

Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

BARBADOS Summary Report | May 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic is dramatically altering how people earn a living and meet their critical needs. The Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey was launched by CARICOM to gather data on livelihoods, access to markets and food security and provide snapshots of these impacts over time. This report analyses data collected from 25 January to 12 February 2021 and complements the findings from the previous survey rounds conducted in April and June 2020. Implemented by the World Food Programme, the short online survey was circulated via social media, traditional media outlets, and emails. The survey link was also distributed by telecommunications service providers via text messages.

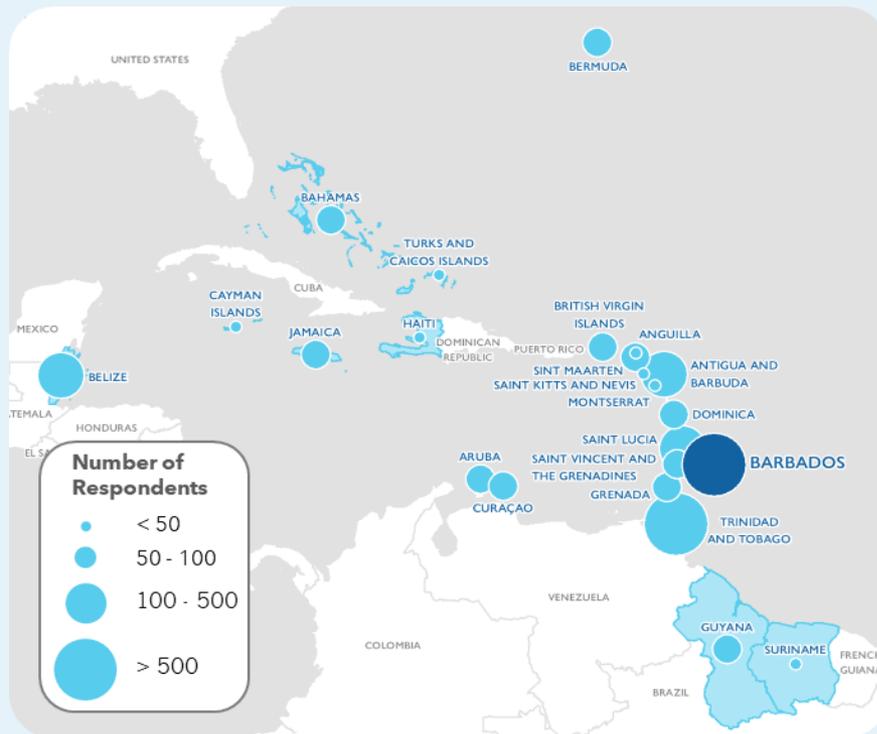
February 2021



June 2020



April 2020



SUMMARY | April 2021

- The impacts of COVID-19 continue to evolve nearly a year on from the initial declaration of the pandemic, with spikes in cases in late 2020 and early 2021. People in Barbados have endured multiple lockdowns, changes in travel protocols and drastic declines in tourism during this time.
- The Government of Barbados has put in place various measures to provide support, with food vouchers being most widely reported among survey respondents. While 11% of respondents have received some form of government assistance, only 3% were still receiving it at the time of the survey.
- Impacts to livelihoods remain widespread, reported by nearly half of respondents (similar to June 2020 and down from two-thirds in April 2020). The main factors behind the disruptions continue to be movement restrictions and concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak. Two out of three respondents continue to predict at least moderate impacts to their livelihoods in the future, with poorer households being the most pessimistic.
- Job loss and income reductions are still very common, affecting 55% of overall respondents and 88% of those from lowest income groups. Disproportionally impacted are households whose income comes from tourism and hospitality, petty trade, informal labour or external assistance, as well as younger people.
- The availability of key products in markets has improved consistently since the beginning of the pandemic, particularly for staple foods and hygiene items, which are reported as almost universally available. Still, the availability of fresh foods or medicines remains partial or limited for 20-25% of respondents.
- Most respondents (56%) observe higher than usual food prices, with lowest income groups more commonly reporting increases. Access to markets remains difficult for one fifth of respondents, primarily due to the lack of financial means. This has influenced shopping behaviour, with a growing share of respondents turning to cheaper foods or buying smaller quantities.
- Food insecurity remains a concern, with a quarter of respondents cutting down food consumption in the week leading up to the survey. Average household food stocks continue to decrease, which could be due to reduced incomes and potentially more confidence in consistent market access.
- Negative impacts on food security disproportionately affect respondents from low-income households. They are also the ones most worried about unemployment and not being able to meet their food or other essential needs. Compared to households classifying their income as average or above, they are much more likely to meet their food needs at the expense of selling productive assets and cutting spending on other priorities, such as health and education.
- Overall, negative impacts across key metrics of well being are most widespread among households who perceive their income levels as well below average, those who earn their income from tourism and hospitality, informal and casual sources or rely on external assistance as well as the youngest respondents. Differences in these metrics were not substantial between male and female respondents.
- Some signs of recovery are beginning to emerge, primarily among economically better off households, business owners and people relying on salaried work. However, poorer and younger respondents continue to face challenges and seem to increasingly rely on external support, which also suggests widening disparities and deepening inequality.
- While the survey contributes to a better overview of impacts of the pandemic on livelihoods, food security and market access in Barbados, the data are not based on a representative sample, and the online questionnaire limits inputs from people without internet connectivity.

SUMMARY | April 2021

All respondents

		Feb-21	Jun-20	Apr-20
LIVELIHOODS	Disrupted livelihoods	47%	46%	69%
	Reduction/loss of income	55%	62%	43%
	Moderate to severe or severe future livelihoods impacts	45%	40%	40%
MARKETS	Lack of market access	18%	17%	52%
	Change in shopping behaviour	79%	84%	85%
	Increase in food prices	56%	73%	48%
FOOD SECURITY	Reduced food consumption	24%	25%	17%
	Lack of food stock	11%	9%	2%

Respondents with well below average perceived income*

*This information was not collected in the April 2020 survey round.

		Feb-21	Jun-20
LIVELIHOODS	Disrupted livelihoods	65%	71%
	Reduction/loss of income	88%	87%
	Moderate to severe or severe future livelihoods impacts	81%	72%
MARKETS	Lack of market access	44%	44%
	Change in shopping behaviour	92%	92%
	Increase in food prices	66%	82%
FOOD SECURITY	Reduced food consumption	65%	61%
	Lack of food stock	31%	26%

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COVID-19 | Situation and response

COVID-19 cases and government responses

Following the first registered case of COVID-19 and the declaration of a public health emergency in mid-March 2020, the Government of Barbados first implemented a nationwide curfew at the end of March and closed the borders to incoming travel.

The first Caribbean COVID-19 Survey was launched in late March 2020 when a full lockdown was in place and supermarkets were closed. At the time of the second survey at the end of June 2020, Barbados had relaxed restrictions whilst gradually reopening for tourism accompanied by public health protocols and entry requirements.

Following the rapid increase in the number of active cases in December 2020, the government imposed a night curfew from January 2021, which was extended throughout February and March.

The current round of the survey was conducted in February, when tightened movement restrictions and protocols were in place to limit the spread of the virus. Starting from mid-February, these restrictions were gradually lifted.

Social protection measures

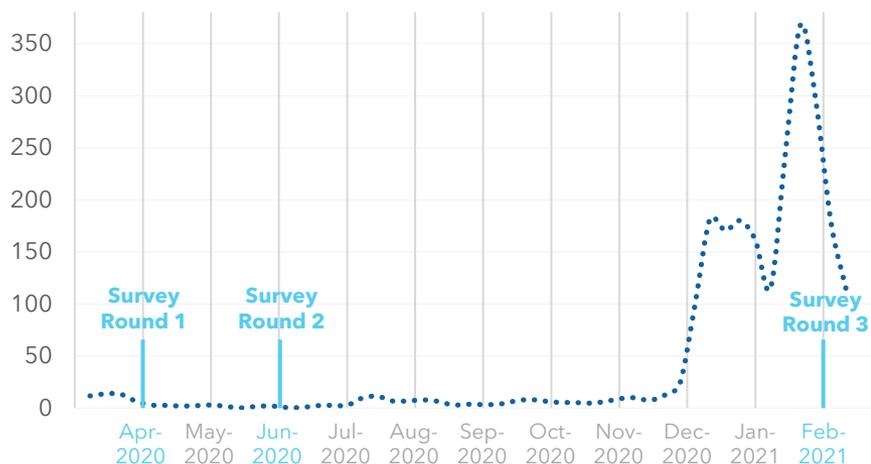
Faced with the widespread economic repercussions of the pandemic, all governments in the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean have turned to social protection to support people, through existing programmes or ones introduced in the wake of COVID-19.

In Barbados, the government implemented a Household Survival Programme to provide monthly financial assistance 1,500 families identified as the most vulnerable. Under the Adopt-a-Family Programme, the government is working to provide monthly assistance to vulnerable families, funded by public funding and corporate and individual donations.

The government introduced a Business Cessation Benefit to assist self-employed persons who have made contributions to the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) but are not entitled to unemployment benefits. Furthermore, companies that kept at least two thirds of their workforce were deferred from paying 3 months of employers' NIS contributions. In addition to these measures, the NIS disbursed over BDS\$155 million in unemployment benefits to about 34,000 persons between March 2020 and March 2021.

Aside from financial assistance, the government also distributed food packages to vulnerable households during the national curfews, including to elderly living alone, persons with disabilities, and unemployed adults with children.

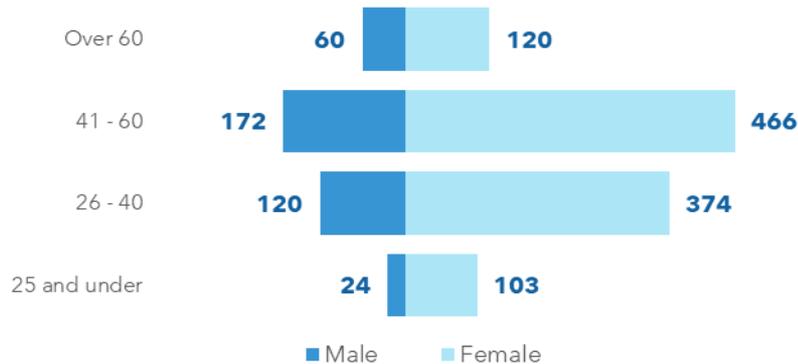
New COVID-19 cases in Barbados
Average 14-day notification rate per 100 000 population



Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2021

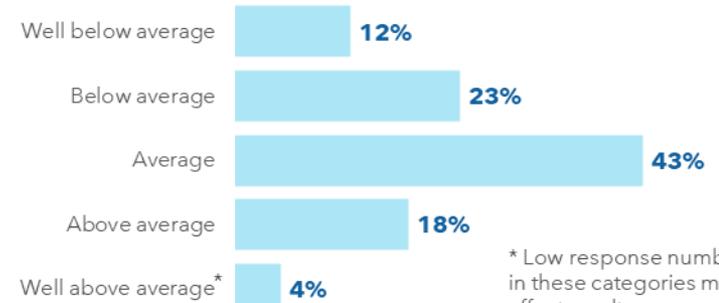
RESPONDENTS | Demographics

Age and sex



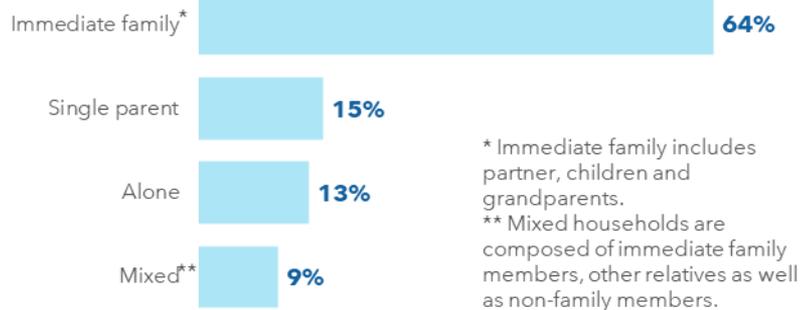
Perceived income levels

Respondents were asked to compare their household's income with the rest of their country.



* Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

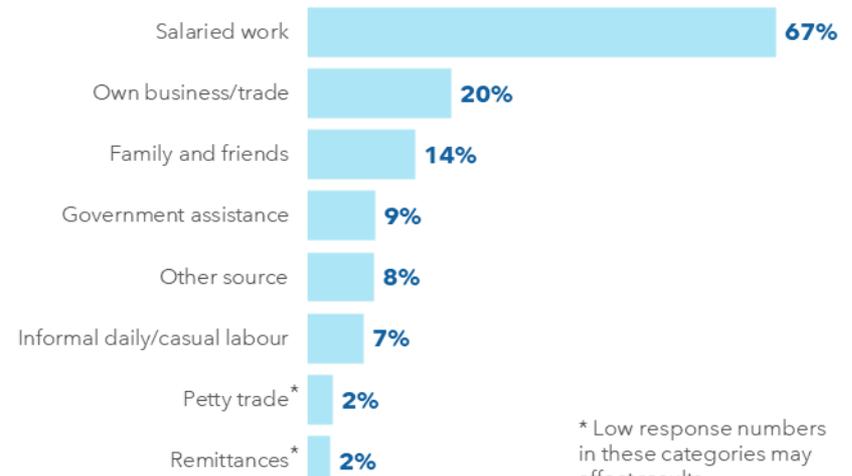
Household composition



* Immediate family includes partner, children and grandparents.
 ** Mixed households are composed of immediate family members, other relatives as well as non-family members.

Main income sources

Respondents were asked to indicate the main income source(s) for their household. Multiple choices could be selected.



* Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

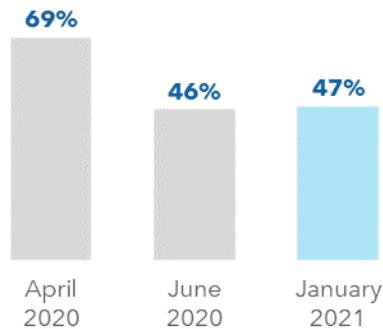
Urban/rural location



LIVELIHOODS | Disruptions to livelihoods

- ▶ Impacts to livelihoods remain widespread, with every second respondent reporting disruptions.

Respondents reporting that their ability to carry out livelihood activities was affected in the 2 weeks prior to the survey

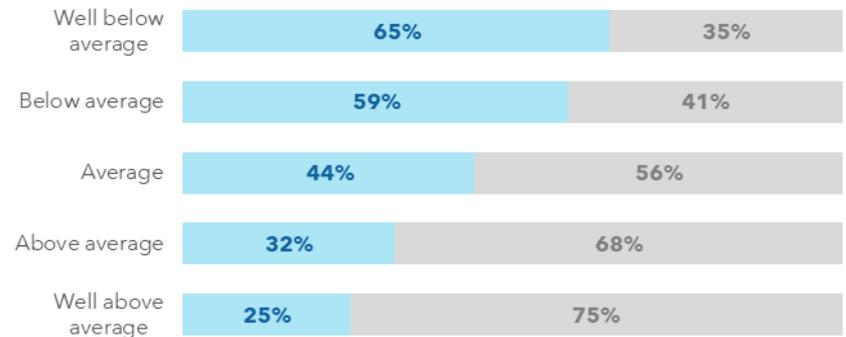


The COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt livelihoods in Barbados. For nearly half of respondents, the ability to pursue their livelihood was affected in the two weeks preceding the survey. This proportion has decreased from April 2020 (69%) but shows no significant change when compared to June 2020.

When considering the different characteristics of people responding to the survey (such as age, sex, perceived income, household composition) the most marked differences are found related to people’s sources and level of income, as well as age of the respondents. Of those who described their income as well below average, 65% reported livelihood disruptions, compared to 25-32% of respondents who consider their income levels as above or well above average. Disruptions have been more widespread among people whose livelihoods related to tourism and hospitality.

Respondents reporting that their ability to carry out livelihood activities was affected in the 2 weeks prior to the survey

By perceived income level



Between 58% and 69% of respondents with less stable household income sources (e.g., informal labour, petty trade, support from friends and family) reported their livelihoods being affected compared to 43% of those in households with salaried income. Livelihood disruptions are also most widespread among respondents aged 25 or younger and the difference with other age groups seems more pronounced in Barbados compared to the region.

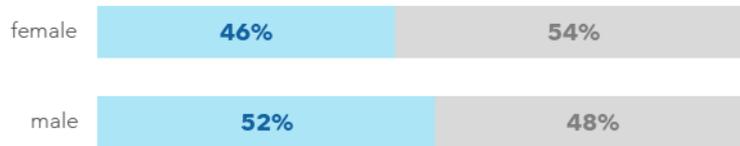
There are some differences based on the household composition of respondents. Livelihood disruptions seem more widespread among people living in ‘mixed’ households with extended family and non-family members compared to those who live alone. The averages differed only slightly by gender, with 52% of men reporting disruptions compared to 46% of women.

LIVELIHOODS | Disruptions to livelihoods

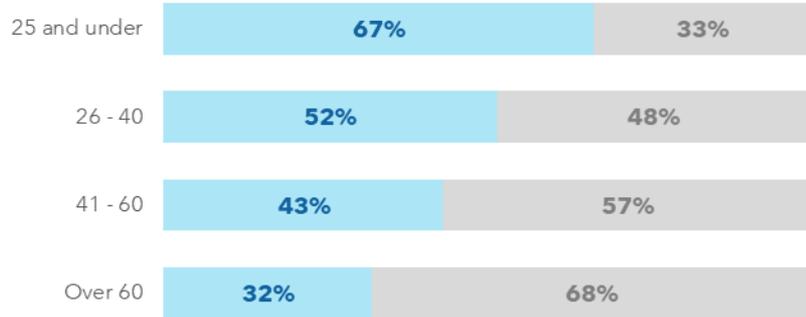
Respondents reporting that their ability to carry out livelihood activities was affected in the 2 weeks prior to the survey

■ yes ■ no

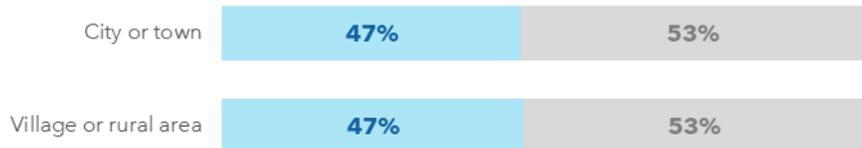
By sex



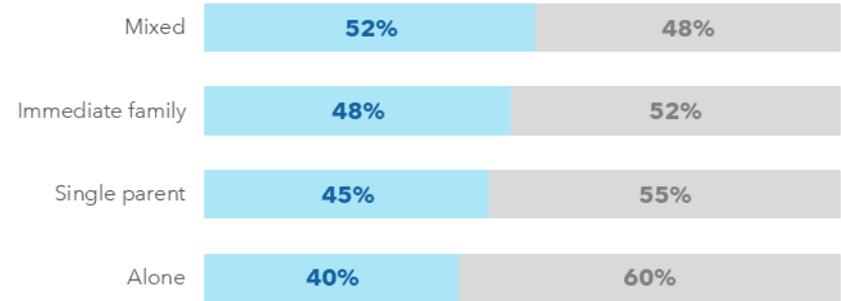
By age group



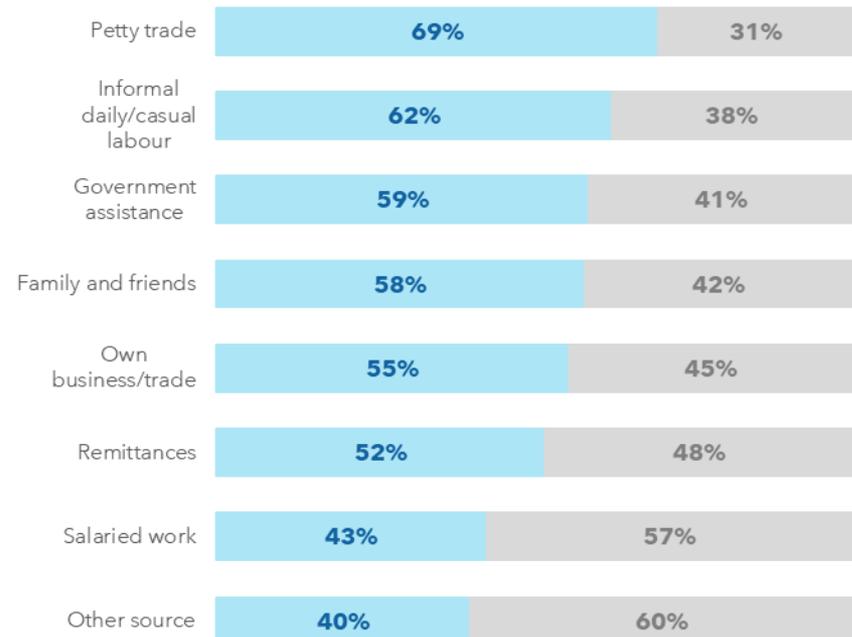
By urban/rural location



By household composition



By income sources

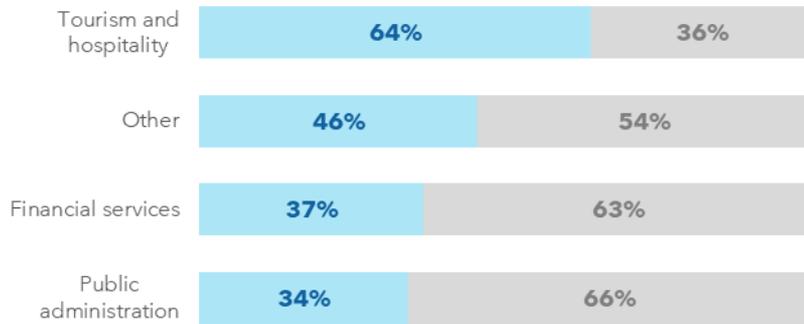


LIVELIHOODS | Disruptions to livelihoods

Respondents reporting that their ability to carry out livelihood activities was affected in the 2 weeks prior to the survey

■ yes ■ no

By income sector

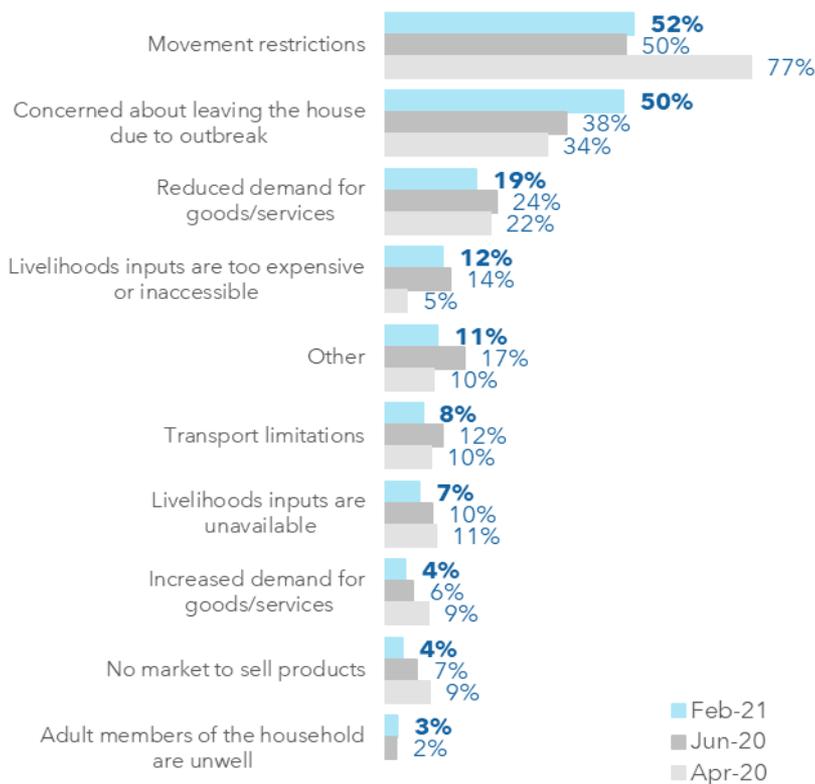


LIVELIHOODS | Reasons for livelihood disruptions

- Concerns about the outbreak and movement restrictions are still the main drivers behind disruptions to livelihoods. The price and access of livelihood inputs is a growing factor, affecting mostly the lowest-income households.

