Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

CAYMAN ISLANDS Summary Report | November 2020

117 Respondents

58 Female | **42 %** Male

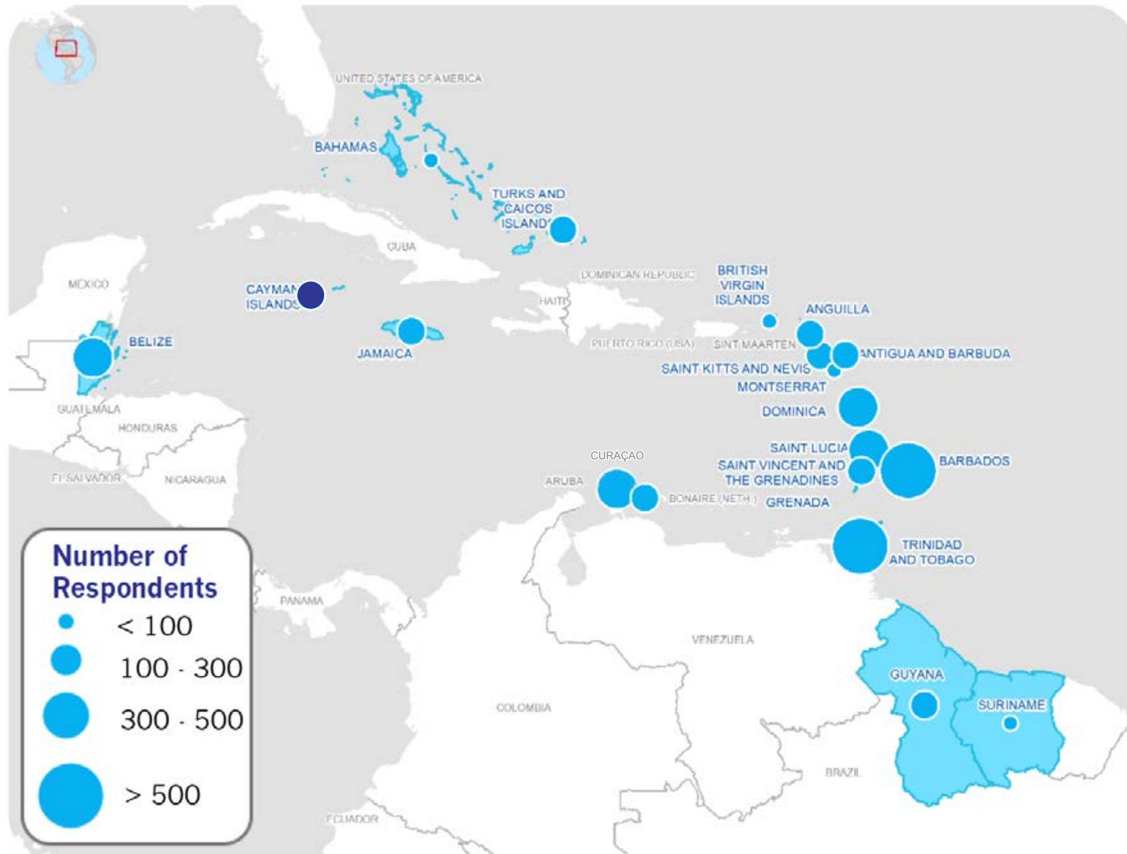
41 Average age

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.

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. It is assumed that the poorest, most vulnerable are underrepresented in the survey results.



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

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

Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

CAYMAN ISLANDS Summary Report | November 2020

117 Respondents

58 Female | **42 %** Male

41 Average age

3 Average household size

- COVID-19 and measures to contain it have resulted in widespread disruptions to livelihoods. Over half of respondents (57%) reported that their ability to carry out livelihoods was impacted, mainly owing to movement restrictions or concerns about leaving the house.

- Nine out of ten respondents predict that their livelihoods will be impacted in the future, while every fifth respondent expects this impact to be severe. Eight out of ten respondents expressed negative or very negative sentiment concerning the pandemic and the disruption it caused.

- The pandemic appears to affect the economic wellbeing of the vast majority of households in the Cayman Islands. Over half of respondents (58%) have experienced job loss or reduced incomes in their households, slightly below regional levels (69%), and half of respondents are mainly worried about unemployment. Job loss in the tourism sector is also a dominant theme among open-ended responses.

- COVID-19 has impacted the availability of goods and market access, but to a lesser extent than in the region. In June, one out of six respondents experienced difficulties in accessing markets, mainly due to movement restrictions. While key commodities are generally available in stores, for a quarter of respondents hygiene items were only partially available.

- The vast majority of respondents observed an increase in food prices (73%) and changed their shopping behaviour (87%) since the pandemic began. Respondents have mainly turned to buying larger quantities than usual or buying cheaper or less preferred brands.

- Food security has been affected, with 18% of respondents resorting to skipping meals or eating less than usual and the same share of respondents eating less preferred foods. Thirteen percent of respondents were mainly worried about their inability to cover their food needs.

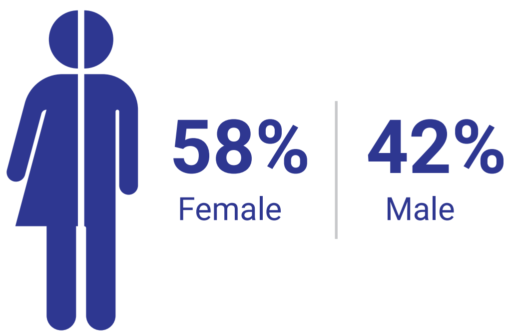
- The pandemic has changed the amount of time people are spending on unpaid activities. Nearly half reduced time spent on shopping while time devoted to domestic work has increased for half of respondents and time spent on childcare and subsistence activities for a third of respondents.

- 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.

