



Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS Summary Report | October 2020



106
Respondents



70
Female

30 %
Male



41
Average age

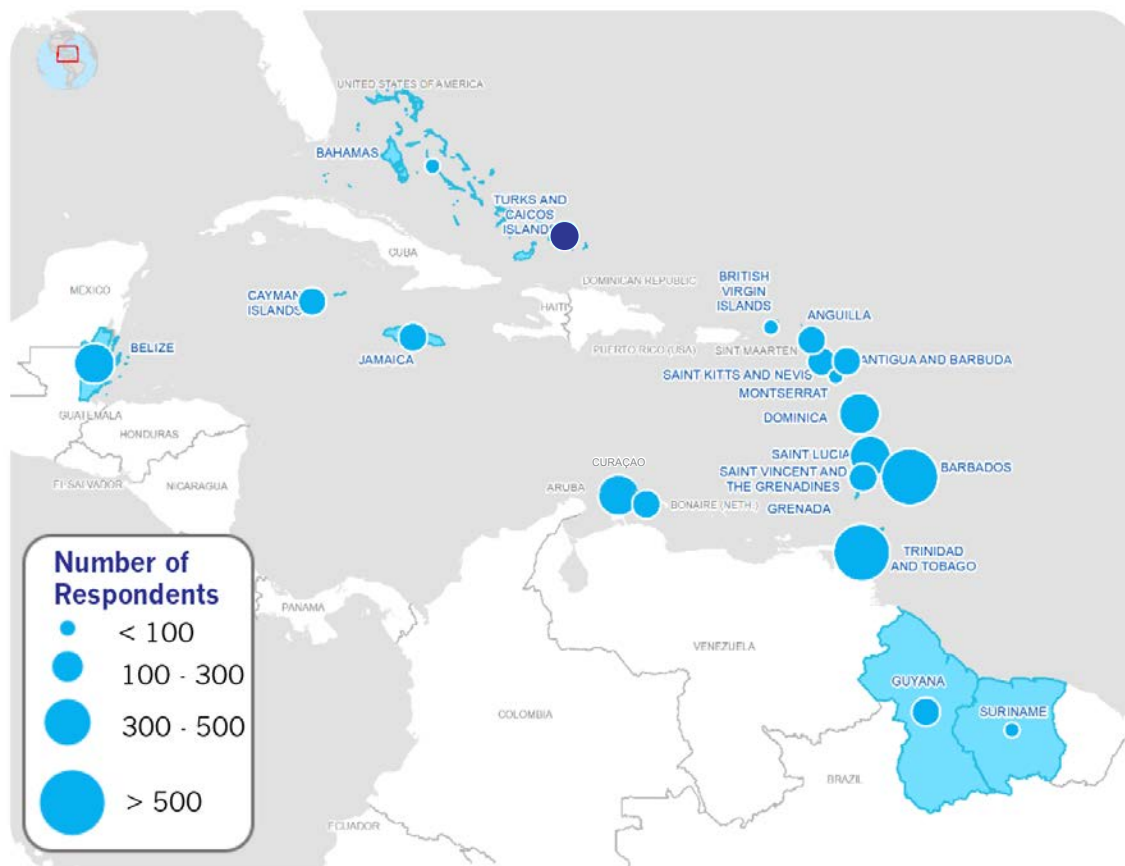


4
Average household size

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 conducted using online methods and the survey link was shared via social media, e-mail, and text messages. The results of this survey should be read with caution given the assumption 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



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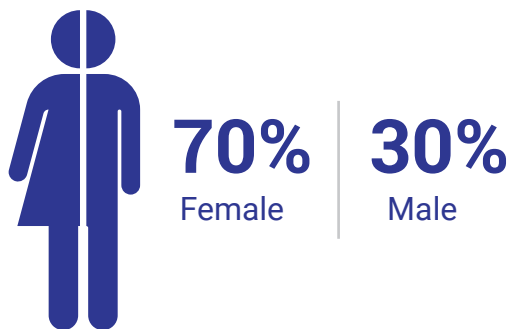
4
Average
household size

- COVID-19 and measures to contain it have resulted in widespread disruptions to livelihoods. Three out of five respondents reported that their ability to carry out livelihoods was impacted, mainly owing to movement restrictions and concerns about leaving the house.
- The vast majority of respondents (88%) predict that their livelihoods will be impacted in the future, while almost every third respondent expects this impact to be severe. Four out of five respondents expressed negative or very negative sentiment concerning the pandemic and the disruption it caused.
- The crisis has impacted the economic wellbeing of the majority of households. Almost four out of five respondents have experienced job loss or reduced incomes in their households and unemployment is the main worry for over half of respondents.
- COVID-19 and measures to contain it have impacted market access, with two out of five respondents experiencing difficulties in accessing markets, mainly due to movement restrictions and market closures.
- While most respondents described food and key items as generally available in stores, fresh food items were only sometimes/partially available for 38% respondents, and 23% of respondents described staple foods as sometimes/partially available. Likewise, 31% of respondents reported only partial availability of essential medicines,
- The vast majority of respondents observed an increase in food prices (85%) and changed how they shop (88%) since the pandemic began. More than half of the respondents who changed their purchasing behaviour bought cheaper or less preferred brands and more than a third bought larger quantities than usual.
- The pandemic appears to be taking a toll on food security. A quarter of respondents reported skipping meals or eating less than usual and expressed concerns about meeting food needs. One out of six respondents also reported not having any food stocks at home.
- Respondents are mainly worried about illness (62%), unemployment (56%) and their inability to cover essential needs (36%).
- The pandemic has changed the amount of time people are spending on unpaid activities. Half of respondents reduced time spent shopping, while nearly the same proportion increased time devoted to domestic work, childcare and subsistence activities,
- The number of respondents was not sufficient for disaggregated analysis between men and women and among income and age groups. However, the regional results found that detrimental impacts to income and food consumption were more widespread among low-income households.

