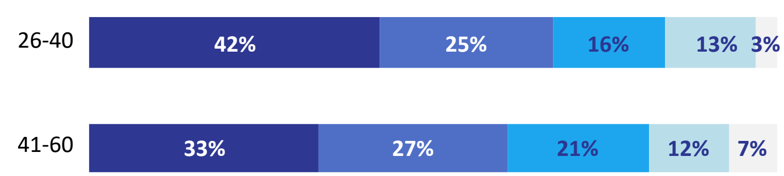


How do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19?

By survey



By age



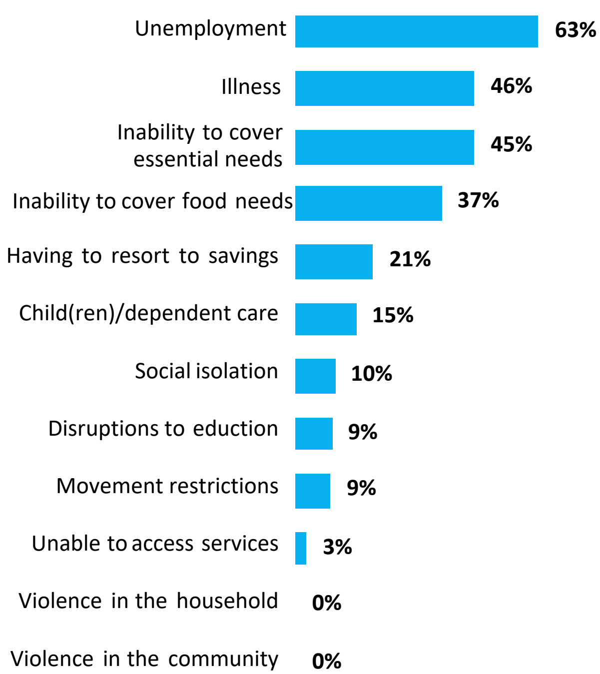
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Worries

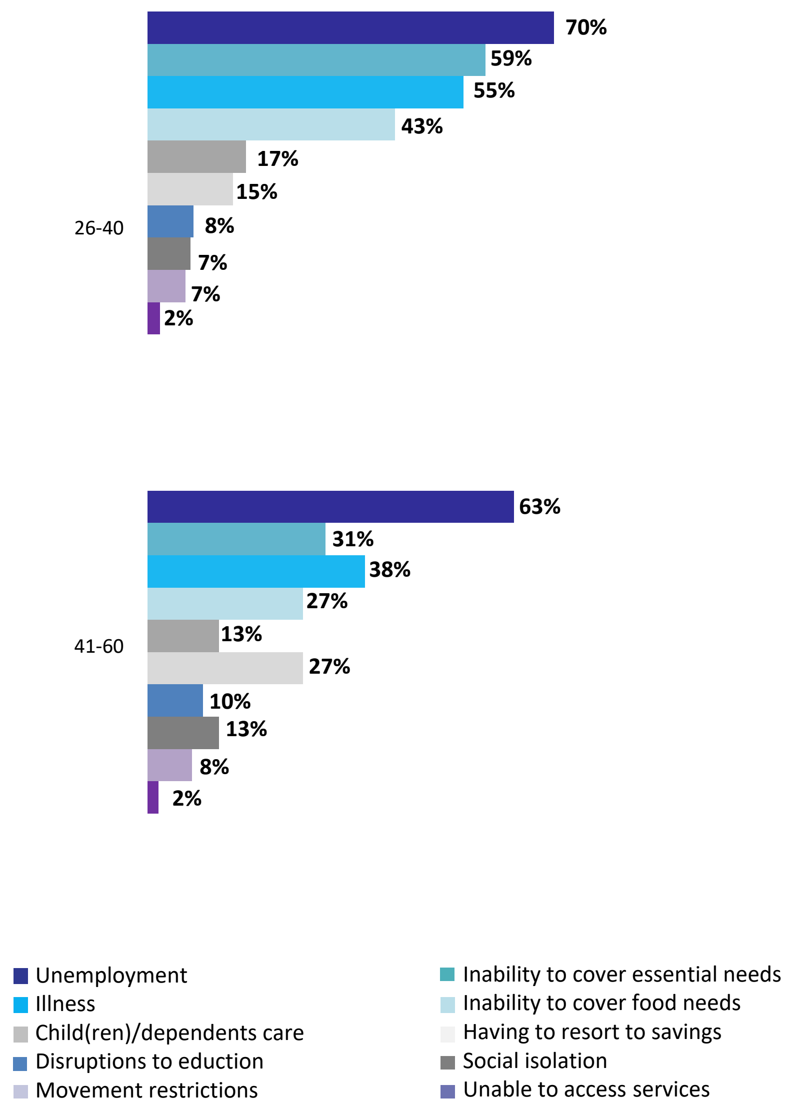
Almost two out of three respondents are mainly worried about unemployment, followed by illness and the inability to cover essential needs, which nearly half of respondents are worried about. Every third respondent is also worried about the inability to cover food needs. Respondents in the 26-40 years age group are more likely to worry about illness and their inability to cover essential and food needs, while respondents in the 41-60 age group are more likely to worry about having to resort to savings.