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

Multiple choices could be selected.



Movement restrictions, reported by about half of respondents who faced disruptions to livelihoods, remain the main reason behind the disruptions, though these are less of a driver compared to the early stages of the pandemic when restrictions were more widespread. Nearly the same percentage of people cited that concerns about leaving the house as the main reason, which has gained in importance with each survey round.

Respondents who rely on salaried work or government assistance are most likely to cite movement restrictions as a main reason for livelihood disruptions, compared to respondents with other income sources.

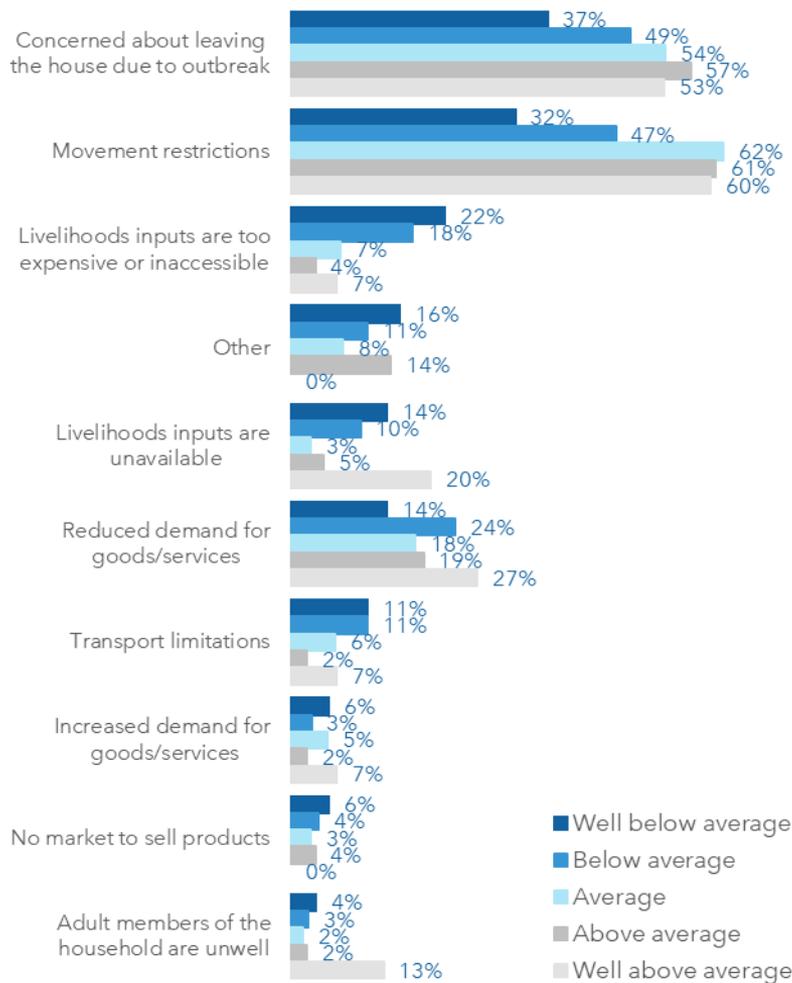
Reduced demand for goods/services continues to affect at least one out of five respondents facing livelihood disruptions, and nearly half of respondents who own a business or trade (46%), followed by 28% of those who mainly rely on informal labour for their income.

Men are much more likely to report reduced demand for goods and services compared to women, while the opposite is the case with regard to concerns about leaving the house. At the same time concerns about leaving the house seem to be more widespread among respondents aged 25 or younger compared to older age groups.

LIVELIHOODS | Reasons for livelihood disruptions

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

Multiple choices could be selected.
By perceived income level



"I am self-employed and COVID has rendered my business almost disabled. My family and I have resorted to be dependent on a very reduced income provided by my adult children and what little jobs I can acquire." - Female, 40 years

"I am a Taxi and Island Tour Operator. We do not have tourists on the island and as such, I am suffering. My tour are my only source of income to feed my family." - Male, 55 years

"I cannot get a supplemental job to make ends meet. I am currently living off my parents and I am unable to support my kids" - Female, 43 years

"I have been forced to retreat from starting my own business due to low funding in my household and unemployment." - Female, 20 years

"My business is manufacturing, and people are holding back from spending to see the outcome of the COVID19 " - Male, 41 years

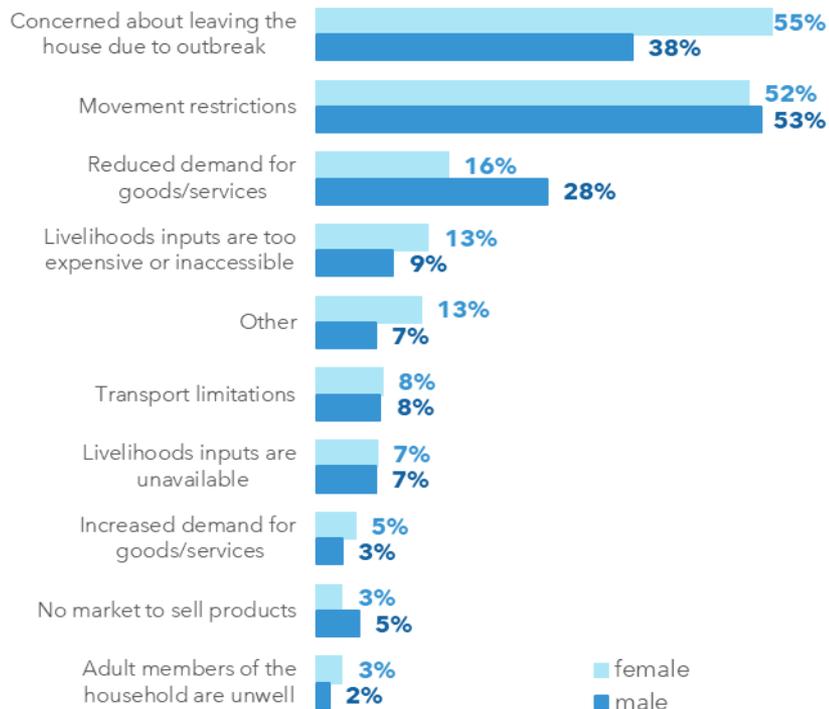
"My major concern at this time is the ability to maintain myself financially " - Female, 52 years

LIVELIHOODS | Reasons for livelihood disruptions

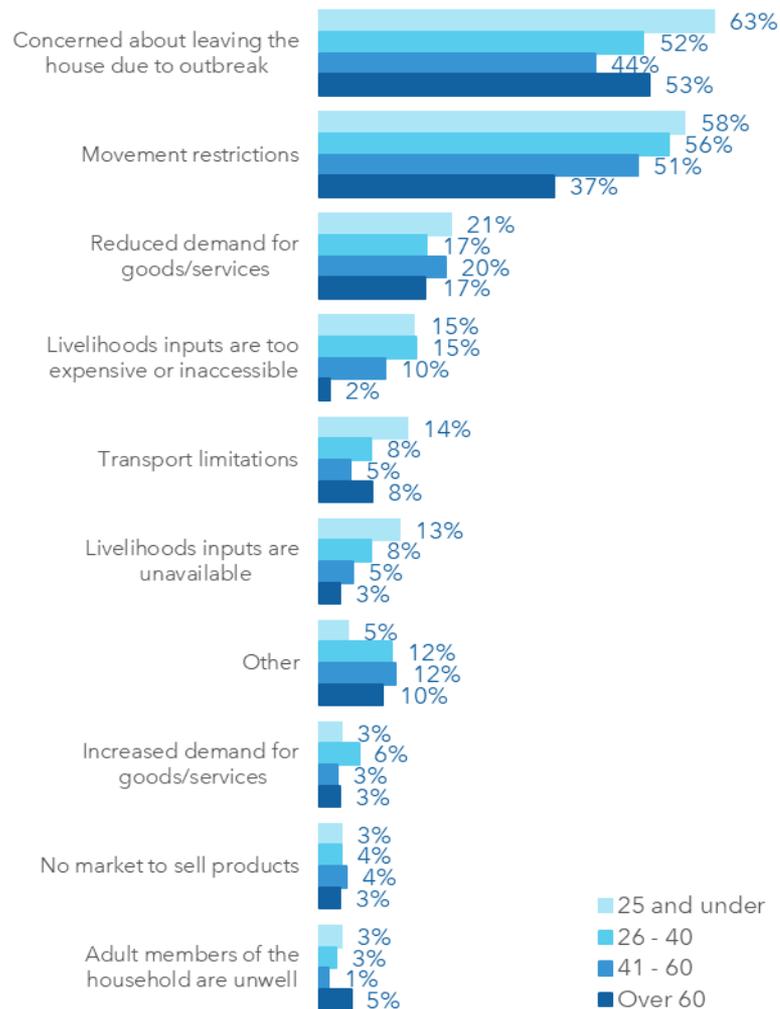
For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...

Multiple choices could be selected.

By sex



By age group

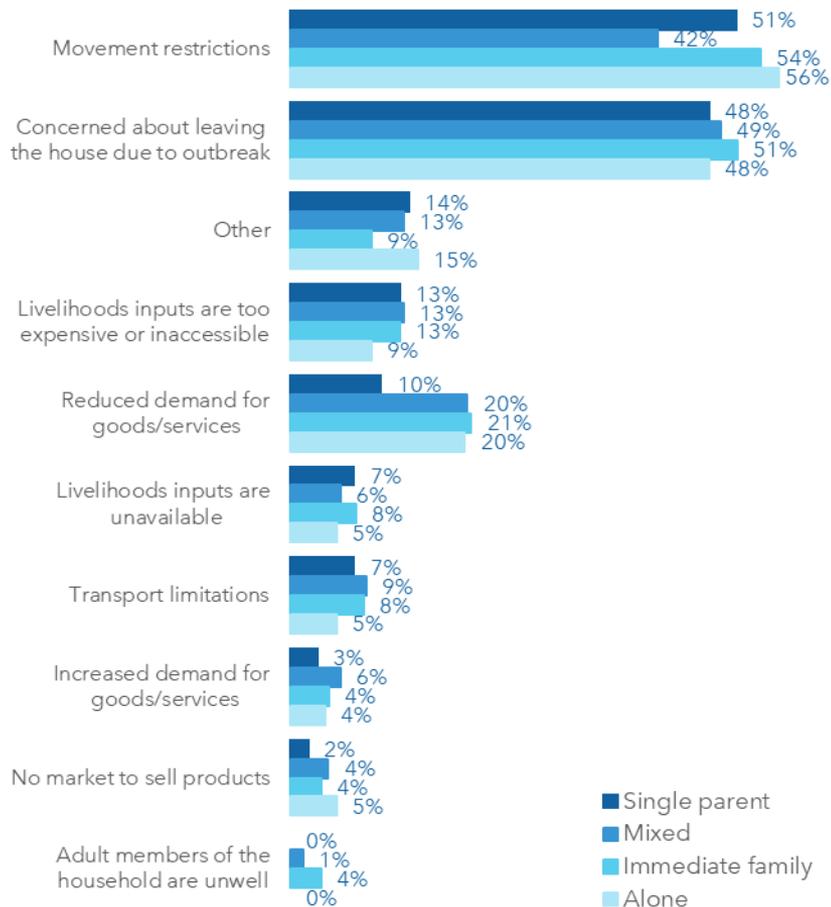


LIVELIHOODS | Reasons for livelihood disruptions

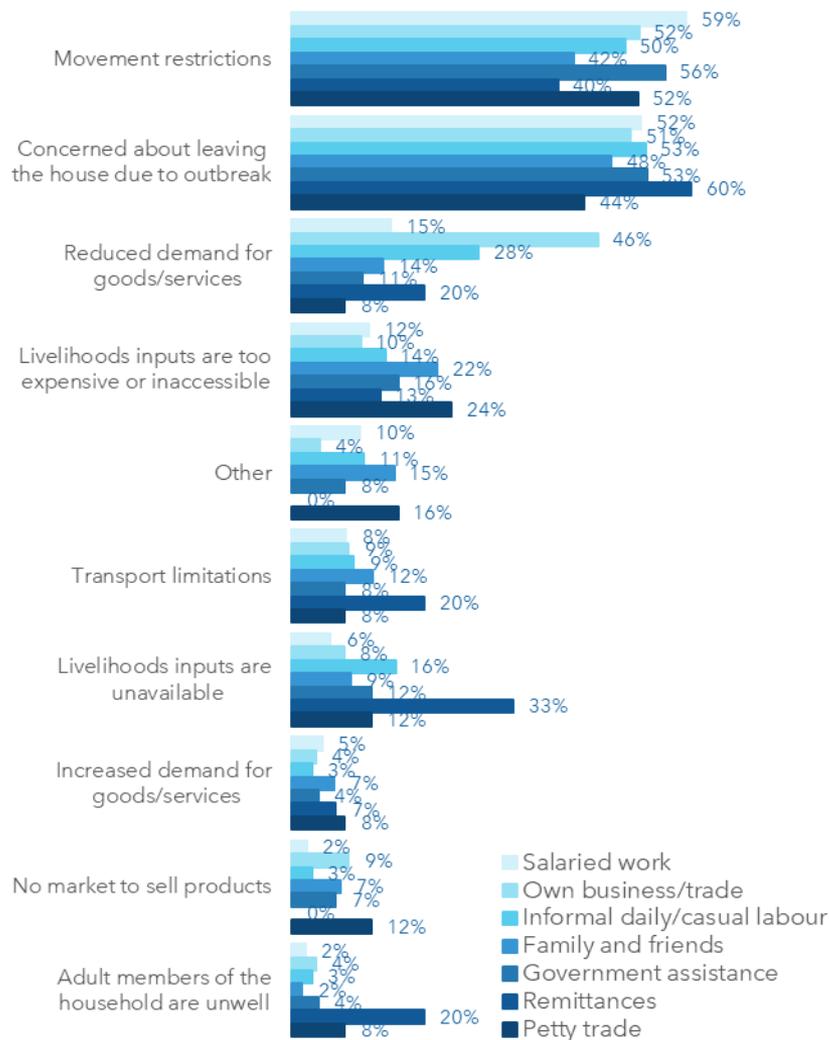
For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...

Multiple choices could be selected.

By household composition

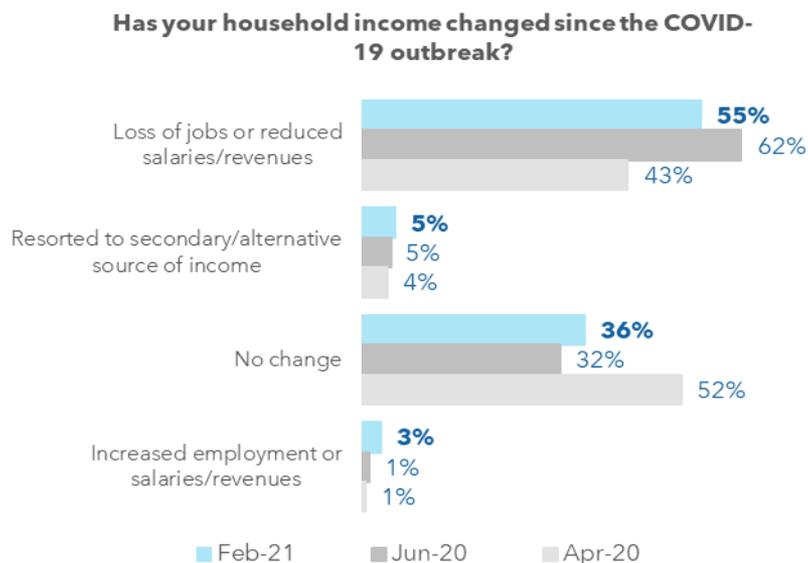


By main income source



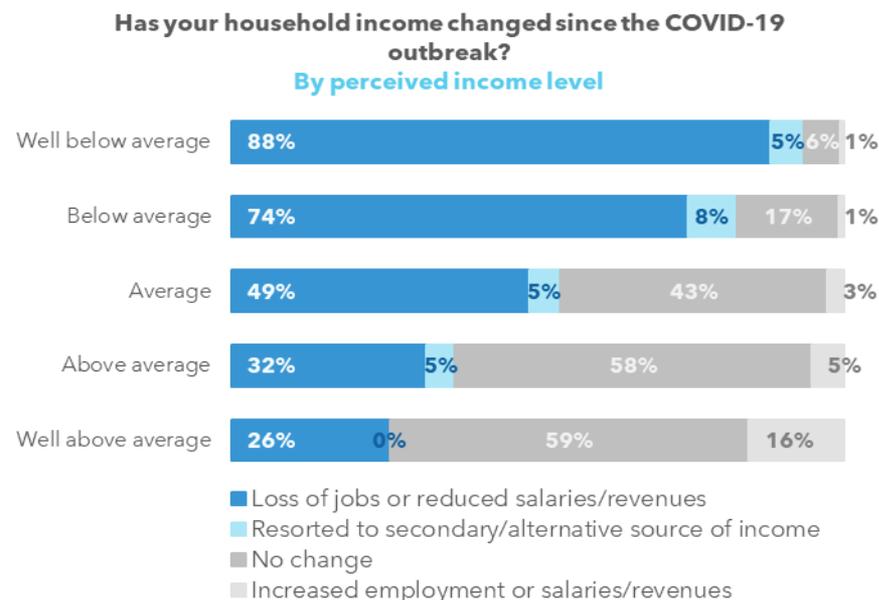
LIVELIHOODS | Impacts on income

- ▶ Over half of respondents still face job loss or income reductions in their households.



Impacts to income continue to be widespread, with 55% of respondents reporting that their household has experienced job loss or reduced salaries since the COVID-19 outbreak, slightly lower compared to June 2020 (62%). The figure remains higher compared to April 2020 (43%) and suggests the continuation of economic hardship with many people facing decreased income.

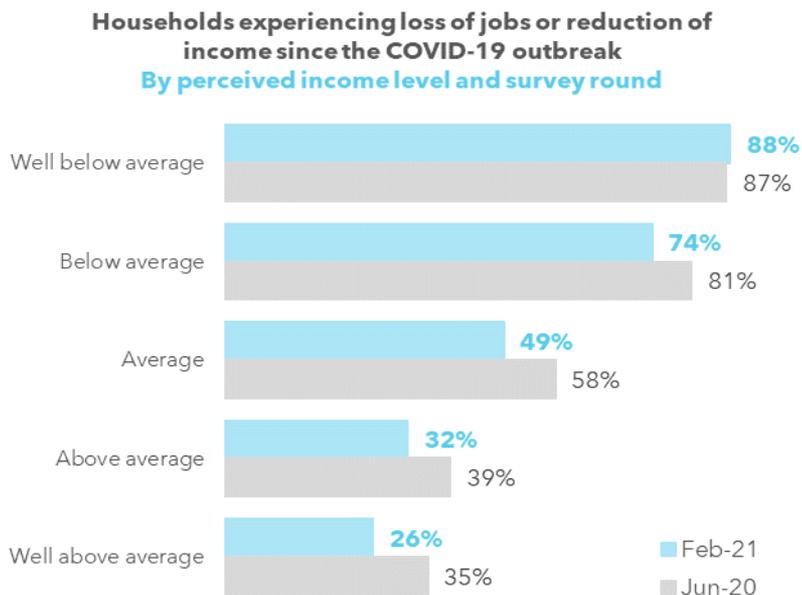
The most marked differences in responses were found across income groups and sources of income and between age groups, with job and income losses most widespread among the younger respondents, those with informal and casual income sources and lowest perceived income levels.



Job loss or income reduction was reported by the vast majority of respondents describing their household income as well below average (88%) or below average (74%), compared to less than third of those describing their income as above or well above average. Respondents with household income from petty trade, informal labour and support from friends and family were much more likely to report job loss/reduced income compared to those who earn salaries. Tourism and hospitality has been the most widely affected economic sector with nine out of ten respondents who earn income in that sector reporting job losses or reduced salaries/revenues.

LIVELIHOODS | Impacts on income

- ▶ Impacts on income continue to be most widespread among lowest-income households.



The share of respondents facing job losses or a reduction in household income has continued to be very high for those reporting income as well below average – about nine out of ten respondents in both June 2020 and February 2021. Among respondents from all other income groups this share has fallen. The improvement has been most pronounced among respondents who classified their income as average or well above average, with a difference of 9% compared to June 2020. This suggests some signs of recovery could be occurring but unevenly across income groups, with poorest households still facing the most significant struggles.

At least 80% of those whose income sources include petty trade, informal daily/casual labour, or support from family and friends reported job loss or reduced income, suggesting continued hardship for these livelihood groups. Impacts remain widespread but with slight improvements for those respondents whose primary income sources include business/trade (72% in June 2020 and 65% in February 2021) or salaried work (61% in June 2020 and 49% in February 2021).

Respondents from the two youngest age groups were much more likely to report income or job loss (65%), compared to those 60 years or older (26%), suggesting disproportionate impacts on younger persons. Job and income loss is also widespread among respondents living in mixed households with extended family and non-family members (67%), while people living alone appear to be least impacted (39%). No major difference was observed between women and men or the location of respondents in urban versus rural areas.

"Being self-employed places strains on income and our ability to meet financial obligations"- Female, 43 years

"I have no fixed income and have been operating at 90% reduction in my income since March. I received no national insurance and work is hard to find. I worry about how I will pay my rent and how to pay my bills and eat." - Female, 30 years

"No income, I am not working. Trying to cope with little help from friends and family." - Female, 49 years

LIVELIHOODS | Impacts on income

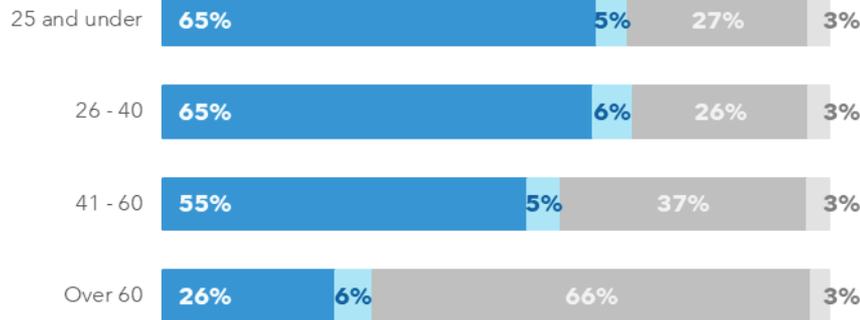
Has your household income changed since the COVID-19 outbreak?