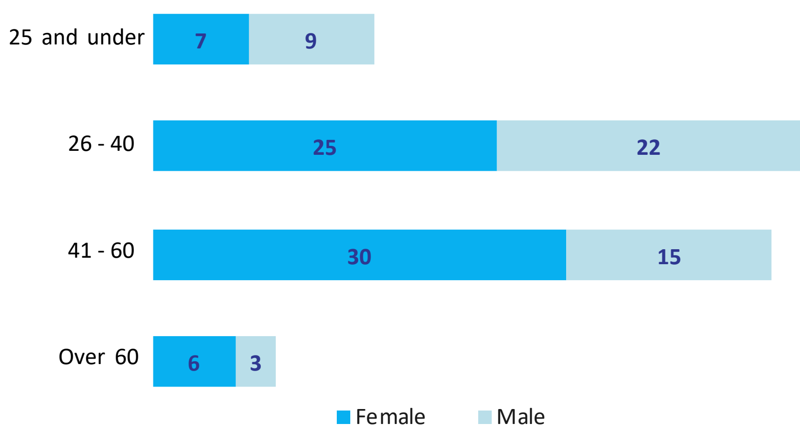
DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Age and gender breakdown reveals that respondents are more likely to be female and that the majority is in the 26-40 age category. The overall number of respondents in the Cayman Islands is insufficient to enable a disaggregated analysis by age, sex or perceived income.

Sex of respondents

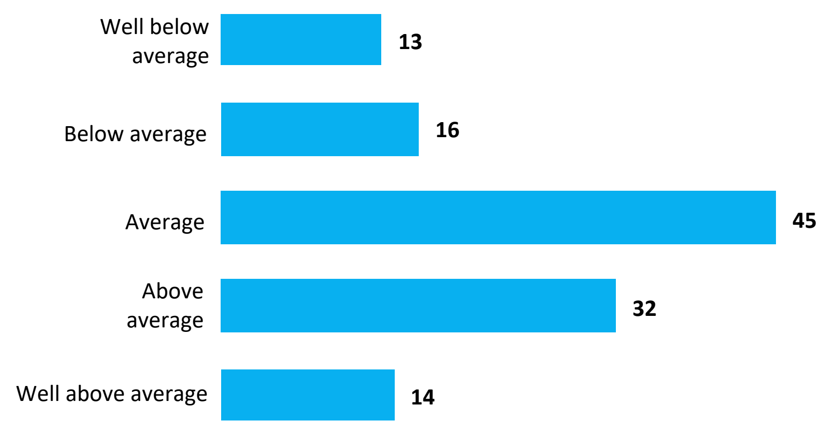


Age of respondents



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, 24% assessed their income as below or well below average, while 38% assessed it as average, and another 38% as above or well above average.



"I need to stay at my boss house and sometimes I feel homesick because I'm far from my family." Female, Age 33

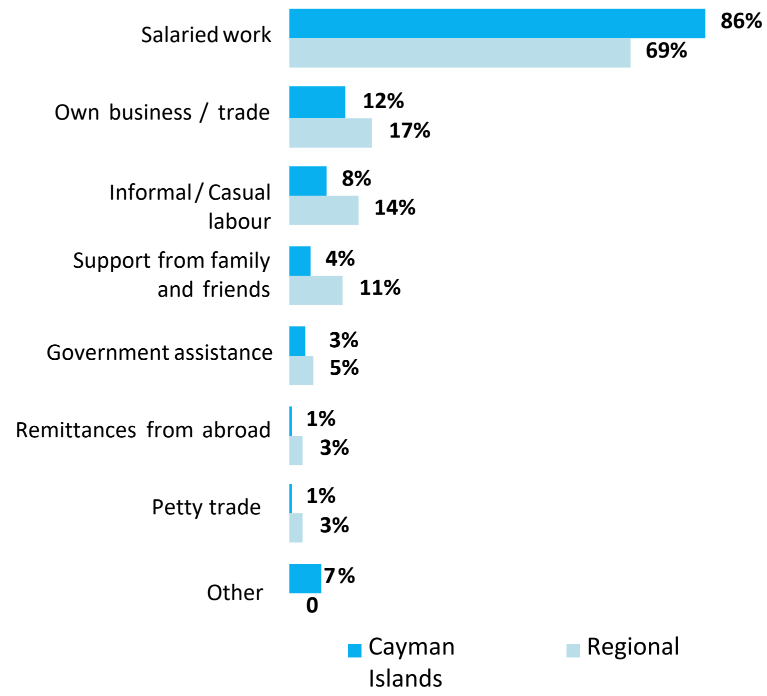
"Being unemployed and not being able to pay my mortgage and bills." Female, Age 35

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 86% of respondents, higher than the regional average, followed by business/trade (12%). Respondents in the Cayman Islands were less likely to source their income from informal/casual labour and support from family or friends compared to the region.

Main household income sources

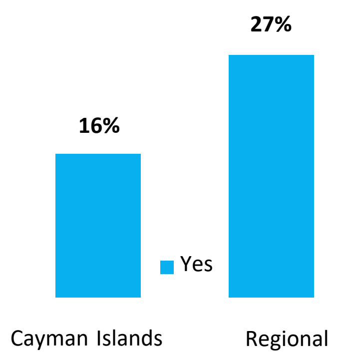


"I work in the tourism industry and lost my job on March 16. I am on a work permit with a company that has completely shut down. I am worried about being deported. I am worried about the house I recently bought here. I have taken in roommates to help with cost and loneliness. Our borders continue to be closed until sept for now." Female, Age 32

IMPACT ON MARKETS

Disruptions due to COVID-19 have had a negative effect on market access, with 16% of respondents indicating that there was a time when they were unable to access markets in the week prior to the survey, which is less than the regional average. Movement restrictions were the primary reason, cited by 42% of respondents experiencing lack of access to markets, a higher share than in the region (22%). Concerns about leaving the house due to the pandemic were cited by 37%, compared to 25% in the region, and transportation limitations by 26% of affected respondents, compared to 15% in the region. Lack of money to spend was a less prevalent reason in the Cayman Islands (16%) than the region average (38%).