What are you mainly worried or concerned about at the moment...

Multiple responses could be selected



By age



IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Households engaged in farming/fishing

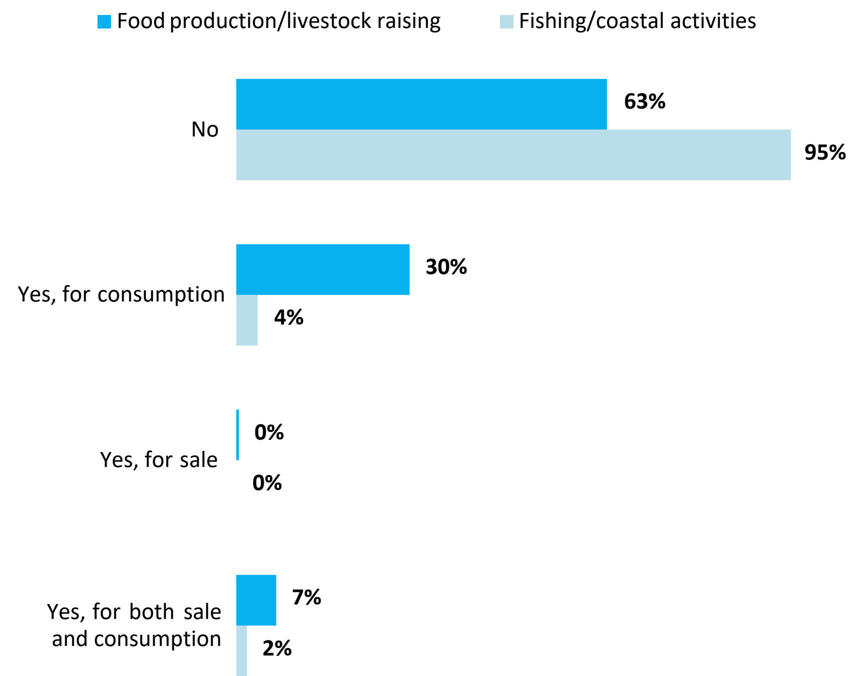
Agriculture (including fishing) accounts for only 2% of national GDP but 17% of employment in Saint Lucia. In this survey, 37% of respondents reported being involved in farming and only 6% in fishing activities, both predominantly for own consumption.

The large number of respondents in farming allowed for a comparison between households who are engaged in farming and those that are not. Generally, farm and non-farm households appear similar on major well-being outcomes, such as food consumption, changes in income, or major worries, resulting from the pandemic and the related disruptions. However, non-farm households are nearly twice as likely to expect their livelihoods to be more severely impacted in the future (27%), compared to households engaging in farming (14%).

CARICOM and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) are conducting a more in-depth assessment and analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 on agricultural livelihoods, production and food systems.

More information about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Caribbean small-scale fisheries and what solutions and adaptation methods are being used to ensure the continuity of livelihoods has been shared through other resources and a regional webinar.