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

By sex



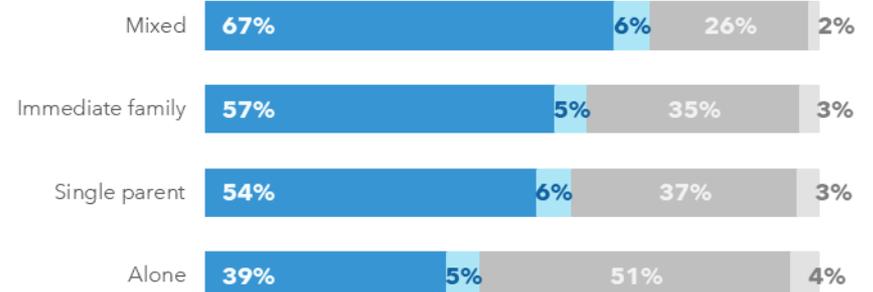
By age group



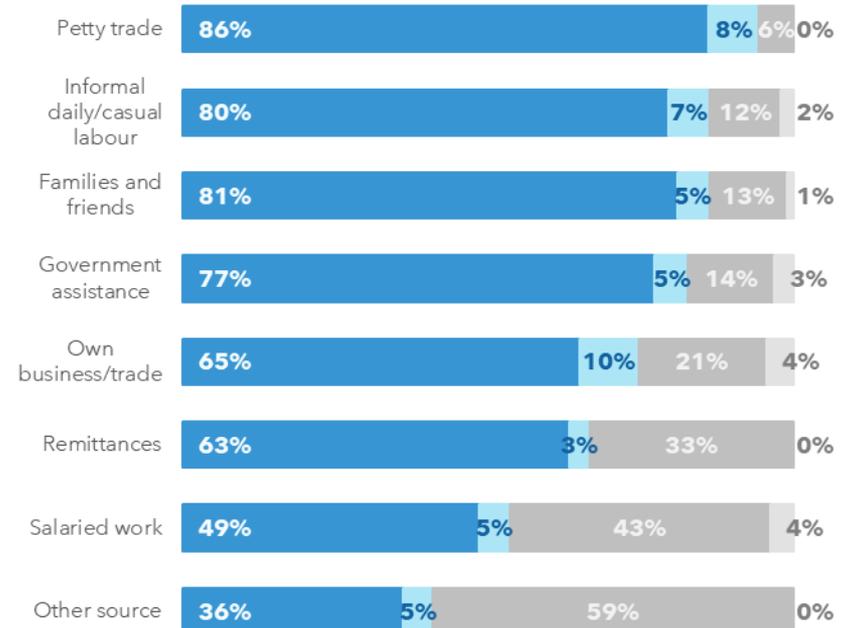
By urban/rural location



By household composition



By income sources

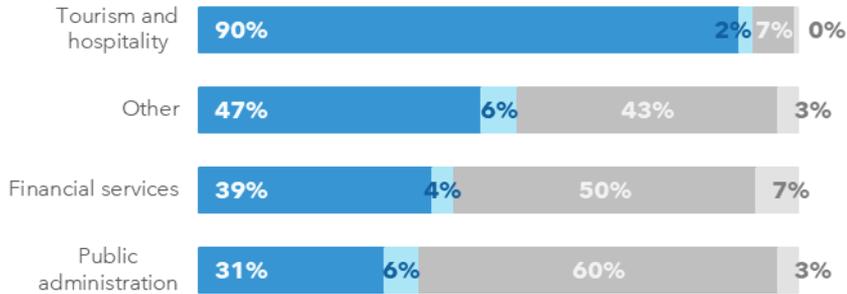


LIVELIHOODS | Impacts on income

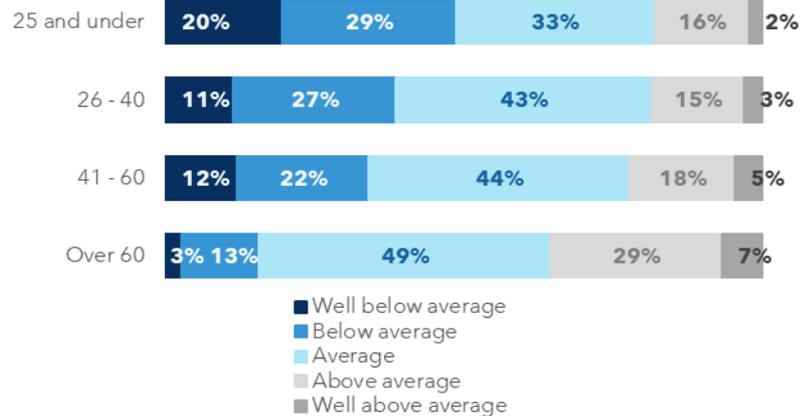
Has your household income changed since the COVID-19 outbreak?

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

By income sector



Age group and perceived income level comparison



"Sole income earner taking care of two households due to job loss and reduced income." - Female, 56 years

"Loss of income and not being able to pay utilities and rent" - Male, 47 years

"My wife has been laid off again and my company has us on a further 25% pay cut for a minimum of 3 months." - Male, 33 years

"Unable to find affordable childcare so that I can seek employment." - Female, 48 years

"Significantly less income and have had to sacrifice paying insurances and other bills to make sure I have food and gas " - Male, 38 years

"Using savings to help others. Fear of depleting savings and not being able to help as much." - Female, 36 years

"Little income. Supplementing with credit cards." - Female, 61 years

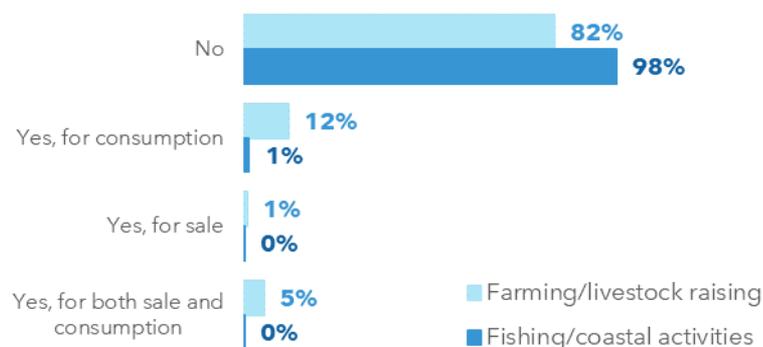
"I have experienced job loss and had to resort to a lower paying job." - Female, 45 years

"I can't make my monthly rent for my apartment due to shorter work hours." - Female, 45 years

LIVELIHOODS | Farming and fishing

- ▶ Respondents engaged in fishing activities seem among the hardest hit by COVID-19, but more detailed assessment is needed.

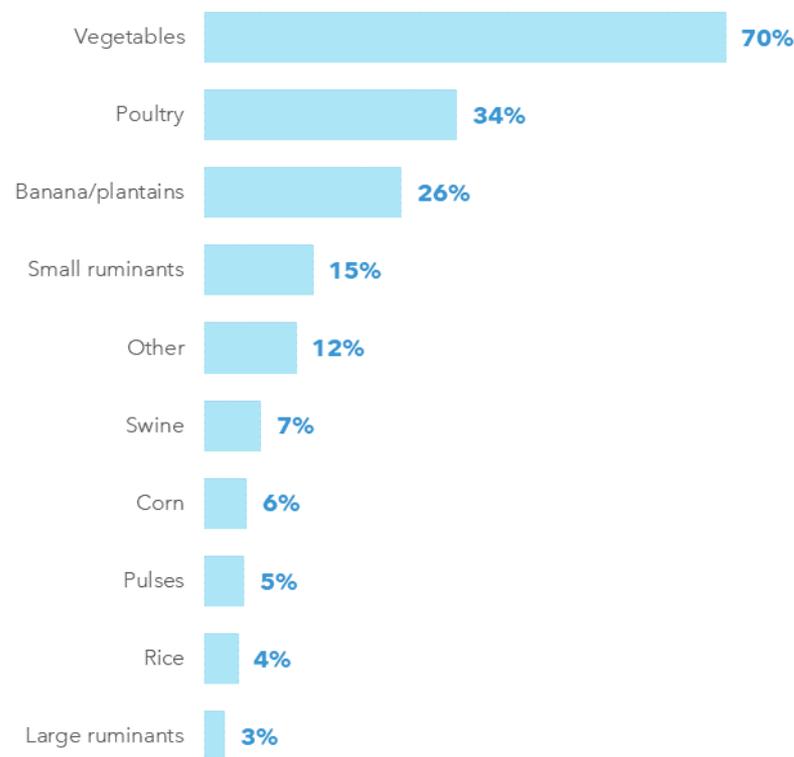
Is your households engaged in farming/fishing?



Nearly one in five respondents reported engaging in farming, gardening or livestock raising and 2% in fisheries/coastal activities. In both cases these activities are primarily for their own consumption, with vegetable production being by far the main farming activity (70%). Over two thirds of respondents undertaking farming and/or livestock raising (68%) also have household income from salaries, 22% pursue their own business or trade, and 17% receive support from family and friends. Respondents aged 25 years or younger are more likely to be engaged in farming, gardening and/or livestock raising, compared to other age groups.

For those that engage in agriculture/livestock raising, the products are...

Multiple choices could be selected.

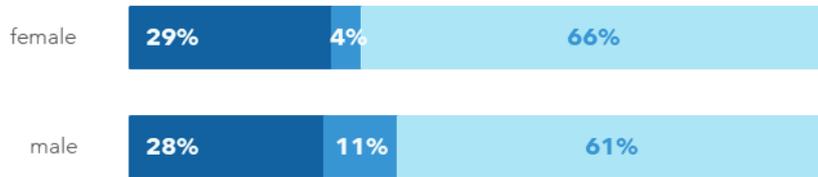


LIVELIHOODS | Farming and fishing

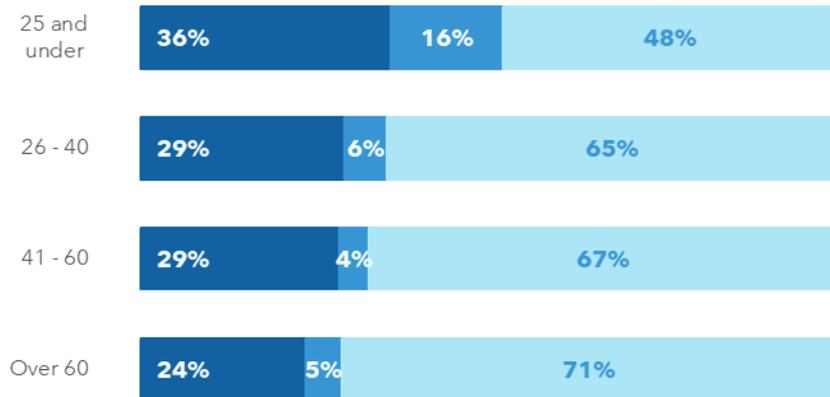
Households engaged in farming/livestock raising

- Yes, for both sale and consumption
- Yes, for sale
- Yes, for consumption

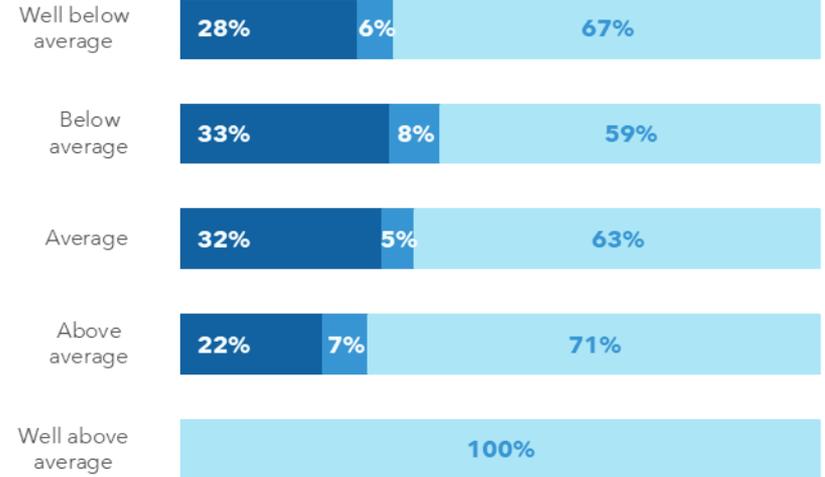
By sex



By age group



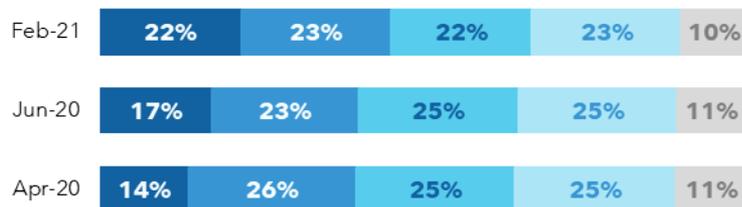
By perceived income level



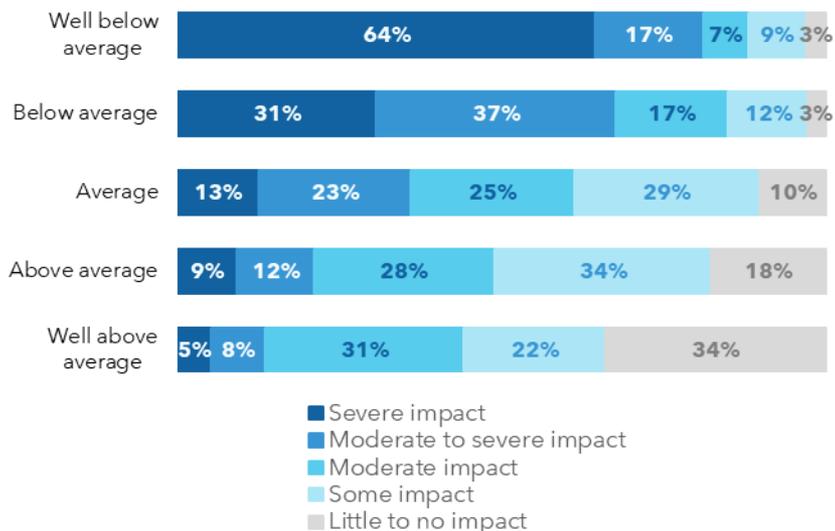
LIVELIHOODS | Future livelihood impacts

- Nine out of ten respondents expect at least a moderate impact on their livelihoods. For over six out of ten lowest income households, this impact is expected to be severe.

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



By perceived income level



Respondents continue to expect that the COVID-19 pandemic will impact their livelihoods in the future, and increasingly in ways that are severe. Looking ahead, 45% anticipate “moderate to severe” or “severe” impacts to their livelihoods, which is slightly higher than the prior two survey rounds. Only 10% expect little or no impact.

Respondents with different levels of income varied substantially in their perspectives. Of those with incomes perceived as well below average, 64% expect their livelihoods to be severely impacted in the future (15% higher compared to June 2021) and much higher compared to households with well above average income (5%). Differences in perspectives between lowest and highest income respondents seem more pronounced in Barbados compared to the regional survey average, and at greater disadvantage towards lowest-income households.

While the majority of respondents anticipate at least some impacts regardless of their sources of income, those who rely on salaries were much less likely to predict severe livelihood impacts (16%), compared to respondents who earn their living from petty trade (44%) or receive support from family and friends (42%) or the government (38%). Unsurprisingly, households who rely on more informal sources of income or external support are also among those more likely to report income levels that are below or well below average.

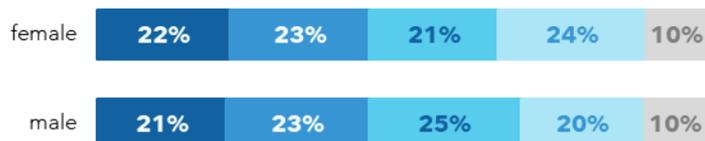
There are no differences in such expectations between women and men respondents and only minimal differences across age groups except for respondents aged 60 or above, who are least likely to expect moderate or severe impacts.

LIVELIHOODS | Future livelihood impacts

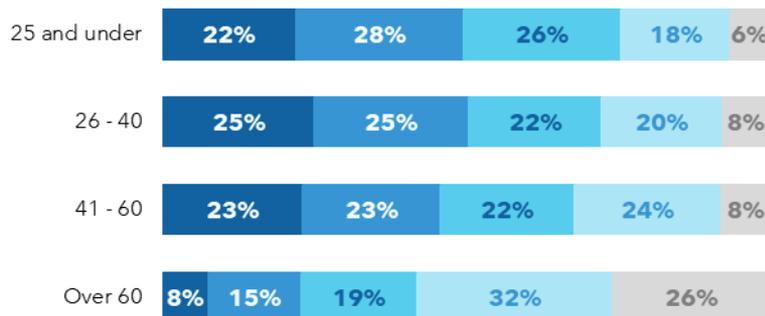
How do you expect your livelihood will be impacted as a result of disruptions from COVID-19?

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

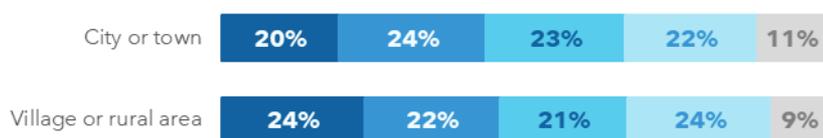
By sex



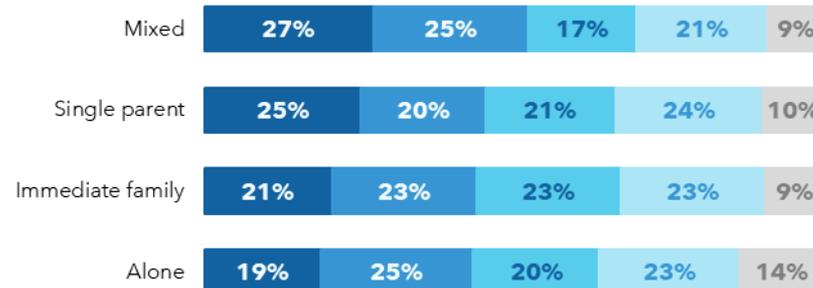
By age group



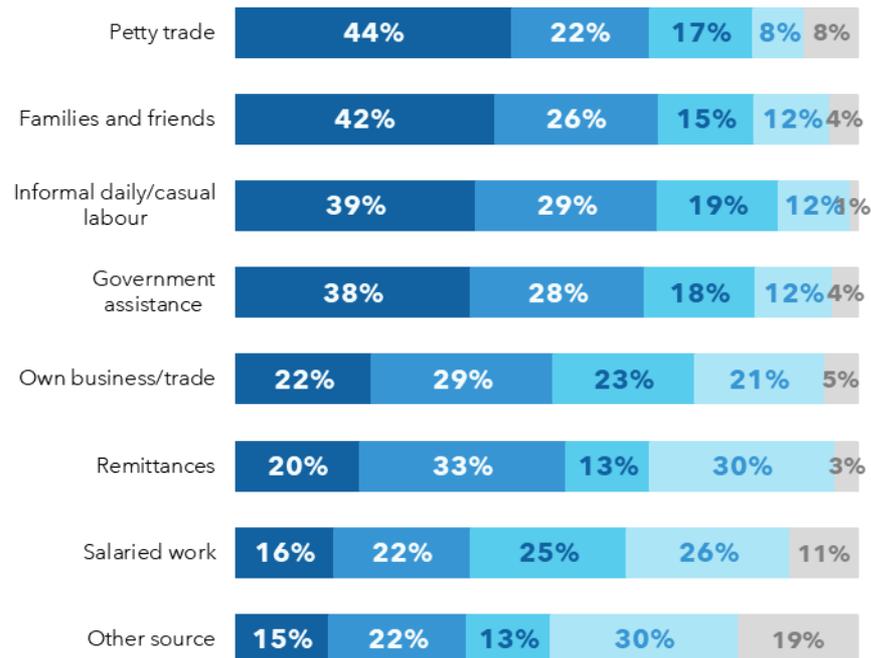
By urban/rural location



By household composition



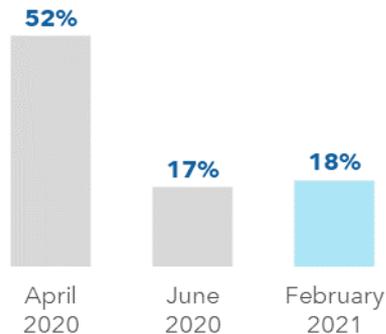
By income sources



MARKETS | Access

- ▶ One in five households are still experiencing difficulties in accessing markets due to COVID-19.

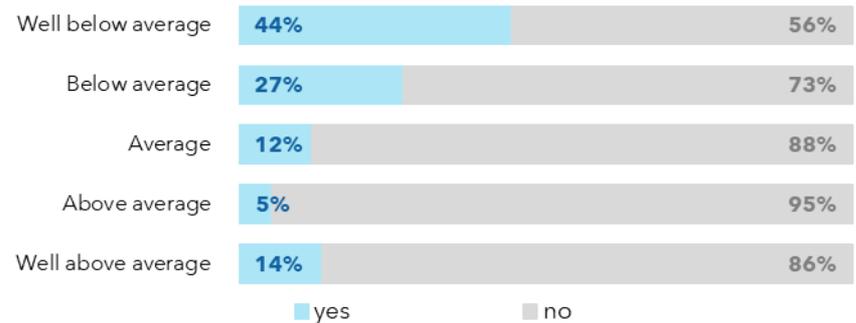
Respondents unable to access markets in the 7 days prior to the survey



COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus are still impacting market access, with 18% of respondents reporting that they could not access stores and markets at some point in the seven days prior to the February survey. This is much lower than in April 2020 (52%), when a 24-hour curfew was in effect, but remains very similar to the levels reported during the June 2020 survey (17%). In comparison with the regional average (30%), fewer respondents reported issues with market access.

Clear differences were found across age groups, household composition, income levels and income sources. Younger respondents faced a time when they were unable to access markets more often than older respondents. Those living in mixed households and single parents also reported problems in accessing markets more frequently than those living alone or with immediate family.

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



Respondents reporting well below average income levels experienced the greatest difficulties in accessing markets (44%), compared to 5-14% for respondents with average or higher income. In addition, those with less stable income sources (petty trade, informal daily/casual labour, support from family and friends, and government assistance) more frequently indicated that they experienced a time when they were unable to access markets compared to respondents with salaried income or income from their own business. Furthermore, 28% of respondents working in the tourism and hospitality sector indicated a time when they could not access markets compared to 8-16% of respondents working in other sectors.