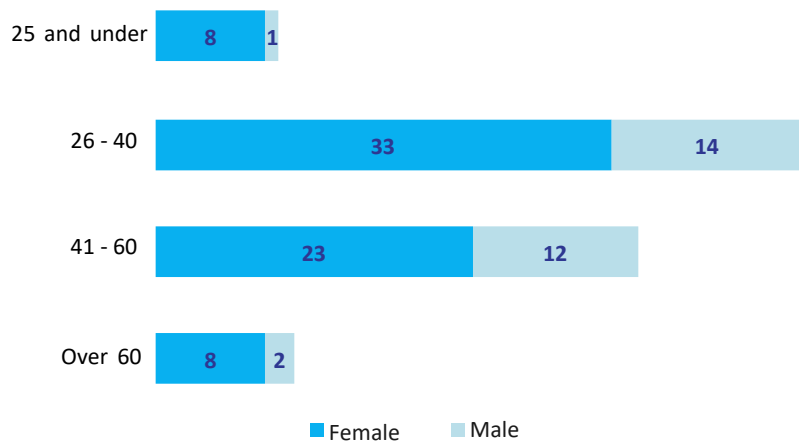
DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Age and gender breakdown reveals that respondents are much more likely to be female than male and are concentrated in the 26-40 age category. The number of respondents in Turks and Caicos Islands is not sufficient to enable disaggregated analysis by age, sex and income.

Sex of respondents

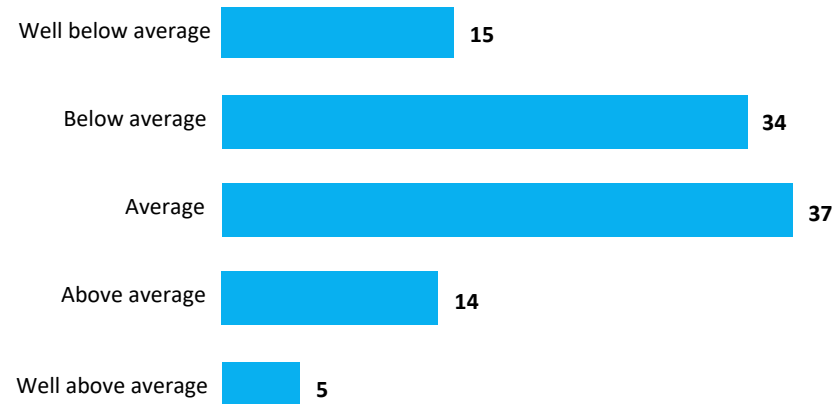


Age of respondents



Perceived income level of respondents

Respondents were asked how they feel their household's income compares to the rest of the country. Of all respondents, 46% perceived their income as 'below' or 'well below average', 35% as average and 18% as 'above' or 'well above average'.



"Excessive use of telecommunications resulting in disconnection and therefore limited access to social media and other media platforms." - Female, Age 43

"Having to work, and therefore, having a domestic worker coming into our home to take care of my children." - Female, Age 37



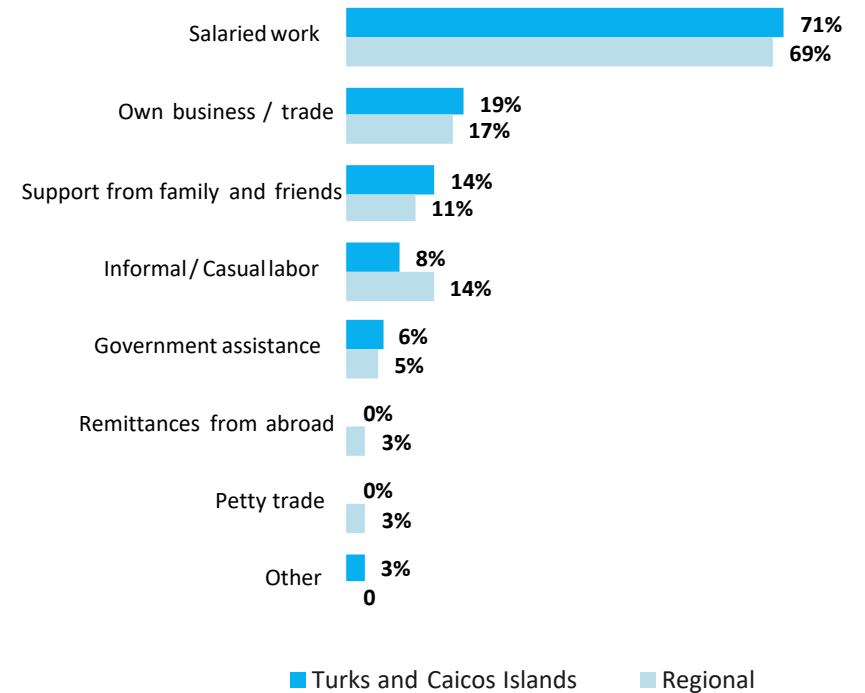
DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Main household income sources

Respondents were asked to indicate the main income source/s for their household and multiple choices could be selected. The main income source is salaried work, with 71% of respondents, followed by business/trade (19%). The overall distribution of income sources is largely similar to the region.

The Caribbean-wide survey found that the main sources of household income have shifted since April, with a reduction in those reporting salaried income and increased reliance on external support such as remittances from abroad, family and friends, or government assistance.

Main household income sources



"Very bad not working can't buy food pay bills." - Female, Age 46

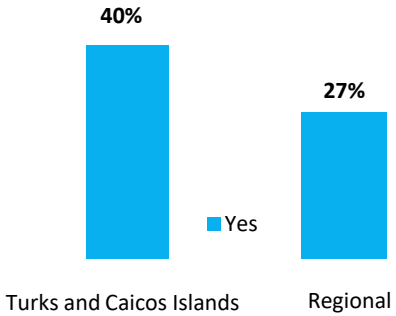
"My main concern at this point we are worried of scarcity of food supply due to this pandemic." - Male, Age 48



IMPACT ON MARKETS

Disruptions from COVID-19 have had a negative effect on market access. In June, 40% of respondents indicated they had problems accessing markets in the week prior to the survey, much higher than the regional average. Market closures, movement restrictions and concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak were the primary reasons, cited by nearly a third of respondents experiencing restricted market access. A lack of cash, cite by 27%, was not as dominant a reason as in the region (38%), while security concerns were more prevalent, as cited by a fifth of affected respondents compared to 7% in the region.