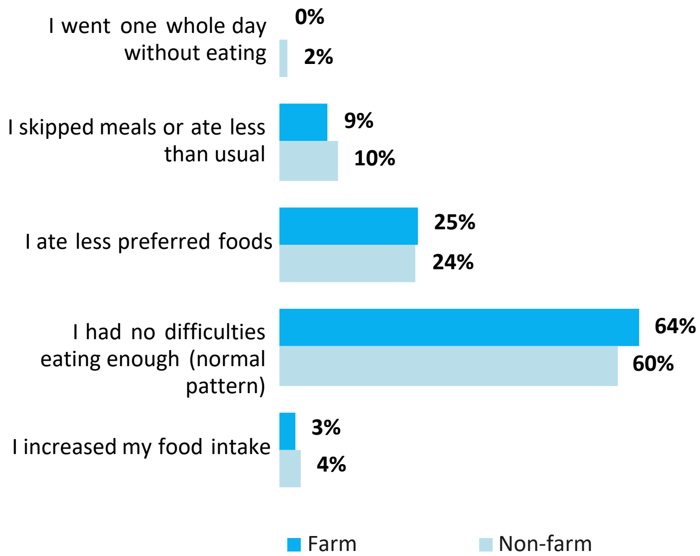
Households engaging in farming/fishing

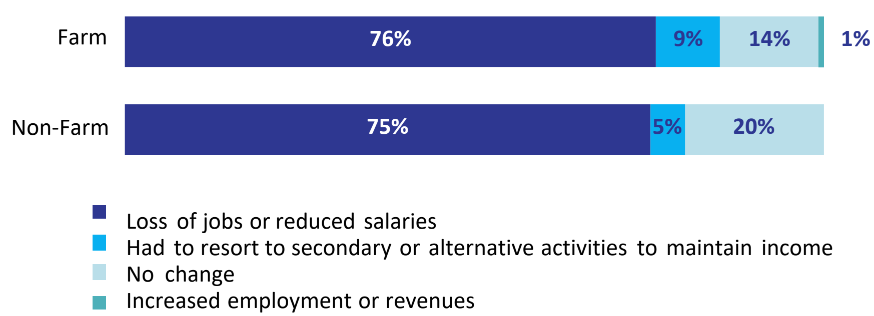


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

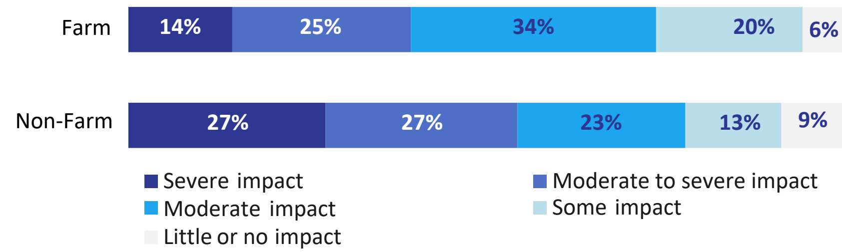
Households engaged in farming/fishing

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



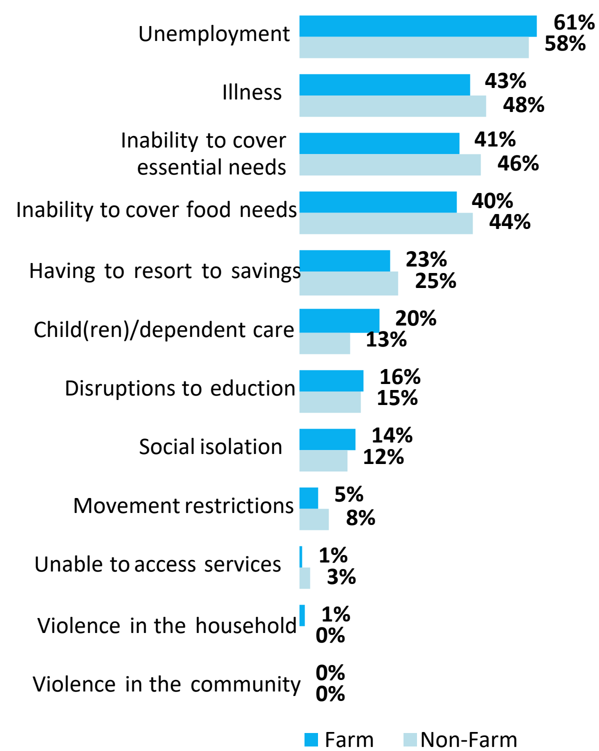


How do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19?



What are you mainly worried or concerned about at the moment...

Multiple responses could be selected



INSIGHTS BY INCOME

Respondents were asked how they feel their household's income compares with the rest of the country. The results of the disaggregated analysis suggest that impacts on market access, food security, livelihood and income are more widespread among low-income households.

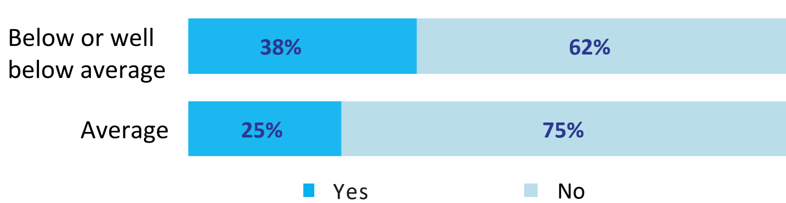
Households with a perceived income below or well below average were significantly more likely to experience market access constraints, with 38% reporting difficulties in accessing markets, compared to 25% of households with a perceived average income.