There were no significant differences found between women and men in accessing markets.

MARKETS | Access

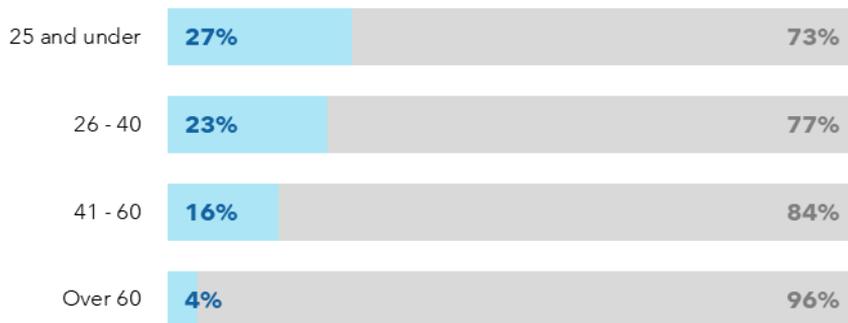
In the past 7 days, was there a time when your household could not access the markets?

■ yes ■ no

By sex



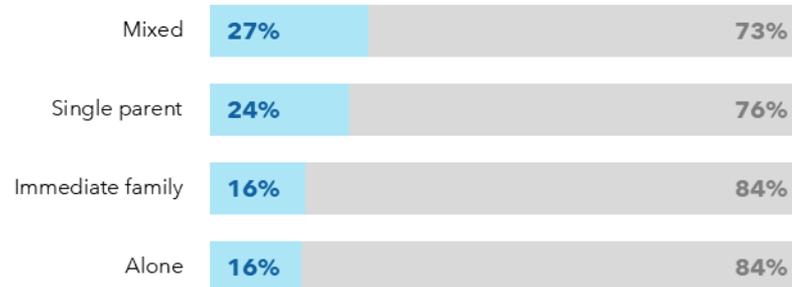
By age group



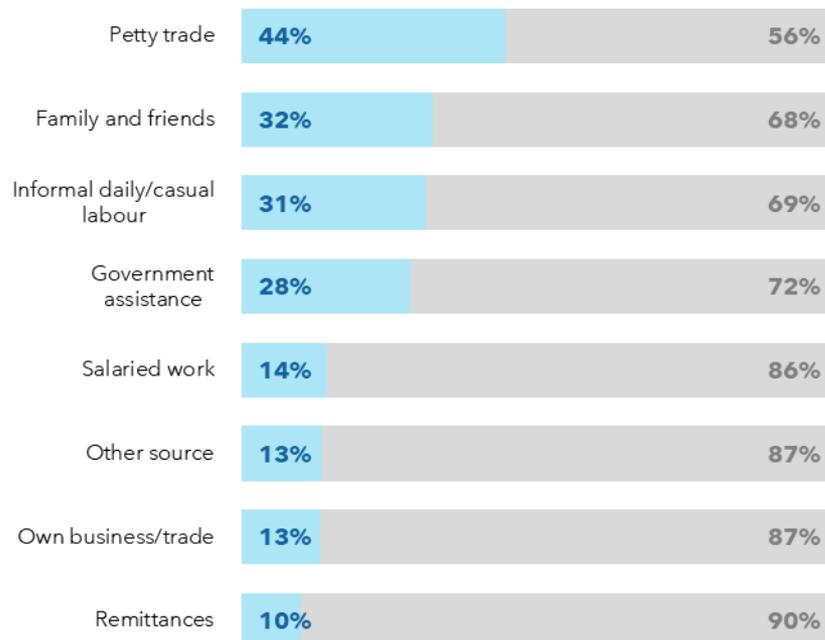
By urban/rural location



By household composition



By main income source

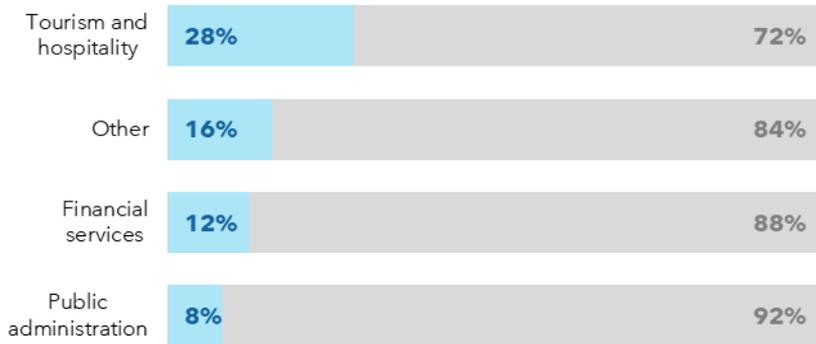


MARKETS | Access

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

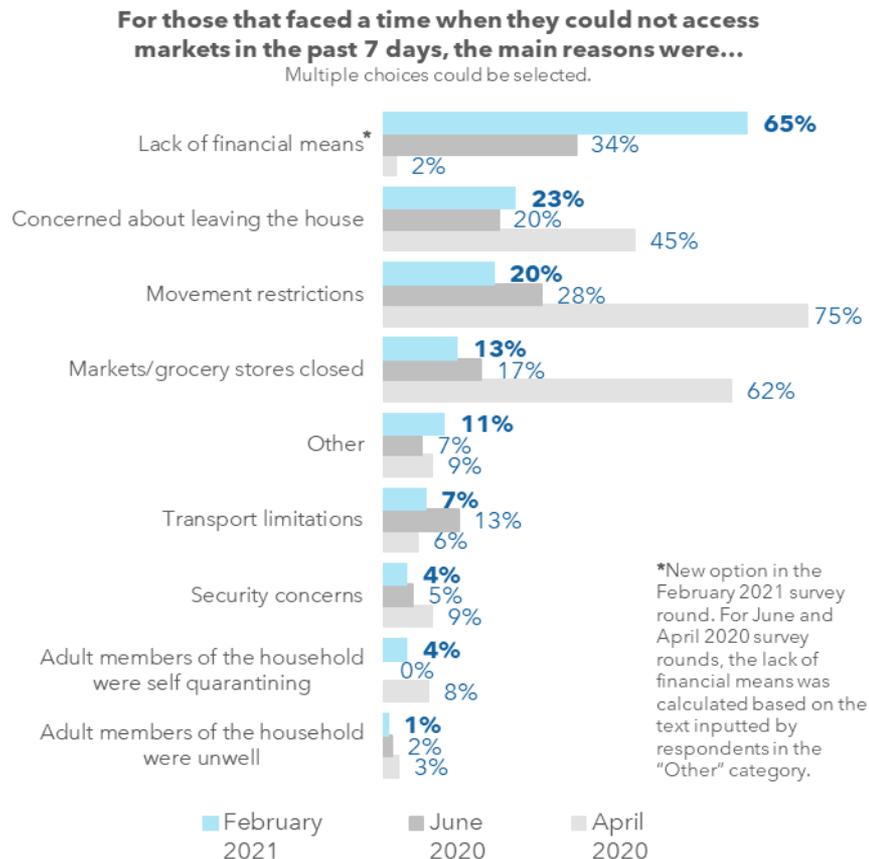
■ yes ■ no

By income sector



MARKETS | Reasons for limited market access

- ▶ Lack of financial means is currently the main limiting factor to market access.



In April 2020, movement restrictions, store closures and concerns about leaving the house were the main factors influencing market access. Over time, these concerns have become less widespread.

Lack of financial means is overwhelmingly reported as the main reason for limited market access, cited by 65% of those who faced a time when they could not access markets in the week prior to the survey. This is a significant increase since April and June 2020 when respectively 2% and 34% of the respondents cited lack of money as the main issue in market access. While financial constraints are largely the main reason for limited market access in Barbados, it is affecting a smaller proportion of those unable to access markets than in the region, where on average 84% of respondents cited lack of financial means as the main issue limiting market access.

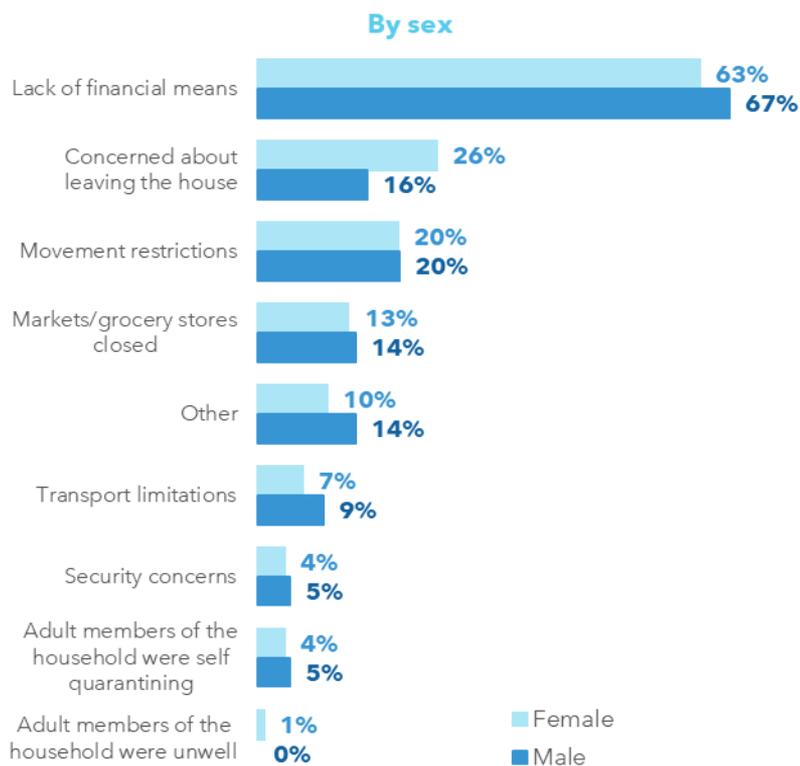
There were notable differences across income levels and income sources. Almost all respondents who described their income level as being well below average reported financial limitations as the main reason for not being able to access markets (92%), compared to 13-14% of those with above and well above average income. For the latter, the main reasons for limited market access were store closures, movement restrictions, and concerns about leaving the house due to the virus. Correspondingly, those with less stable income sources (petty trade, informal daily/casual labour, support from family and friends, and government assistance) more frequently indicated financial constraints in limiting access to markets compared to respondents with salaried income or income from their own business. Differences were also observed across age groups. Respondents under 60 more frequently cited lack of financial means as a key challenge (58-74%) compared to those over 60 (25%), for whom the main challenge in accessing markets were store closures (38%).

The differences between men and women were not significant except for concerns about leaving the house. More women (26%) cited this as a limitation for market access compared to men (16%).

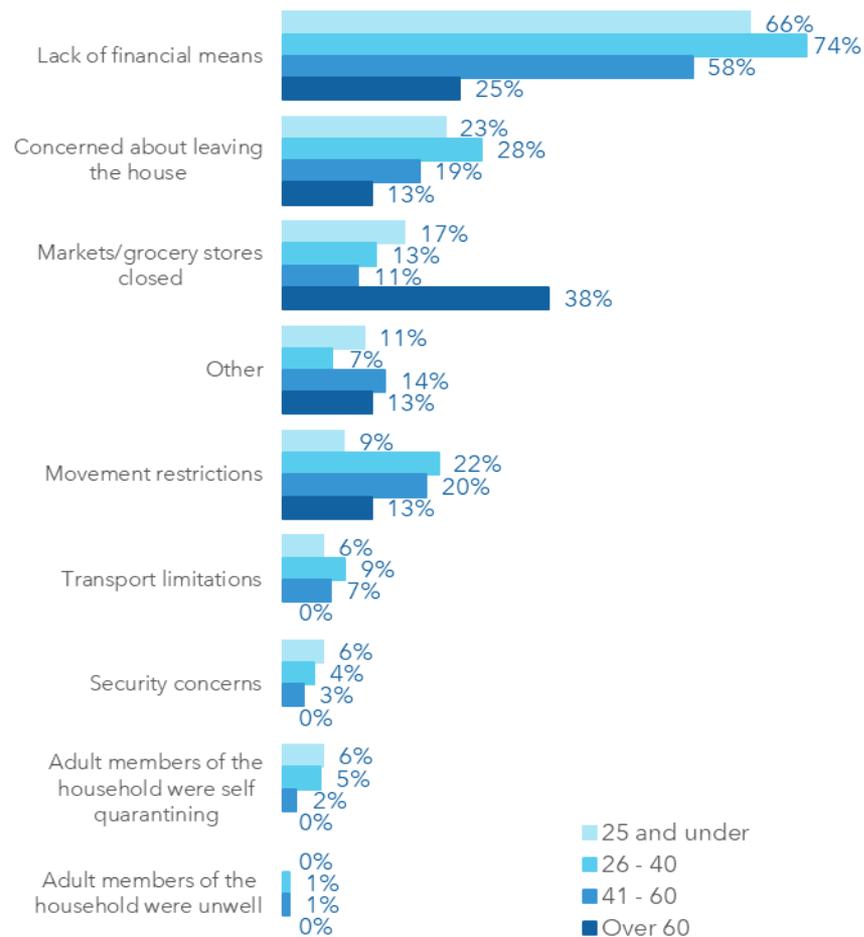
MARKETS | Reasons for limited market access

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.



By age group

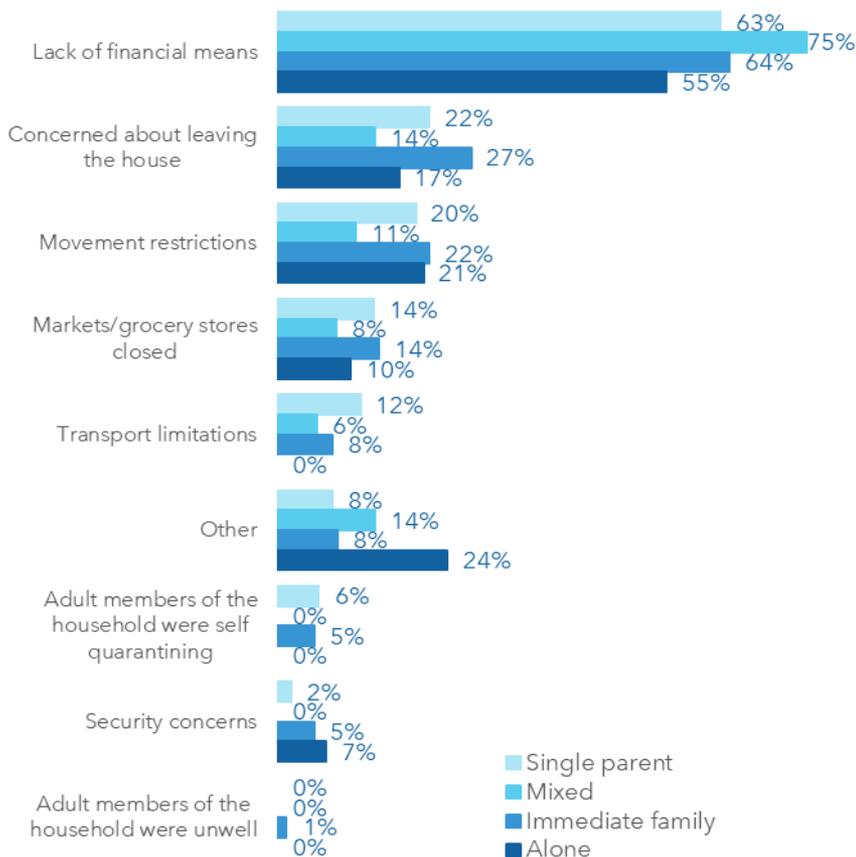


MARKETS | Reasons for limited market access

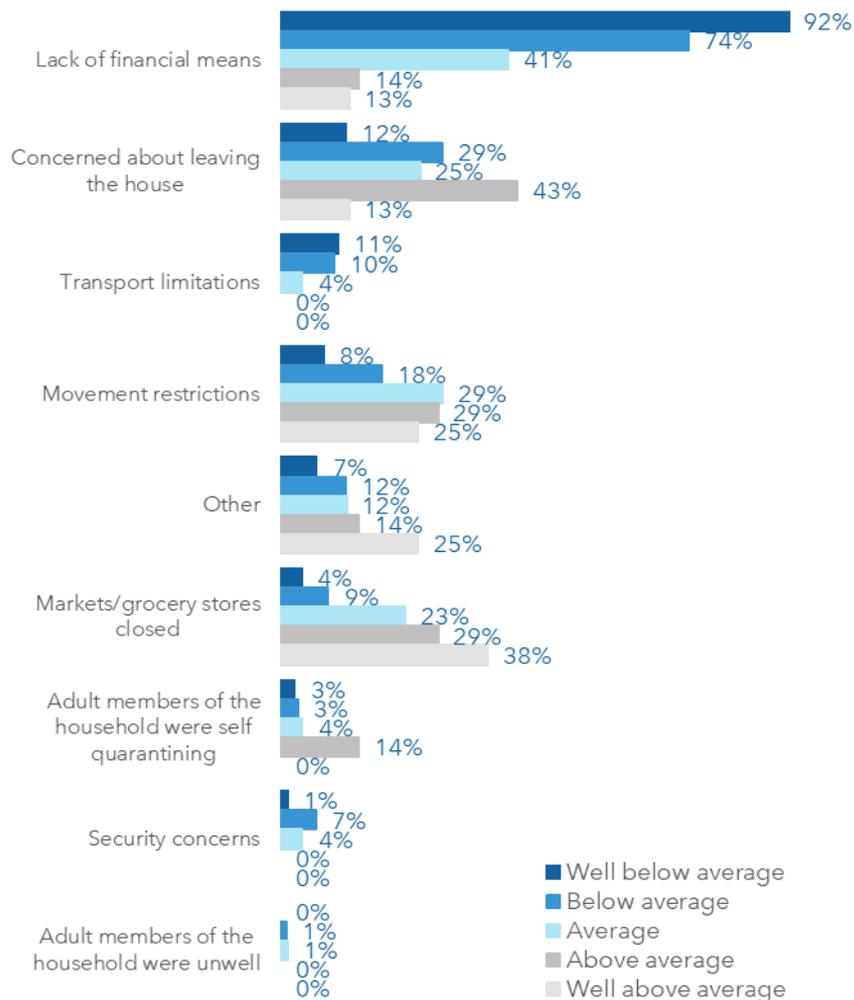
For those that faced a time when they could not access markets in the past 7 days, the main reasons were...

Multiple choices could be selected.

By household composition



By perceived income level

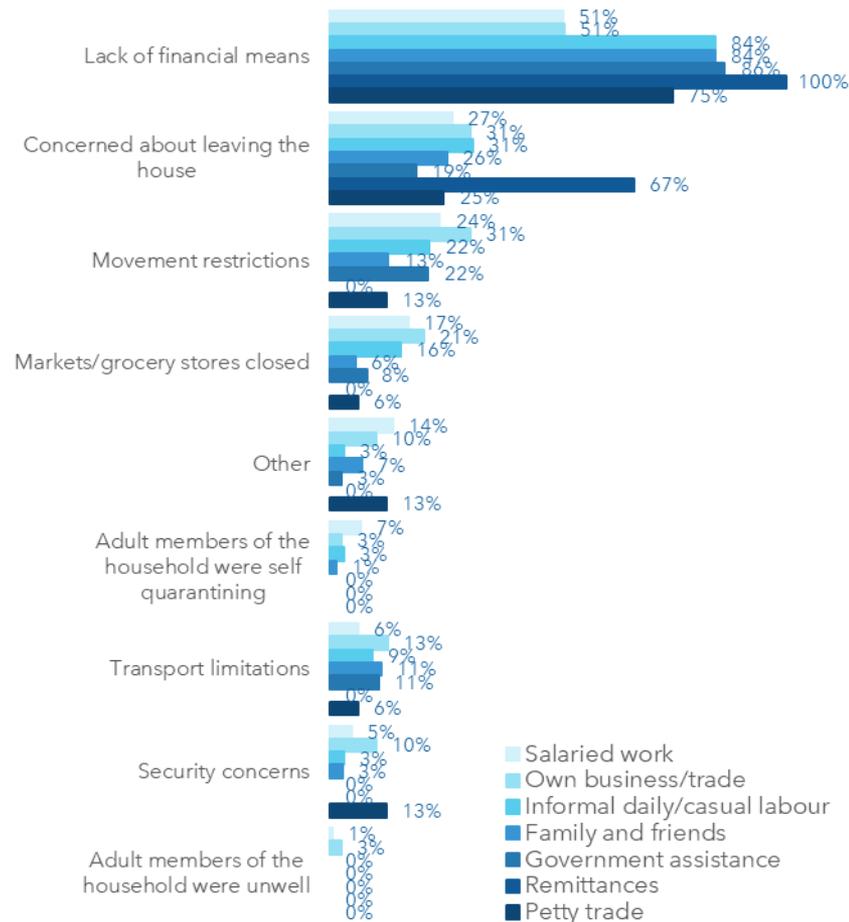


MARKETS | Reasons for limited market access

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

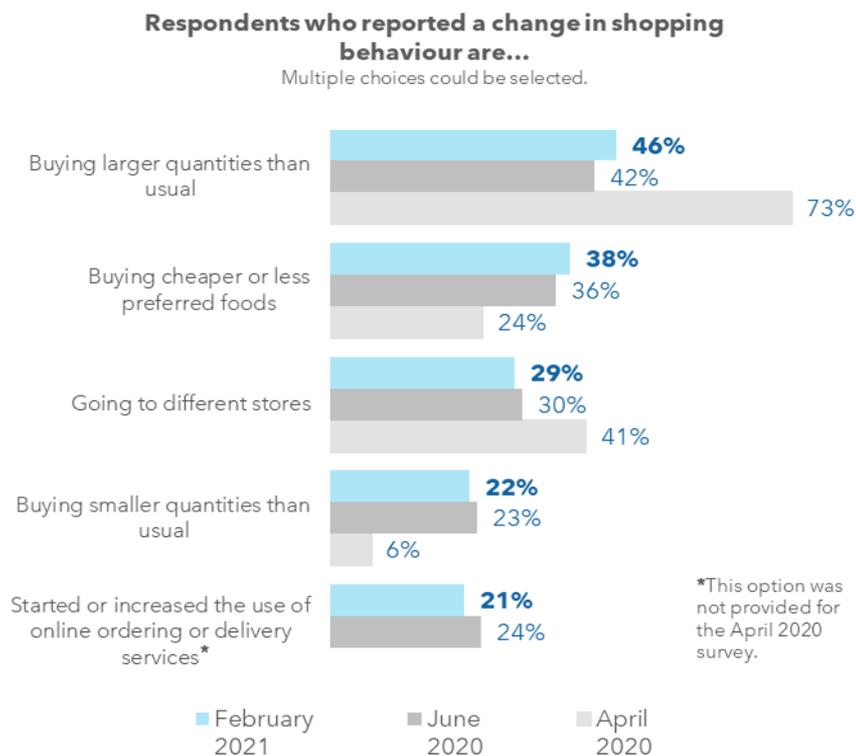
Multiple choices could be selected.