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



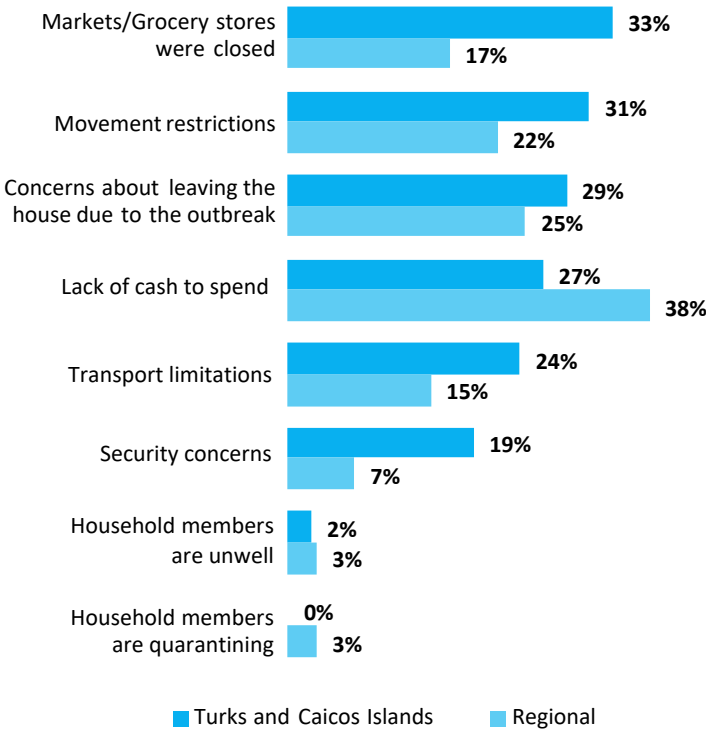
"I might not be able to travel to give birth near my partner due to travel restrictions." - Female, Age 32

"I am concerned about some young people in the community that have young children and are not working, to feed their family, I help as much as possible but cannot continue doing so, i'm Praying that things will be better soon." - Female, Age 61



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

Multiple responses could be selected



IMPACT ON MARKETS

Availability of items in stores

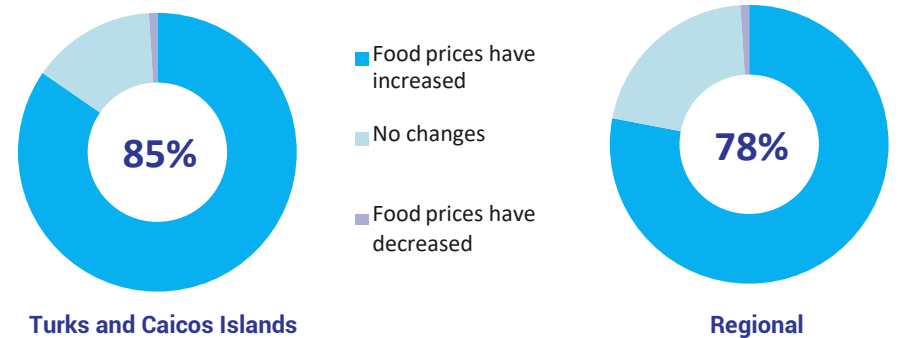
Respondents reported on the availability of key items in stores.

How Available?	Fresh food items		Basic food items		Hygiene items		Essential medicines	
	Turks and Caicos Islands	Regional	Turks and Caicos Islands	Regional	Turks and Caicos Islands	Regional	Turks and Caicos Islands	Regional
Always Available	60%	71%	75%	83%	84%	85%	52%	55%
Partially/sometimes available	38%	25%	23%	15%	15%	13%	31%	30%
Not available	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	3%	2%
Don't know	2%	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%	13%	15%

Availability of goods has been impacted, and to a greater extent for fresh food items when compared to the region. Fresh food items were only partially available for 38% of respondents while 23% of respondents experienced limited availability of basic foods. Likewise, 31% of respondents reported that essential medicines were only partially/sometimes available.

Food prices

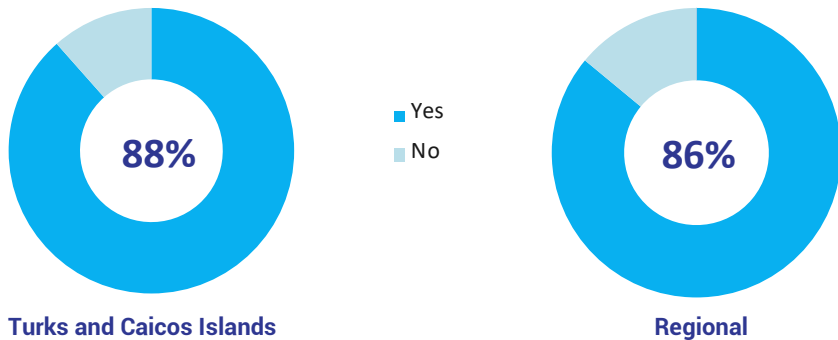
Respondents reported on any observed changes in food prices and the vast majority observed an increase.



IMPACT ON MARKETS

Shopping behavior

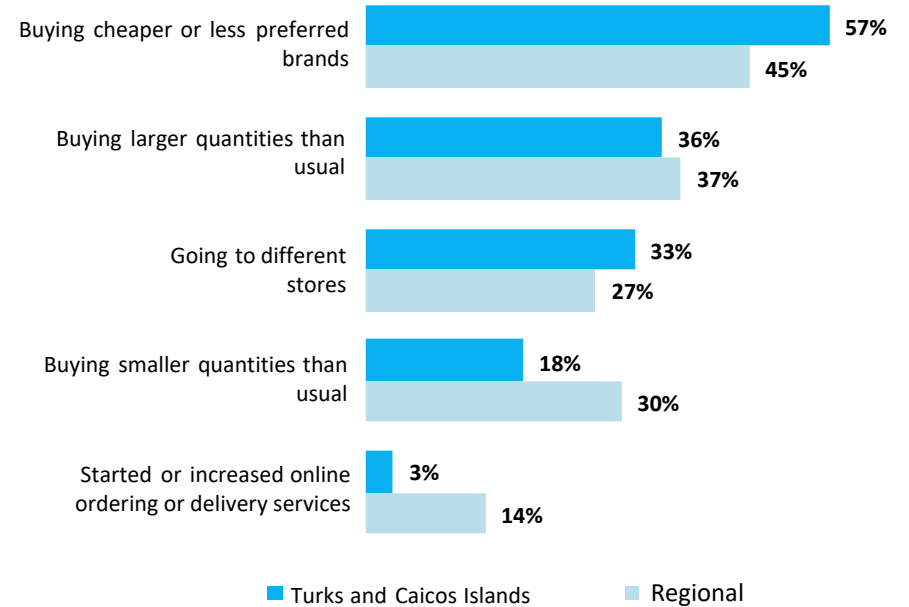
Respondents were asked if they altered their shopping behavior and if so how.