Impacts on food security appear more prevalent among lower income households. Of all respondents with a perceived income below or well below average, 45% skipped meals or eat less than usual, compared to 25% of respondents with an 'average' household income. Another 14% of lower income respondents reported going one whole day without eating, compared to 2% of 'average' income respondents. Almost a third of 'below' or 'well below average' income households had no food stocks, compared to one tenth of 'average' income households.

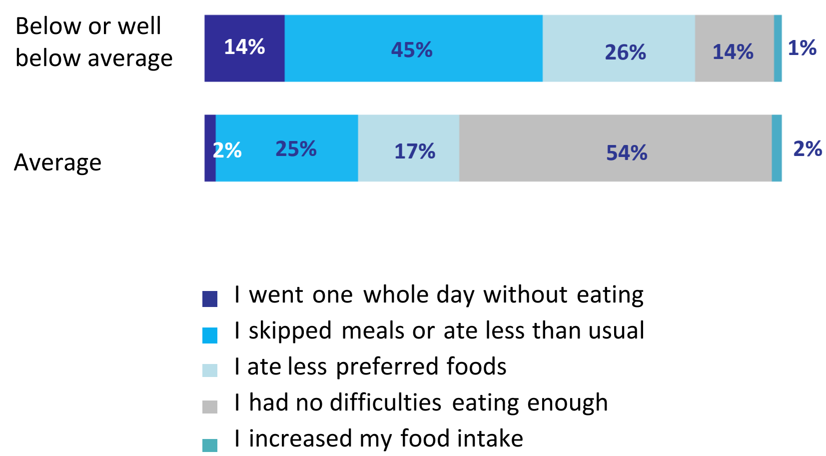
Lower income households also more frequently reported livelihood disruptions (73% compared to 53%) and loss of jobs or reduced salaries (90% compared to 74%) than 'average income' households.

Worries about unemployment and the ability to cover food and other essential needs are more prevalent among respondents from lower income households when compared to those with a perceived average income. Respondents from lower income households also have a more pessimistic outlook on the future, with 52% expecting a 'severe' impact to their livelihood, compared to 28% of 'average' income households.

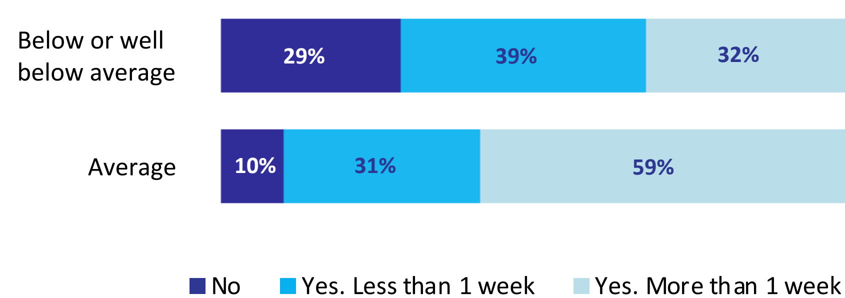
In the past 7 days, was there a time when your household could not access the markets?
By perceived income