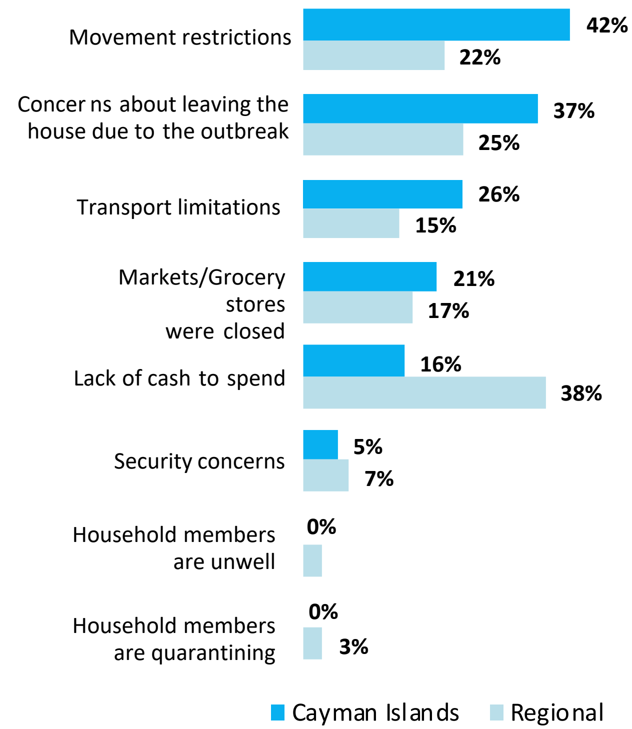
In the past 7 days, was there a time when your household could not access the markets?



"The weekly Waitrose flight stopped in March and we could no longer get Waitrose produce. In particular we miss the houmous. For a short period, ginger and cilantro was also hard to find. Thankfully that was quickly resolved. Otherwise we noticed an increase in the price of a good Chablis and Rioja." Male, Age 42

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



16% of households reported lack of market access over the past week, mainly due to movement restrictions.

IMPACT ON MARKETS

Availability of items in stores

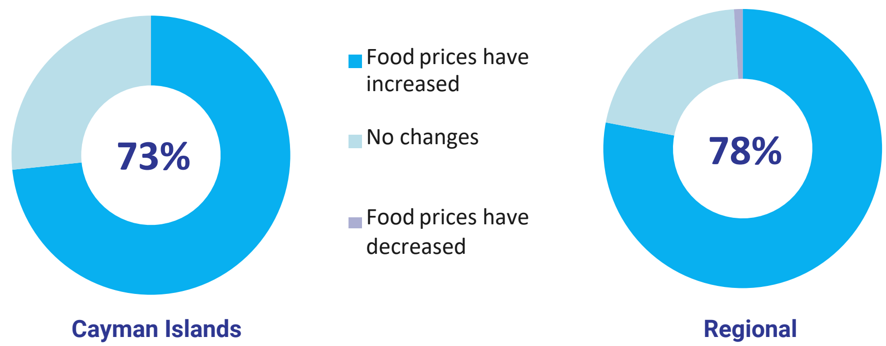
Respondents reported on the availability of key items in stores.

How Available?	Fresh food items		Basic food items		Hygiene items		Essential medicines	
	Cayman Islands	Regional	Cayman Islands	Regional	Cayman Islands	Regional	Cayman Islands	Regional
Always Available	**82%**	71%	**90%**	83%	**76%**	85%	**78%**	55%
Partially/ sometimes available	**18%**	25%	**9%**	15%	**23%**	13%	**13%**	30%
Not available	**1%**	1%	**1%**	1%	**0%**	1%	**0%**	2%
Don't know	**0%**	4%	**0%**	2%	**1%**	2%	**9%**	15%

Availability of goods has also been impacted, but not to the extent as this was observed in the Caribbean. The availability of fresh and basic foods and essential medicines was fairly high, reported to be always available by at least eight out of ten respondents. However, for every fourth respondent, hygiene items were only partially available.

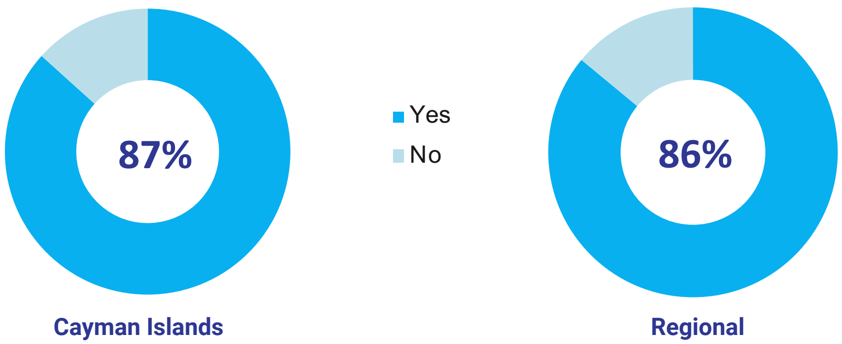
Food prices

Respondents reported on any observed changes in food prices. The vast majority (73%) observed an increase.