Shopping routines have changed for 88% of respondents. Buying cheaper or less preferred brands is the most commonly adopted change, reported by 57% of respondents who changed their shopping pattern, followed by buying larger quantities than usual (36%). When compared to regional findings, less respondents resorted to buying smaller quantities than usual (18% compared to 30%) and a smaller proportion used online and delivery services (3% compared to 14%).

How respondents changed their shopping behaviour

Multiple responses could be selected



"Am not able to work have no idea where the funds for survival will come from." - Female, Age 36

"Stopped drinking alcohol, feel better and spend less." - Female, Age 64

"Increase in grocery prices." - Female, Age 37



IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

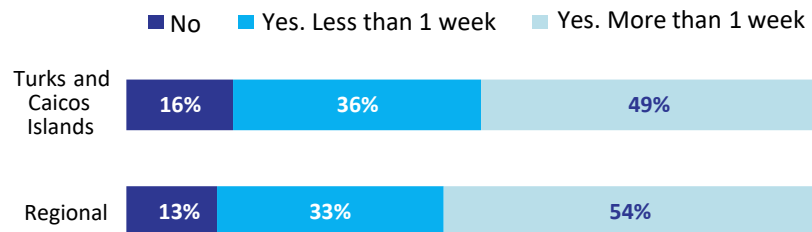
The COVID 19 pandemic and measures to prevent its spread have had an impact on food stocks and household food consumption. While half of the respondents said they had more than a week's supply of food in their household, 16% of respondents had no food supplies in their homes at all.

Food consumption has also been impacted, with a quarter of respondents skipping meals or eating less than usual and 8% of respondents going one whole day without eating. Another third of of respondents in Turks and Caicos Islands resorted to eating less preferred foods, which is a larger proportion than in the region.

Food stocks

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

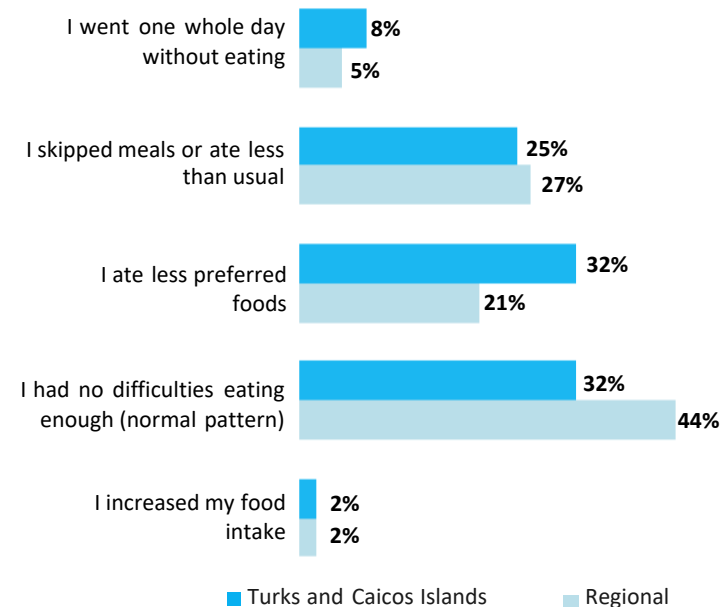
Does your household have any food stock?



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?



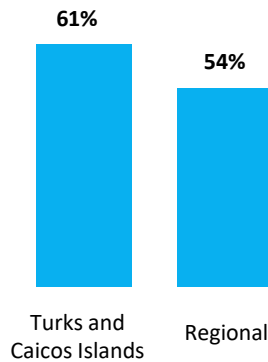
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus have had a widespread impact on livelihoods. In Turks and Caicos Islands, three out of five respondents reported disruptions to their livelihoods, which is similar to the region. Respondents who experienced livelihood disruptions primarily cited movement restrictions (36%), concerns about leaving the house (30%) and a reduced demand for goods and services (28%), similar to trends in the region.

Disruptions to livelihoods

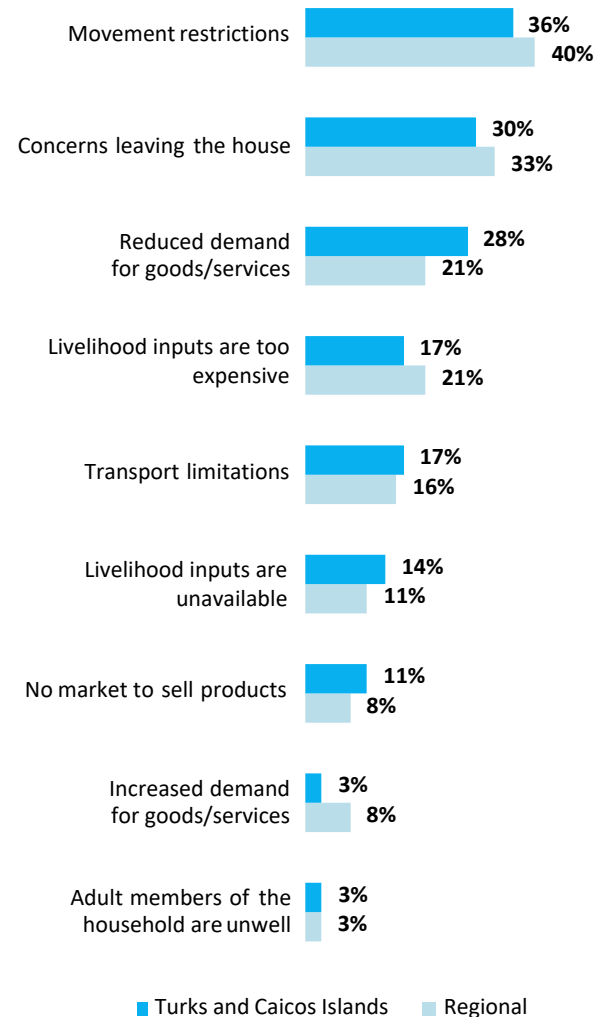
Respondents reported on any disruptions to their livelihoods in the two prior to the survey.