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

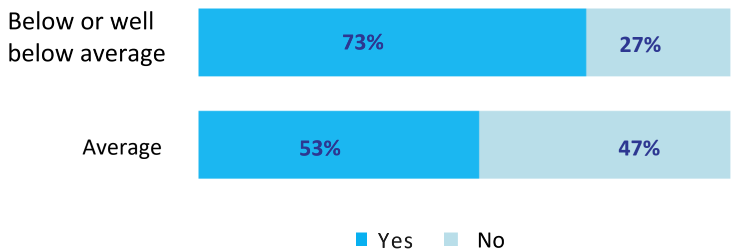


Does your household have any food stock?
By perceived income

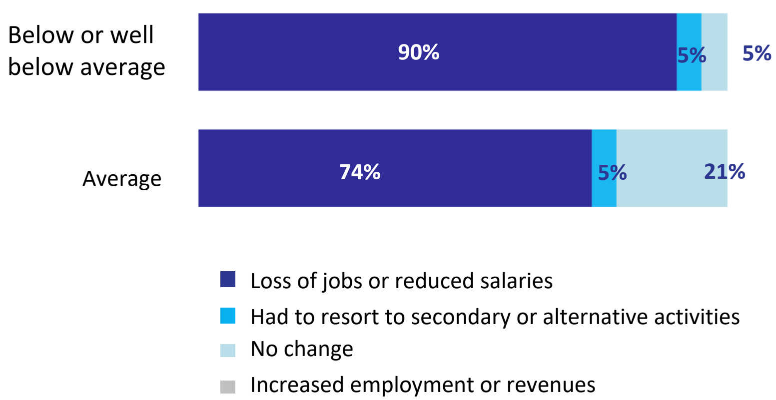


INSIGHTS BY INCOME

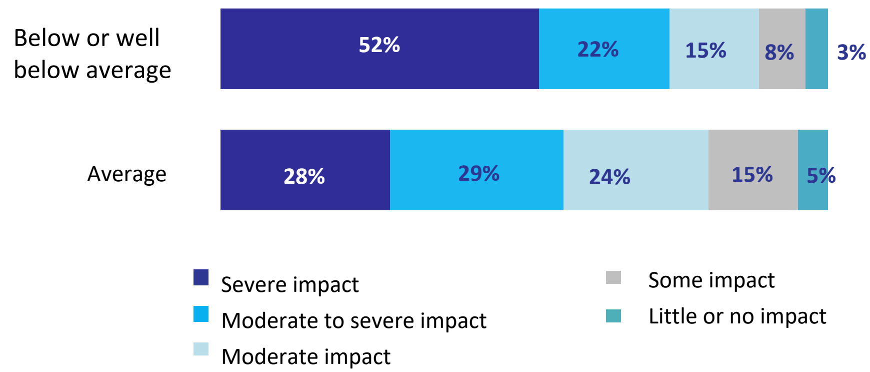
Was your ability to carry out livelihood activities affected in the last 2 weeks?
By perceived income



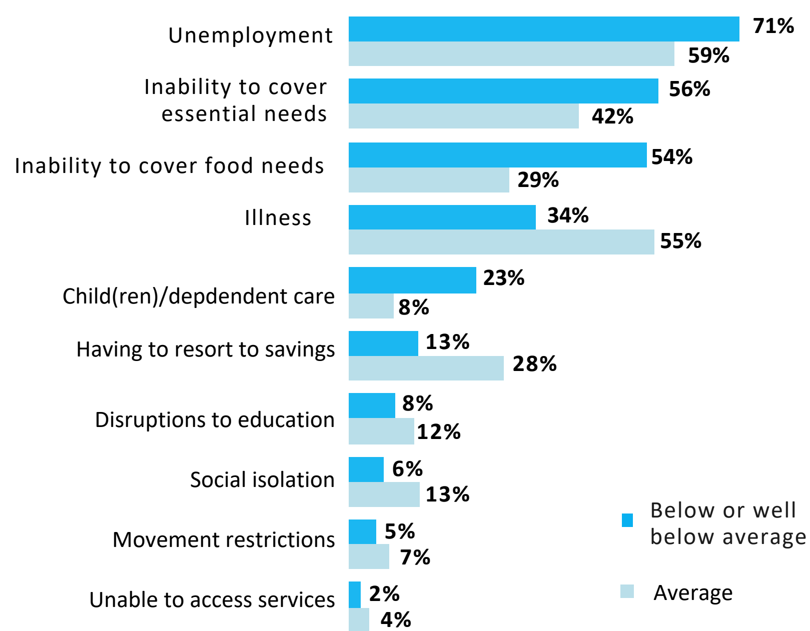
Has your household income changed since the COVID-19 outbreak?
By perceived income



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



What are you mainly worried or concerned about at the moment...
By perceived income



WIDER IMPACTS

Unpaid care and work

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the amount of time people are spending on unpaid activities. The majority of respondents (56%) reduced time spent for shopping, while time devoted to domestic work and childcare increased for about half of respondents. Half of the respondents also reported an increase in time spent on subsistence activities, which could be due to more people gardening and planting food.

	Domestic work	Childcare	Shopping	Subsistence production	Community work
Decreased	4%	7%	56%	4%	21%
No change	37%	23%	13%	28%	38%
Increased	58%	53%	30%	52%	15%
Not applicable	1%	16%	1%	16%	26%

By age

26-40	Domestic work	Childcare	Shopping	Subsistence production	Community work
Decreased	4%	13%	60%	7%	22%
No change	34%	16%	8%	26%	32%
Increased	60%	57%	30%	48%	17%
Not applicable	2%	14%	2%	19%	29%