Shopping behavior

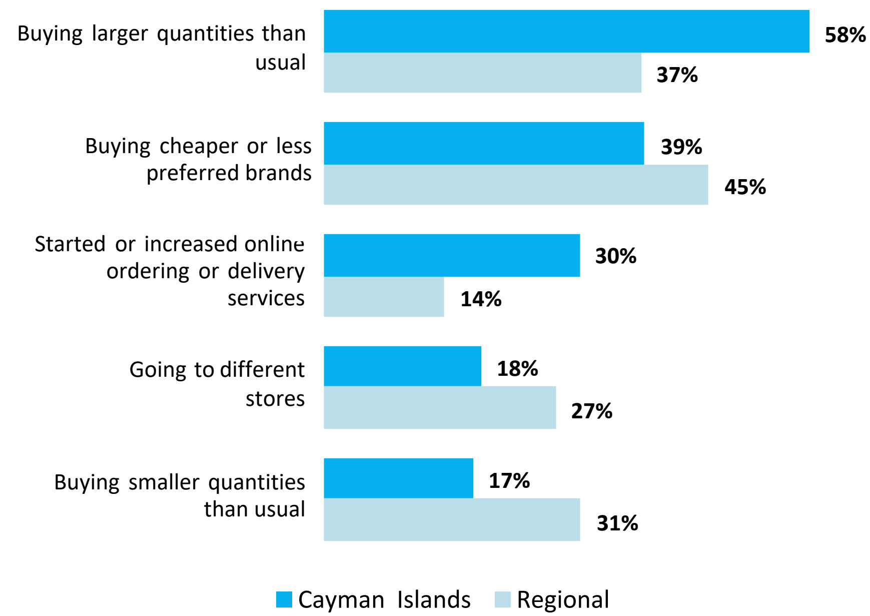
Respondents were asked if they have had altered their shopping behavior and if so how.



In line with the regional findings, shopping routines have changed for 87% of respondents. Buying larger quantities than usual is the most common shift, reported by 58% of respondents who changed their shopping behaviour, which is a higher share than in the region (37%). This was followed by buying cheaper or less preferred brands (39%). In the Cayman Islands, respondents were also twice as likely to start or increase online purchases (30%) compared to the region. In contrast, a smaller share of respondents resorted to buying smaller quantities than usual (17% compared to 31% in the region).

How respondents changed their shopping behaviour

Multiple responses could be selected



"COVID-19 has brought me into a life I've never witnessed my whole entire life, to adopt to all the new normal beings of life is difficult." Male, Age 28

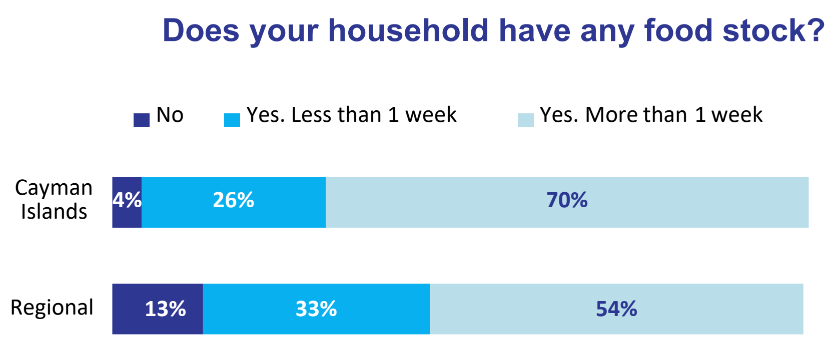
"Isolation Tom friends and family was very difficult, as a senior living alone." Female, Age 63

IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY

The COVID-19 pandemic and measures to stop its spread appear to have impacted household food security. Eigtheen percent of respondents in the Cayman Islands reported skipping meals or eating less than usual and the same percentage resorted to eating less preferred foods. A quarter of households had less than a week's worth of food stocks, and 4% had no food stocks at all.

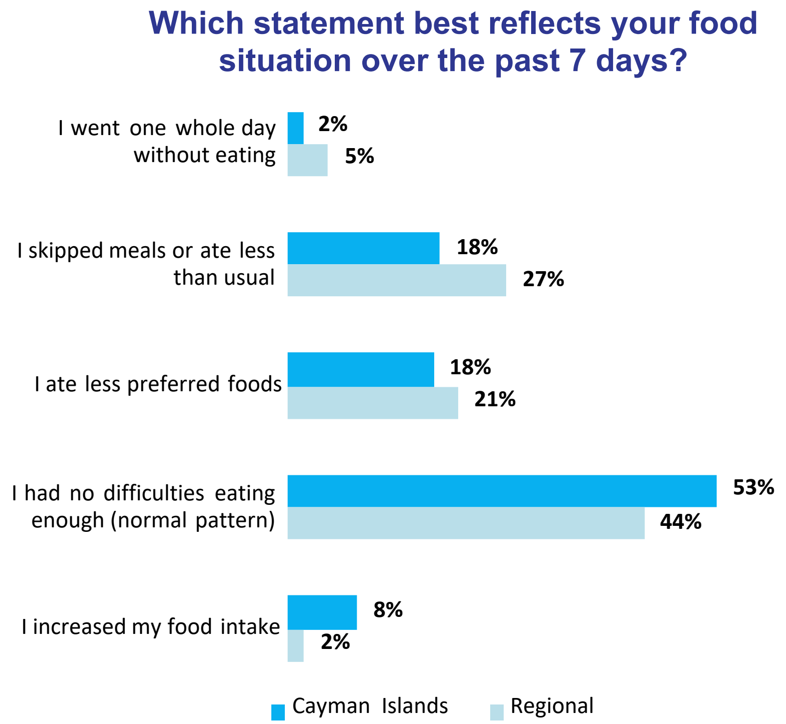
Food stocks

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



Food consumption

Respondents were asked to reflect o n t heir f ood c onsumption during the week prior to the survey.



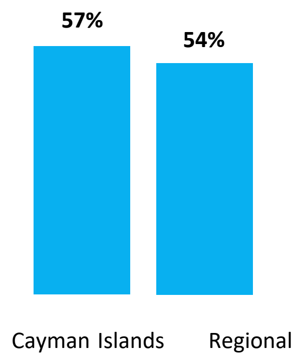
IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus have had a widespread impact on livelihoods. In the Cayman Islands, over half of respondents reported disruptions to their livelihoods, similar to the region. This was mainly due to movement restrictions, reported by 63% of affected respondents, a higher share than in the region (40%). Concerns about leaving the house were the second most common reason, cited by 31% of affected respondents, followed by the cost of livelihood inputs (15%) as well as transport limitations (15%).