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



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

Multiple choices could be selected

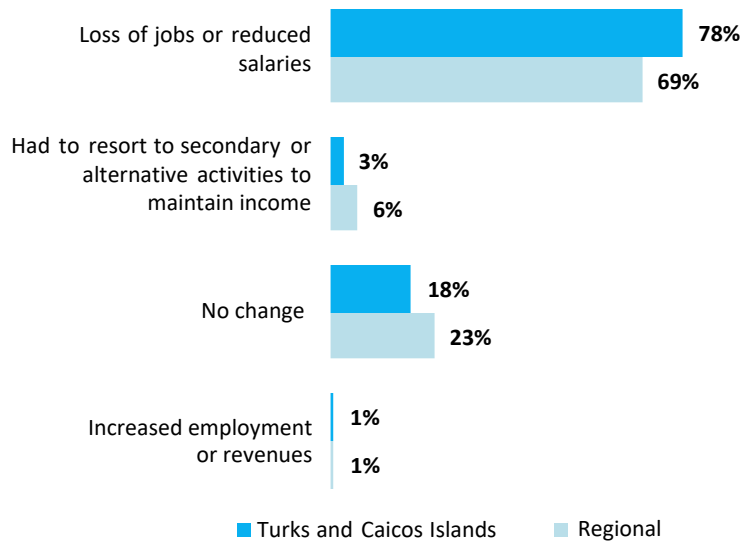


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Income changes

Respondents communicated changes to their household income since the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic appears to be taking a widespread toll on households' economic wellbeing, in line with regional trends. Almost four out of five respondents have experienced job loss or reduced incomes in their households, a higher share than in the region.

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



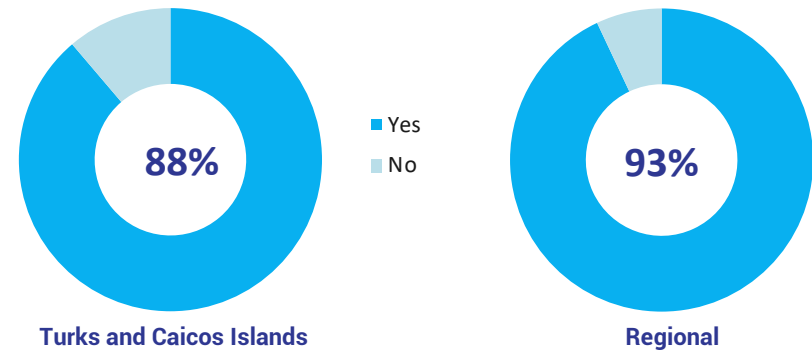
"Salary cuts, job surety is in question and mental state (have had moments of depression)" - Female, Age 45

"Feel down and somewhat spiritual drain cause no church." - Sex unknown, Age 46

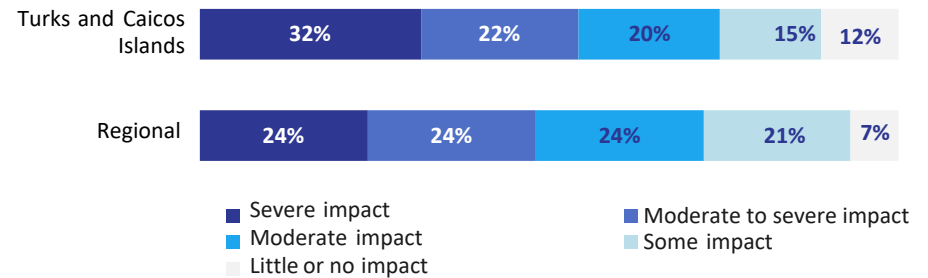


Future livelihood impacts

Respondents were asked to look ahead and predict the level of impact to their livelihoods as a result of disruptions from COVID-19. Almost 9 out of 10 respondents believed that their livelihoods would be impacted to some degree and a third of respondents anticipate severe impacts.



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



IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Worries

Respondents were asked about their main worries. Almost two thirds are mainly worried about illness (62%) which is a larger proportion than in the region (52%). Similar to the region, over half of respondents are worried about unemployment (56%), and over a third are worried about their inability to cover essential needs (36%).

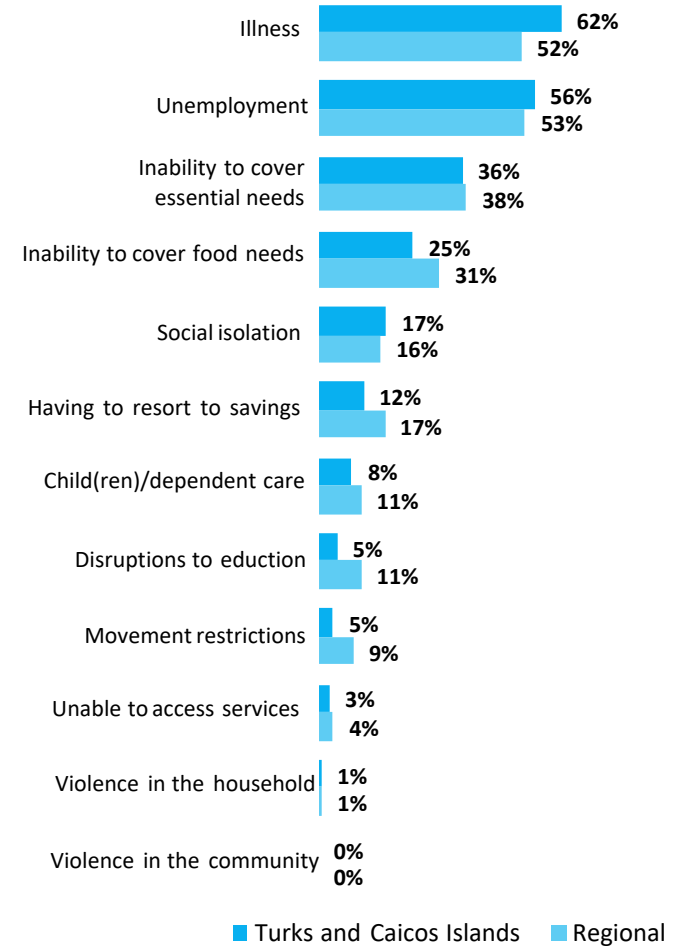
"My family and I have mainly been affected financially due to having one income. During this time, I have been laid-off and had already fallen back with essential needs such as rent, school fees etc." - Female, Age 42 "