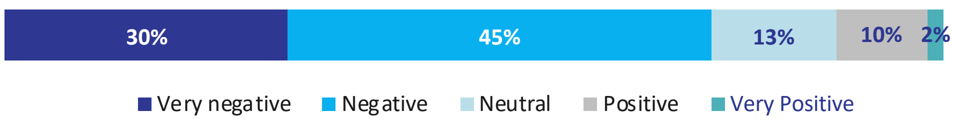
41-60	Domestic work	Childcare	Shopping	Subsistence production	Community work
Decreased	4%	2%	55%	1%	19%
No change	38%	30%	14%	33%	44%
Increased	57%	50%	29%	55%	14%
Not applicable	1%	18%	2%	10%	22%

WIDER IMPACTS

How people are coping and adapting

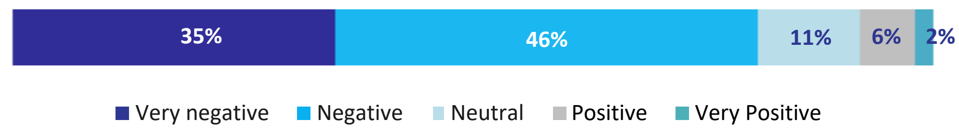
Both survey rounds gave respondents space to give fuller and more nuanced insights on how they are coping and adapting to the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Saint Lucia, June 2020



Saint Lucia, April 2020

Region, June 2020



Region, April 2020

In June, 113 or 38% of the 301 respondents from Saint Lucia answered the open-ended question. Text analysis was used to categorize and interpret the degree of positive and negative emotions within the responses using machine learning.

Sentiments seem to have significantly deteriorated in June compared to April, with the proportion of respondents with 'very negative' sentiment jumping more than sevenfold from 4% in April to 30% in June 2020. Trends in Saint Lucia are similar to the region.

Concerns regarding employment and growing financial strain on households have likely driven the increase in negative sentiments.

HOW PEOPLE ARE COPING AND ADAPTING

Key themes

The word clouds represent key themes on how people in Saint Lucia are being impacted and are adapting to disruptions from COVID-19. The most frequently mentioned phrases are “job”, “loss” and “work” as opposed to “food”, “home” and “income” in April. A large focus of respondents’ responses indicate that they are concerned about unemployment and their ability to sustain livelihoods.

June 2020

April 2020

CONCLUSION

Results from this survey suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a negative impact on livelihoods, incomes and food security in Saint Lucia. Reported instances of unemployment, reduced incomes and rising food prices are widespread and have increased significantly since April. This situation is accompanied by worsening food consumption, despite some improvements in market access and the availability of food and other essential goods. Nearly a third of respondents reported skipping meals or eating less than usual, and 7% reported going one whole day without eating. Accessing items such as essential medication or fresh food is still an issue for nearly a third of respondents.

Compared to April, a growing share of respondents in this survey round had income from family/friends, remittances, government assistance or petty trade, painting the picture of families facing more precarious economic situations and increasingly relying on external support rather than salaried work.

Trends for Saint Lucia are largely worse compared to what was observed at the regional level, and respondents' perspectives on how the pandemic is impacting their lives and overall sentiment appears to be more negative compared to April. The vast majority of respondents in Saint Lucia predict that their livelihoods will be impacted in the future and are overall more pessimistic in their predictions when compared to the region. Impacts on market access, food security, livelihood and income appear to be more widespread among low-income households who also seem to be more worried about unemployment and their inability to cover food and other essential needs.

The government of Saint Lucia and its partners must redouble their efforts to mitigate these impacts through medium and longer-term programmes and interventions. Considering the protracted nature and unforeseeable end of the crisis, it is essential to continue monitoring its impacts, particularly on the most vulnerable groups. Continued and specific assessments of vulnerable populations and people living in rural areas are highly recommended to better gauge the impact of COVID-19 on these groups.

VOICES FROM SAINT LUCIA

Loss of job but just trying to do things around the house – Male, Age 25

I am still learning to adapt but the low economy is making it really difficult as a lot of people are losing their jobs – Female, Age 25

Inability to sleep – Female, Age 26

It's very difficult to cope I worry about my family because I can't take care of them anymore - Female, Age 51

Working from home & the office while adjusting to the many protocols have been very challenging and worthwhile learning experiences - Female, Age 64

It has change the way I manage life on the whole. Such as the health & safety of my family, how secure is it going to be? - Male, Age 45

The Caribbean is not an easy place to live financially even under 'normal' circumstances and most of our economies are tourism based... Just trying to not let this break me down mentally but it's not easy. - Female, Age 47

I am very apprehensive about allowing my teenage daughters to leave the house or welcome visitors to our home. . .I utilise every opportunity to attend virtual sessions and request a synopsis of what was discussed if the event was held at a venue. Online grocery shopping eased the burden tremendously. - female, age 47