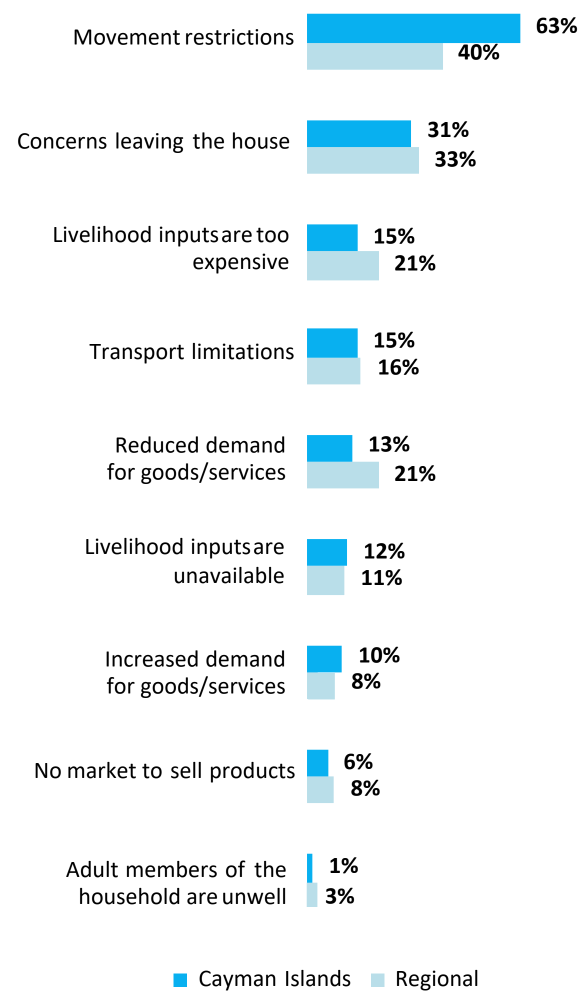
Disruptions to livelihoods

Respondents reported on any disruptions to their livelihoods.

% 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

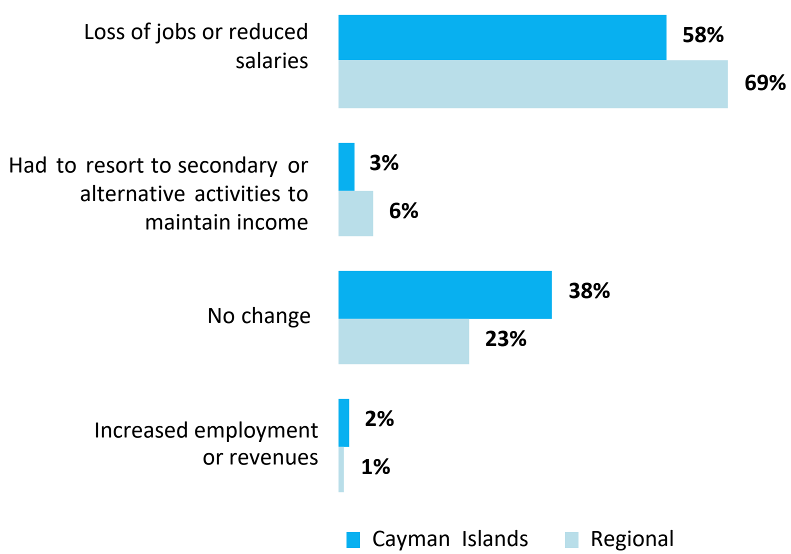


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Income changes

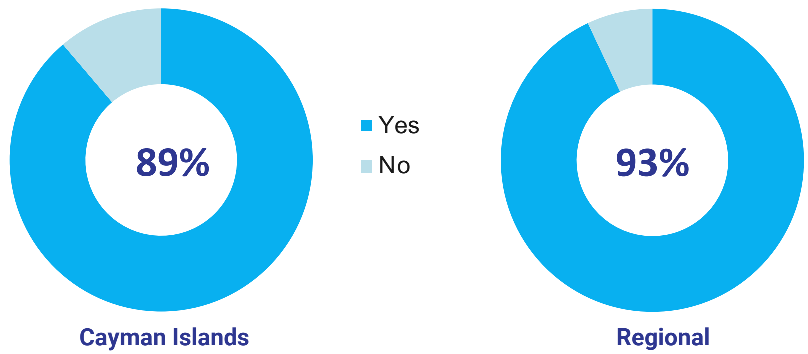
Respondents communicated changes to their income since the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic appears to be taking a widespread toll on households' economic wellbeing, but to a lesser extent than in the region. Over half of respondents (58%) have experienced job loss or reduced incomes in their households while 38% experienced no change.

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

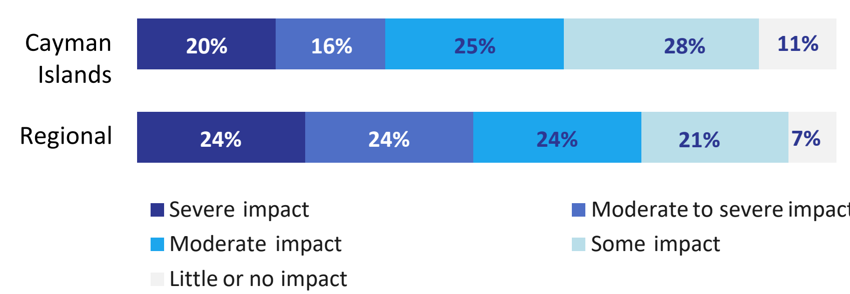


Future livelihood impacts

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, while a fifth of respondents anticipate severe impacts.