"It has set me back financially. I often worry about my bills being paid and I try to pay the essentials (mortgage, light, water and internet) however, there are a few bills passed due."- Female, Age unknown



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

Multiple responses could be selected



IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Households engaged in farming/fishing

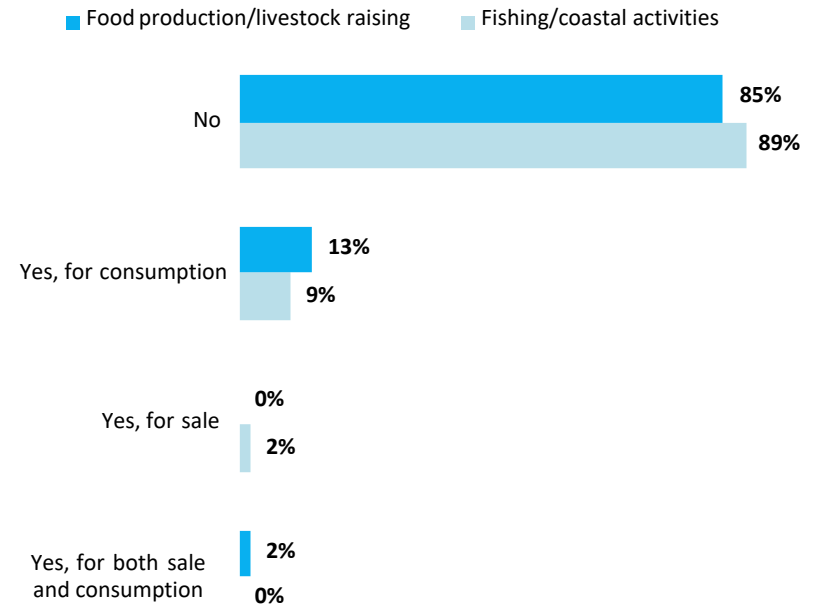
Agriculture (including fishing) accounts for only 0.5% of national GDP in the Turks and Caicos Islands. In this survey, 15% of respondents reported being involved in food/livestock production and 11% in fishing, mainly for own consumption.

At the regional level, metrics of wellbeing for farming households do not differ much from the average respondents but households engaged in fishing seem to have been more adversely affected by disruptions related to COVID-19 as they report above average values for loss of jobs/reduced salary, difficulties in eating enough food, worrying about food needs and expecting their livelihood to be severely affected.

A disaggregated analysis of the impact of COVID on households engaged in farming or fishing in the Turks and Caicos Islands cannot be conducted given the insufficient number of responses received from these subgroups. 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



"Am not able to work have no idea where the funds for survival will come from." - Female, Age 36

"I am concerned about some young people in the community that have young children and are not working, to feed their family, I help as much as possible but cannot continue doing so, i'm Praying that things will be better soon" - Female, Age 61



WIDER IMPACTS

Unpaid care and work

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the amount of time people are spending on unpaid activities. Time spent on shopping decreased for 31% of respondents while respondents increased time devoted to domestic work (47%) and childcare (36%).

	Domestic work	Childcare	Shopping	Subsistence production	Community work
Decreased	16%	13%	48%	13%	25%
No change	27%	32%	16%	41%	37%
Increased	47%	36%	31%	25%	16%
Not applicable	9%	20%	5%	21%	22%



"Struggling a little to keep kids educated and entertained. I also miss meeting my friends at coffee shops." - Female, Age 34

"I am not working to take care of myself and my kids" - Male, Age unknown



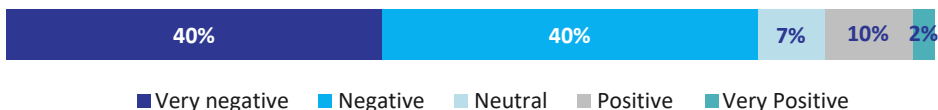
WIDER IMPACTS

How people are coping and adapting

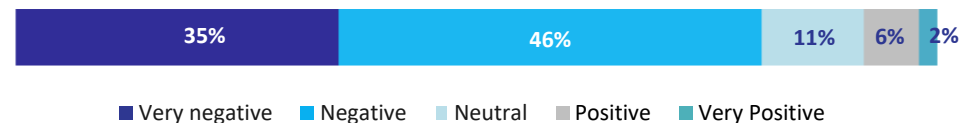
The survey gave respondents space to give fuller and more nuanced insights on how they are coping and adapting to the disruptions caused by COVID-19. In June, 42, or 40%, of the 106 respondents from Turks and Caicos Islands answered the open-ended question, with a total count of 626 words. Text analysis was used to categorize and interpret the degree of positive and negative emotions within the responses using machine learning.

Similar to the overall region, sentiment in Turks and Caicos Islands is largely negative. with four out of five respondents expressing 'negative' or 'very negative' sentiment. Only 12% of comments were classified as 'positive' or 'very positive'.