I am not able to focus on college work due to the many distractions that this epidemic have posed on me. - Female, Age 18

Due to covid 19 I have lost my job I am unable to provide for my family in savings have been depleted and the new school term is soon approaching - Male, Age 36

Not being able to travel to the UK to see my children - Female, Age 65

Only travel out of the village twice a month - female, Age 72

Lost my job and rely on my parents for assistance - Female, Age 23

First of all I was laid off from end of March. My company paid half my salary for April which did not do nothing much for me and family. I have rent to pay, a baby to feed, bills to pay plus food have to be bought. It's tough. - Male, Age 38

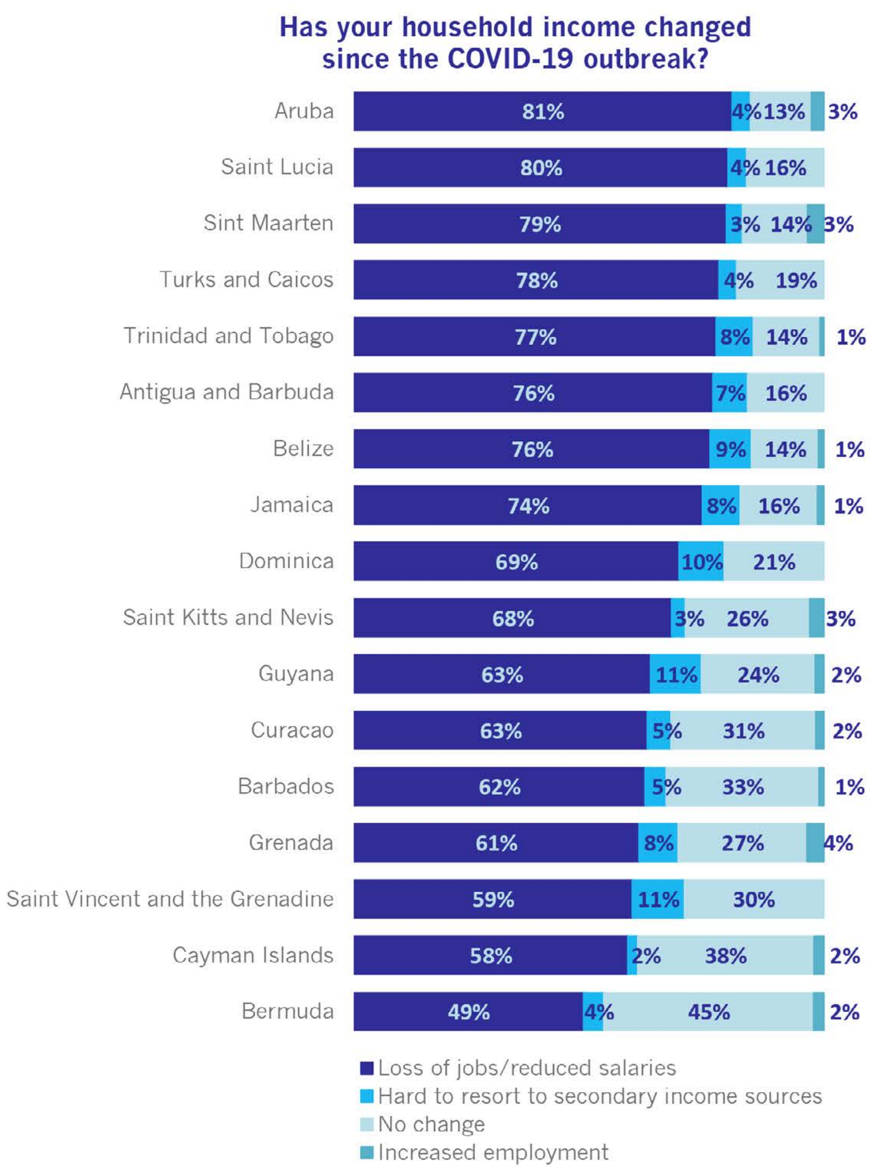
I worked in the tourism industry and now there is no work. When I am almost out of food I call my sister from the USA for help. - Female, Age 43

I have bill home need work can no money and sometimes not have food to feed my family - Female, Age 50