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

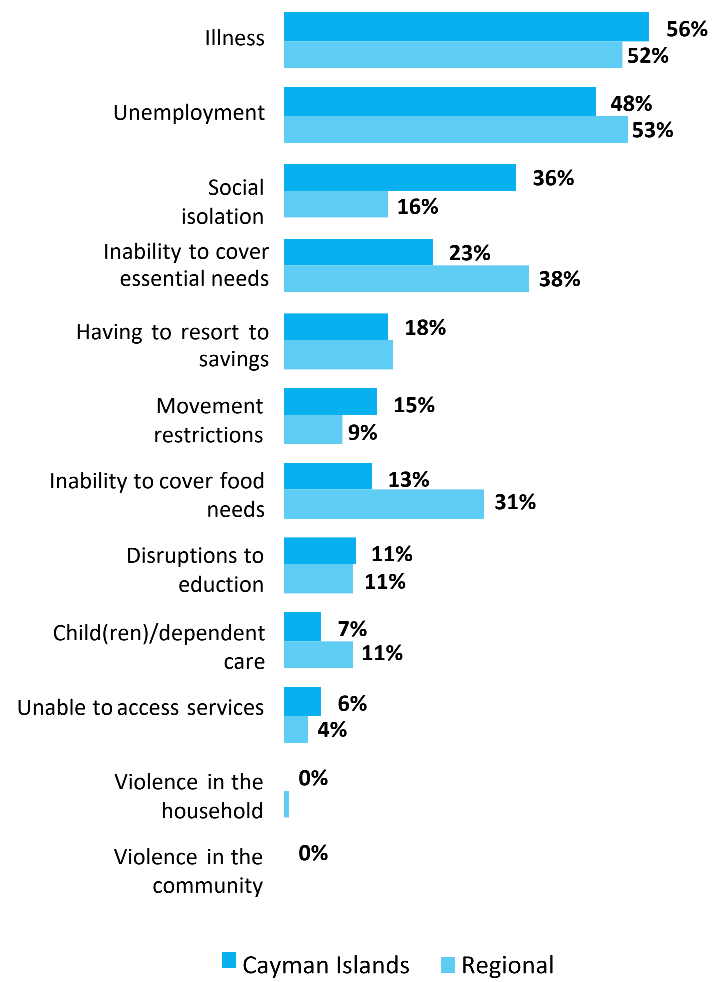


IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Worries

The survey inquired about people's main concerns. Over half of all respondents (56%) are mainly worried about getting ill, followed by unemployment (48%). Social isolation is the third most common worry, cited by 36% of respondents, which is a higher share than in the region (16%). At the same time, respondents in the Cayman Islands are much less likely to worry about their inability to cover food needs (13% compared to 31% in the region) and other essential needs (23% compared to 38% in the region).

What are you mainly worried or concerned about at the moment...
Multiple responses could be selected



"Fearing for the loss of my job, fearing the possibility of not being able to go back home because of the lock down and shutting down the airports and not being able to sustain myself on paying bills, rent and other important utilities." Male, Age 25

"I work in the hospitality industry and have essentially been unemployed." Male, Age 41

"My main concern is having to use my savings because I was hoping to pay off some loans but instead my light bill is higher because we're at home all of the time." Female, Age 49

"My only worry it is that I own a business and due to this pandemic we haven't been able to continue working on the business and only have one income that it could barely cover some expenses." Female, Age 53

IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS

Households engaged in farming/fishing

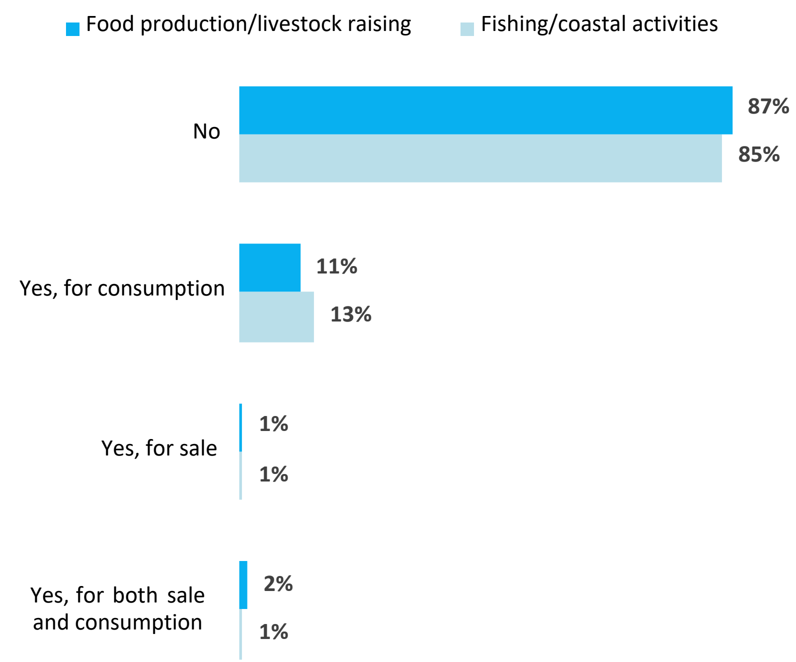
Agriculture (including fishing) accounts for only 0.4% of national GDP in the Cayman Islands, while food is a major import commodity. In this survey, 14% of respondents reported being involved in food/livestock production and 15% in fishing, mainly for own consumption.

At the regional level, metrics of wellbeing for households engaged in food production 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 Cayman 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



WIDER IMPACTS

Unpaid care and work

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the amount of time people are spending on unpaid activities. Nearly half of respondents reduced time spent on shopping while time devoted to domestic work has increased for half of respondents and time spent on childcare and subsistence activities for a third of respondents.