Turks and Caicos Islands, June 2020



Region, June 2020



Region, April 2020



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

"I'm coping well with Covid-19...Because my hope and trust is in God." - Sex unknown, Age 58

"Savings is just about gone." - Female, Age 65

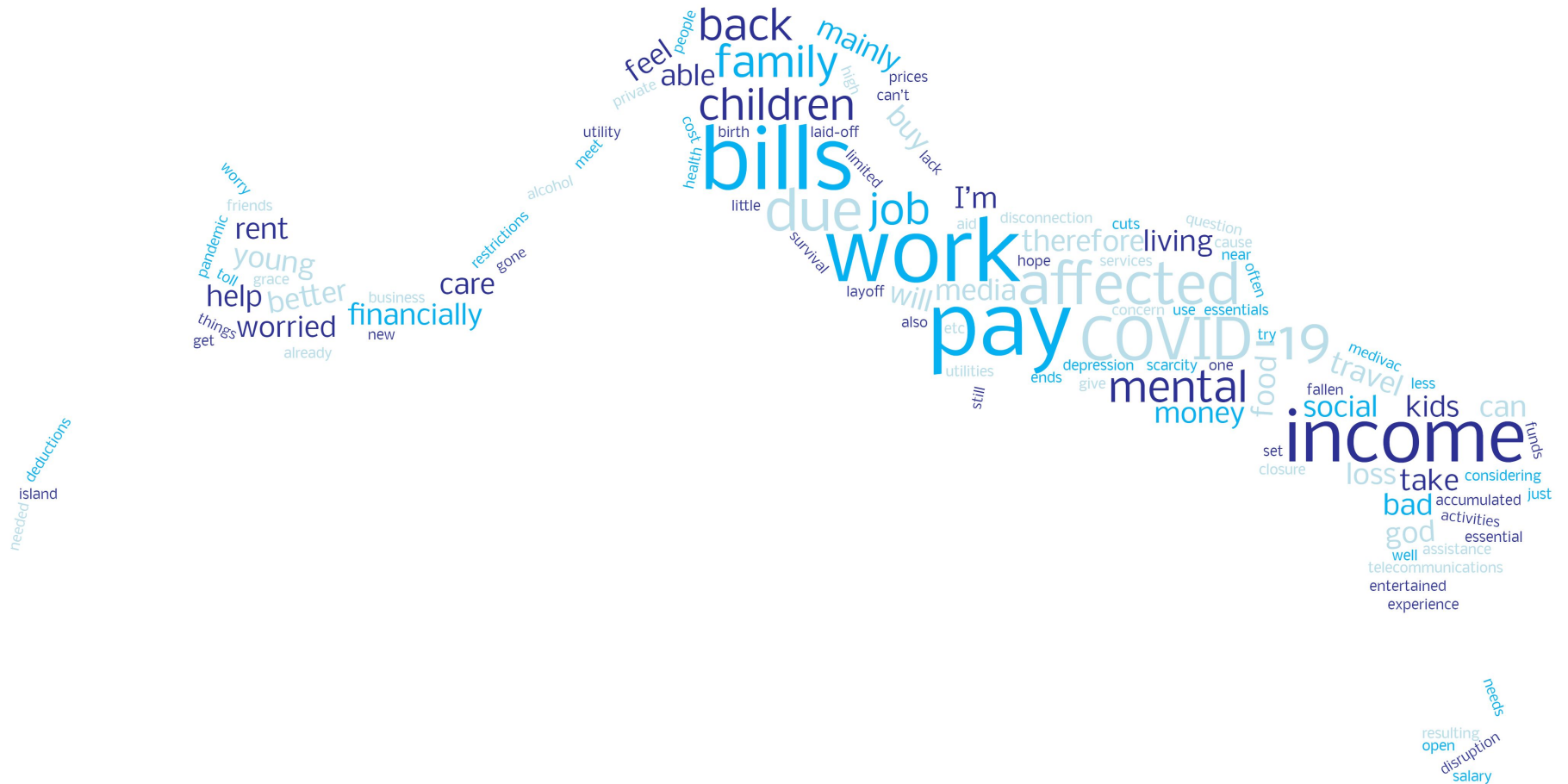
"Need medivac off island but had to wait for ports to open." - Female, Age 39



HOW PEOPLE ARE COPING AND ADAPTING

Key themes

The word cloud represents key themes on how people in the Turks and Caicos Islands are being impacted and are adapting to disruptions from COVID-19. The most commonly mentioned phrases are “work”, followed by “bills”, and “pay” and “income”, which indicates respondents are concerned about their ability to sustain their livelihood.



June 2020

CONCLUSION

Since March 2020, strict measures were put in place to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. The closure of borders, air and seaports has brought a halt to international tourism while internal movement restrictions and business closures have caused further economic disruptions.

Results from this survey suggest that the vast majority of people in the Turks and Caicos Islands have experienced a deterioration of their employment and income situation, an increase in food prices and concerns about the future of their livelihoods. A third of respondents expect their livelihood to be severely affected while worries about unemployment and illness are widespread.

Restricted market access for two out of five respondents and limited availability of fresh foods and essential medicines are worrying. Food security appears to have deteriorated, with a quarter of respondents worried about the inability to cover food needs and resorting to skipping meals or eating less than usual.

The pandemic is shifting life at home, with time spent on domestic work and childcare increasing among most respondents, and shopping patterns changing towards buying cheaper goods.

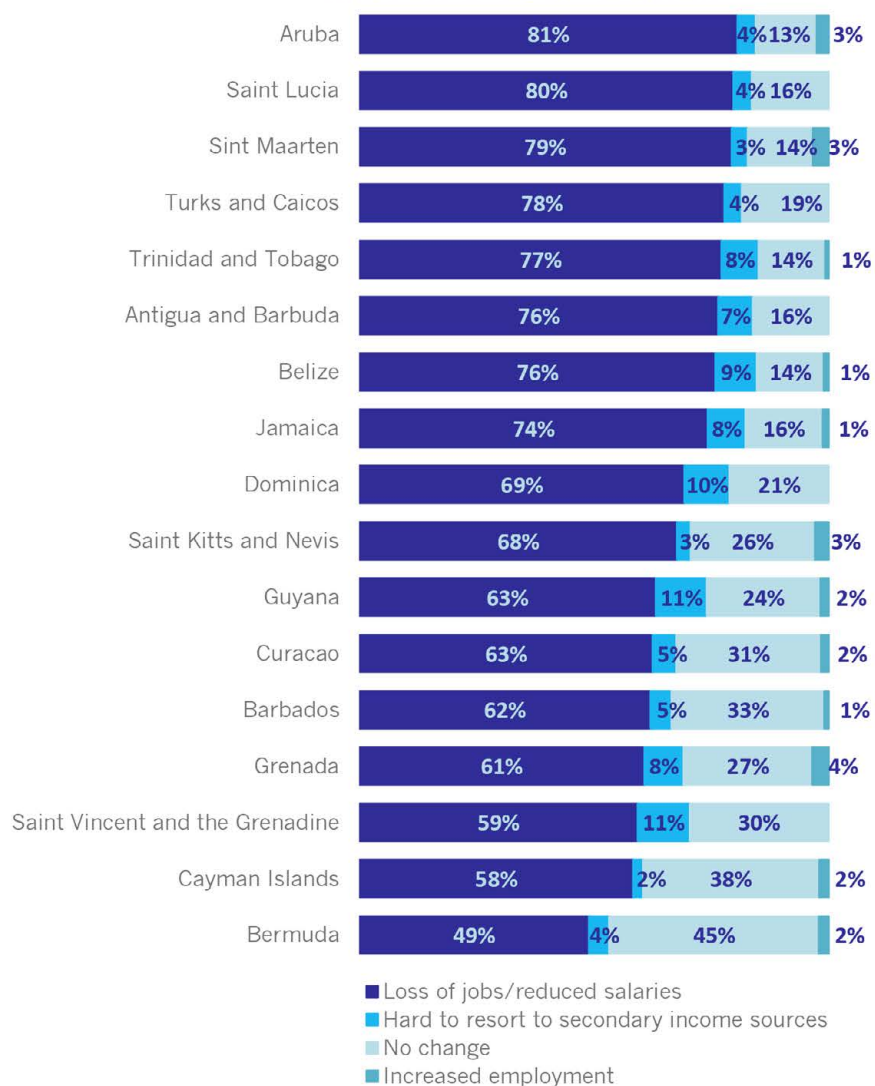
Given the ongoing impact of the crisis, the government of Turks and Caicos Islands and its partners must redouble their efforts to mitigate the socioeconomic impacts through medium and longer-term programmes and interventions. Opportunities include the permanent expansion of social programmes, livelihood support, and vocational training for people from affected economic sectors.

The results of this web-based survey should be read with a degree of caution given potential bias towards households who can afford internet access and smartphone devices. Considering the protracted nature and unforeseeable end of the crisis, it is essential to continue monitoring its impacts, particularly on the most vulnerable groups and people living in rural areas.

ANNEX. REGIONAL OVERVIEWS

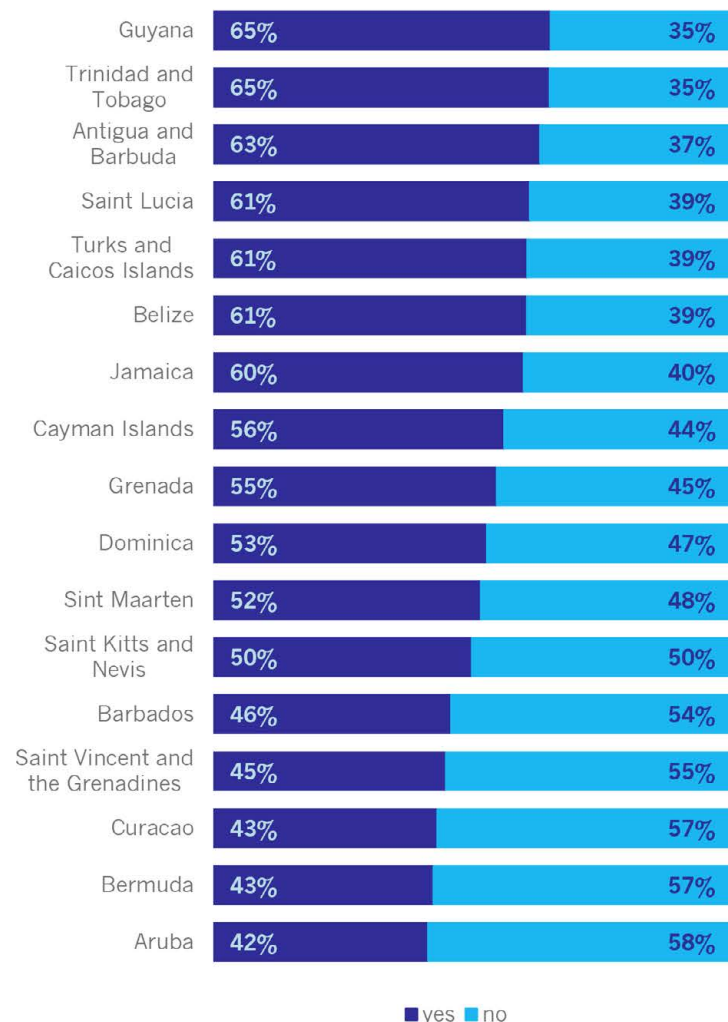
Income changes

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



Livelihood disruptions

Was your ability to carry out livelihoods activities affected in the last 2 weeks?



METHODOLOGY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

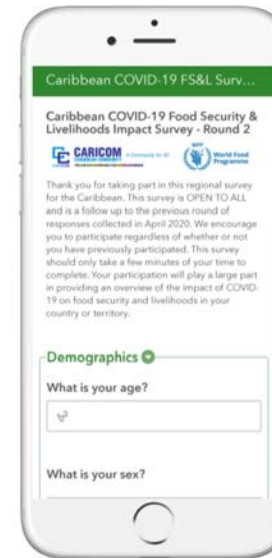
The second round of the CARICOM Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods impact survey was launched via a webform, which was accessible on mobile/smartphone and PC/desktop. The data collection period was inclusive of 14 June to 1 July 2020. The survey was circulated via email, social media, SMS,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



[Link to survey](#)



[Link to dashboard \(mobile version\)](#)



[Link to dashboard \(desktop version\)](#)

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