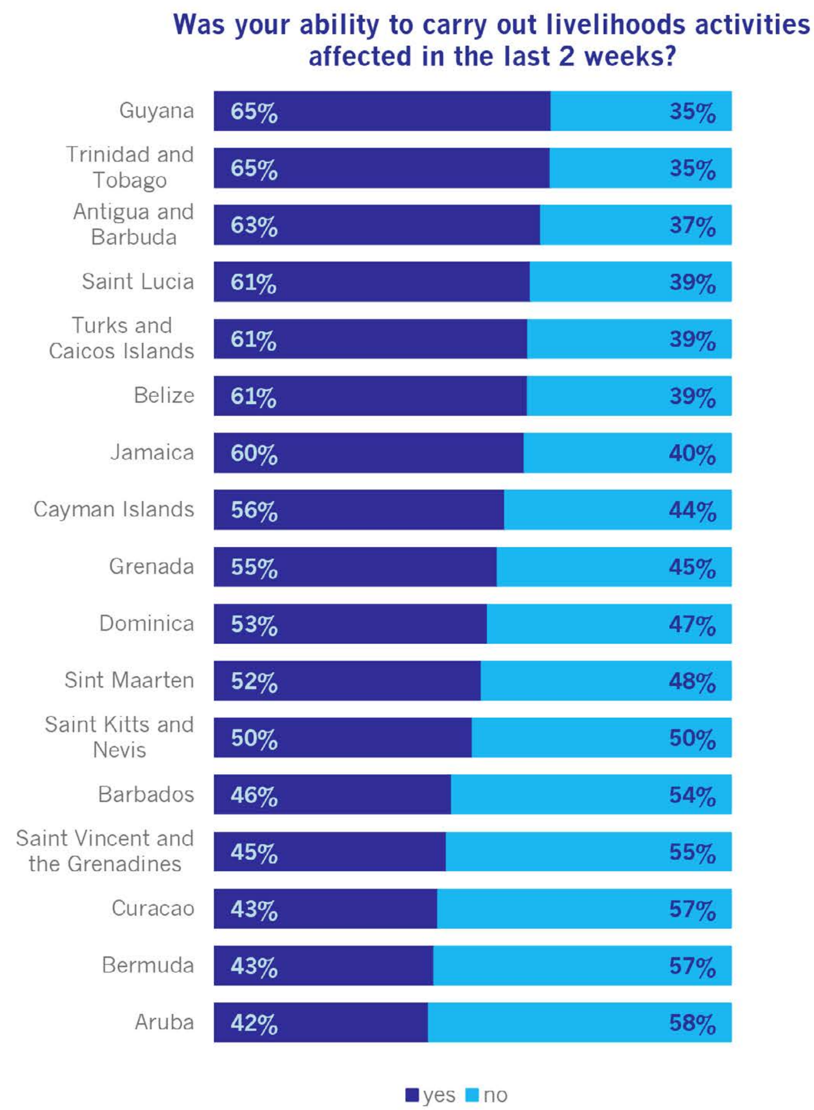
...it's hard and getting harder. I have been eat less and drink more water to fill the space of my food . - Female, Age 26

ANNEX. REGIONAL OVERVIEWS

Income changes



Livelihood disruptions



METHODOLOGY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

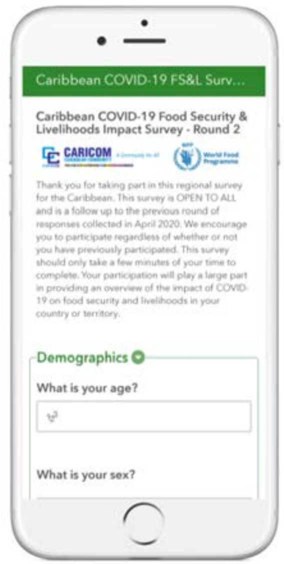
The second round of the CARICOM Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods impact survey was launched via a webform, which was accessible on mobile/smartphone and PC/desktop. The data collection period was inclusive of 14 June to 1 July 2020. The survey was circulated via email, social media, SMS, media and other communication channels.

The World Food Programme (WFP) performed the data collection, monitoring and analysis. Responses were visualised live on an interactive dashboard and 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.

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 responses. To moderate the non-representative nature of the data, the analysis team further refined the classifications presented by the algorithms.

WFP expresses warm appreciation to Flow and Digicel for distributing the survey link by SMS. Special thanks to the International Telecommunication Union for their support in facilitating the SMS distribution. Thanks to UNHCR for their support with the Spanish translation of the survey.

This report was prepared for WFP Caribbean by Kagin's Consulting - Edward J. Taylor, Justin Kagin, Momir Blazek, Julian Fletcher-Taylor, Rebbeca Morton, Sebastian Fletcher-Taylor and Heng Zhu.



Link to survey

Link to dashboard (mobile version)

Link to dashboard (desktop version)

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