	Domestic work	Childcare	Shopping	Subsistence production	Community work
Decreased	13%	7%	47%	10%	15%
No change	32%	34%	20%	36%	44%
Increased	50%	31%	31%	36%	23%
Not applicable	5%	28%	2%	18%	18%

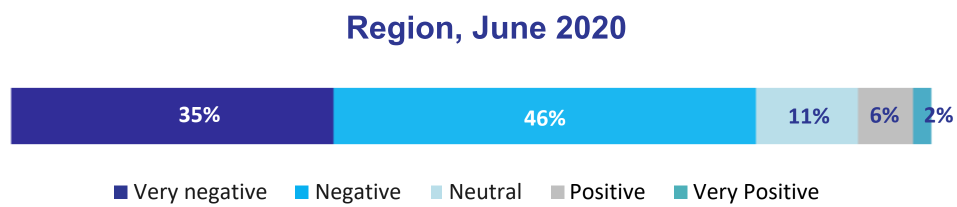
"The Cayman Islands is no longer on lockdown, very few people have the virus and many are recovering only one death which was the person who brought the virus here. I am adapting well and am exercising occasionally. I am in contacts with my closest friends but I am worried about my education." Female, Age 12

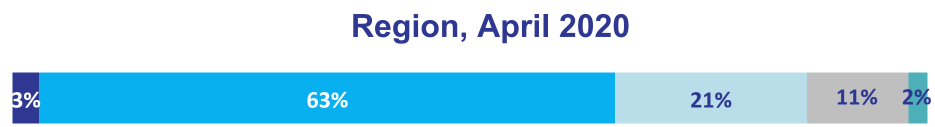
WIDER IMPACTS

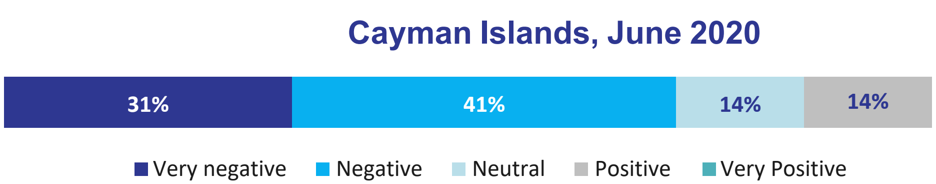
How people are coping and adapting

The survey gave respondents space to provide fuller and more nuanced insights on how they are coping and adapting to the disruptions caused by COVID-19. In June, 29, or 24%, of the 120 respondents from the Cayman Islands answered the open-ended question. Text analysis was used to categorize and interpret the degree of positive and negative emotions among the responses using machine learning.

At the regional level, sentiments seem to have significantly deteriorated compared to April with the share of "very negative" comments increasing significantly from 3% in April to 35% in June. Trends in the Cayman Islands are similar, with 31% of respondents expressing "very negative" sentiment, and 41% "negative" sentiment.







"I am a worker here and I can't go back home to my Family." Female, Age 46

"Unable to travel outside of country to see family and return. Forced government facility quarantine at your own personal expense in government facility - approx $3,000 out of pocket." Female, Age 56

"Might be unable to attend university due to the spread in America." Male, Age 17

"Continue to follow the instructions of social distancing and be mindful of cleanliness keeping a positive and healthy mind about overcoming this pandemic." Female, Age 39

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 the Cayman Islands are being impacted and are adapting to disruptions from COVID-19. The most frequently mentioned phrases are “home”, followed by “family”, and “work”, which indicates that a large focus of respondents are concerns about their ability to sustain their livelihood and reflects their experience posed by movement restrictions.

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 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 majority of people in the Cayman Islands experience a deterioration of their employment and income situation, an increase in food prices and concerns about the future of their livelihoods. A fifth of respondents expect their livelihood to be severely affected while worries about illness and unemployment are even more widespread.

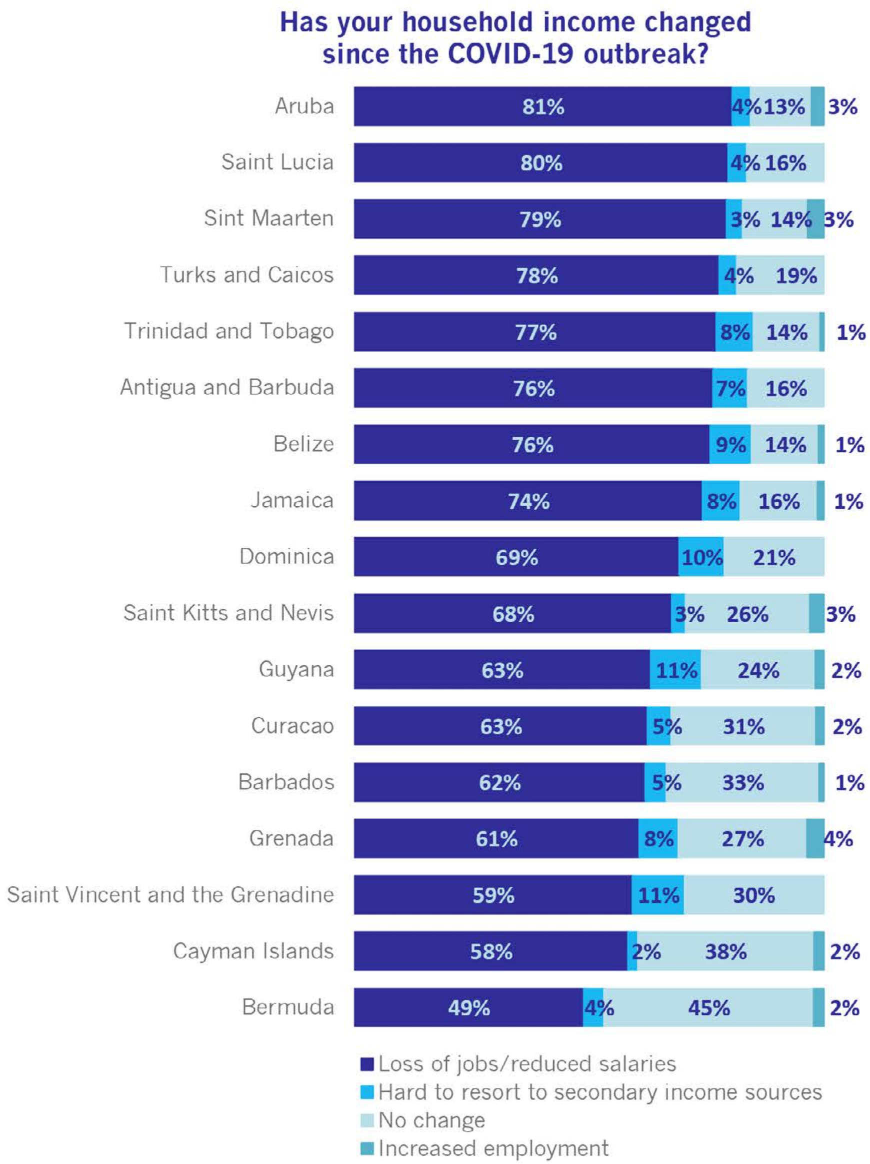
The pandemic has shifted life at home, with time spent on domestic work and subsistence activities increasing for many respondents, and shopping patterns have changed towards purchases of cheaper goods and bulk purchases. While most consumer goods are widely available, a quarter of the respondents reported limited availability of hygiene items. One out of six respondents in the Cayman Islands experienced difficulties accessing markets and a similar share of respondents were worried about the inability to cover food needs. One out of five respondents skipped meals or eat less than usual.