By main income source



MARKETS | Shopping behaviour

- ▶ Respondents continue to buy larger quantities of food, but they are also more frequently buying cheaper or less preferred foods than at the beginning of the pandemic.



The pandemic has changed how people shop, but these changes have evolved over time. Many respondents (79%) have changed their shopping behaviour compared to before the pandemic, which is slightly less than in June and April 2020 (84% and 85% respectively).

How people are changing their shopping appears to be following the June 2020 pattern, with 46% buying larger quantities and 38% buying cheaper or less preferred foods compared to before the pandemic. This is in contrast with April 2020, when by far the most cited change was buying larger quantities (73%) – possibly to deal with curfews and to reduce the need to shop frequently. It also differs from the trends in the Caribbean, where the most common changes in shopping behavior are buying cheaper foods (46%) and smaller quantities (32%). Almost half of the respondents in Barbados are spending less time shopping than before the pandemic.

While differences in shopping behaviour were not significant across sex and household composition, younger respondents were more likely to buy cheaper or less preferred foods, go to different stores and buy smaller quantities when compared to older age groups.

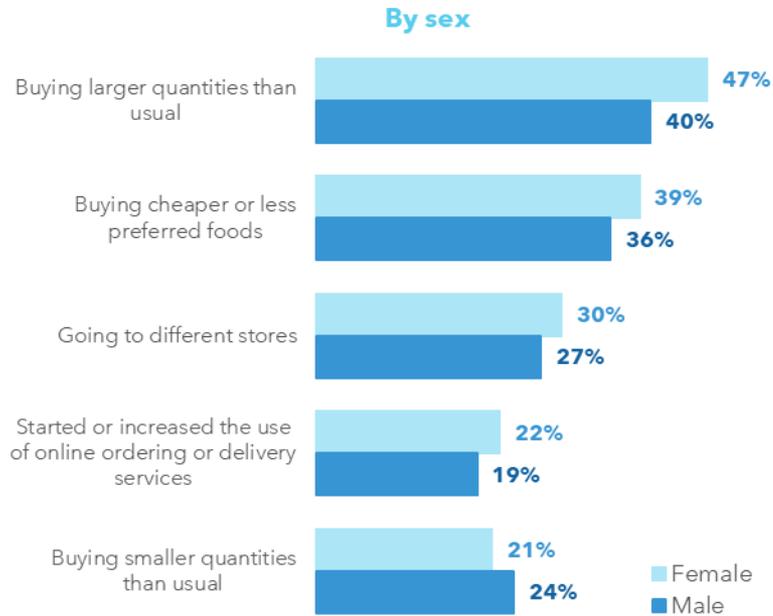
The most notable differences in shopping behaviour were across income level. Respondents with lower income resorted to buying cheaper foods and smaller quantities (60% and 36% respectively for those with well below average income), while those with higher income reported buying larger quantities and increasingly relying on online delivery services (73% and 56% respectively for those with well above average income). This is also reflected across income sources: respondents with less stable income sources more frequently indicated buying cheaper foods and smaller quantities compared to respondents with salaried income or income from their own business. The latter more often reported buying larger quantities and relying on online delivery.

"Access to essential items not because you don't have money but the long lines and crowds I prefer not to be around the crowds." - Female, 37 years

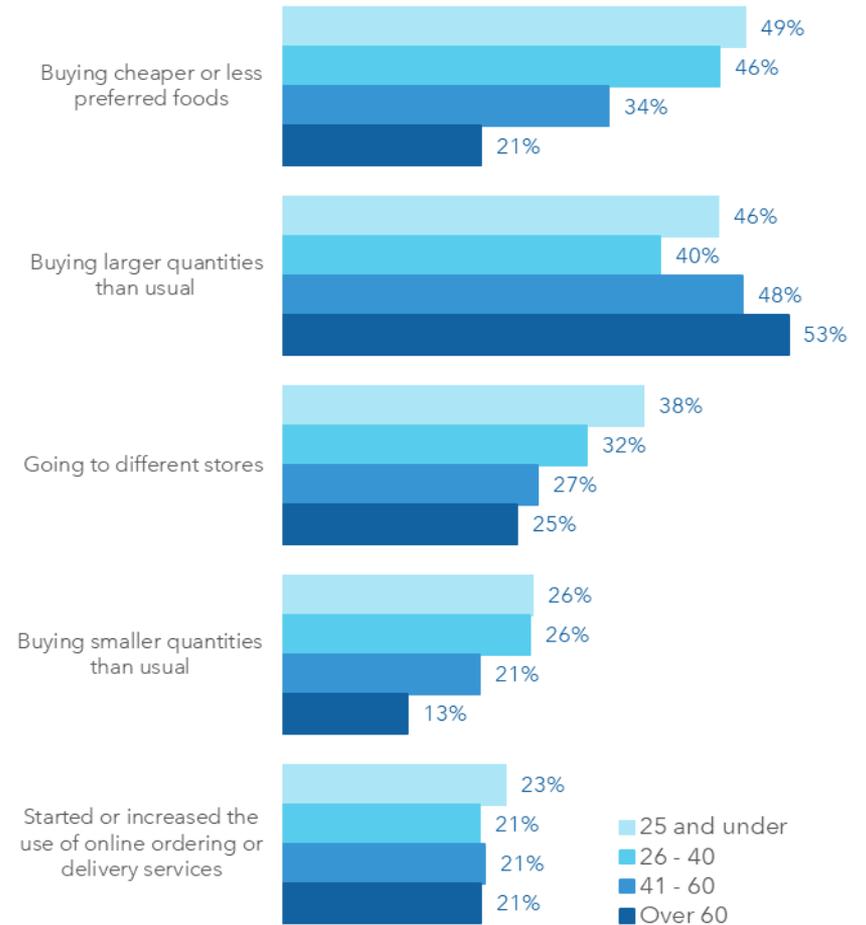
MARKETS | Shopping behaviour

Respondents who reported a change in shopping behaviour are...

Multiple choices could be selected.



By age group

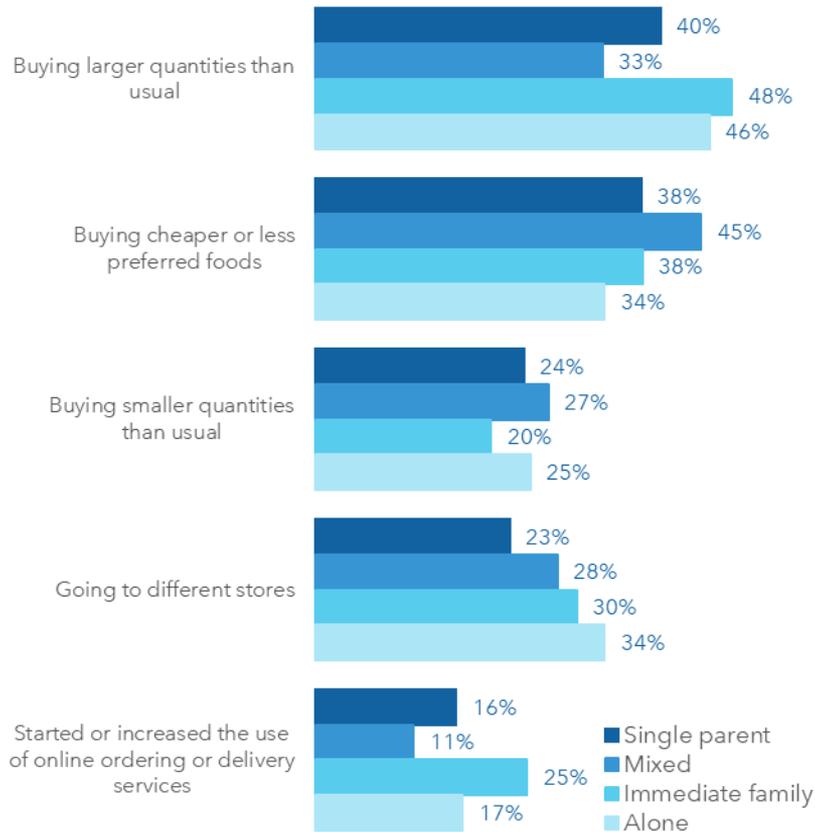


MARKETS | Shopping behaviour

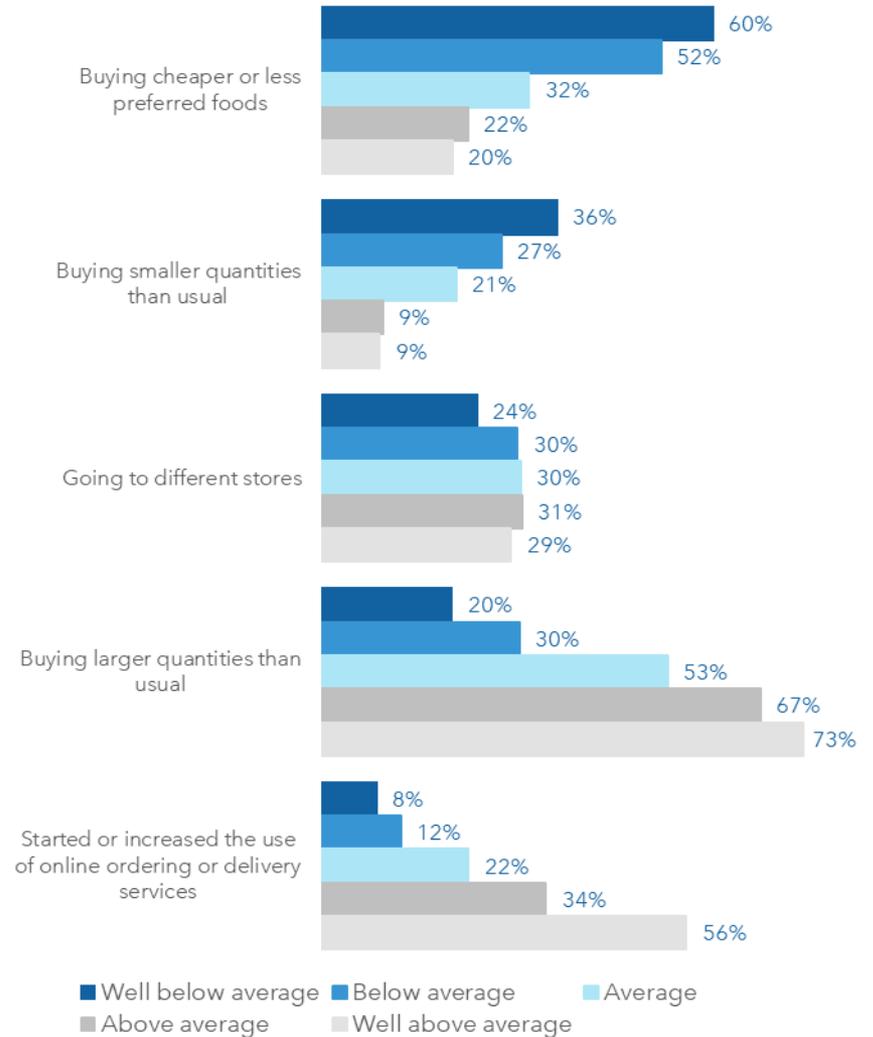
Respondents who reported a change in shopping behaviour are...

Multiple choices could be selected.

By household composition



By perceived income level

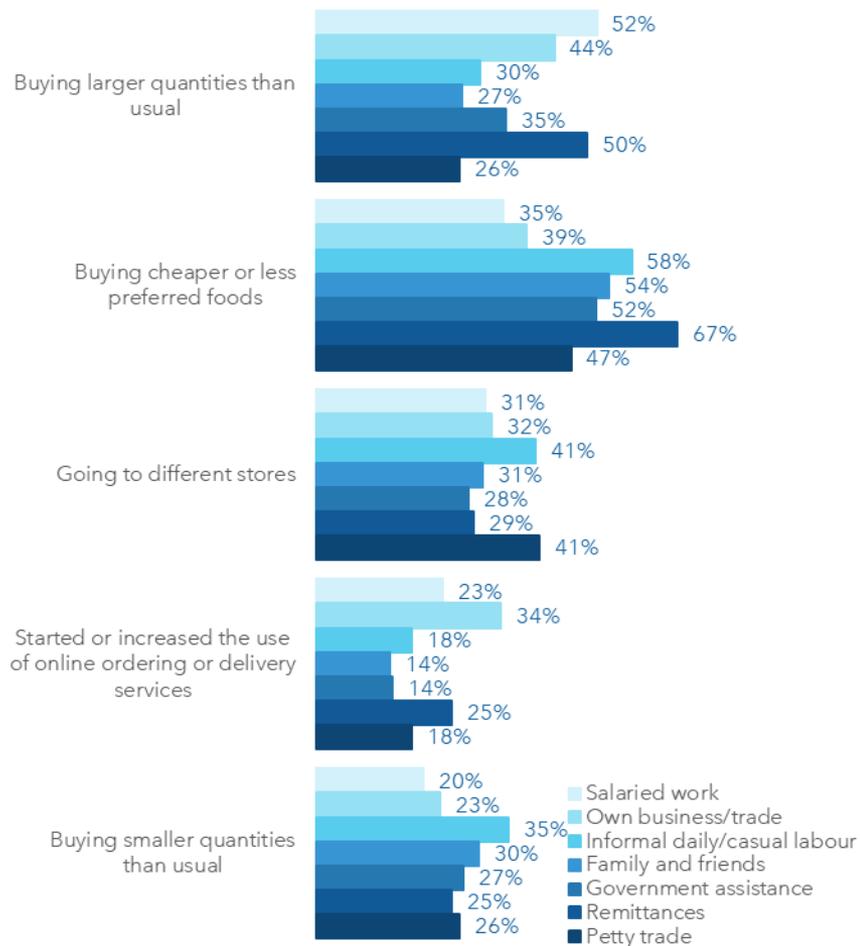


MARKETS | Shopping behaviour

Respondents who reported a change in shopping behaviour are...

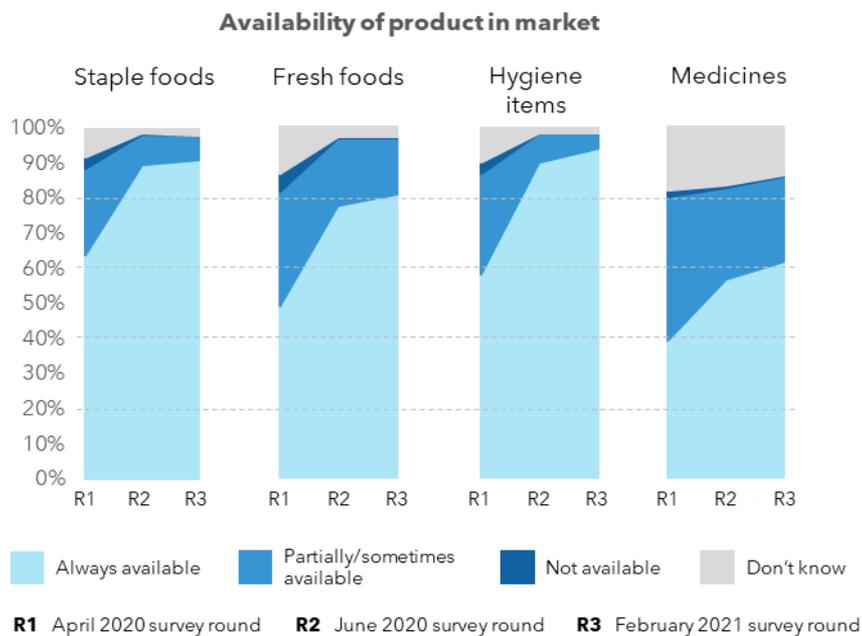
Multiple choices could be selected.

By main income source



MARKETS | Availability

- ▶ Availability of key products – such as staple foods and hygiene items - has steadily increased since the pandemic began, but fresh foods and medicines are still not fully accessible.



The availability of key products has improved consistently since the beginning of the pandemic. While in April 2020, 28-43% of respondents indicated that food, hygiene items and medicines were not always available, that percentage has decreased in February 2021 - but some items are still not always available in stores and markets. When compared to the Caribbean region, the availability of all key items is slightly better in Barbados.

The reported availability of staple foods and hygiene items has increased substantially between April and June 2020. Their availability continues to increase, with 91% and 94% of respondents in February 2021 indicating that staple foods and hygiene items respectively are always available in their markets. However, 7% of respondents continue to report partial availability of staple foods and 4% report partial availability of hygiene items.

As in previous surveys, fresh foods are marginally less available than staple foods, but their availability appears to be increasing with 81% of respondents reporting that fresh foods are always available. However, 16% of respondents continue to indicate that fresh foods are only sometimes available.

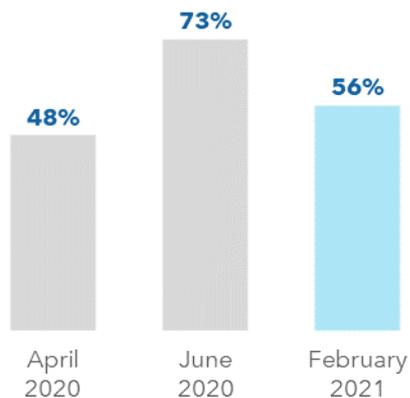
Although availability of medicines appears to be improving with 62% of respondents reporting that medicines are always available in February 2021, 24% of respondents still indicate that medicines are not always available. For all items, less than 1% of respondents described items as being unavailable.

“ Concerns regarding the non-availability of some specific medications ” - Female, age unknown

MARKETS | Food prices

- ▶ More than half of respondents (56%) continue to report increases in food prices.

Respondents who reported an increase in food prices over the 2 weeks prior to the survey

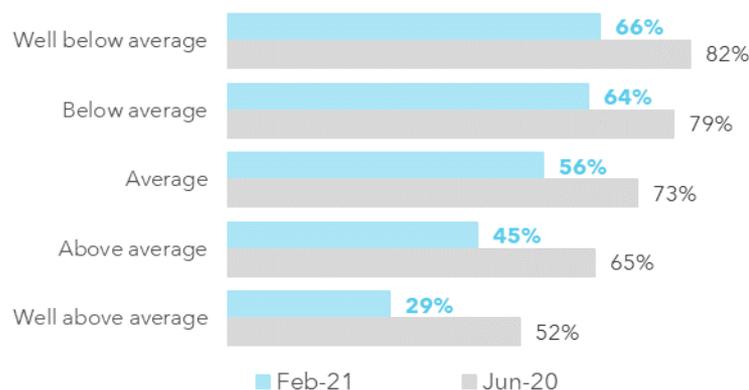


Food prices continue to be reported as increasing, with more than half of the respondents (56%) indicating an increase in the cost of food over the two weeks prior to the survey. This compares favourably with the June 2020 survey when 73% of respondents observed an increase in food prices, but is still higher than in April 2020 when 48% indicated the increase.

The percentage of respondents who identified an increase in food prices in Barbados is substantially lower than in the Caribbean region where on average 71% of respondents reported an increase in the cost of food.

While there are no stark differences between those reporting food price increases who live in urban areas (52%) or rural areas (58%), significant differences can be observed across income levels.

Respondents who reported an increase in food prices over the 2 weeks prior to the survey
By perceived income level and survey round



Respondents with lower income levels reported increases in food prices more frequently than others. Two-thirds of respondents with below and well below average income indicated an increase in food prices, compared to 29-45% of respondents with above and well above average income. This could potentially be explained by having fewer shopping options or that they are more sensitive to price changes given limited income levels.

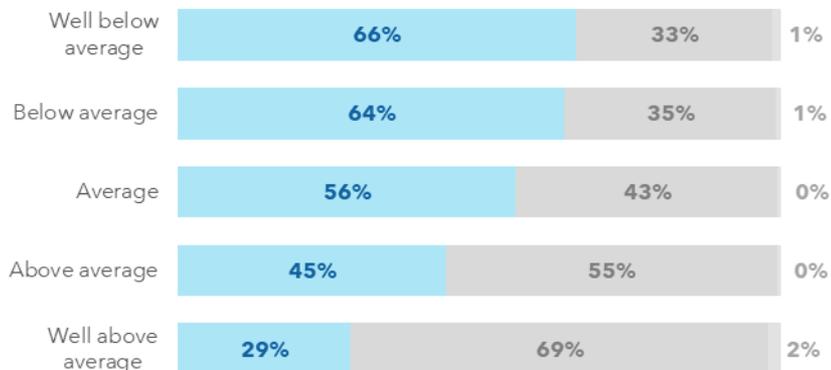
"I am unemployed and there is no money coming in some days there is nothing to eat, have to get from my mother at times so it really hard . Just have to take what we get to adapt." - Female, 38 years

MARKETS | Food prices

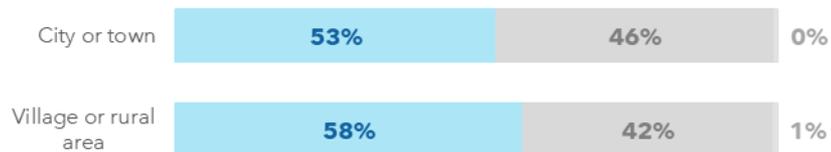
Respondents who reported an increase in food prices over the 2 weeks prior to the survey

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

By perceived income level



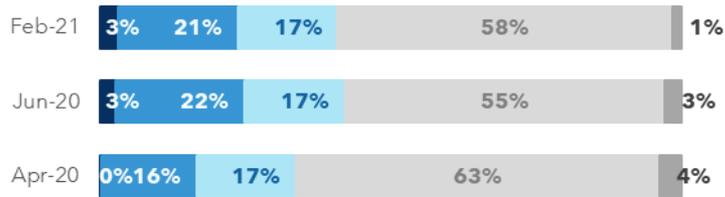
By urban/rural location



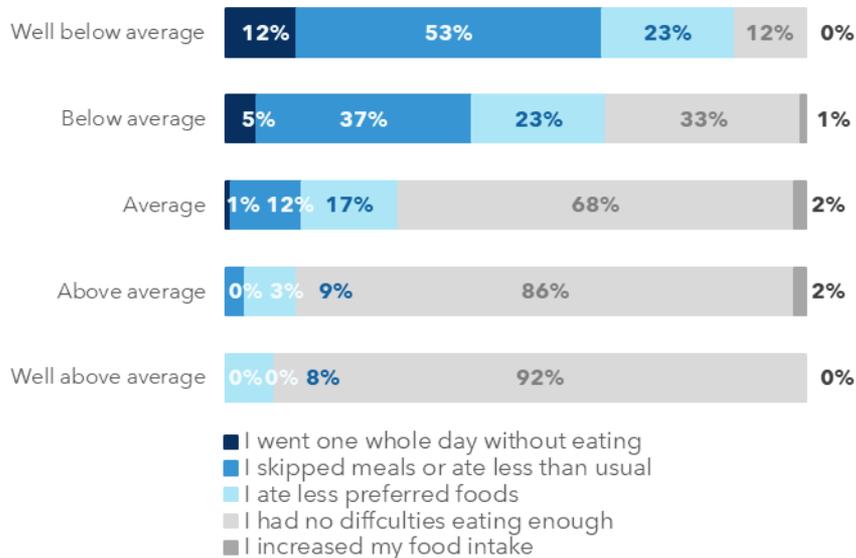
FOOD SECURITY | Food consumption

- Impacts on food consumption are widespread, particularly among lower income households.

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



By perceived income level



COVID-19 continues to have an impact on people’s diets, with 21% of respondents skipping meals or eating less than usual during the week leading up to the survey, and 3% going a whole day without eating. Another 17% of respondents reported eating less preferred foods. These findings are mostly in line with the findings from the surveys conducted in April and June 2020.

Differences across income groups continue to be the most striking. Of those respondents describing their household income as ‘well below average’, 53% skipped meals or ate less than usual during the week prior to the survey and another 12% went an entire day without eating. By contrast, 92% of respondents with a perceived income of well above average reported no difficulty eating enough with the remaining 8% eating less preferred foods.

Consistent with previous survey rounds, households with informal sources of income (petty trade, casual labor) and those relying on external support from government or family and friends appear to be the most affected. Of those engaged in petty trade, 46% reported skipping meals or eating less than usual, followed by 42% for those relying on government assistance. While those with salaried incomes or their own business are less widely affected, 16-17% of these respondents reported skipping meals or eating less than usual.

Respondents employed in the tourism/hospitality industry appear to be particularly affected, with 33% skipping meals or eating less than usual, compared to 8-9% of those working in financial services or public administration.

FOOD SECURITY | Food consumption

While differences in the impacts on food consumption are most striking across income levels and sources, impacts also vary in terms of age and household composition.

Respondents under 40 years of age were more likely to reduce their food intake than respondents from older age groups. Of those respondents aged 40 and younger, 28-29% reported skipping meals or eating less than usual, compared to 18% of those aged 41 to 60 years and 4% of those over 60 years of age.

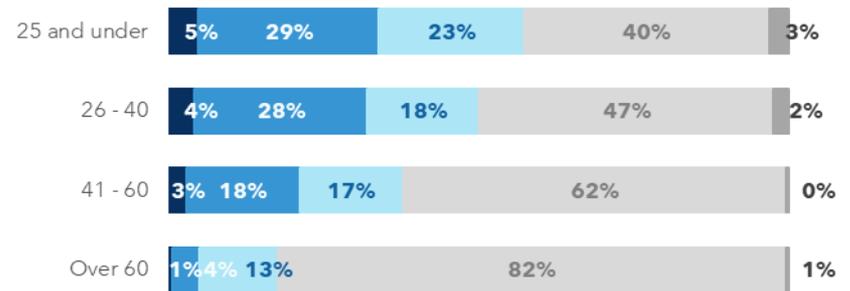
While differences across household types appear less pronounced, respondents from mixed households appear to be the most widely impacted, with 33% skipping meals or eating less than usual. This is followed by single-parent households (22%) and those consisting of immediate family members (19%).

There are no significant differences in the impacts on food consumption when comparing female and male respondents or respondents from urban and rural areas.

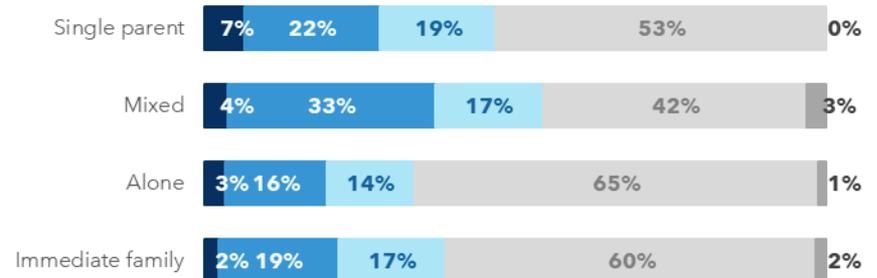
Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days?

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

By age group



By household composition

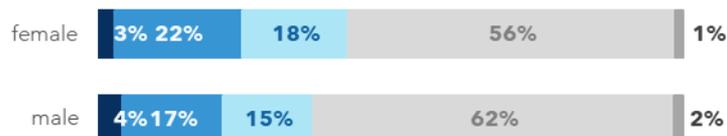


FOOD SECURITY | Food consumption

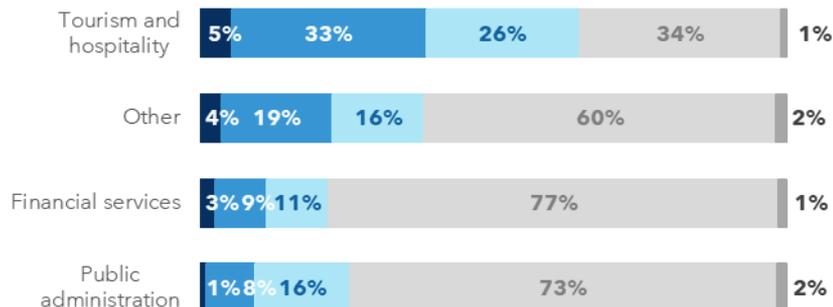
Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days?

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

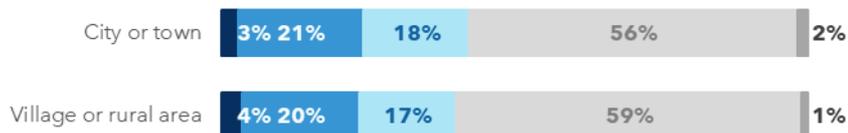
By sex



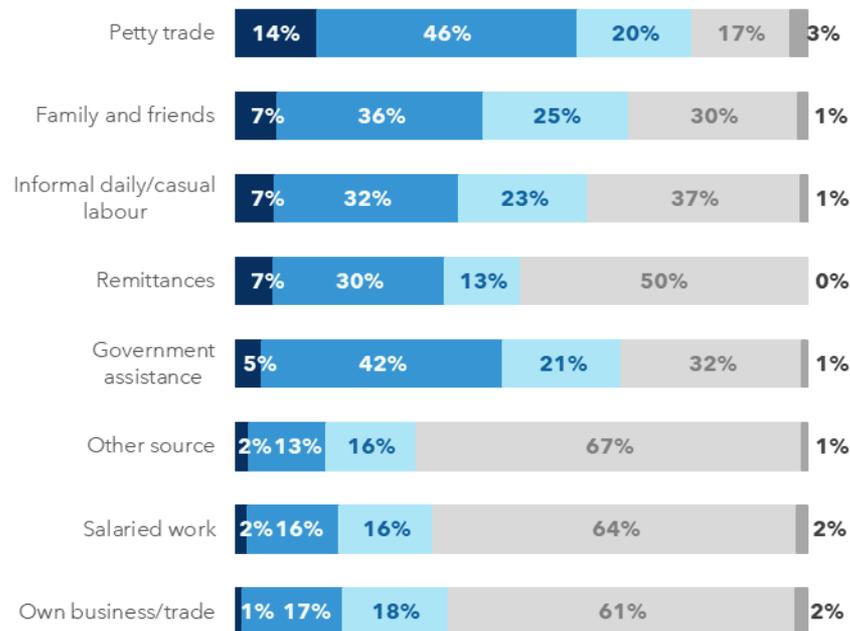
By income sector



By urban/rural location



By income sources

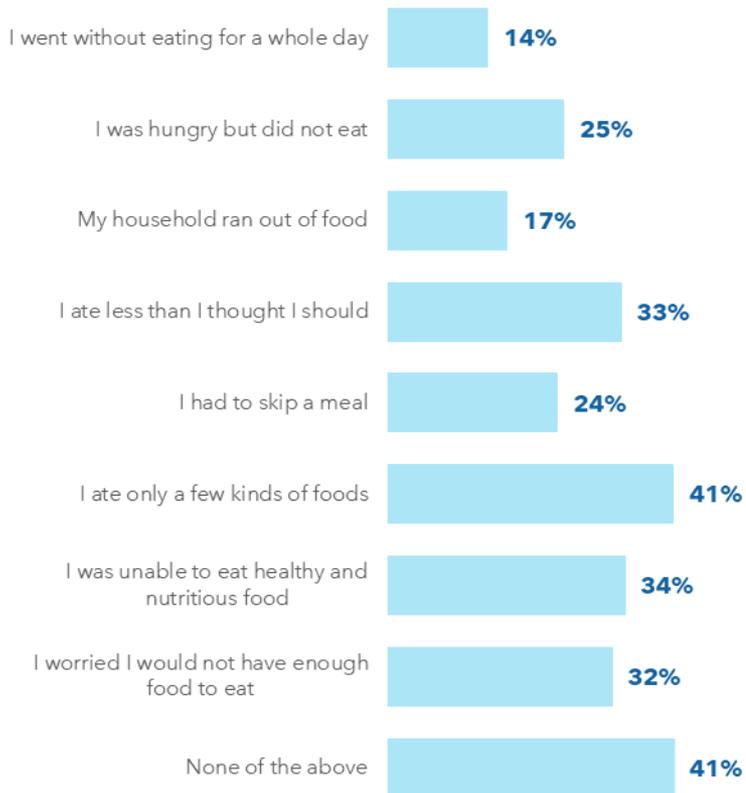


FOOD SECURITY | Food insecurity experience

- ▶ A significant proportion of respondents is struggling to meet their food and nutritional needs on a monthly basis.

Was there a time in the past 30 days when you experienced the following?

Respondents were asked to select "yes" or "no" for each statement. Numbers shown are the percentage of respondents selecting "yes" for each of the statements.



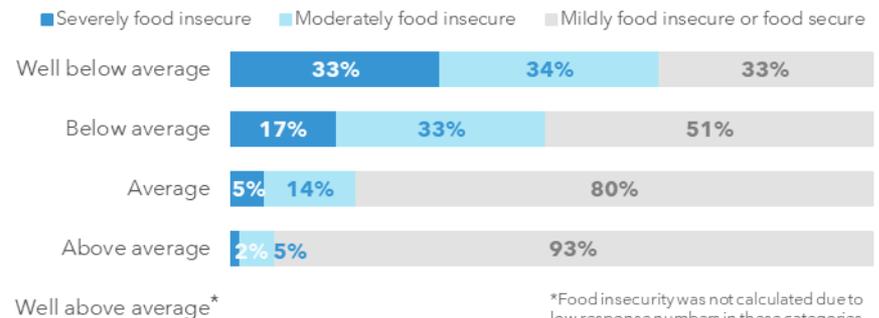
The Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) was used to provide a picture of food insecurity experienced by respondents during the 30 days preceding the survey. The FIES, which is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, is a metric of severity of food insecurity at the household or individual level that relies on people's direct yes/no responses to eight brief questions regarding their access to adequate food during a specified recall period.

When asked about the 30 days leading up to the survey, 14% of respondents reported experiencing a time when they went a whole day without eating. Similarly, 25% of respondents experienced a time when they were hungry but did not eat. Worries about not having enough to eat were reported by 32% of respondents. Nutrition and the variety of foods consumed are also concerning, with 34% of respondents reporting a time when they were unable to eat a healthy and nutritious diet, and 41% reporting a time when they ate only a few kinds of food.

Based on the FIES methodology, it is estimated that 18% of respondents are moderately food insecure and additional 10% severely food insecure. For more information on the FIES methodology, see [page 59](#).

Prevalence rates of food insecurity by perceived household income

Based on FIES methodology.



FOOD SECURITY | Food insecurity experience

Food insecurity is not uniformly experienced by respondents. When looking at responses to the eight FIES items, the differences across income levels are again most striking.

Households with perceived incomes well below average appear the most widely affected. A third of respondents from these households went an entire day without eating over the 30 days leading up to the survey and over two-thirds faced a time when they ate less than they thought they should. By contrast, 3% of respondents describing their household income as well above average went a day without eating or faced a time when they ate less than they thought they should.

Responses also vary significantly by age groups, with younger respondents experiencing more difficulties in accessing adequate food on a monthly basis. Of respondents aged 25 and younger, 30% went an entire day without eating, compared to 6% of those over 60 years. Likewise, 28% reported a time when they ate less than they thought they should, compared to 3% of those over 60 years of age.

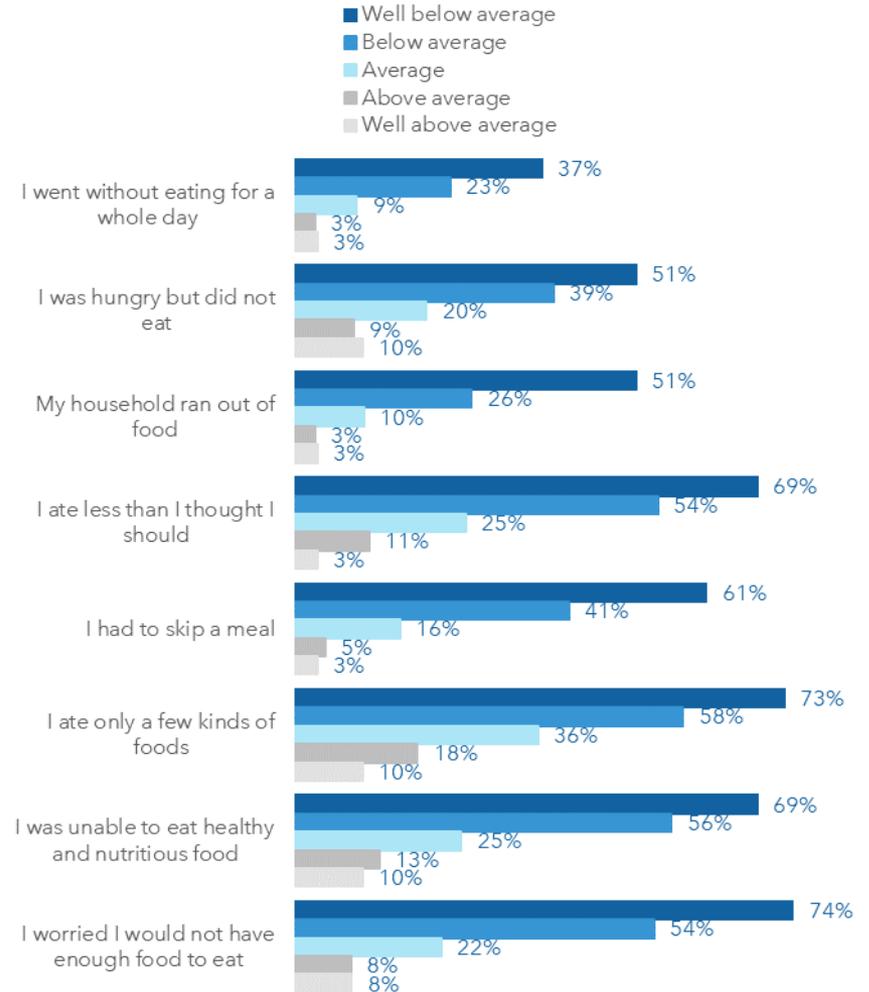
Differences across household types are less striking, but mixed households appear to be the worst off, followed by single-parent households. One-person households, on the other hand, appear to be the least affected. A quarter of respondents from mixed households went an entire day without eating, compared to 10% of respondents who live alone, and 43% reported a time when they ate less than they thought they should, compared to 28% of those living alone.

There are no significant differences in the responses to the FIES items when comparing female and male respondents.

Was there a time in the past 30 days when you experienced the following?

Multiple choices could be selected.

By perceived income level

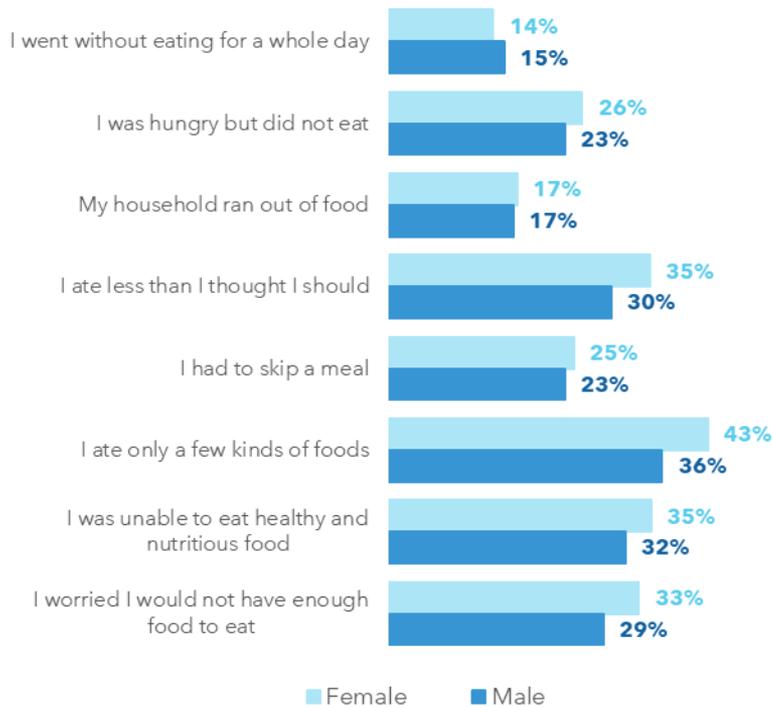


FOOD SECURITY | Food insecurity experience

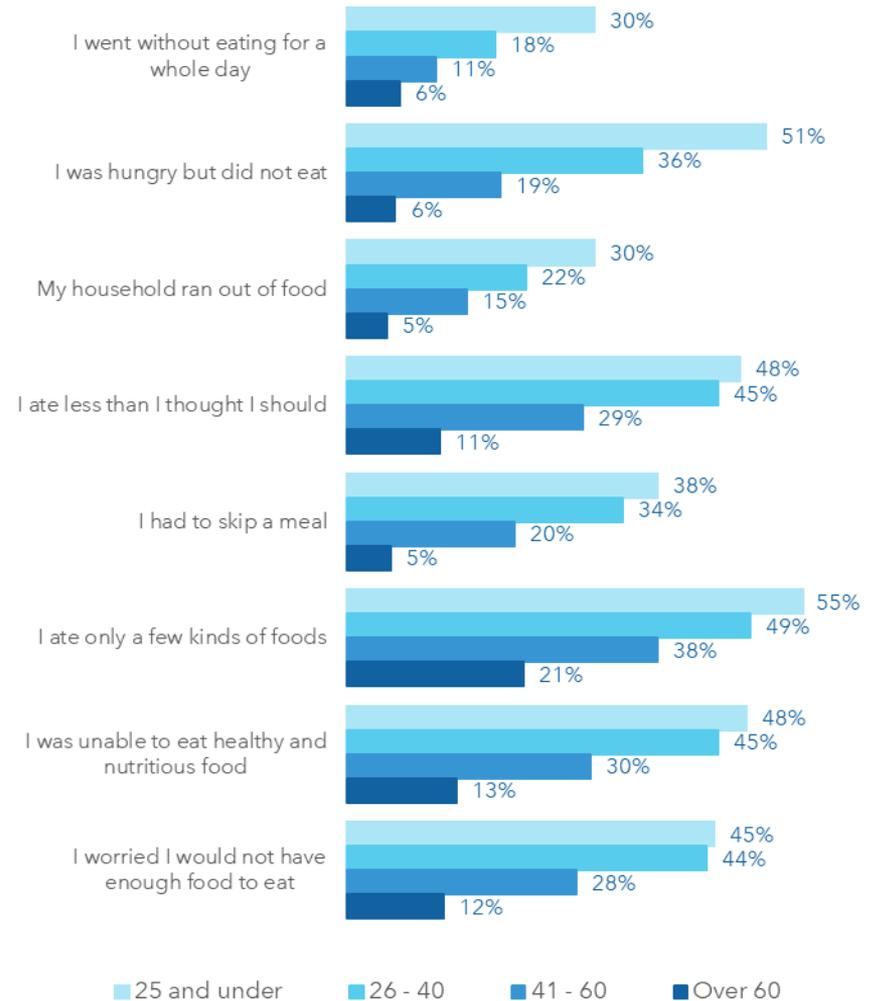
Was there a time in the past 30 days when you experienced the following?

Multiple choices could be selected.

By sex



By age group

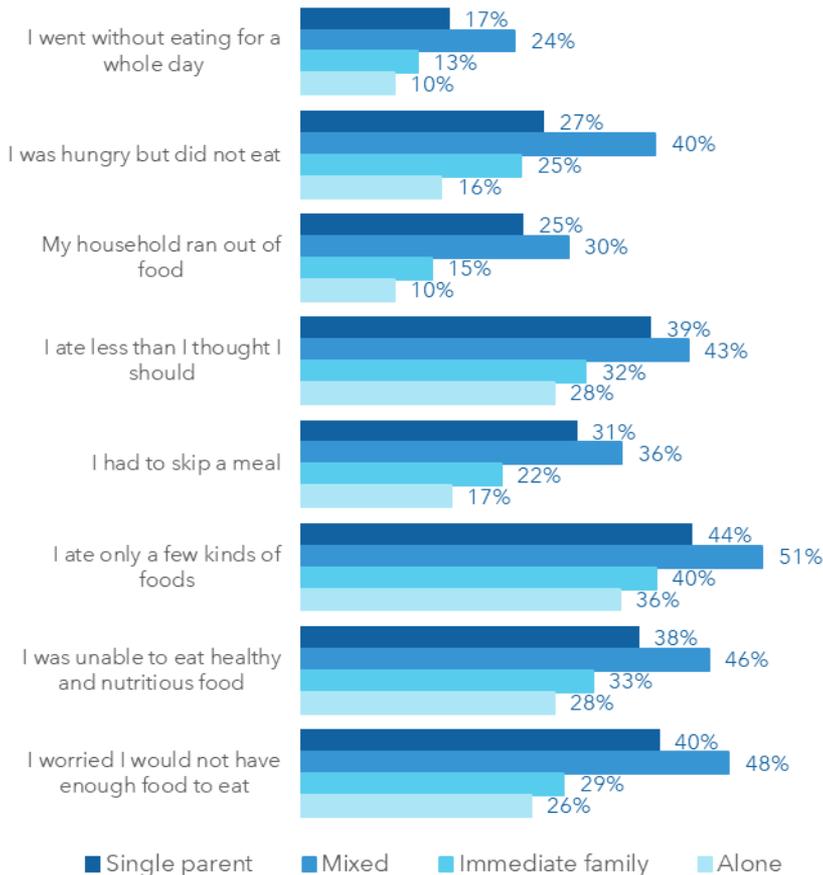


FOOD SECURITY | Food insecurity experience

Was there a time in the past 30 days when you experienced the following?

Multiple choices could be selected.

By household composition



"I have no money and no home. No food and I'm moving around from place to place to shelter." - Female, 28 years

"The gov't here is moving away from in-store shopping and towards ecommerce for food items. Some supermarkets however have minimum quantities for ordering & delivery which, given my reduced income makes purchasing difficult. My current work is in tourism which is non-existent for the foreseeable future." - Female, 41 years

"Unable to obtain usual supply of fresh fruits." - Female, 43 years

"I am concerned about the availability of fresh vegetables and fruits, paper products, meat and gluten free products as I have food allergies. The current economic environment did not allow me to stock up per se so there is concern about what will happen in the coming weeks as we are import. The basic food items are available for now but the reduced hours makes it hard for many persons to access during that short window." - Male, 43 years

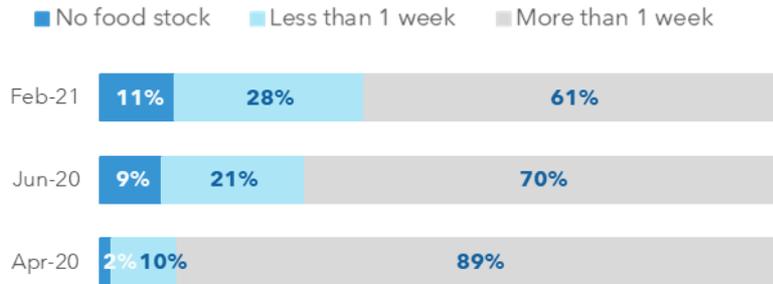
"Not eating as healthy as I am used to, and having to stay indoors with little or no exercise is no good." - Female, 72 years

"Losing my mothers house and had to spread out my family. No job no money no food." - Male, 43 years

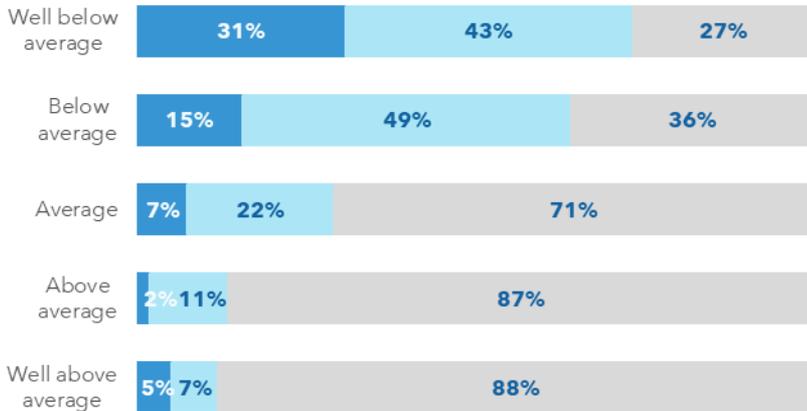
FOOD SECURITY | Food stocks

- ▶ Most households have some supply of food, but increasingly they report a lack of or smaller quantities of food supplies.

Does your household have any food stock?



By perceived income level



Of all respondents, 61% reported having more than a week's worth of food supplies in their household, which is a decrease from 89% in April and 70% in June 2020. The higher share in April 2020 is likely due to respondents stocking up on food supplies in the face of movement restrictions and shop closures that were implemented during that period.

Differences in food stocks seem to mainly reflect disparities in household income, with low-income households tending to have less food supplies than higher income households. Almost a third of households with a perceived household income well below average had no food stocks at all, compared to 7% for households with a perceived average income, and only 27% had more than a week's worth of food supplies, compared to 71% of those with a perceived average income.

Households whose main income comes from salaried labour or their own business/trade tend to have larger food stocks than households that mainly rely on informal income sources or support from government, family or friends.

Food stocks also vary in terms of respondents' age. Respondents in the age groups up to 40 years tend to have smaller food stocks than those from older age groups. Of respondents aged 25 and younger, 16% had no food stocks, compared to 4% of those over 60 years of age.

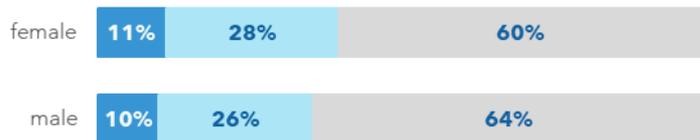
There are no significant differences in household food stocks when comparing women and men or respondents from rural and urban areas.

FOOD SECURITY | Food stocks

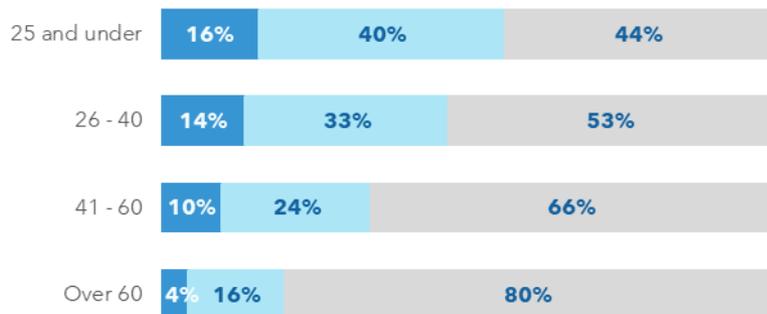
Does your household have any food stock?

■ No food stock ■ Less than 1 week ■ More than 1 week

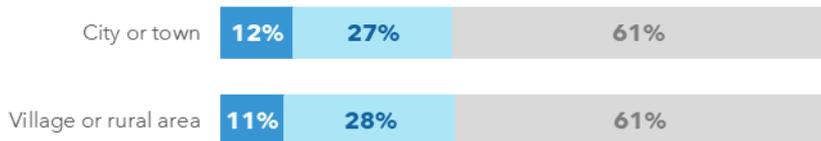
By sex



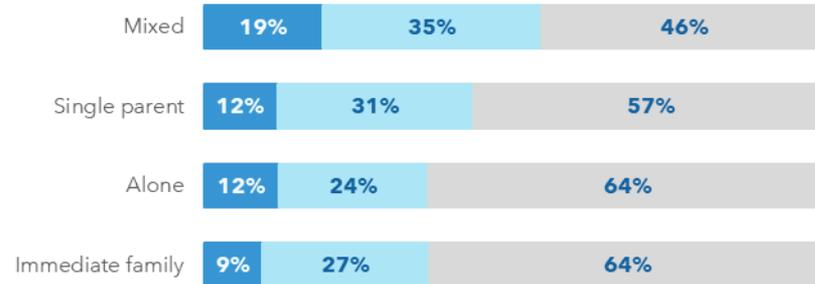
By age group



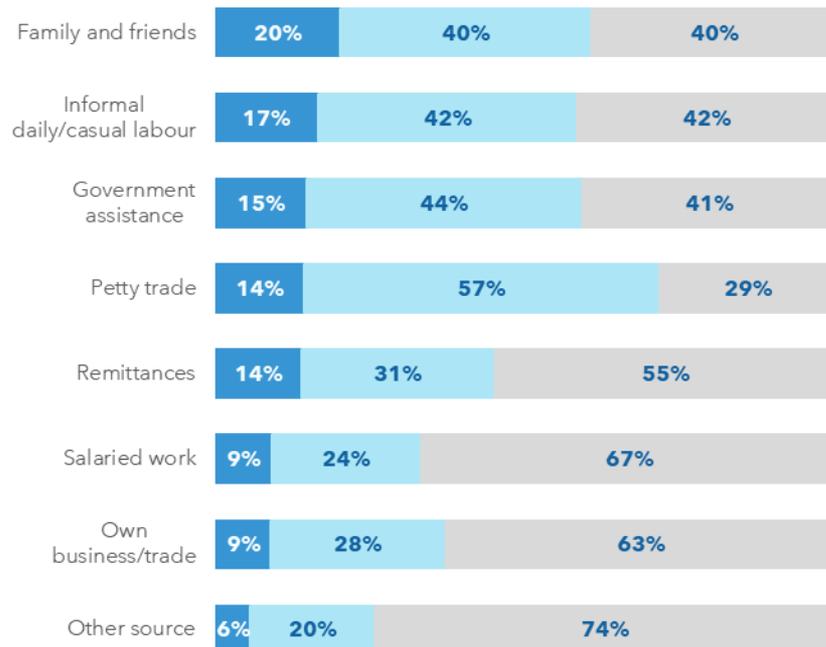
By urban/rural location



By household composition



By income sources



FOOD SECURITY | Coping strategies

- ▶ People are finding ways to meet food needs, but many are doing so at the expense of savings or investing in health, education or long-term income generation.

In this survey round, respondents were asked if in the 30 days prior to the survey they reduced essential non-food expenditures, spent savings or sold productive assets to meet their food needs. Of all respondents, 58% resorted to spending savings, and 33% reduced essential non-food expenditures, such as on education and health. One out of five respondents sold productive assets to meet food or other needs, potentially undermining long-term income generation.

Again, differences across income levels are most striking. Households with a perceived income below or well below average income are the most frequent to resort to these compromises, which could lead to an even greater gap between economically better and worse off households.

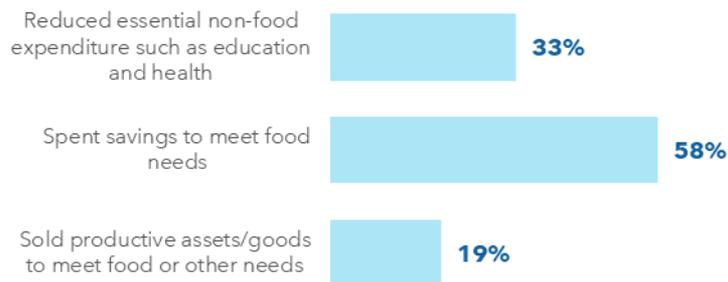
Respondents aged 40 or younger are more likely to spend savings in order to meet food needs when compared to older respondents. Meanwhile, respondents over 60 of age are the least likely to resort to any of these compromises.

Respondents from mixed households are more likely to sell productive assets to meet food or other needs, when compared to one-person households and those consisting of immediate family members.

There are no significant differences when comparing women and men or respondents from rural and urban areas. However, respondents in Barbados are less likely to engage in any of these strategies compared to the regional average.

Households' coping strategies in the 30 days prior to the survey

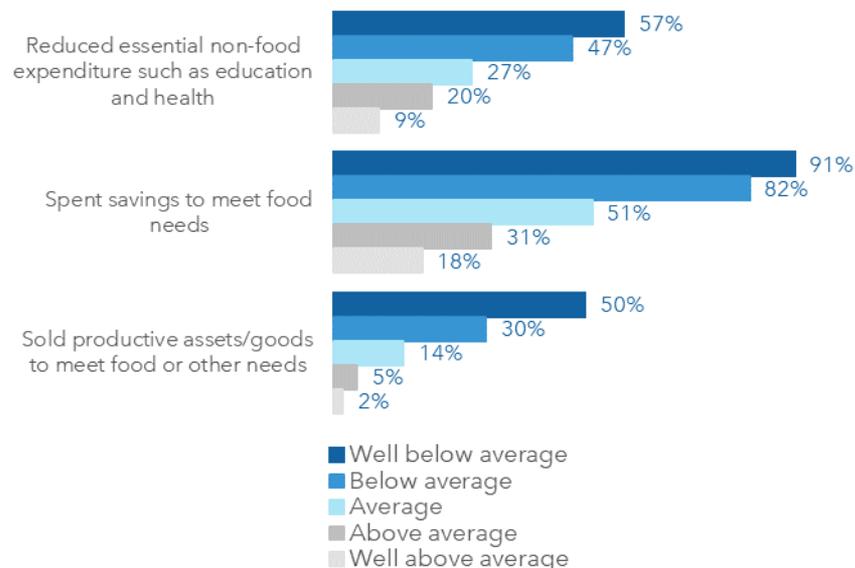
Multiple choices could be selected.



Households' coping strategies in the 30 days prior to the survey

Multiple choices could be selected.

By perceived income level

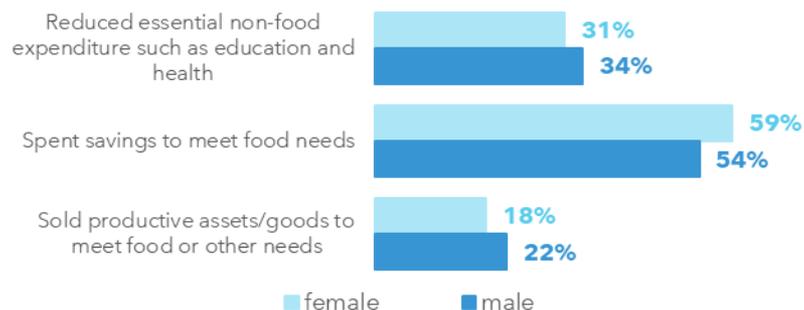


FOOD SECURITY | Coping strategies

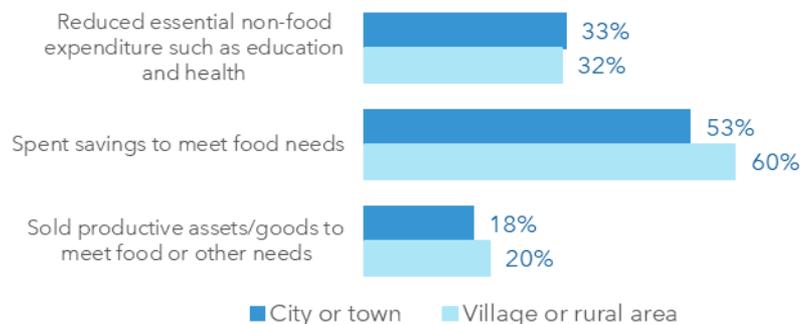
Households' coping strategies in the 30 days prior to the survey

Multiple choices could be selected.

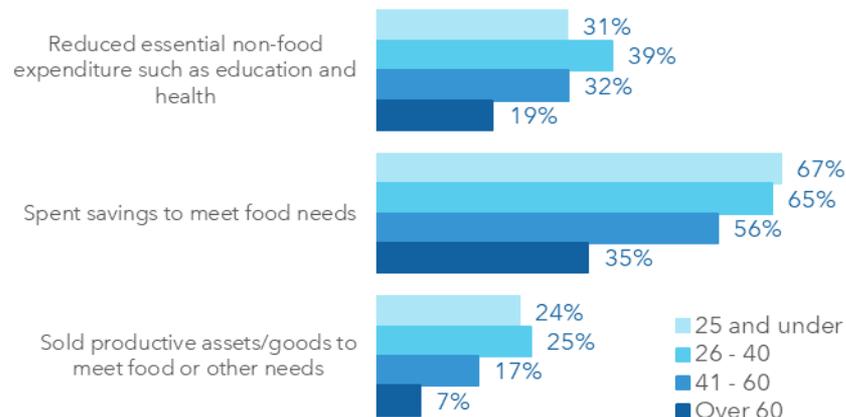
By sex



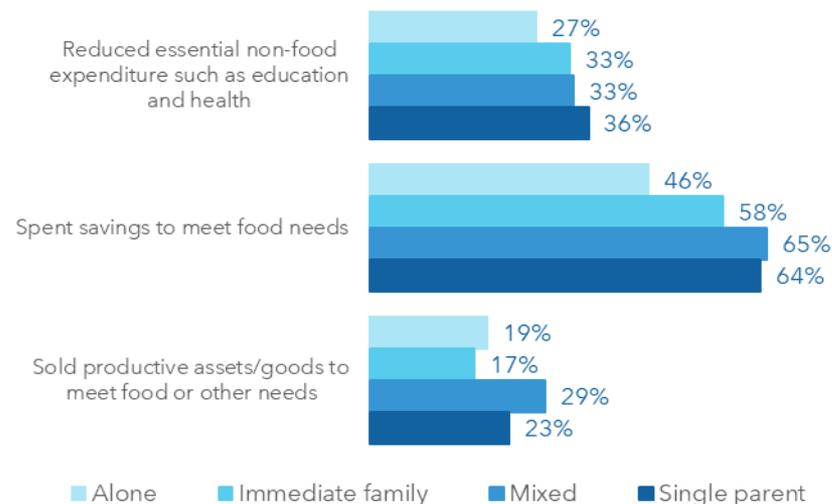
By urban/rural location



By age group

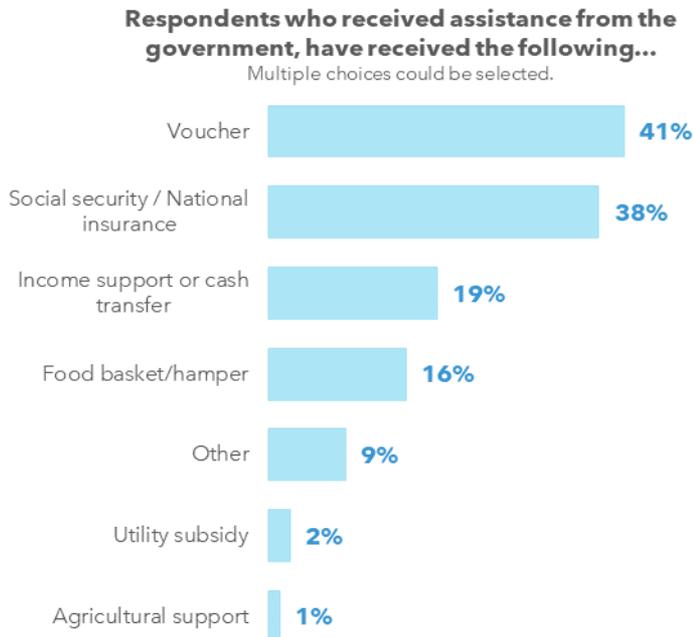
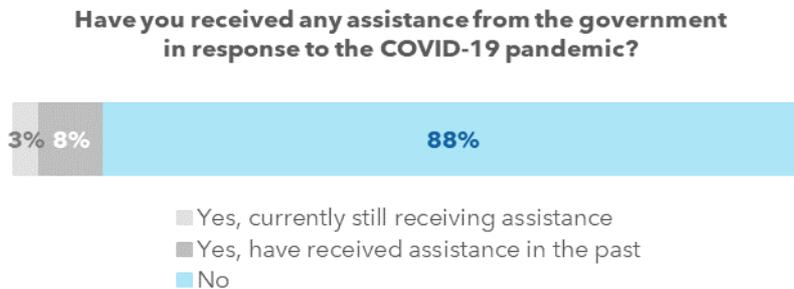


By household composition



WIDER IMPACTS | COVID-19 assistance

- Vouchers and social security were the most commonly received forms of government assistance.



Out of the 11% of respondents who reported to have received government assistance, only 3% are still currently receiving assistance.

The most commonly adopted measures have been through the distribution of food vouchers (41%), and social security/national insurance (38%). The Welfare Department of Barbados issued 1,500 food vouchers to the poor and vulnerable. In addition, there were also private initiatives such as the one provided by the trustee of the Sandy Lane Charitable Trust who provided 1.5 million dollars worth of food vouchers in a series of bi-weekly instalments over a period of 6 weeks from mid 2020 (GIS). These food vouchers were honoured by several major supermarkets which were accessible throughout the island and are a more prominent assistance modality in Barbados compared to the overall region, in which food basket/hampers or income support/cash transfers are more dominant. See [page 5](#) for more information on government social protection responses in Barbados.

Respondents who perceive their income of well below average (25%) were more likely to be recipients of government assistance, with only 15% of below average income reporting to receive, and a small portion (under 10%) were reported by the higher income groups.

Mixed families (18%) were more likely to have received support, followed by single parent families (13%). Those living alone were least likely to receive any assistance (6%).

Recipients of government assistance largely consisted of households for whom government assistance (45%) constituted one out of two main income sources, followed by those who were mainly engaged in petty trade (21%).

No major differences were observed between sex and age groups.

WIDER IMPACTS | COVID-19 assistance

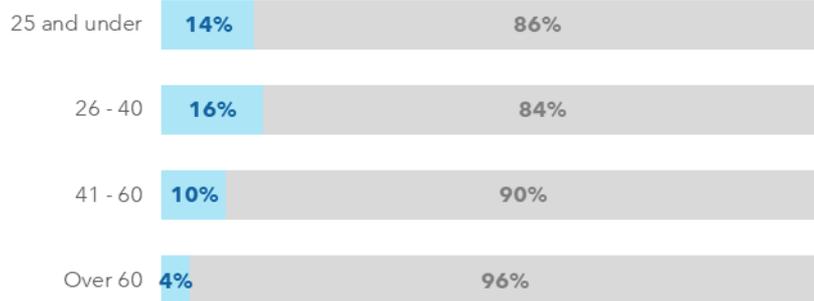
Have you received any assistance from the government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

■ Yes ■ No

By sex



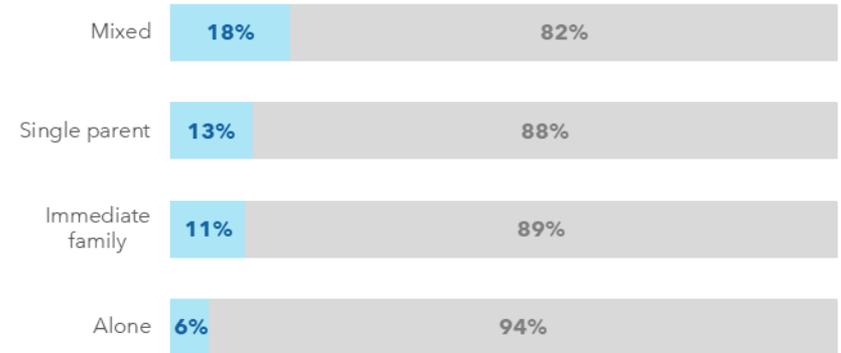
By age group



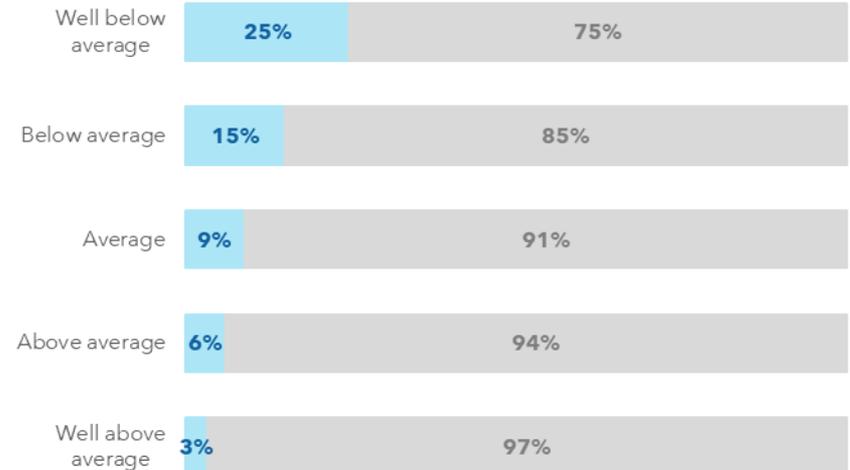
By urban/rural location



By household composition



By perceived income level

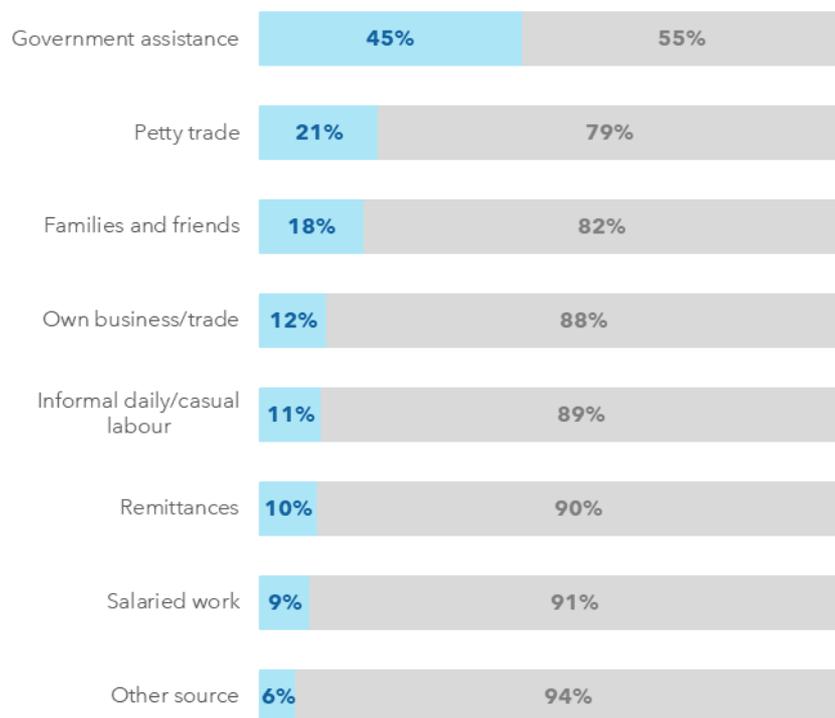


WIDER IMPACTS | COVID-19 assistance

Have you received any assistance from the government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

■ Yes ■ No

By main income source



"Although COVID -19 has restricted my movements, I am adapting by doing more housework that was duly outstanding. I am managing as best." - Female, 38 years

"Working and keeping kids, doing school can be stressful. You are now multitasking in many more ways. Longer working hours are needed to offset time taken to do schooling for children . There is no clear lines between work and home life any longer." - Female, 38 years

"Using the time to pick up new skills. Generally coping well with isolation and working from home where I am more productive rs." - Female, 43 years

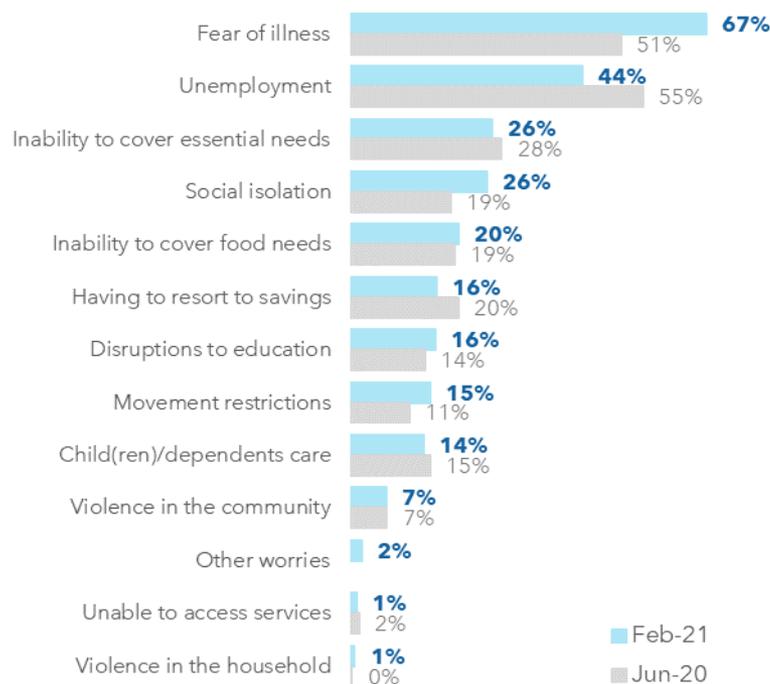
"My mental health is at risk. I'm not sleeping properly and having frequent headaches." - Female, 54 years

WIDER IMPACTS | Main worries

- Fear of illness and unemployment were the leading worries expressed by respondents.

Main worries expressed by respondents

Multiple choices could be selected.



Fear of illness has overtaken unemployment as respondents' main worry when compared with results from June 2020. By February 2021, around two thirds of respondents cited fear of illness over unemployment, which is consistent with a spike of the number of active COVID-19 cases starting from December 2020 (see [page 5](#)). Important differences in main worries were observed between age groups and perceived income levels.

Main worries expressed by respondents

Multiple choices could be selected.

By perceived income level

Main worries	Well below average	Below average	Average	Above average	Well above average
Fear of illness	45%	56%	73%	81%	81%
Unemployment	63%	52%	42%	34%	20%
Inability to cover essential needs	46%	42%	22%	10%	5%
Inability to cover food needs	55%	32%	12%	6%	5%
Social isolation	8%	20%	29%	37%	42%
Having to resort to savings	13%	16%	18%	16%	7%
Movement restrictions	5%	8%	16%	27%	22%
Disruptions to education	6%	14%	21%	16%	12%
Child(ren)/dependents care	19%	15%	12%	11%	20%
Unable to access services	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Violence in the community	1%	3%	8%	10%	10%
Violence in the household	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Other worries	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%

Unemployment (63%) and inability to cover food needs (46%) were the leading reasons cited by those with well below average income. In contrast, the majority of respondents with well above and above average income (both 81%) were more concerned about the fear of illness.

Fear of illness was also the primary worry for people aged 41-60 (71%) and over 60 years (80%). Movement restrictions and violence in the community were also cited more when compared with the lower age groups who expressed unemployment as their main worry.

No major differences were observed between men and women.

WIDER IMPACTS | Main worries

Main worries expressed by respondents

Multiple choices could be selected.

By sex

Main worries	Female	Male
Fear of illness	68%	64%
Unemployment	44%	44%
Inability to cover essential needs	27%	23%
Inability to cover food needs	21%	18%
Social isolation	27%	22%
Having to resort to savings	16%	15%
Movement restrictions	13%	21%
Disruptions to education	17%	13%
Child(ren)/dependents care	15%	11%
Unable to access services	1%	1%
Violence in the community	5%	11%
Violence in the household	1%	0%
Other worries	2%	1%

By age group

Main worries	25 and under	26 - 40	41 - 60	Over 60
Fear of illness	56%	59%	71%	80%
Unemployment	59%	50%	44%	18%
Inability to cover essential needs	30%	34%	26%	8%
Inability to cover food needs	30%	28%	17%	7%
Social isolation	29%	26%	24%	26%
Having to resort to savings	18%	14%	17%	16%
Movement restrictions	17%	12%	14%	27%
Disruptions to education	12%	17%	17%	11%
Child(ren)/dependents care	11%	18%	12%	10%
Unable to access services	1%	2%	0%	1%
Violence in the community	2%	6%	6%	13%
Violence in the household	0%	1%	0%	1%
Other worries	2%	1%	2%	4%

By household composition

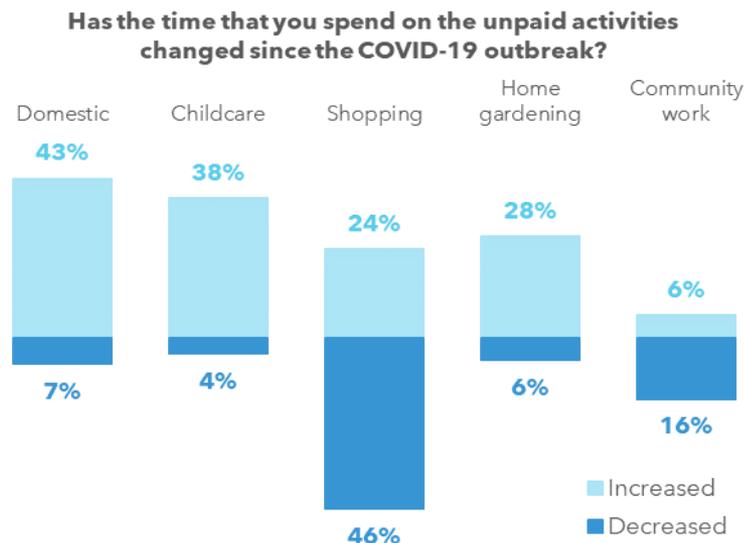
Main worries	Alone	Immediate family	Mixed	Single parent
Fear of illness	68%	68%	63%	66%
Unemployment	33%	45%	54%	42%
Inability to cover essential needs	27%	25%	26%	31%
Inability to cover food needs	13%	19%	27%	28%
Social isolation	27%	26%	22%	23%
Having to resort to savings	16%	17%	13%	15%
Movement restrictions	21%	15%	11%	11%
Disruptions to education	6%	17%	15%	22%
Child(ren)/dependents care	5%	15%	12%	16%
Unable to access services	2%	1%	1%	1%
Violence in the community	8%	7%	6%	3%
Violence in the household	0%	1%	1%	0%
Other worries	4%	2%	1%	1%

By urban/rural location

Main worries	City or town	Village or rural area
Fear of illness	64%	69%
Unemployment	43%	45%
Inability to cover essential needs	27%	27%
Inability to cover food needs	21%	20%
Social isolation	26%	25%
Having to resort to savings	16%	16%
Movement restrictions	16%	15%
Disruptions to education	18%	15%
Child(ren)/dependents care	14%	14%
Unable to access services	1%	1%
Violence in the community	7%	7%
Violence in the household	1%	1%
Other worries	2%	2%

WIDER IMPACTS | Unpaid care and work

- ▶ Most households increased time for domestic work and childcare, while time spent on shopping decreased.



"Mainly miss going out to Church Services or to visit friends, but I am thankful for Technology to keep in touch." - Female, 72 years

"More time at home with movement restrictions has led to growing more food at home." - Female, 65 years

Shopping activity reduced significantly for nearly half of respondents and especially among those in the well below average (71%) and below average (57%) perceived income level groups, compared to only around a third of households describing their income as above or well above average. This may be attributed to the reasons for limited market access, such as lack of money.

Increased time spent on childcare was more frequently reported by households that describe their income as below average (48%) or well below average (37%) when compared to those with an average (37%), above average (29%) or well above average (34%) perceived income. The amount of time spent on childcare increased particularly for single parents (46%) and those living with immediate family (41%). Minor differences were found in terms of increased time spent on childcare between female (40%) and male respondents (34%). This difference does not take into account that women may already be shouldering disproportionate unpaid care work before the pandemic.

Respondents with a perceived income level of well above average (59%) reported a large increase of domestic work compared to all other activities, whereas all other perceived income groups reported similar levels of increases between 38-45%. Men and women, and all household types, except for those living alone reported no major differences in the level of domestic work since the COVID-19 outbreak.

The pandemic led to an overall increase in home gardening, with 28% of respondents indicating an increase. However, this figure is somewhat lower compared to June 2020 (36%).

WIDER IMPACTS | Unpaid care and work

Has the time that you spend on the unpaid activities changed since the COVID-19 outbreak?

	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	43%	38%	24%	28%	6%
No change	46%	33%	28%	46%	48%
Decreased	7%	4%	46%	6%	16%
Not applicable	3%	25%	2%	20%	29%

By sex

Female	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	44%	40%	27%	29%	5%
No change	45%	31%	24%	44%	46%
Decreased	7%	4%	48%	6%	17%
Not applicable	3%	25%	1%	22%	32%

Male	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	41%	34%	18%	26%	10%
No change	50%	38%	38%	52%	53%
Decreased	6%	3%	41%	6%	16%
Not applicable	3%	25%	3%	16%	22%

"Mental health is more my concern, so I balance between, work, exercise and spare time" - Male 45

"My biggest worry is my 16-year-old son. Children are losing a lot of teaching time and no one seem not to care that a lot of these children are slipping through the cracks." - Female, 48 years

By household composition

Alone	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	31%	4%	15%	20%	8%
No change	58%	53%	32%	49%	51%
Decreased	8%	3%	52%	6%	18%
Not applicable	3%	40%	1%	24%	23%

Immediate family	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	45%	41%	26%	29%	7%
No change	45%	30%	29%	46%	48%
Decreased	6%	4%	44%	6%	16%
Not applicable	3%	25%	1%	19%	29%

Mixed	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	40%	40%	21%	21%	6%
No change	46%	30%	30%	42%	42%
Decreased	8%	3%	46%	11%	16%
Not applicable	6%	26%	2%	26%	36%

Single parent	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	48%	46%	27%	29%	3%
No change	41%	32%	22%	45%	47%
Decreased	8%	6%	49%	4%	18%
Not applicable	2%	16%	2%	22%	32%

"Remote work and school is very challenging. Longer hours and increasing domestic demands during work hours." - Female, age unknown

WIDER IMPACTS | Unpaid care and work

Has the time that you spend on the unpaid activities changed since the COVID-19 outbreak?

By perceived income level

	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Well below average					
Increased	38%	37%	14%	20%	3%
No change	45%	29%	12%	40%	39%
Decreased	13%	11%	71%	12%	20%
Not applicable	5%	23%	3%	28%	38%

	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Below average					
Increased	44%	48%	22%	27%	6%
No change	42%	27%	18%	43%	45%
Decreased	9%	5%	57%	10%	18%
Not applicable	5%	21%	3%	21%	31%

	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Average					
Increased	42%	37%	25%	27%	5%
No change	49%	34%	34%	48%	49%
Decreased	6%	4%	40%	5%	15%
Not applicable	3%	25%	1%	20%	30%

	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Above average					
Increased	45%	29%	29%	33%	9%
No change	50%	40%	36%	50%	53%
Decreased	4%	1%	33%	2%	15%
Not applicable	2%	30%	1%	15%	23%

	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Well above average					
Increased	59%	34%	33%	40%	15%
No change	36%	34%	29%	42%	54%
Decreased	5%	0%	38%	0%	6%
Not applicable	0%	32%	0%	18%	25%

"Working from home as a parent is quite exhausting as juggling the two leads to longer hours for me. In order to reduce stress I have adopted the "It'll get done when it gets done" attitude and I refuse to run my blood to water to meet deadlines." - Female, 39 years

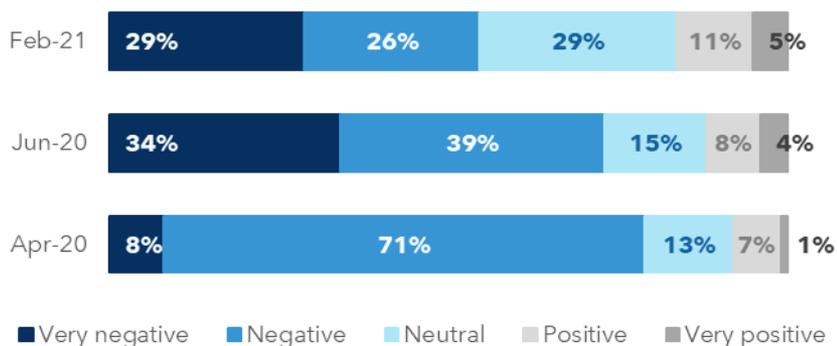
"The ineffective online teaching for my children and the inability to afford extra lessons." - Female, 37 years

"Shorter time to do things for myself and my family. I always feel that I have to rush to do things. Can't get an appointment when you need it and if you get to one late you will not be accommodated you have to reschedule. Life is not normal anymore but I am thankful to God for my family and my life. We have to keep safe." - Female, 55 years

WIDER IMPACTS | Coping and adapting

- ▶ Feelings of anxiety and stress are still widespread, but signs of resilience and adaptation emerge.

Distribution of sentiments across open-ended survey responses



Respondents were given the space to provide more nuanced insights on how they are adjusting to the impacts of the pandemic ten months following its declaration. Respondents from Barbados continue to express stress about money and employment. Some with jobs described challenges of working from home with juggling childcare and domestic activities. New lockdown measures following the increased in surge of cases over the Christmas period seem to have compounded feelings of isolation and stress. The inability to access the outdoors, see friends and family and long lines at the market all continue to be a source of stress and anxiety among respondents.

However, sentiment analysis revealed that the comments were less negative compared to April and June 2020. This may be because people are finding resilience amid these obstacles, and some describe positive steps and adapting. Many are starting to normalize technology for work, shop, for education, and to connect with family and friends.

Some sample responses:

Very negative (29%)

"Struggling to pay bills, constant hunger, fear of the unknown future."

"Because I am high risk, I am constantly fearful of contracting COVID."

"Loss of job/income since April, almost out of funds and rents & bills have to be paid. Job search unsuccessful thus far."

Negative (26%)

"Limitations as to where I can shop and the inability to spend quality time with family members."

"Household lost job due to COVID, we are finding it a struggle to pay house bills and also continue to have food stock."

"Depressed due to inability to have human touch with loved ones because locked out from country of origin; communicate by video."

Neutral (29%)

"To be honest, I was always a homebody before all of this chaos started, only leaving home when necessary. My biggest concern is people not respecting protocol, social distancing etc."

"Use common sense and adapt to the developing situation. Stick to the basic protocols."

Positive (11%)

"Started focusing on small business."

"More time at home with movement restrictions has led to growing more food at home."

Very positive (5%)

"My adaptations are fairly simple. By there being more time at home due to lack of work, I apply most of my time to online learning and study."

The analysis of the responses was performed in collaboration with Google's AI unit.

CONCLUSION

A year since the global declaration of the pandemic, the socio-economic impacts in Barbados continue to be a matter of great concern. People in Barbados have endured multiple lockdowns, movement restrictions and drastic declines in tourism. The spur of new COVID-19 cases on the island in late 2020 led to new restrictions that further affected people's livelihoods, market access, and food consumption.

The snapshot provided by this third survey shows that some of the impacts on people's lives are shifting. Access to markets has steadily improved and so has the availability of key items in stores. At the same time, income and job loss remains widespread, particularly among low-income respondents.

Lack of financial means continues to be the main hindrance for households to access markets, and many resort to buying cheaper or less preferred goods. The reported lack of financial resources is consistent with respondents relying on their savings to meet their basic needs. However, many do so at the expense of investments in education and health and long-term resilience.

Food insecurity remains a major concern, with no significant change from June 2020. Many are struggling to meet their food needs, and a worrying quarter of respondents are still reducing the amount they eat.

The disruptions caused by the pandemic do not affect all households in the same way. Across most indicators of wellbeing, low-income households and those working in tourism and hospitality appear to be the hardest hit, along with households that rely on informal income sources or government support.

While the survey found that women's and men's responses were largely congruent, there are valid concerns that existing gender inequalities may be exacerbated. More specific analysis is needed to identify and address these gaps.

Looking ahead, most respondents anticipate their livelihoods to be affected, with lower-income households having the most pessimistic outlook.

Illness and unemployment are respondents' biggest concerns, with some differences depending on respondents' age and income levels. Younger respondents and those from lower income households are primarily concerned about unemployment, while older respondents and those from higher income households primarily worry about contracting the virus.

Barbados launched its national COVID-19 vaccination campaign in mid-February and until mid-April nearly a quarter of the population has received its first shot. Additional vaccine deliveries are expected in May through the COVAX Mechanism. Along with their vital role in preventing deaths and illnesses, vaccines are a step on the path to revitalising tourism and commercial activities which are critical to the economy of Barbados.

At the same time, recovery is not coming at the same pace for all, suggesting widening disparities and deepening inequality. Efforts by the Government of Barbados and various private entities have attempted to curb the impacts of the pandemic. However, with only one tenth of respondents reporting to receive government assistance, it is crucial that continued efforts and investments are made to ensure that assistance reaches people living in poverty and facing vulnerable conditions.

METHODOLOGY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The third round of the CARICOM Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods impact survey was launched via a webform, which was accessible on mobile/smartphones and PC/desktops. The data collection period was inclusive of 25 January to 12 February 2021. 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 and monitored live on an interactive dashboard. Data validation methods were designed into the survey form to mitigate against data entry errors and/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 distribution of very negative to very positive 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 algorithm.

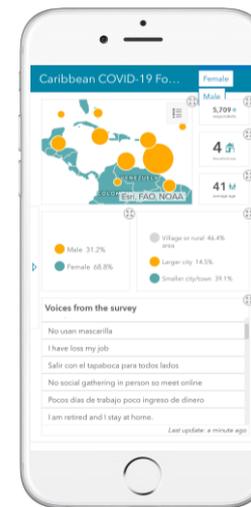
WFP expresses warm appreciation to Flow and Digicel for distributing the survey link by SMS in Barbados, Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago. Special thanks to the International Telecommunication Union for their support in facilitating the SMS distribution.

While the survey contributes to a better overview of impacts, the data are not representative, and the use of a web-based questionnaire limits inputs from those without connectivity. Responses were heavily skewed towards two countries, with 36% of responses coming from Barbados and another 26% from Trinidad and Tobago. While this report refers to the results of previous survey rounds, the varying demographics of respondents limit comparability across survey rounds.

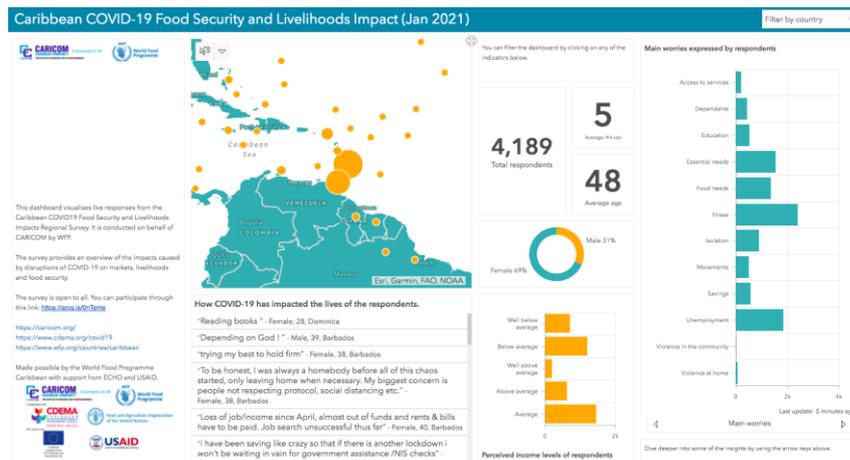
This report was prepared by WFP Caribbean - Amy Chong, Irina Bird Reddiar, Elisaveta Gouretskaia, Darko Petrovic, Sarah Bailey and Regis Chapman.



Survey form



Dashboard for Smartphones



Dashboard for PCs/Laptops

CALCULATION OF FOOD INSECURITY ESTIMATES

The Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) was used for calculating food insecurity estimates presented in this report (see [page 39](#)).

The Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) is an experience-based metric of food insecurity severity at the household or individual level, which is used for global food security monitoring and aligned with food security targets outlined in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. It relies on people's direct responses to questions regarding their access to adequate food during a given recall period. The eight questions focus on self-reported food-related behaviours and experiences during 30 days prior to the survey. They reflect increasing difficulties in accessing food due to resource constraints. A concept essential to the FIES is that the eight items and respondents are positioned on the same underlying scale of severity of food insecurity. Therefore, the probability of a respondent answering "yes" to a FIES item depends on the distance along the scale between the food severity experienced by the respondent and the severity of the item. A respondent's raw score (an integer number ranging from zero to eight) is the sum of affirmative responses given to the eight FIES questions. It is the basis for estimating the respondent parameter, which provides an interval measure of the severity of food insecurity and makes it possible to produce comparable measures of food insecurity. For this report, prevalence rates of moderate and severe food insecurity were calculated based on survey data using the FIES online App ([page 39](#)).

For more information on the FIES, see FAO's '[The Food Insecurity Experience Scale: Measuring food insecurity through people's experiences](#)'.

UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

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