Given the ongoing crisis, the government of the Cayman 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 protection programmes, livelihood support, and vocational training for people from most affected economic sectors.

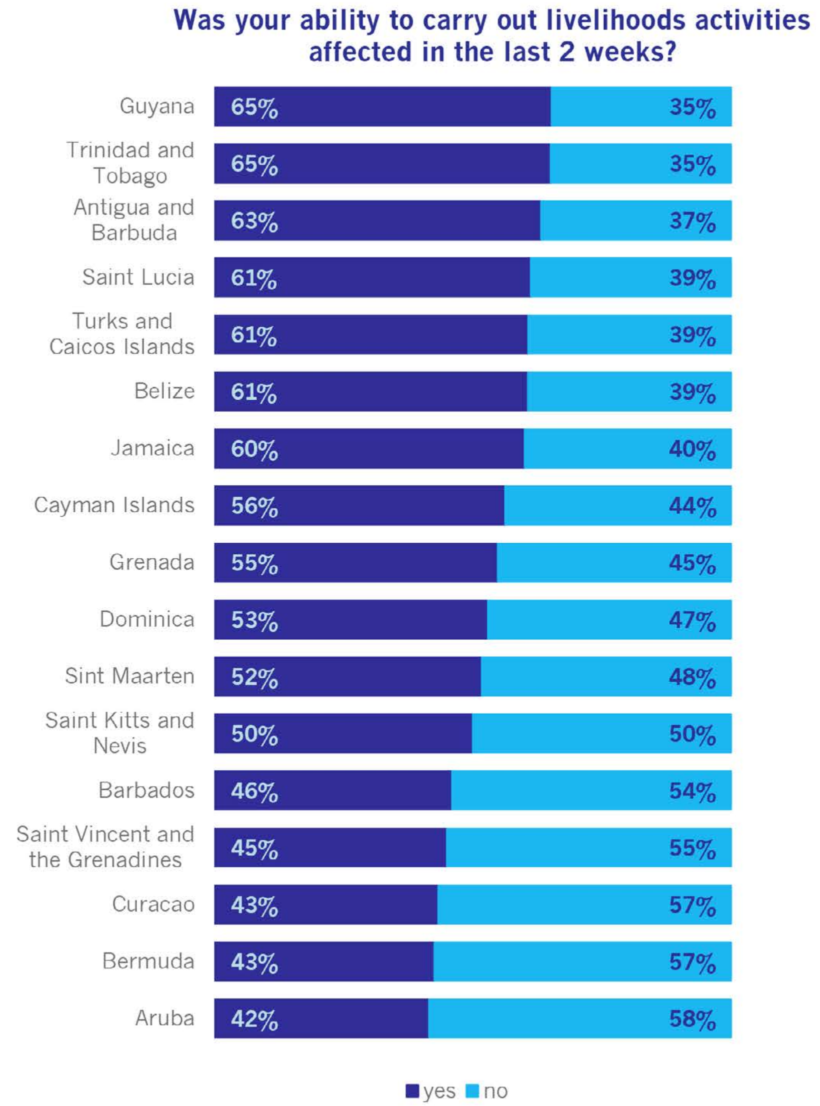
The results of this web-based survey should be read with a degree of caution given potential bias towards households who can afford internet access or smartphone devices. Considering the protracted nature and unforeseeable end of the crisis, it is essential to continue monitoring its impacts, particularly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

ANNEX. REGIONAL OVERVIEWS

Income changes



Livelihood disruptions



METHODOLOGY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

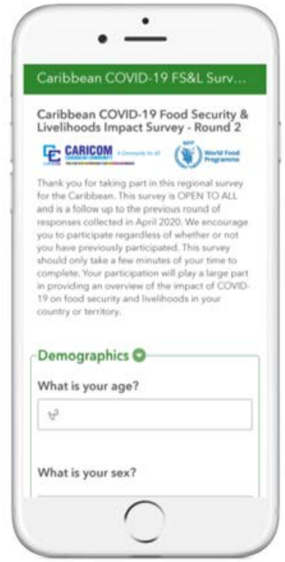
The second round of the CARICOM Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods impact survey was launched via a webform, which was accessible on mobile/smartphone and PC/desktop. The data collection period was inclusive of 14 June to 1 July 2020. The survey was circulated via email, social media, SMS,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

This page is intentionally left blank.

UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME
Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Caribbean
UN House, Marine Gardens
Christ Church
Barbados
Regis Chapman | Head of Office
Tel: +1 246 467 6085
Email: wfp.barbados@wfp.org
Website: https://www.wfp.org/countries/caribbean

CARICOM
Caribbean Community Secretariat
Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown
PO Box 10827
Guyana
Shaun Baugh | Programme Manager, Agricultural & Agro-Industrial Development
Tel: +592 222 0134
Email: shaun.baugh@caricom.org
Website: https://www.caricom.org

Funded by

Funded by
European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid