Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO Summary Report | June 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 in Trinidad and Tobago via social media, traditional media outlets, and emails. The survey link was also distributed by telecommunications service providers via text messages.

February 2021

1103 Respondents | **302** English-speakers, **763** Spanish-speakers, **38** unknown language

64 Female | **36%** Male

37 Average age

4 Average household size

June 2020

899 Respondents | **143** English-speakers, **429** Spanish-speakers, **327** unknown language

67 Female | **33%** Male

36 Average age

5 Average household size

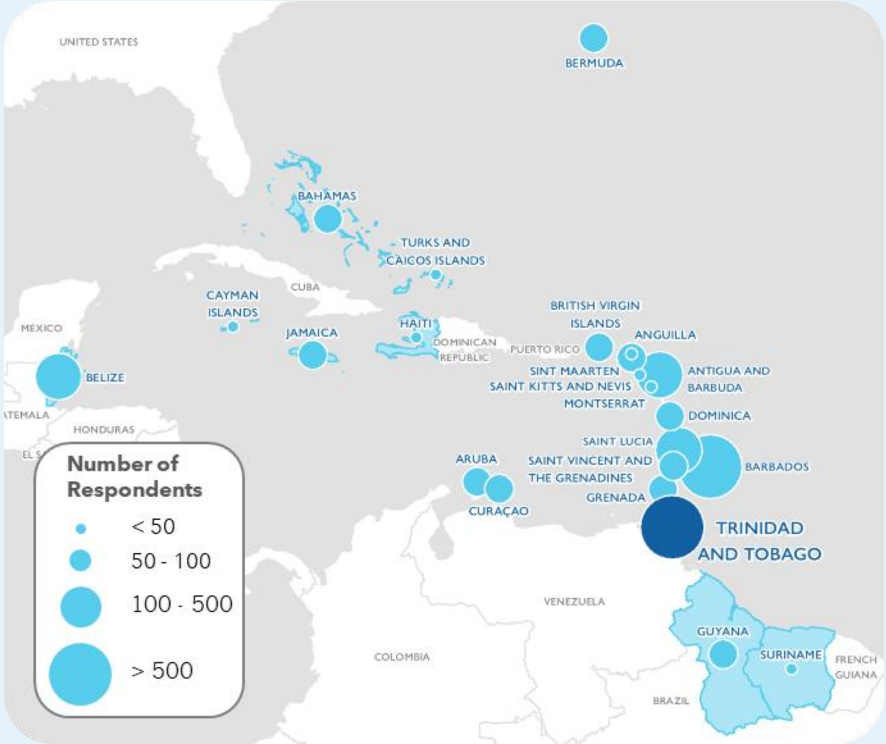
April 2020

535 Respondents | **535** English-speakers

67 Female | **33%** Male

42 Average age

4 Average household size



CARICOM CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY *A Community for All* | CDEMA Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency *Resilient States · Safer Lives* | WFP World Food Programme | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

SUMMARY | June 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 September 2020 and May 2021. People in Trinidad and Tobago have endured multiple lockdowns, changes in travel protocols and drastic declines in tourism during this time.
- Trinidad and Tobago has put in place various measures to provide support, with food hampers and income support being most widely reported among survey respondents. While 8% of respondents have received some form of government assistance, only 1% were still receiving it at the time of the survey.
- Impacts to livelihoods remain widespread, reported by over a third of all respondents and two-thirds of low-income respondents. The main factors behind the disruptions continue to be concerns about leaving the house due to the outbreak and movement restrictions. Six out of ten 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 50% of overall respondents and 80% of those from lowest income groups.
- 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, and the availability of fresh foods has also improved. Still, the availability of medicines remains partial or limited for every third respondent.
- Most respondents (80%) 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 behavior, particularly among low-income households, 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 and are uneven across income groups, which is consistent with reduced purchasing power and widening income disparities.
- Negative impacts on food security disproportionately affect respondents from low-income households, half of whom have reduced food consumption. 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, like health and education.
- Differences across most metrics of well-being appear to be minimal between male and female respondents. However, negative impacts are most acutely felt by Spanish-speaking residents of Trinidad and Tobago, primarily assumed to be migrants from Venezuela. Livelihood disruptions, income loss, limited market access, food insecurity, worries about meeting food and other essential needs and negative coping mechanisms and livelihood expectations are most widespread among this population group and have steadily increased since April 2020.
- Some signs of recovery are beginning to emerge, primarily among economically better off households. However, poorer and Spanish-speaking 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, the data are not based on a representative sample, and the online questionnaire limits inputs from people without internet connectivity.
- Findings are reported separately for English- (pages 8-35) and Spanish-speaking respondents (pages 36-43).

SUMMARY | June 2021

English-speaking respondents

		Feb-21	Jun-20	Apr-20
LIVELIHOODS	Disrupted livelihoods	37%	57%	72%
	Reduction/loss of income	50%	63%	40%
	Moderate to severe or severe future livelihoods impacts	39%	49%	40%
MARKETS	Lack of market access	19%	27%	15%
	Change in shopping behaviour	84%	86%	82%
	Increase in food prices	80%	77%	65%
FOOD SECURITY	Reduced food consumption	23%	33%	12%
	Lack of food stock	16%	11%	2%

Spanish-speaking respondents*

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

		Feb-21	Jun-20
LIVELIHOODS	Disrupted livelihoods	71%	75%
	Reduction/loss of income	86%	89%
	Moderate to severe or severe future livelihoods impacts	55%	55%
MARKETS	Lack of market access	68%	63%
	Change in shopping behaviour	92%	89%
	Increase in food prices	86%	76%
FOOD SECURITY	Reduced food consumption	64%	71%
	Lack of food stock	25%	23%

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COVID-19 | Situation and response

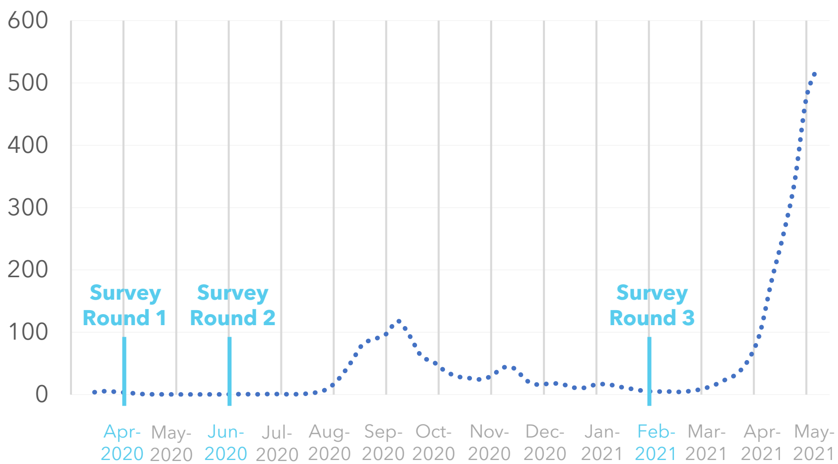
COVID-19 cases and government responses

Following the first recorded case of COVID-19 in Trinidad and Tobago in early March 2020, the government closed the country's borders and imposed a strict curfew, which subsequently was extended several times until mid-May 2020.

The first Caribbean COVID-19 Survey was launched in late March 2020 when a full lockdown was in place. At the time of the second survey at the end of June 2020, the government had started relaxing certain restrictions allowing retail businesses and the public service to re-open with certain conditions.

In mid-August 2020, amid an uptick in cases in the country, the government reintroduced certain measures, restricting commercial activities and social gatherings and delaying the reopening of school.

New COVID-19 cases in Trinidad and Tobago
Average 14-day notification rate per 100 000 population



Source: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2021

The current round of the survey was conducted in February, when the number of new cases reached an all-time low for 2021.

At the time of publication of this report in June 2021, the twin-island state was experiencing a third wave of COVID-19, as a result of which the government imposed a state of emergency and a night-time curfew. The borders remained closed to international travel.

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 new ones introduced in the wake of COVID-19.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the government introduced a Salary Relief Grant in April 2020, which provided income support for an initial period of three months to citizens and permanent residents who lost their income or employment as a result of COVID-19. By November 2020, almost 40,000 people had benefited from the relief grant.

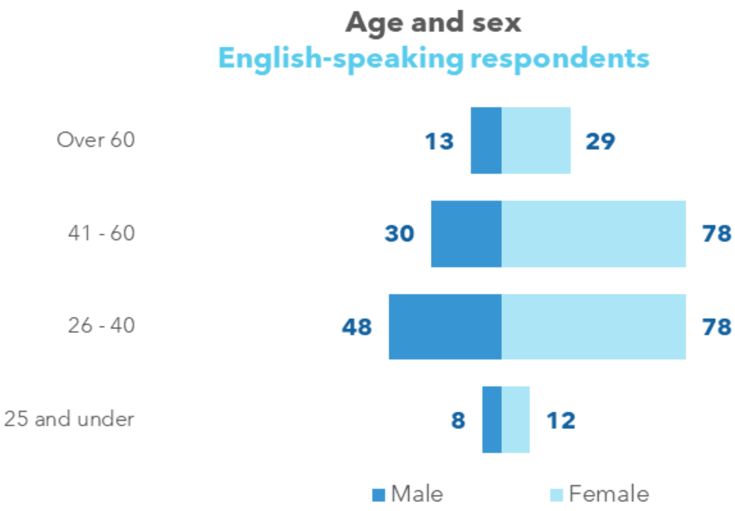
Existing recipients of Food Support, Public Assistance and Disability Assistance Grants also received additional support in the form of top-ups over a period of three months.

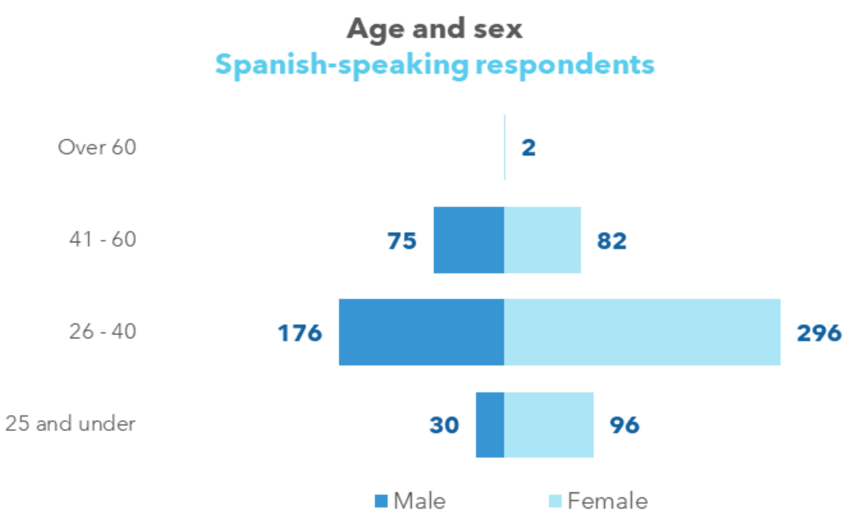
Furthermore, the government provided temporary food support to families with children registered under the School Feeding Programme as well as to other vulnerable people not already in receipt of food cards.

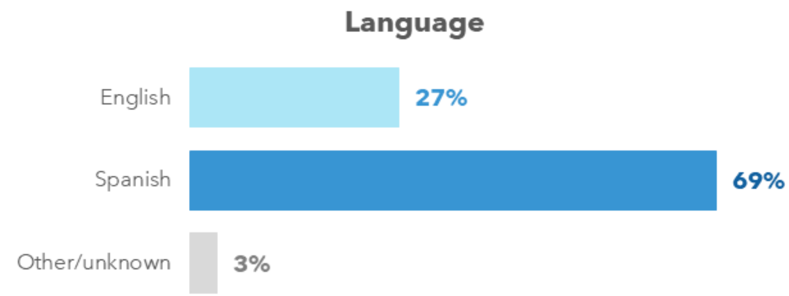
Under the Rental Assistance Grant, eligible individuals and families who lost their job or suffered a loss in income, could benefit from payments for a period of up to 12 months.

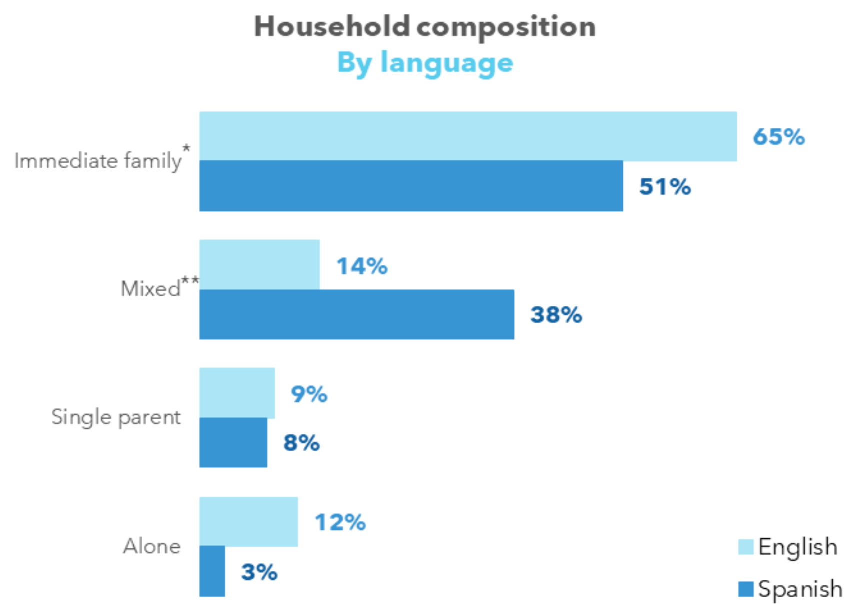
In May 2021, the government announced additional Income Support and Salary Relief Grants to assist those affected by newly imposed restrictions.

RESPONDENTS | Demographics



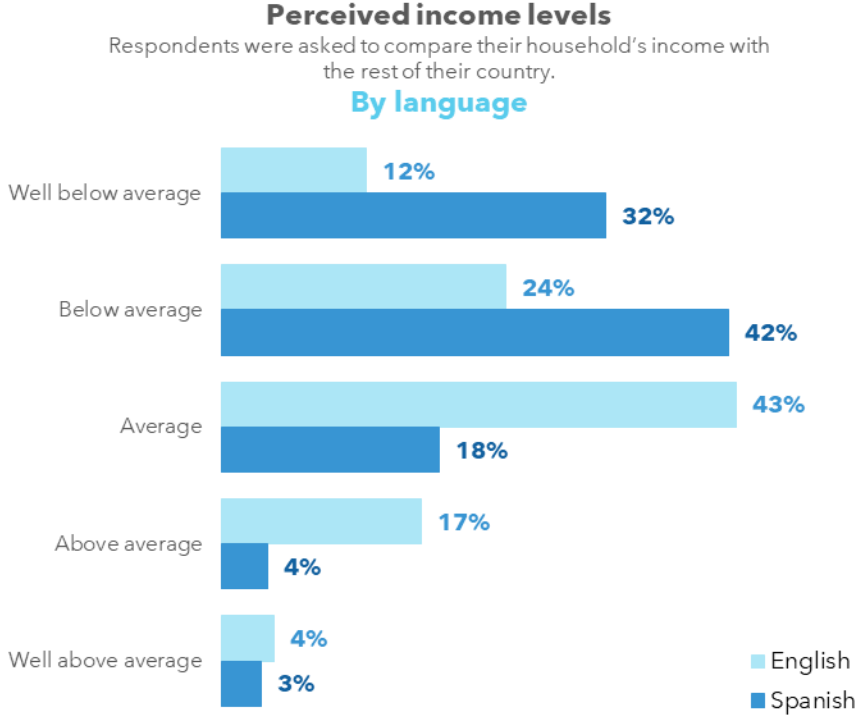


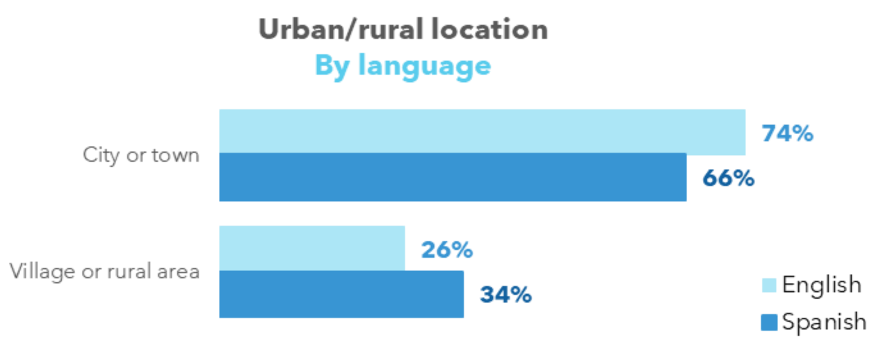


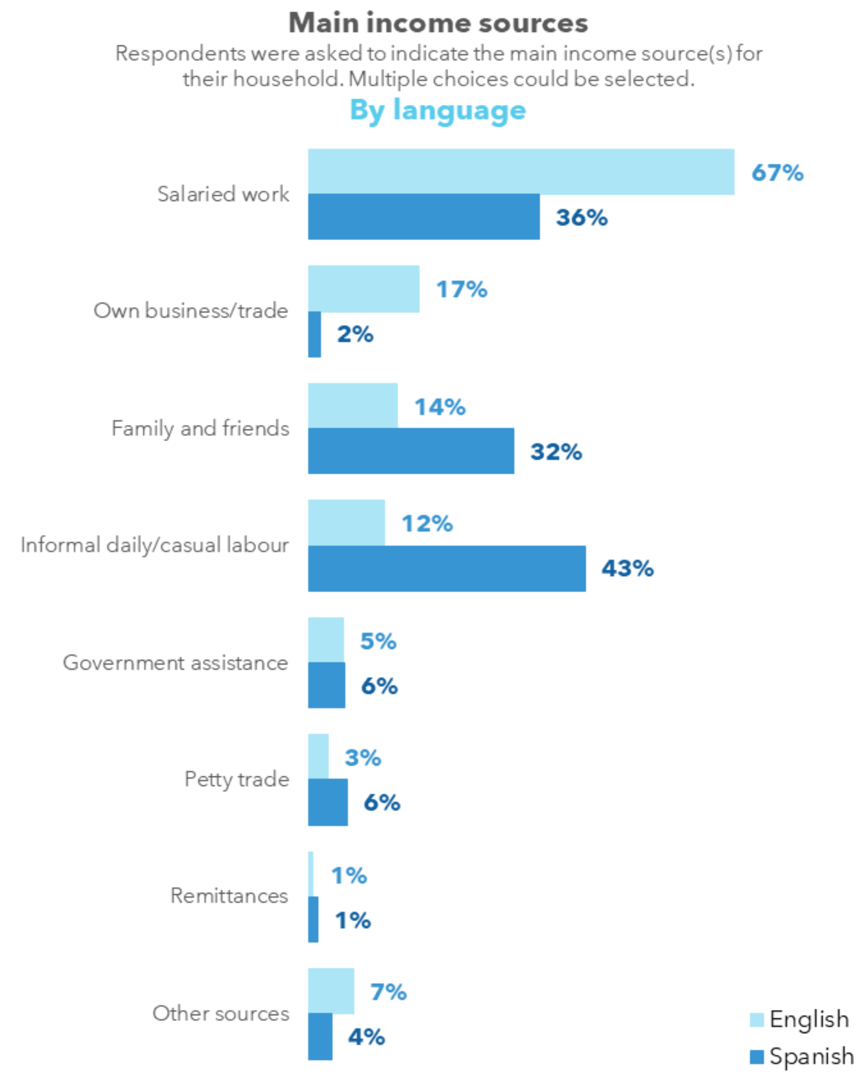


* Immediate family includes partner, children and grandparents.
** Mixed households are composed of immediate family members, other relatives as well as non-family members.

RESPONDENTS | Demographics



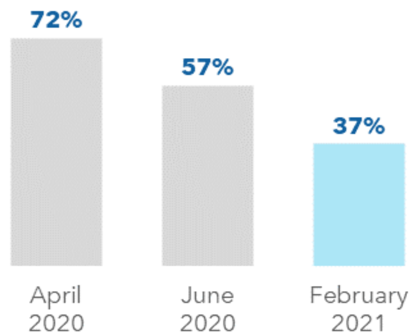


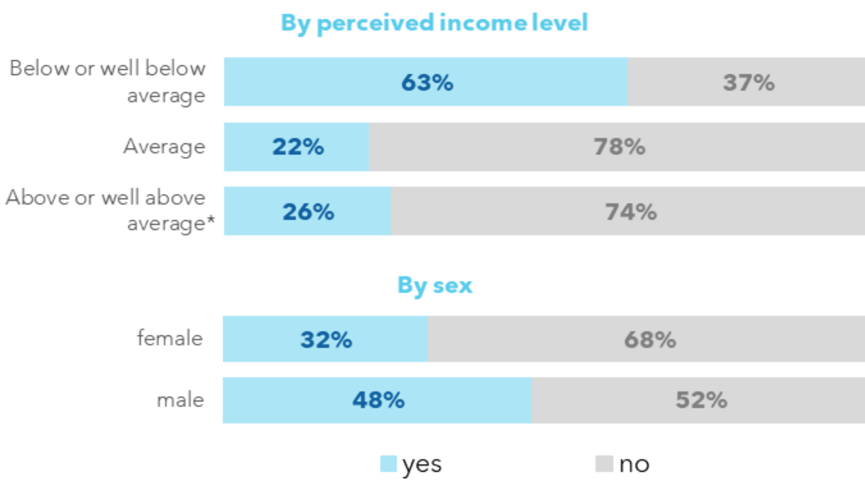


LIVELIHOODS | Disruptions to livelihoods

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

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





*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt livelihoods in Trinidad and Tobago. For over one third of respondents, the ability to pursue their livelihood was still affected in the two weeks prior to the February survey. Overall, this proportion has decreased from 72% in April and 57% in June 2020 and is below the regional average of 51%.

When considering the different characteristics of people responding to the survey the most marked differences are found related to people's level of income, as well as the sex of respondents. Of those who described their income as below or well below average, 63% reported livelihood disruptions, compared to 26% of respondents who consider their income levels as above or well above average.

Men were found to be much less likely to earn income from salaried work and livelihood disruptions seem to have been more widespread among them, compared to women respondents.

Main income sources

Multiple options could be selected.

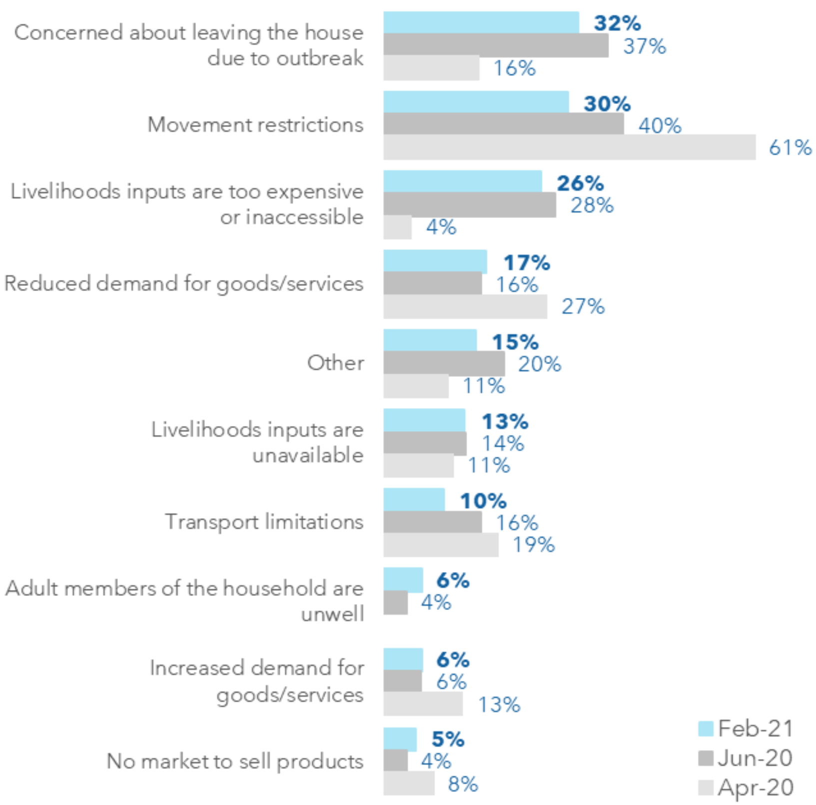
"Closed borders mean no cruise ship visitors and no sales for me."- Female, 65 years

"I used to work in the Air Transport Sector, but with Air Travel Restrictions in place I cannot work." - Male, 41 years

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 remains another key factor, affecting mostly the lowest-income households.

For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...
Multiple choices could be selected.



Concerns about leaving the house, reported by about a third of respondents who faced disruptions to livelihoods, remain the main reason behind the disruptions, and they were more of a driver compared to the early stages of the pandemic. Nearly the same percentage of people cited movement restrictions as the main reason, which has reduced in importance with each survey round.

Limited access to livelihood inputs is also among the key reasons for livelihood disruptions, cited by a quarter of respondents, and is much more widespread among people with incomes below or well below average.

Reduced demand for goods/services continues to affect almost one out of five respondents facing livelihood disruptions, in particular those with above or well above average incomes.

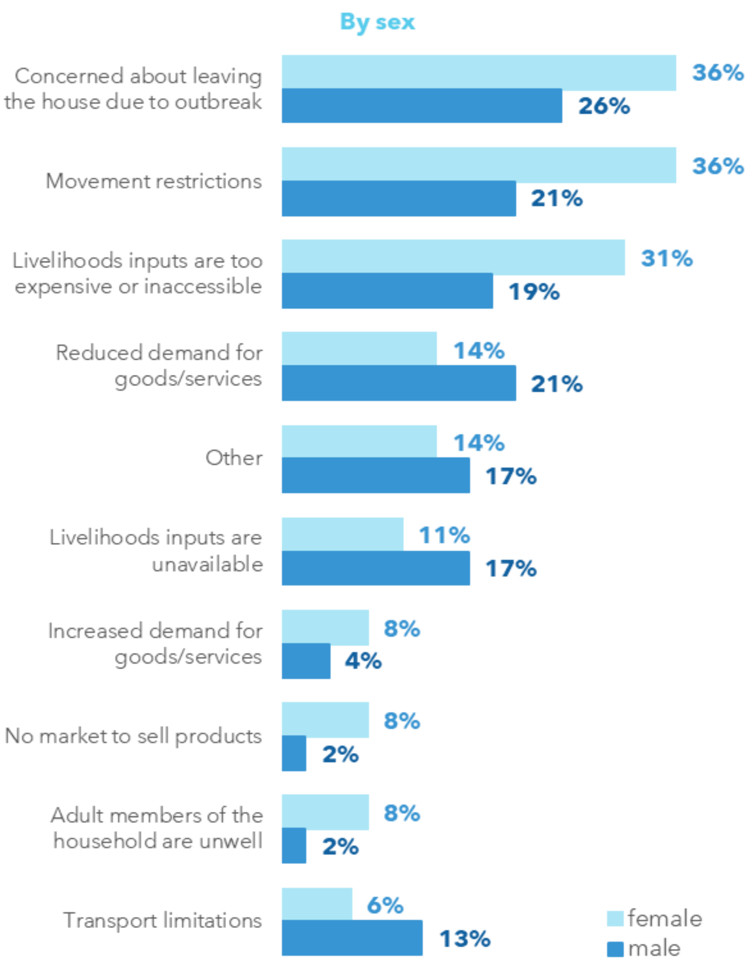
Women respondents are more likely to cite concerns about the outbreak, movement restrictions and expensive livelihood inputs as reasons for livelihood disruptions compared to men.

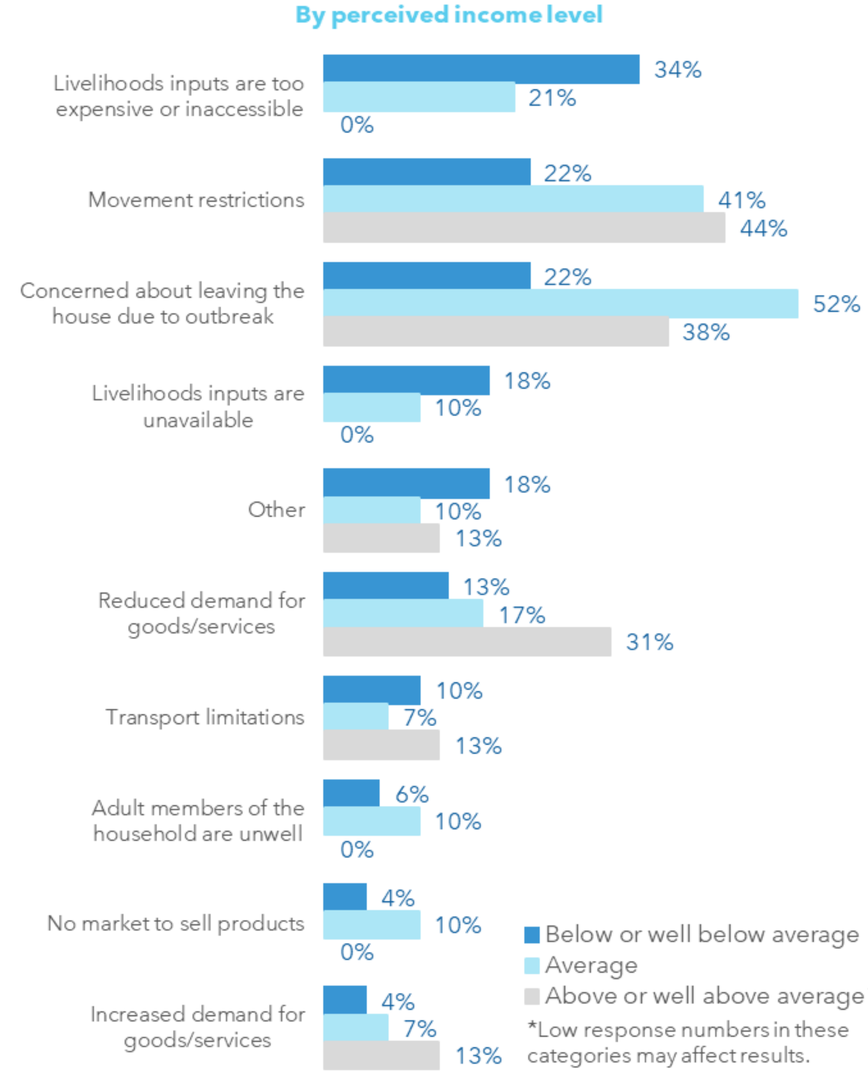
"I own a travel retail/duty free store and our borders have been closed for 11 months. No income and a new investment." - Female, 61 years

"My son and wife lost their newly opened business at the beginning of the pandemic, and I have been supporting them and two grandchildren, my savings are almost gone, and they haven't been able to get steady work. It is difficult, we don't own our own home, and the savings were to help build a home for us." – Male, 62 years

LIVELIHOODS | Reasons for livelihood disruptions

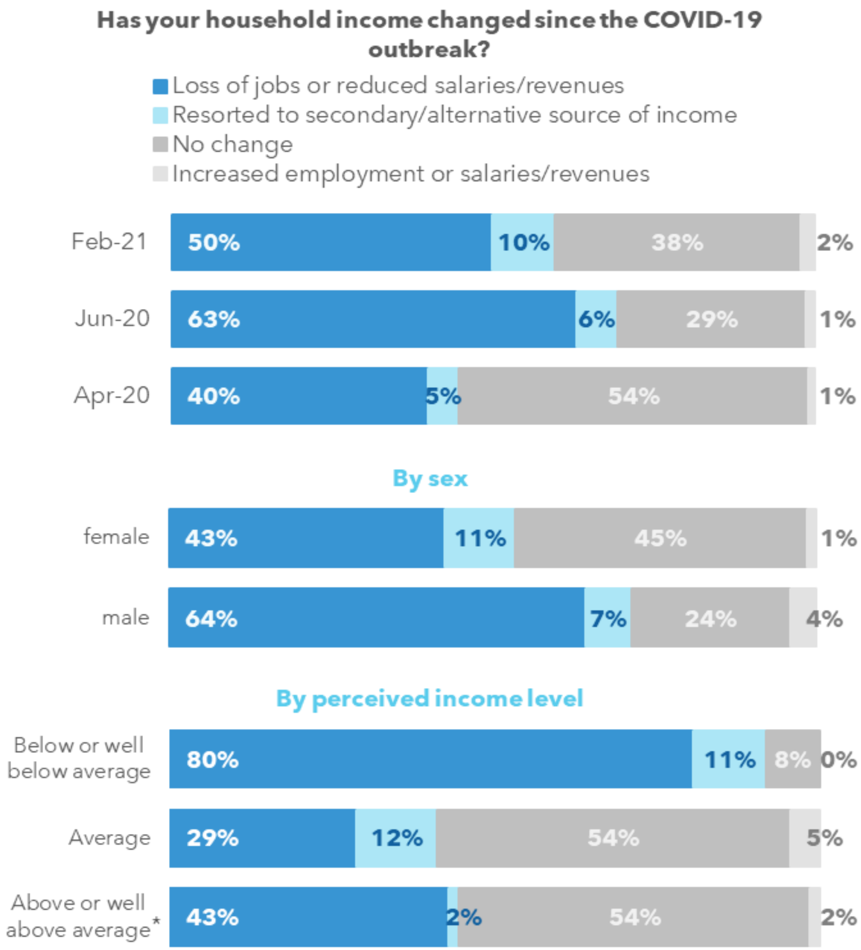
For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...
Multiple choices could be selected.





LIVELIHOODS | Impacts on income

► A half of respondents continue to face job loss or income reductions, with the lowest income households being the most affected.

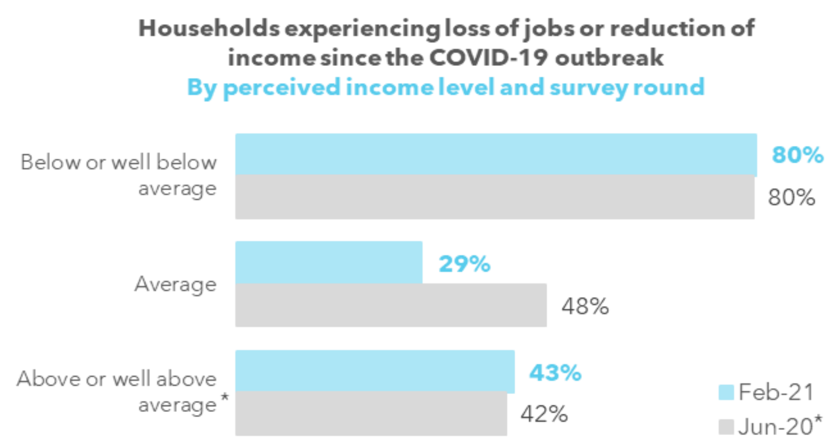


*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

Impacts to income continue to be widespread, with 50% of respondents reporting that their household has experienced job loss or reduced salaries since the COVID-19 outbreak, lower compared to June 2020 (63%). The figure remains higher compared to April 2020 (40%) and suggests the continuation of economic hardship with many people facing decreased income.

The most marked differences in responses were found across income groups with job and income losses most widespread among respondents with a below or well below average perceived income levels (80%). This share is unchanged among the lowest income groups since June 2020 while it has fallen among respondents with average incomes. This suggests some signs of recovery could be occurring but unevenly across income groups, with poorest households still facing the most significant struggles.

Loss of jobs and reduced salaries is more widespread among men compared to women respondents.

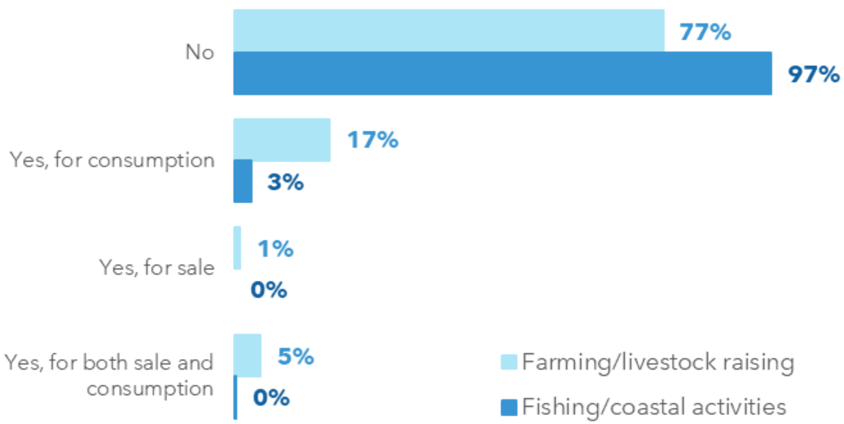


*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

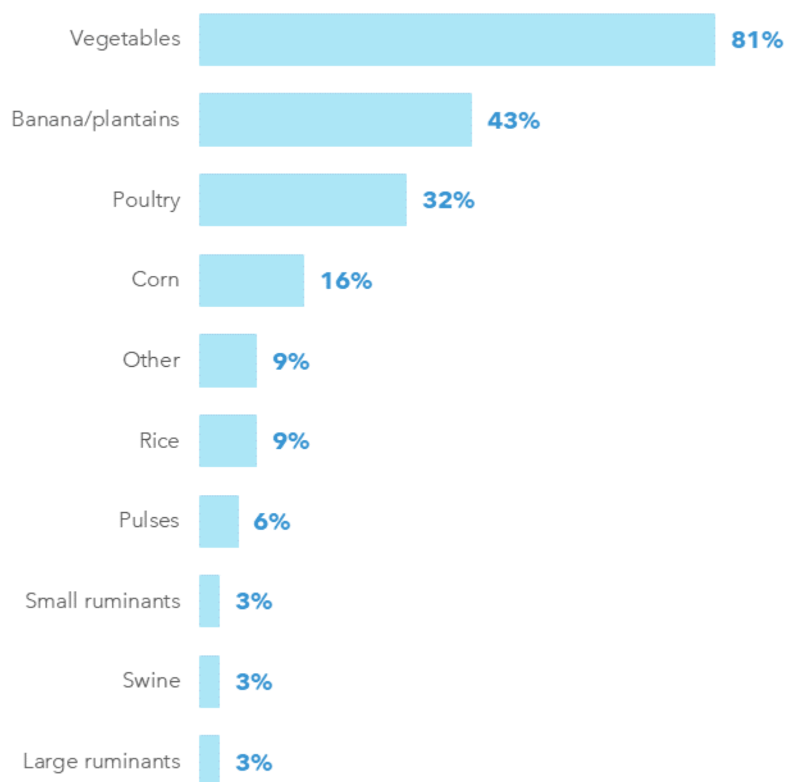
LIVELIHOODS | Farming and fishing

▶ Gardening and household production has increased among four out of ten households.

Is your households engaged in farming/fishing?



For those that engage in agriculture/livestock raising, the products are...
Multiple choices could be selected.

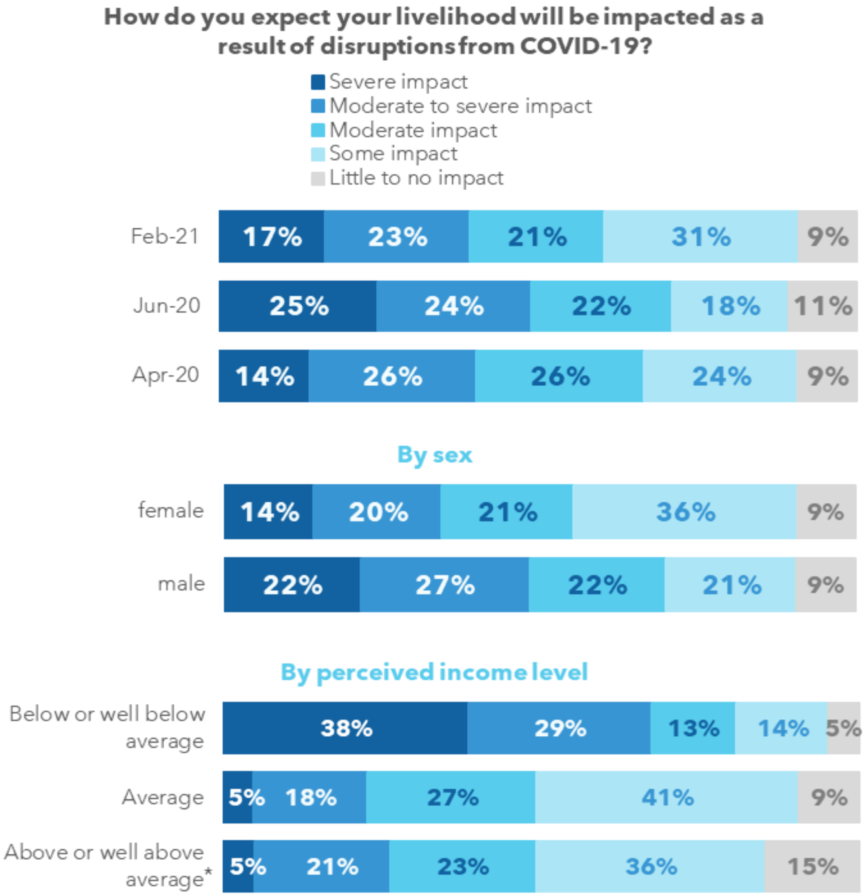


Nearly one in four respondents reported engaging in farming, gardening or livestock raising and 3% in fisheries/coastal activities. In both cases these activities are primarily for their own consumption, with vegetable production being by far the main farming activity (81% of those that engage in farming). 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.

The pandemic led to an overall increase in gardening and household production activities, with 43% of respondents indicating that they have increased the amount of time spent on these activities. This is similar to the share reported in June 2020 (46%).

LIVELIHOODS | Future livelihood impacts

► Six out of ten respondents expect at least a moderate impact on their livelihoods. For four out of ten lowest income households, this impact is expected to be severe.



*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

Respondents continue to expect that the COVID-19 pandemic will impact their livelihoods in the future, though negative sentiments are less widespread compared to June 2020. Looking ahead, 40% anticipate “moderate to severe” or “severe” impacts to their livelihoods. Only 9% expect little or no impact.

Respondents with different levels of income varied substantially in their perspectives. Of those with incomes perceived as below or well below average, 67% expect their livelihoods to be severely impacted in the future and much higher compared to households with above or well above average income (5%). Differences in perspectives between lowest and highest income respondents seem however less pronounced in Trinidad and Tobago compared to the regional survey average, and at a lower disadvantage towards lowest-income households.

Differences in such expectations exist between women and men respondents, with men more likely to report pessimistic outlooks.

“Children lost their jobs and having to assist them.” - Female, 63 years

"My biggest fear Is losing property after all these years of paying the bank." - Female, 65 years

“Job loss cause I'm a mixologist and alcohol is not sold in restaurants I can't find a job. Have to adapt by learning how to do yard work." - Male, 44 years

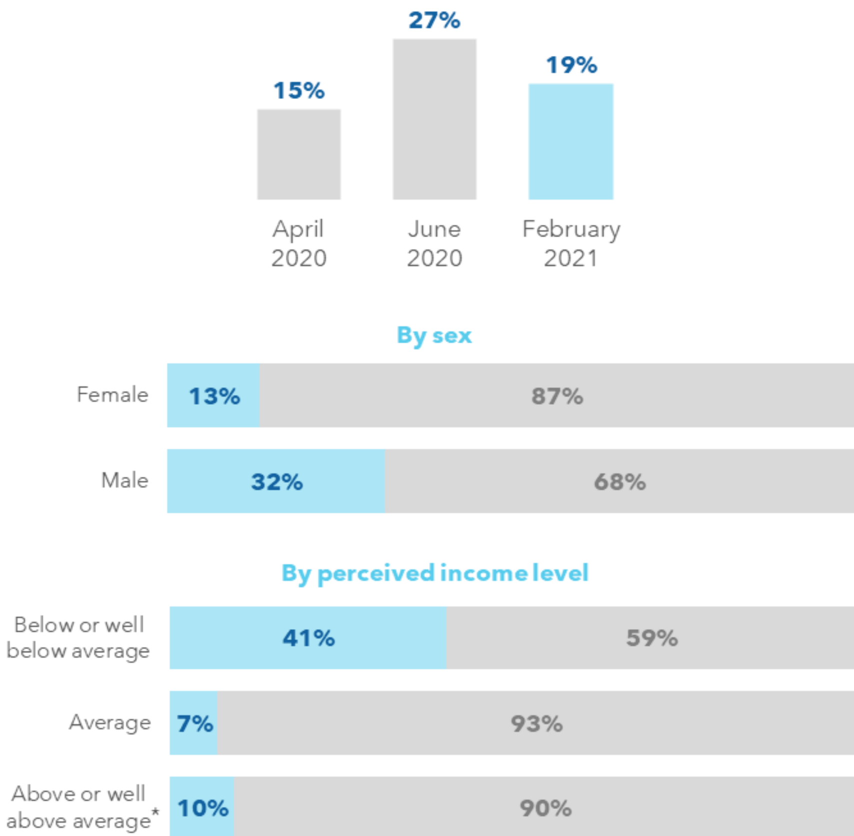
“Our main source of capital coming in the house is my dad and he hasn't worked for a year, he is in construction. It is very scary not knowing if you have job stability.” – Female, 33 years

“I am an essential worker, I have to work during the pandemic in order to help others, however I fear everyday that I contract the virus and bring it home to my family. I have pre-existing conditions, but have to continue to work.” – Male, 43 years

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



*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus are still impacting market access, with 19% 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 slightly higher than in April 2020 (15%), but remains lower than the levels reported during the survey in June 2020 (27%). In comparison with other countries in the Caribbean, the limited market access for English speakers in Trinidad and Tobago is below the regional average of 30%.

Clear differences were found across income levels and between women and men. Male respondents were more likely to have faced a time when they were unable to access markets (32%) than female respondents (13%). However, the greatest difficulties in accessing markets were experienced by respondents reporting below or well below average income levels (41%), compared to 7-10% for respondents with average or higher income.

"It has been very difficult with public transport since they are only taking one to sit in the buses with just 20 persons. I adapt to it by being there very early to make sure you get on the transport." – Female, 58 years

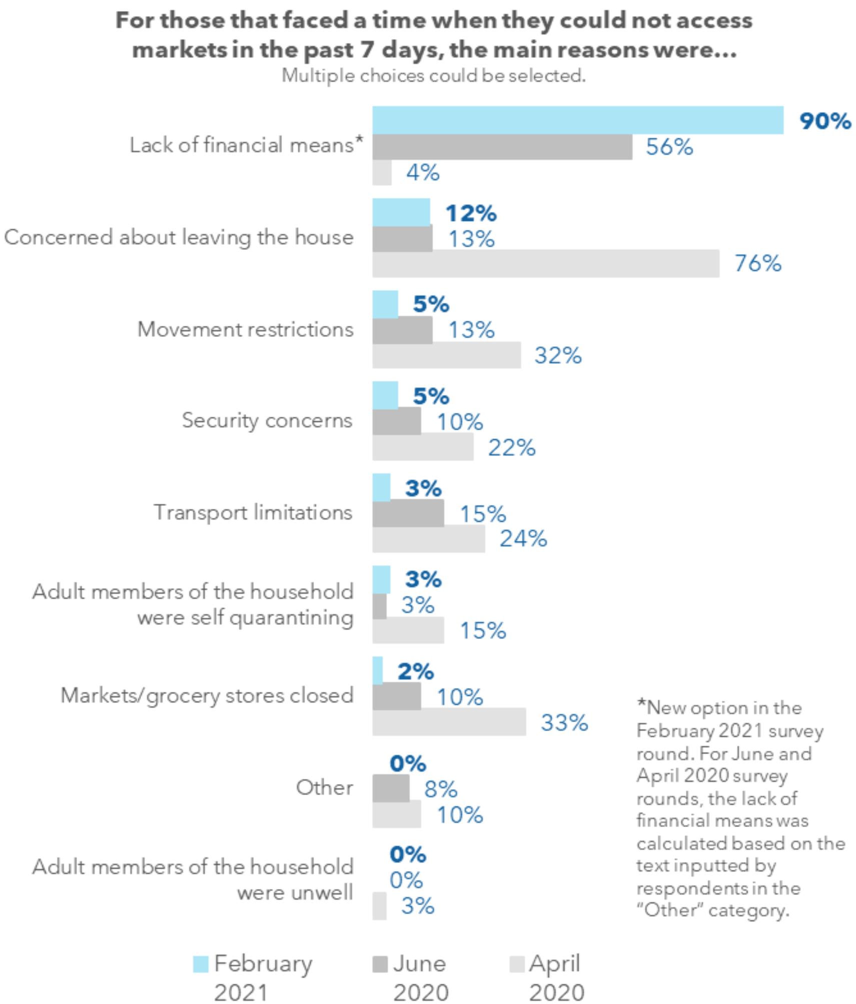
"I go to the fresh food market less often." – Female, 67 years

"Paying bills on line, not shopping on a month end." – Female, 64 years

"My mom, who is my dependent likes to move around and I think restrictions regarding movement have affected her somewhat. She feels less independent and it makes her unhappy and worries me." – Female, 44 years

MARKETS | Reasons for limited market access

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



*New option in the February 2021 survey round. For June and April 2020 survey rounds, the lack of financial means was calculated based on the text inputted by respondents in the "Other" category.

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

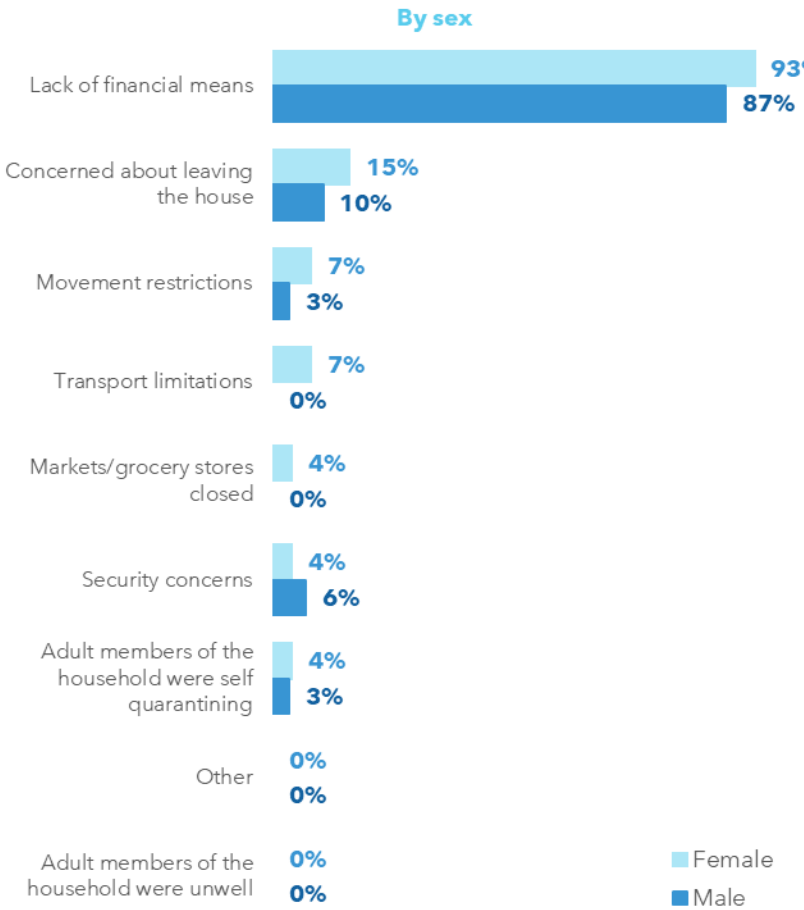
In February 2021, lack of financial means was overwhelmingly reported as the main reason for limited market access, cited by 90% of those who faced a time when they could not access markets in the week prior to the survey. This is a significant increase since April and June 2020. Financial constrains in Trinidad and Tobago are affecting a larger proportion of those unable to access markets than in the whole Caribbean region where on average 84% of respondents cited lack of financial means as the main issue limiting market access.

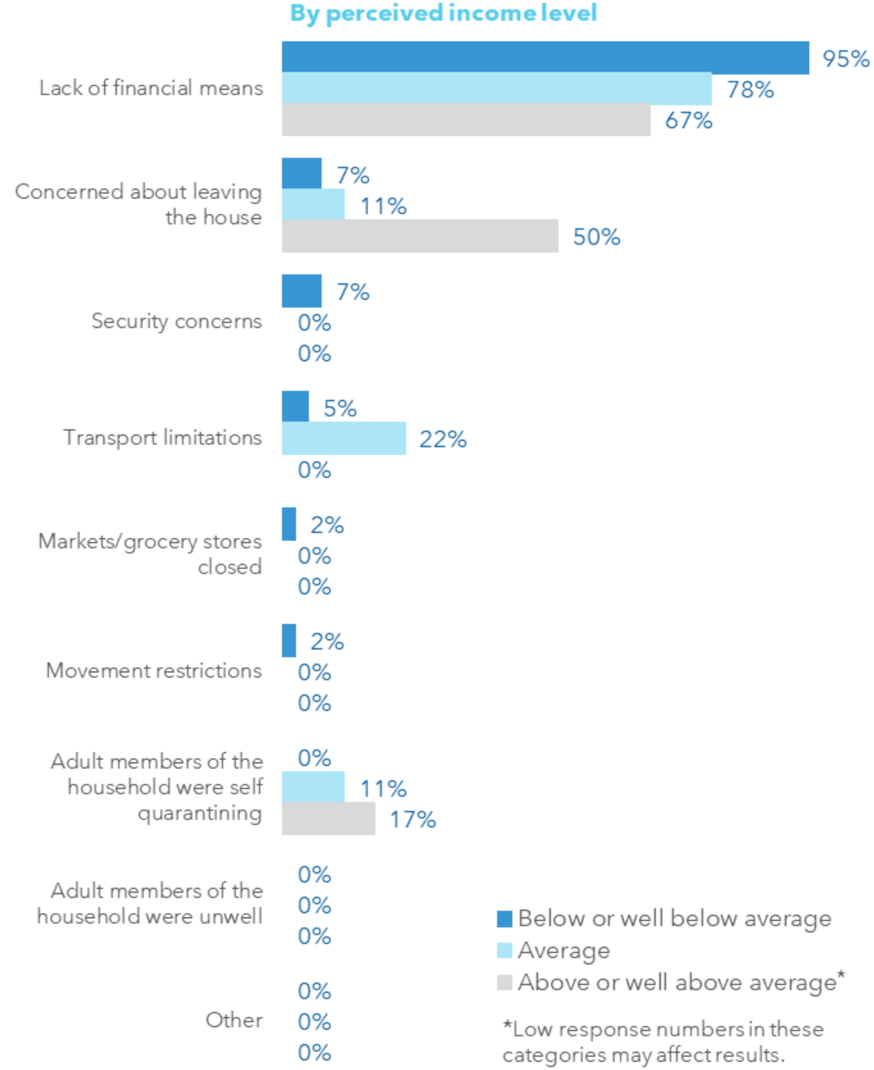
There were notable differences across income levels. Almost all respondents who described their income level as being below or well below average reported financial limitations as the main reason for not being able to access markets (95%), compared to 78% of those with average incomes or 67% of those with above or well above average income. Among the wealthier groups, the additional main reasons for limited market access were concerns about leaving the house due to the virus, transport limitations and self quarantining of adult family member.

The differences between men and women were not large, however most of the reasons for limited market access were reported slightly more often among women than men.

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.



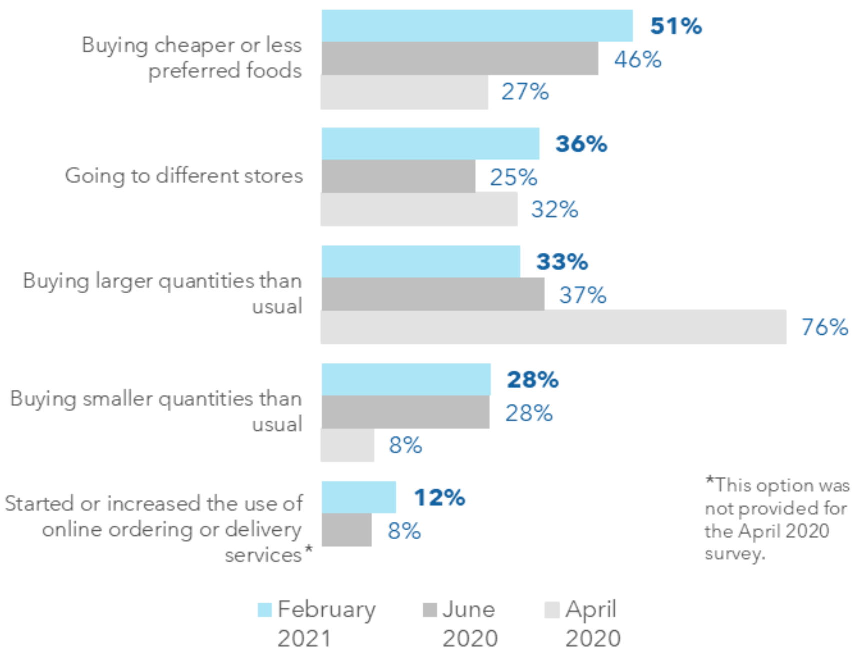


*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

MARKETS | Shopping behaviour

▶ Respondents are buying cheaper or less preferred foods more frequently than at the beginning of the pandemic.

Respondents who reported a change in shopping behaviour are...
Multiple choices could be selected.



"Tried starting my own business. Eating out less and making more meals at home. Going out less." – Female, 28 years

"I'm making less money, so I'm spending less." – Male, 42 years

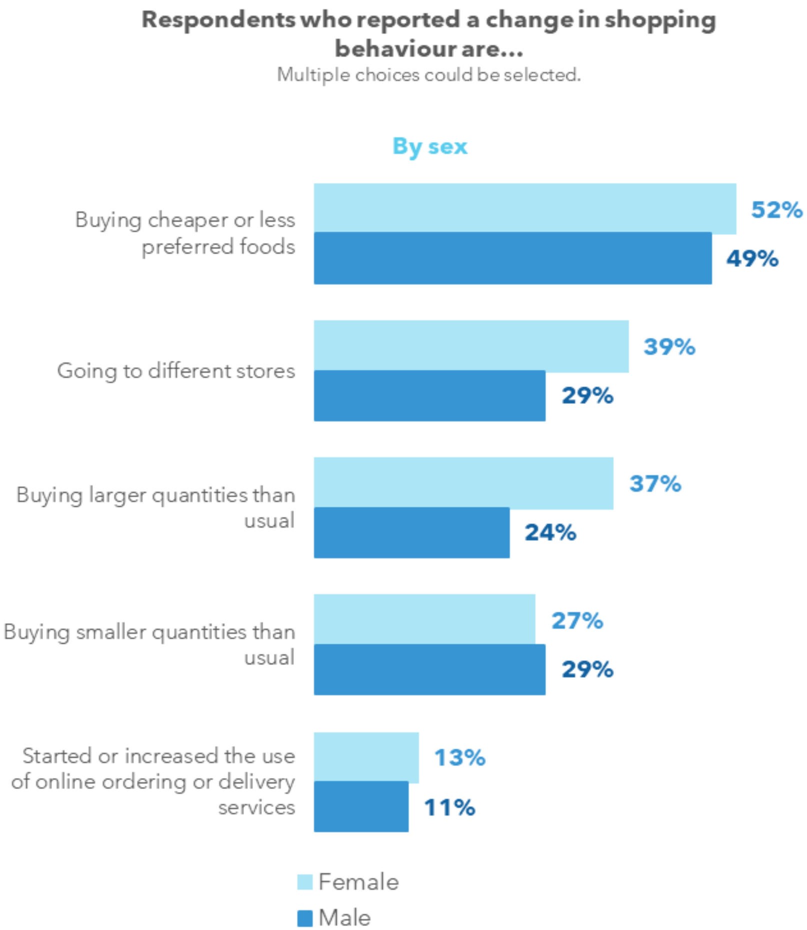
The pandemic has changed how people shop, but these changes have evolved over time. Many respondents (84%) have changed their shopping behaviour compared to before the pandemic, which is consistent with June and April 2020 surveys (86% and 82% respectively).

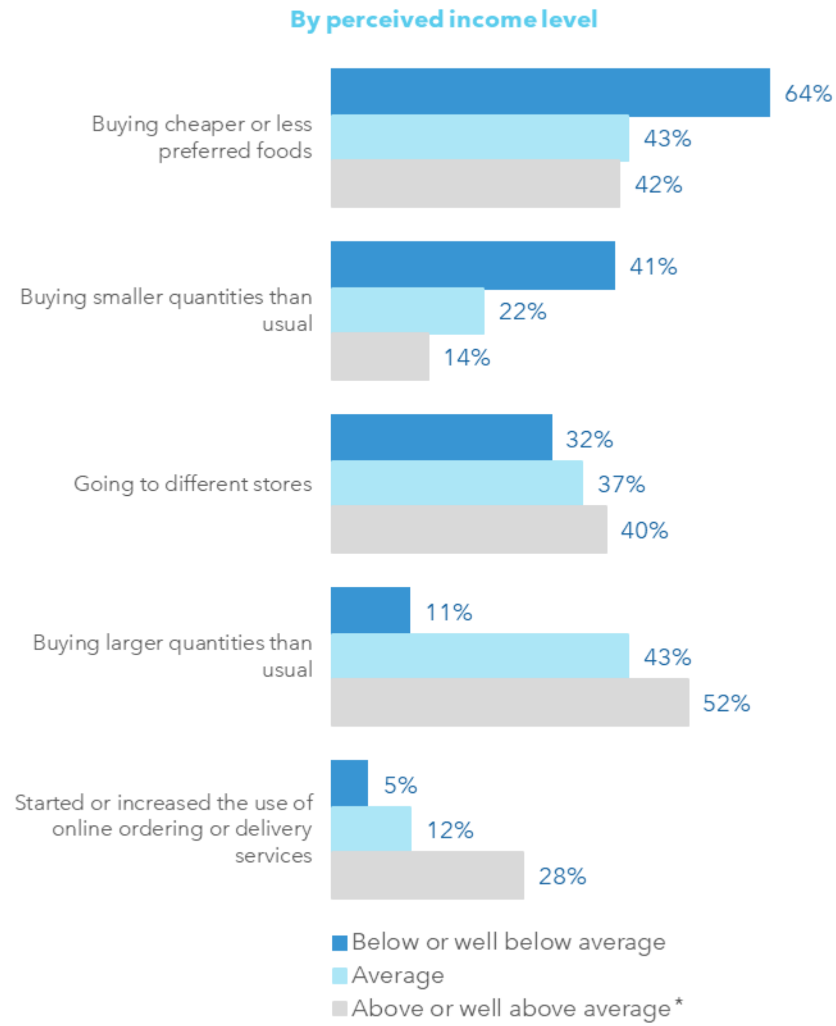
How people are changing their shopping appears to be following the June 2020 pattern, with increasing proportion of respondents buying cheaper or less preferred foods (51%). This is in contrast with April 2020, when by far the most cited change was buying larger quantities (76%) – possibly to deal with curfews and to reduce the need to shop frequently. Respondents are also increasingly resorting to delivery services (12%), buying smaller quantities (28%) and going to different stores (36%) than at the beginning of the pandemic. In addition, more than half of the English-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago are spending less time shopping than before the pandemic. Shopping behaviour is consistent with the trends in the Caribbean, where the most common changes in shopping behavior are buying cheaper foods (46%) and smaller quantities (32%).

There were slight differences in shopping behaviour between men and women, with women more often going to different stores (39%) and buying larger quantities (37%) than men (29% and 24% respectively).

Changes in shopping behaviour are largely a function of available income and most notable differences were observed across income levels. Respondents with below and well below average income resorted to buying cheaper foods and smaller quantities (64% and 41% respectively), while those with higher incomes reported buying larger quantities, going to different stores and increasingly relying on online delivery services (52%, 40% and 28% respectively for those with above or well above average income).

MARKETS | Shopping behaviour

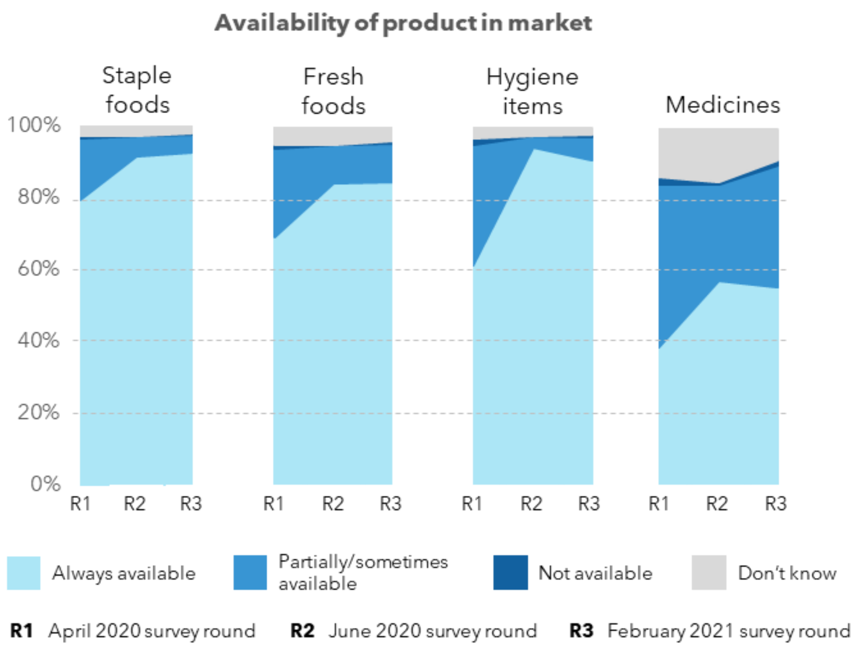




*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

MARKETS | Availability

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



"More vehicular traffic. Inability to get certain non-critical products in the supermarket." – Female, 37 years

"Shortage of goods coming in." – Female, 35 years

The availability of key products has improved considerably since the beginning of the pandemic. While in April 2020, 18-48% 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 except medicines is slightly better in Trinidad and Tobago.

The reported availability of staple foods and hygiene items has increased substantially between April and June 2020. Their availability remains stable, with 93% and 91% of respondents in February 2021 indicating that staple foods and hygiene items respectively are always available in their markets. However, 5% of respondents continue to report partial availability of staple foods and 6% report partial availability of hygiene items. Less than 1% of respondents highlighted that the two items are unavailable in markets.

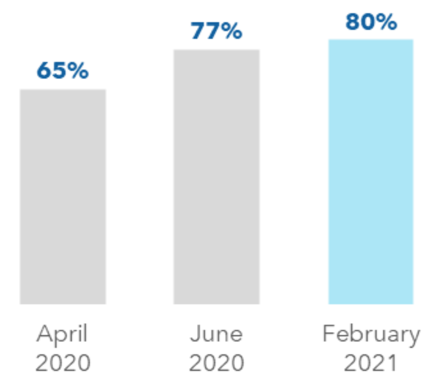
As in previous surveys, fresh foods are marginally less available than staple foods, but their availability increased since April 2020 with 85% of respondents reporting that fresh foods are always available. However, 11% of respondents continue to indicate that fresh foods are only sometimes available and 1% reports that these items are unavailable.

The availability of medicines improved between April and June 2020, and it remains stable through February 2021 with 56% of respondents reporting that medicines are always available. However, 34% of respondents still indicate that medicines are not always available and more than 1% report that medicines are fully unavailable.

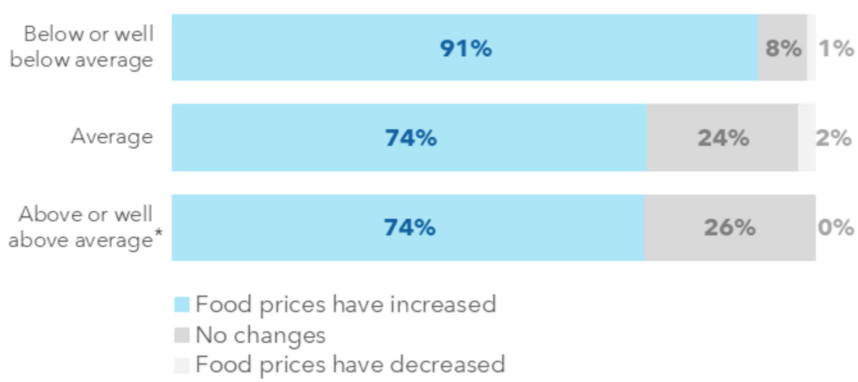
MARKETS | Food prices

► Four out of five respondents (80%) continue to report increases in food prices.

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



By perceived income level



*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

Food prices continue to be reported as increasing, with majority of the respondents (80%) indicating an increase in the cost of food over the two weeks prior to the survey. This is higher than in June and April 2020 surveys when 77% and 65% of respondents respectively observed an increase in food prices.

The percentage of English-speaking respondents who identified an increase in food prices in Trinidad and Tobago is higher than in the Caribbean region where on average 71% of respondents reported an increase in the cost of food.

Clear differences were found across income levels. Respondents with below or well below average income levels reported increases in food prices more frequently (91%) compared to 74% of respondents with higher income levels. This could potentially be explained by having fewer shopping options or that they are more sensitive to price changes given limited income.

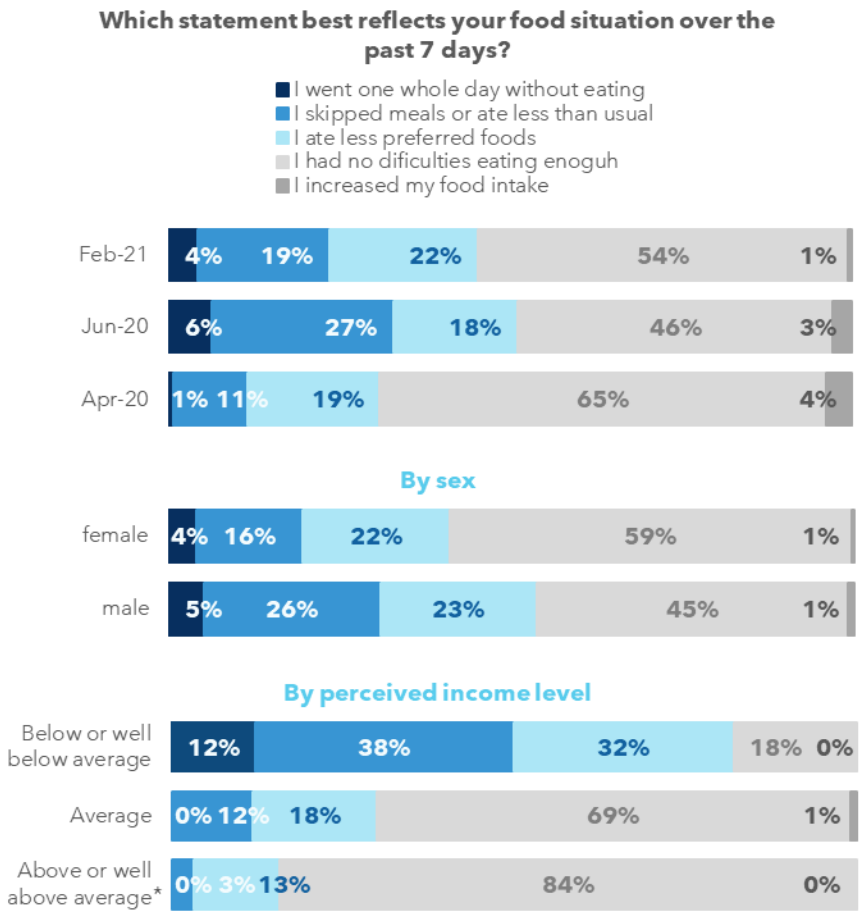
"It has forced me to sustain not only my household but 2 other family members' households that depend on me to help them survive. I've been bulk buying to be able to provide basic foodstuff items to all households." - Female, 35 years

"Problem to pay bills and eat properly." – Male, 35 years

"Not able to pay rent, feed myself, need personal items, toiletries etc." – Female, 60 years

FOOD SECURITY | Food consumption

► Impacts on food consumption remain widespread, particularly among lower income households.



*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

COVID-19 continues to have a negative impact on people's diets, with 19% of respondents skipping meals or eating less than usual during the week leading up to the February survey, and 4% going a whole day without eating. Another 22% of respondents reported eating less preferred foods. These results show no significant improvement since June 2020, while indicating an overall deterioration of food consumption since April 2020.

Overall food consumption trends in Trinidad and Tobago are broadly in line with those in the Caribbean where differences in the impact on food consumption appear to primarily reflect disparities in household income.

When considering respondents' demographic characteristics such as gender, age and income, the differences between income groups continue to be the most striking in Trinidad and Tobago. Of the respondents who described their household income as 'below' or 'well below average', 38% skipped meals or ate less than usual in the week prior to the survey, which is a three times higher percentage compared to those describing their income as average. Worryingly, 12% of those with perceived incomes below or well below average went a whole day without eating in the week leading up to the survey.

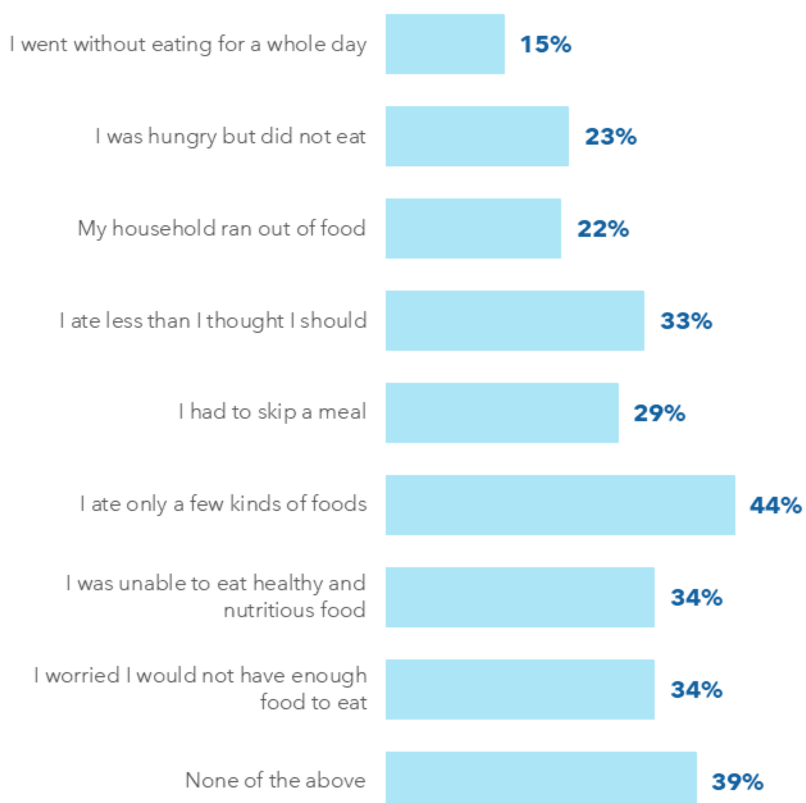
When comparing the responses of female and male respondents, it appears that negative impacts on food consumption are more prevalent among men. Of all male respondents, 26% reported skipping meals or eating less than usual in the week before the survey, compared to 16% of female respondents.

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.



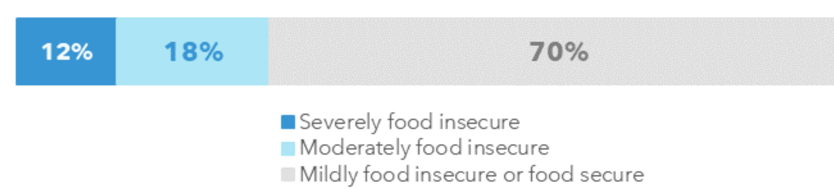
The Food Insecuity Experience Scale (FIES) was used to provide a picture of food insecurity experienced by respondents during the 30 days preceding the survey. The FIES, which is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, is a metric of severity of food insecurity at the household or individual 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, 15% of respondents reported experiencing a time when they went a whole day without eating. Similarly, 23% of respondents experienced a time when they were hungry but did not eat, and 33% experienced a time when they ate less than they thought they should. Worries about not having enough to eat were reported by 34% 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 44% reporting a time when they ate only a few kinds of food.

Based on the FIES methodology, it is estimated that 18% of respondents in Trinidad and Tobago are moderately food insecure and additional 12% severely food insecure. For more information on the FIES methodology, see page 46.

Prevalence rates of food insecurity

Based on FIES methodology.



FOOD SECURITY | Food insecurity experience

Food insecurity is not uniformly experienced by respondents. When comparing responses to the eight items of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), the differences across income levels are again most striking.

Households that describe their incomes below or well below average appear to be the most widely affected. Of these respondents, 29% went an entire day without eating over the 30 days leading up to the survey, and 51% experienced a time when they were hungry but did not eat. By contrast, of those respondents describing their household's income as average, 6% went a day without eating and 9% faced a time when they were hungry but did not eat. Nutrition and the variety of foods consumed are also particularly concerning for lower income households, with 64% of these respondents experiencing a time when they were unable to eat healthy ad nutritious food in the past 30 days.

When comparing responses of male and female respondents, men appear disproportionately affected across the majority of FIES items. Of all male respondents, 22% went a whole day without eating during the 30 days leading up to the survey, compared to 11% of all women. Likewise, 30% of male respondents experienced a time when they were hungry but did not eat, compared to 20% of all female respondents. Worries about not having enough food to eat were expressed by 45% of men, compared to 29% of women (see page 24).

"I have faced eviction, job loss and had to go without food for days." – Male, 26 years

"I have lost my job about 2 weeks now and worried because I do not have money for rent and food." – Male, 45 years

"I have learnt to eat when necessary and for survival. I no longer specialized in specific dishes. Food has become a source of survival not a luxury." – Female, 35 years

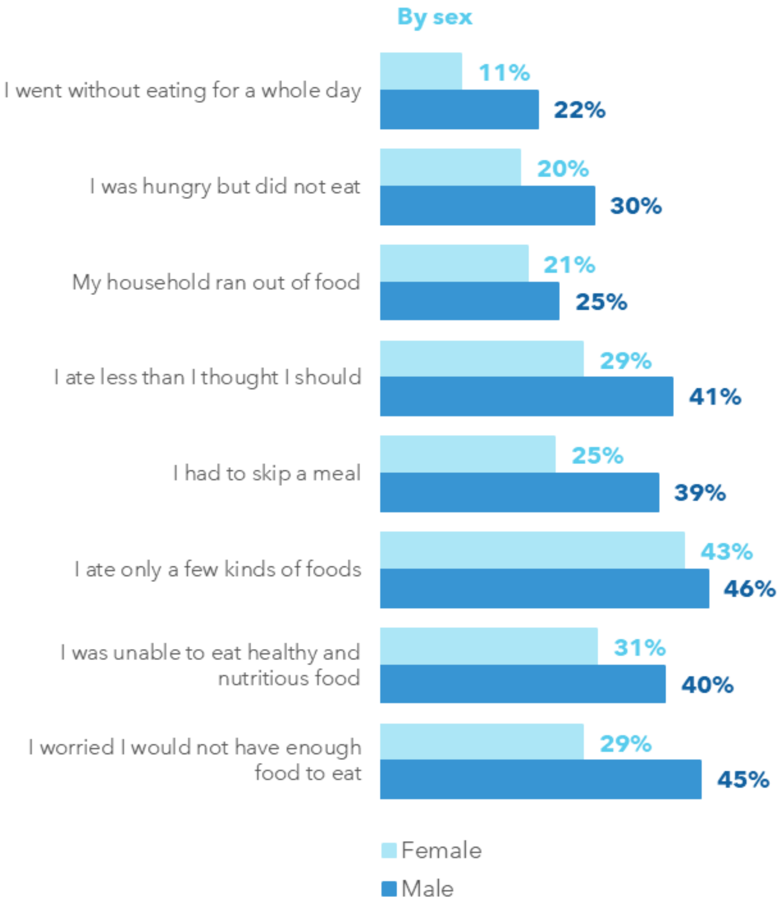
"I have lost my job and am unable to get employment. I am not coping well because I hardly can purchase my basic needs." – Female, 40 years

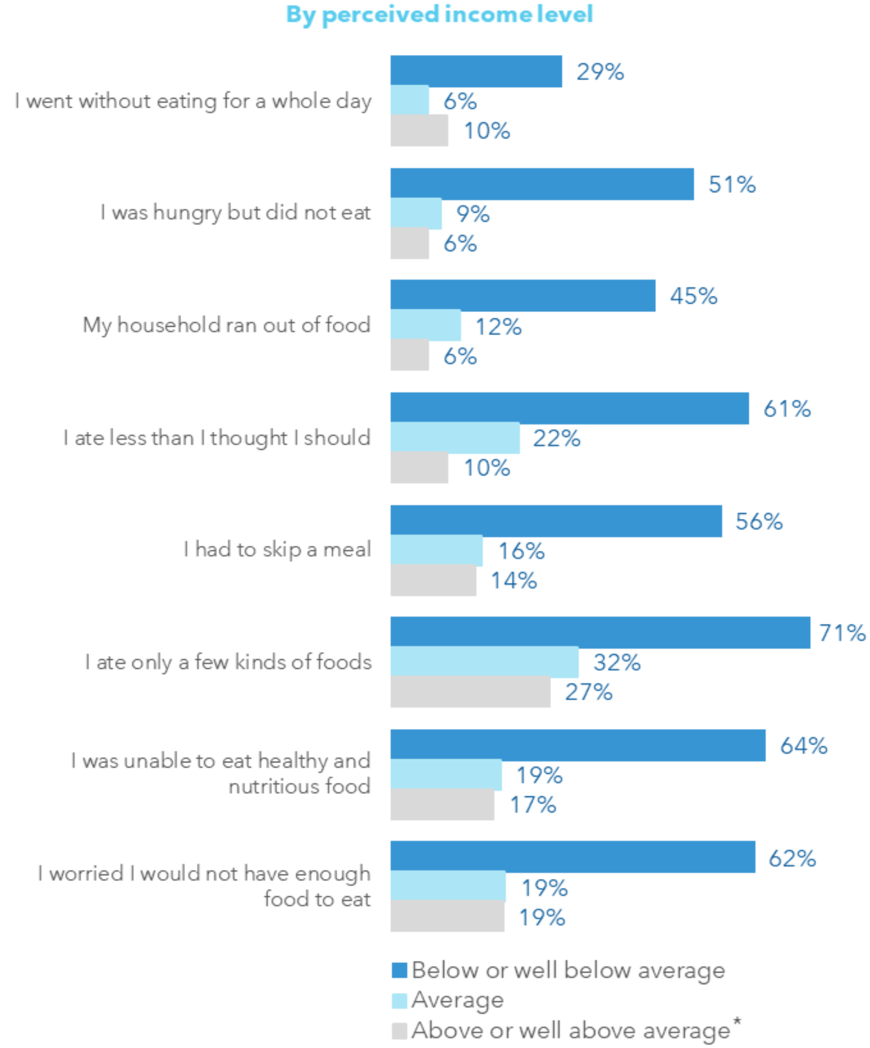
"Looking out for family members and less fortunate...ensuring no food is wasted." – Female, 59 years

"Loss of job, difficulty paying rent, light and internet, buying food, clothing etc. I am drained to dying." – Male, 52 years

FOOD SECURITY | Food insecurity experience

Was there a time in the past 30 days when you experienced the following?
Multiple choices could be selected.

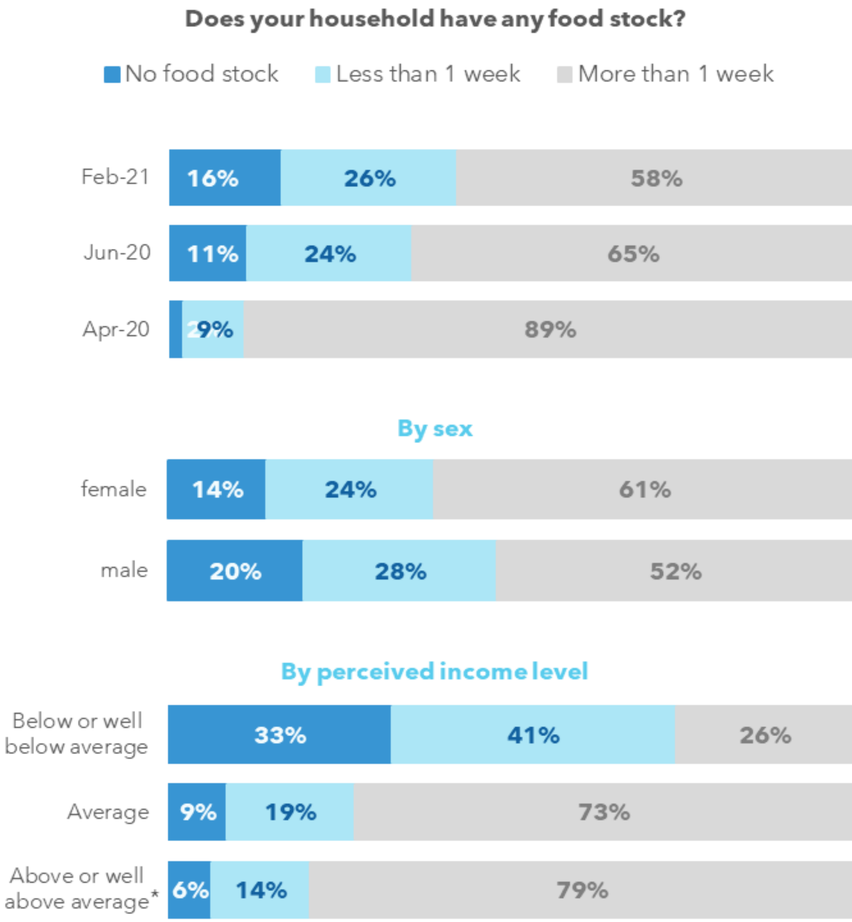




*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

FOOD SECURITY | Food stocks

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



*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

Of all respondents, 58% reported having more than a week's worth of food supplies in their household, which is a decrease from 89% in April and 65% in June 2020. The higher share in April 2020 is likely due to respondents stocking up on food supplies in the face of the lockdown that was implemented during that period.

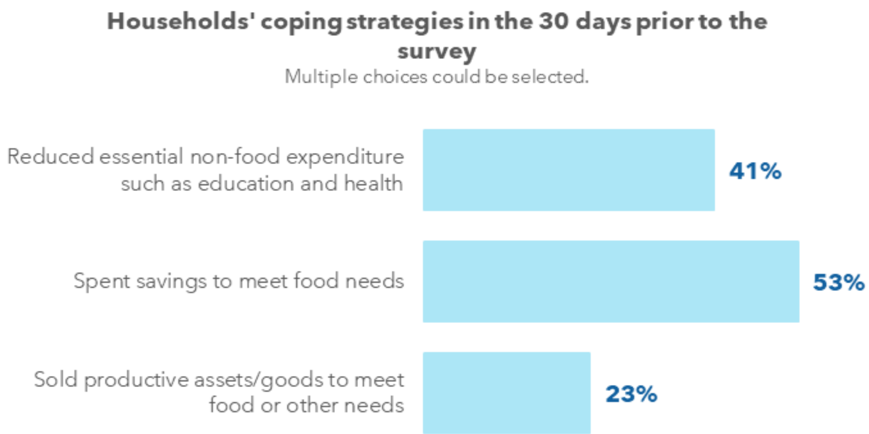
Overall findings for the Caribbean region are similar as in Trinidad and Tobago, with availability and size of household food stocks having decreased compared to April 2020.

Differences in food stocks in Trinidad and Tobago as well as at the regional level seem to mainly reflect disparities in household income, with low-income households tending to have less food supplies than households describing their incomes as average or above average. In Trinidad and Tobago, a third of households with a perceived household income below or well below average had no food stocks at the time of the survey, compared to 9% for households with a perceived average income, and only 26% had more than a week's worth of food supplies, compared to 73% of those with a perceived average income.

When comparing men and women, female respondents tend to report larger household food stocks than male respondents. Of all female respondents, 61% had more than a week's worth of food supplies, compared to 52% of male respondents.

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.



"We barely making it to buy a little food for home, we owing people because of borrowing to keep out loans paid in time." – Female, 26 years

"I have been unemployed since the out of COVID-19, and have been adapting through church cleaning for a little support(food)." – Male, 40 years

"It's a bit difficult having to go to work and my children are left at home to compete their work." – Female, 42 years

In the February 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, 53% resorted to spending savings, and 41% reduced essential non-food expenditures, such as on education and health. Likewise, 23% respondents sold productive assets to meet food or other needs, potentially undermining long-term income generation.

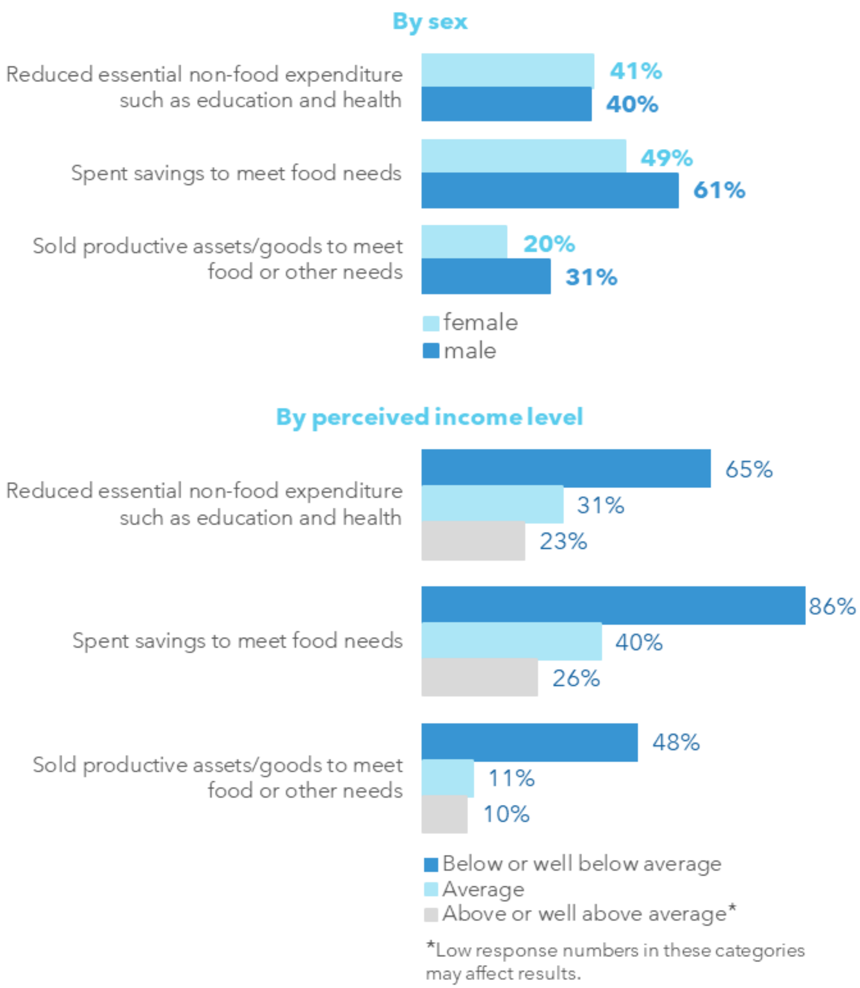
When compared to the average of the Caribbean region, English-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago are less likely to engage in any of the three coping strategies.

In Trinidad and Tobago, differences in the adoption of the coping strategies are the most striking across income levels. Households with a perceived income below or well below average income resorted to these compromises most often. In the future, this could lead to an even greater gap between economically better and worse off households.

The differences between women and men are less pronounced, but it appears that male respondents more frequently spent savings and sold productive assets/goods to meet food needs than female respondents.

FOOD SECURITY | Coping strategies

Households' coping strategies in the 30 days prior to the survey
Multiple choices could be selected.



"Unexpected and costly home repairs which may be partly due to the household being mainly at home." – Female, 37 years

"I have learned to save more of my salary for unexpected expenses in these unprecedented times. I cut back on some luxuries in order to do this effectively." – Female, 40 years

"COVID-19 has brought a great mental strain in my family and its taking a big tole on us, but we are trying to adapt and move on." – Male, 18 years

"Disruption to education as a postgraduate student and inability to travel and engage in recreation." – Male, 28 years

"Decreased medical care at public health institutions." – Female, 34 years

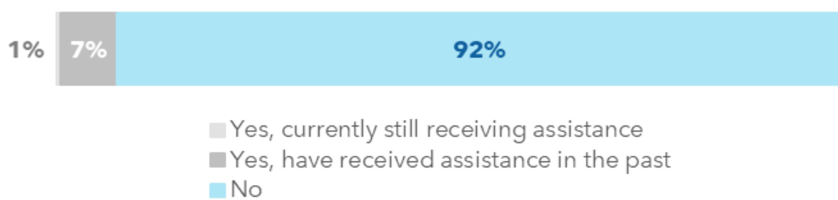
"Staying home and not being able to go to the park and exercise. My health is not the same. I'm diabetic so it used to help with the daily 1 hour walk in the part." – Male, 67 years

"Having to wait in lines outside banks and other utility places to pay bills. I have moved to paying bills online." – Female, 60 years

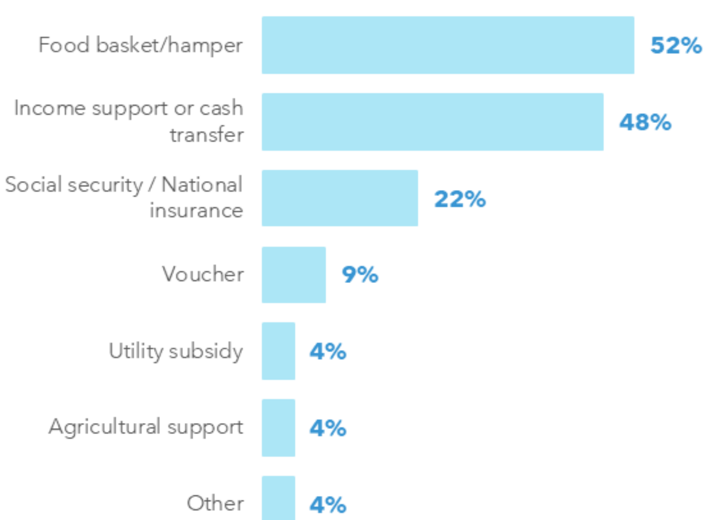
WIDER IMPACTS | COVID-19 assistance

▶ Food basket/hamper and cash transfer were the most commonly received forms of government assistance.

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



Respondents who received assistance from the government, have received the following...
Multiple choices could be selected.



Among the English-speaking respondents 8% reported to have received government assistance in response to COVID-19 pandemic, while 1% were still receiving assistance when the survey was implemented.

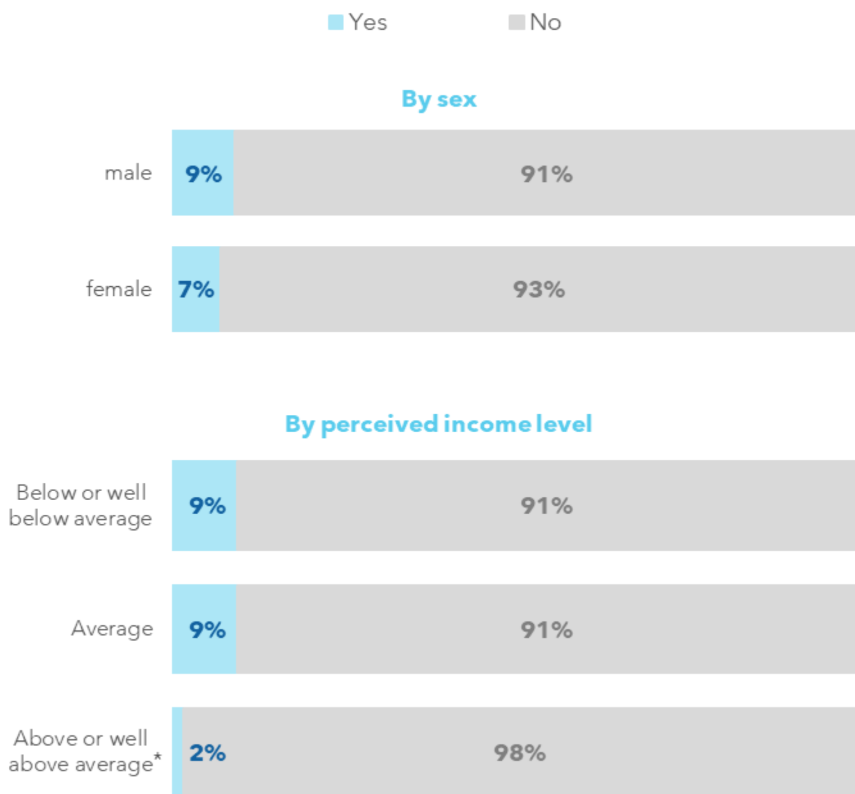
Among the 8% of respondents who reported to have received assistance most were supported through food basket/hamper (52%) and income support or cash transfer (48%). The government in Trinidad and Tobago introduced a Salary Relief Grant and Rental Assistance Grant in April 2020, which provided income and rent payment support to eligible individuals who lost their income or employment as a result of COVID-19. Furthermore, the government top-ups to existing cash transfer programs, such as Food Support, Public Assistance Grant and Disability Assistance Grant, and distributed food hampers and vouchers to families with children registered under the School Feeding Programme as well as to other vulnerable people not already in receipt of food cards. See page 5 for more information on government social protection responses.

The assistance modality in Trinidad and Tobago is comparable to the overall Caribbean region where food baskets/hampers (32% of those who received assistance), income support or cash transfers (31%), social security (26%) and vouchers (25%) were the most common forms of support. However, the average proportion of respondents who reported to have received the assistance in the region is almost double (15%) that of Trinidad and Tobago (8%).

Respondents who perceive their income as average, or below or well below average (9% for both income groups) were more likely to be recipients of government assistance, whereas 2% of above or well above average income earners reported to have received the support. Only minor differences were observed between sex with slightly more male respondents reporting to have received the assistance (9%) compared to female respondents (7%).

WIDER IMPACTS | COVID-19 assistance

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



*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

"The isolation part of its restrictions has had a toll especially with the lack of physical interaction and with my school closed so it's been hard to adapt." – Male, 17 years

"We live with a sense of great caution especially in our spending and movements. Loved ones are becoming anxious and nervous about the situation." – Female, 32 years

"Cannot travel abroad to visit family." – Female, 50 years

"I was not able to visit my doctor for mental health appointments when it was planned for me to do so. This was because of the need for the majority of medical human resources including the doctors at the Health Centre I visit regularly to be focused on patients affected by the pandemic. This was before the pandemic was known to affect a person's mental health." – Female, 35 years

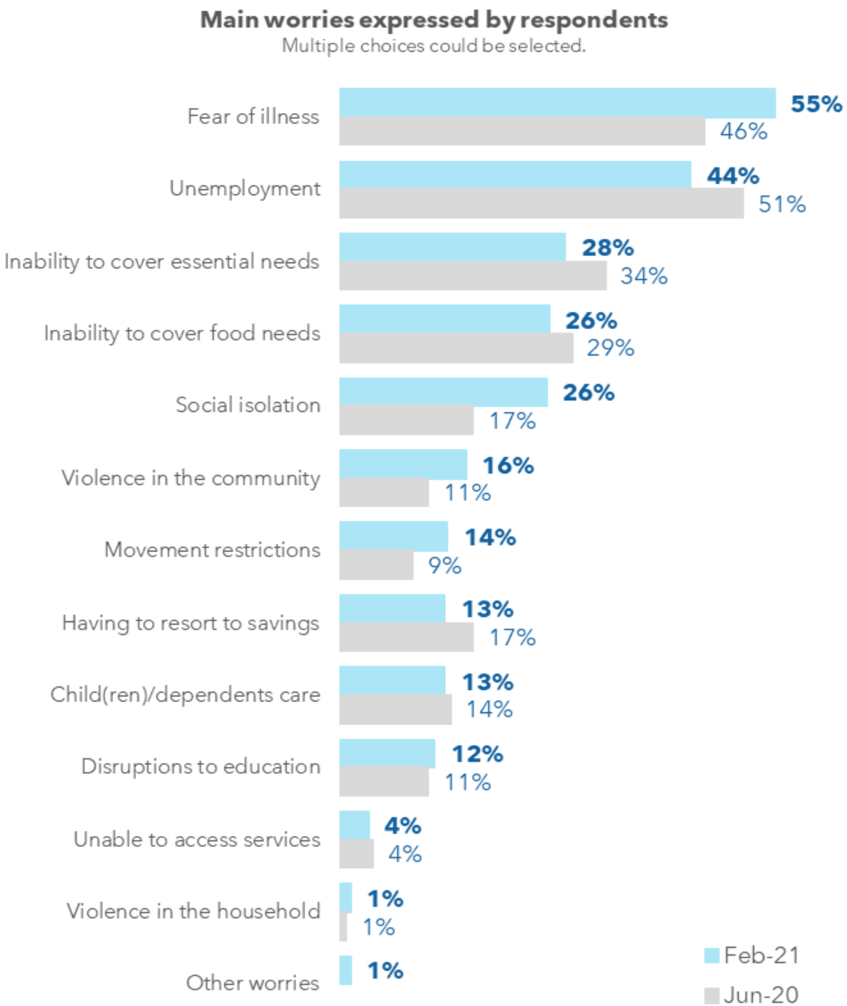
"I have not seen my child in over a year I try to chat with her on what's app." – Female, 50 years

"The children and online school has been intense. CXC has not made the CSEC and CAPE syllabus any easier for students and it is a lot of stress and uncertainty." – Female, 40 years

"Kid not able to start school." – Female, 43 years

WIDER IMPACTS | Main worries

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



Fear of illness has overtaken unemployment as respondents' main worry when compared with results from the June 2020 survey. By February 2021, over half of respondents cited fear of illness as their main worry, which follows a spike of the number of active COVID-19 cases between August and December 2020 (see page 5). A bit under half of the respondents also expressed concerns about unemployment and around one fourth worries about inability to cover food and other essential needs, and about social isolation.

Trends in Trinidad and Tobago are similar to the Caribbean where fear of illness (57%) overtook unemployment (44%) as the main worry when compared to June 2020, followed by worries about the inability to meet essential needs (37%) and food needs (32%).

Important differences in main worries were observed between men and women. While male respondents cited unemployment as their main worry (51%) more often than female respondents (41%), female respondents reported fear of illness more frequently as their key worry (59%) compared to male respondents (45%). Differences between male and female respondents were also observed across other worry categories (see page 31).

Major differences were also noted across perceived income levels. Main worries for those with below or well below income level were unemployment (52%), and inability to cover food and essential needs (51% and 50% respectively), while for the respondents with average and above or well above average income the main worries were fear of illness (67% and 73%), unemployment (39% and 43%), and social isolation (31% and 29%).

WIDER IMPACTS | Main worries

Main worries expressed by respondents
Multiple choices could be selected.

By sex

Main worries	Female	Male
Fear of illness	59%	45%
Unemployment	41%	51%
Inability to cover essential needs	24%	37%
Inability to cover food needs	24%	32%
Social isolation	27%	24%
Having to resort to savings	16%	8%
Disruptions to education	15%	5%
Child(ren)/dependents care	15%	9%
Movement restrictions	14%	12%
Violence in the community	14%	19%
Unable to access services	2%	6%
Violence in the household	2%	0%
Other worries	1%	1%

By perceived income level

Main worries	Below or well below average	Average	Above or well above average*
Fear of illness	30%	67%	73%
Unemployment	52%	39%	43%
Inability to cover essential needs	50%	17%	14%
Inability to cover food needs	51%	13%	13%
Social isolation	20%	31%	29%
Having to resort to savings	10%	15%	16%
Disruptions to education	8%	16%	10%
Child(ren)/dependents care	13%	15%	11%
Movement restrictions	5%	19%	19%
Violence in the community	13%	18%	16%
Unable to access services	5%	3%	3%
Violence in the household	1%	2%	0%
Other worries	2%	2%	0%

*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

"I have had to monitor my son in online school. He just started primary school and it has indeed been a challenge having to balance work, taking care of my family and ensuring at the same time that he gets a solid foundation in school." – Female, 45 years

"I've been struggling to find meaningful ways to spend my time and for many months, I neglected my health. I'm trying to be more self aware by recording/tracking how I spend my time." – Female, 28 years

"Homeschooling is too much for working mothers with children." – Female, 32 years

"Sales have dropped so salary cut back and gates has stop funding education. So yes got to find money to finance children education." – Female, 55 years

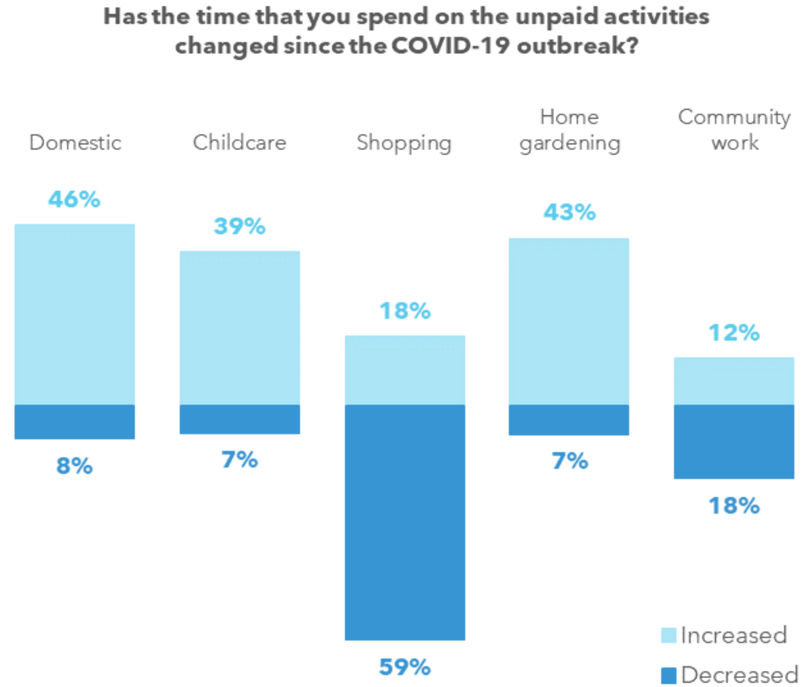
"Health work single parent if I get sick who would care for them." – Female, 53 years

"Too many people not adhering to rules and regulations for efficiency but me and my family are making safety a priority." – Male, 52 years

"Partner got stuck in a different island and loneliness is difficult." – Male, 39 years

WIDER IMPACTS | Unpaid care and work

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



"Less working days...and hardly have some one to watch the child when I have to go to work...if I miss a day...they threaten you with the job...telling you...other people want our jobs." – Female, 30 years

"Positive lessons learnt with regards to priorities and relationships; also, started cooking and gardening." – Female, 56 years

The COVID-19 restrictions and worries significantly reduced shopping activity for over half of English-speaking respondents (59%). On the other hand, the pandemic has increased the amount of unpaid work at home, placing an additional burden on some household members, in particular women. Two out of five households reported to have increased time devoted to domestic work (46%), home gardening (43%) and childcare (39%).

Most of the trends in Trinidad and Tobago are similar to those in the Caribbean where 44% of respondents reported an increase in time spent on domestic work, 39% reported an increase in childcare, and 57% reported a decrease in shopping activity. However, an increase in home gardening appears to be more significant in Trinidad and Tobago than in the region where only 27% of respondents reported an increase in time spent on gardening.

Significant differences in Trinidad and Tobago were observed between men and women and across income levels. Female respondents more often reported a decrease in shopping (65%) and an increase in domestic work (48%), childcare (41%) and gardening (45%) than male respondents (see page 33). This difference does not take into account that women may have been already shouldering disproportionate unpaid care work before the pandemic.

A decrease in shopping activity was also more frequently reported among respondents with below or well above average income (69%) than among respondents with higher income (60% for those with average and 42% for those with above or well above average income). This may be attributed to the reasons for limited market access, such as lack of money. In addition, those with lower income more often cited an increase in childcare, while the wealthiest respondents more often reported an increase in gardening.

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	46%	39%	18%	43%	12%
No change	44%	26%	21%	34%	43%
Decreased	8%	7%	59%	7%	18%
Not applicable	2%	28%	1%	17%	27%

By sex

Female	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	48%	41%	15%	45%	11%
No change	44%	27%	19%	33%	40%
Decreased	6%	5%	65%	5%	17%
Not applicable	2%	26%	1%	17%	31%

Male	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	43%	34%	24%	38%	15%
No change	42%	24%	25%	35%	48%
Decreased	13%	10%	48%	12%	21%
Not applicable	2%	32%	2%	15%	17%

"Making provisions for supervision of my children has resulted in changes to work arrangements for myself and my husband based on the demand of employers to be present at office." - Female, 39 years

By perceived income level

Below or well below average	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	49%	47%	13%	40%	11%
No change	33%	17%	15%	23%	36%
Decreased	15%	14%	69%	16%	22%
Not applicable	2%	22%	3%	21%	31%

Average	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	43%	37%	21%	41%	10%
No change	50%	26%	19%	40%	43%
Decreased	5%	3%	60%	4%	21%
Not applicable	2%	34%	0%	14%	25%

Above or well above average*	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	48%	35%	21%	50%	16%
No change	45%	37%	35%	35%	51%
Decreased	5%	4%	42%	0%	9%
Not applicable	2%	24%	2%	15%	25%

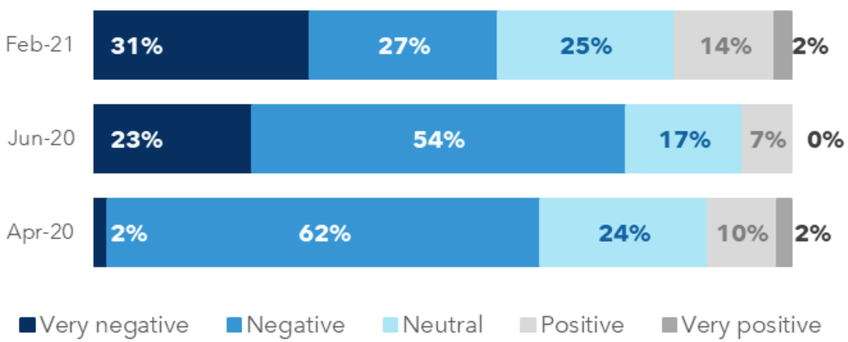
*Low response numbers in these categories may affect results.

"I have had to help my son manage his discipline to do work more so now as he is at home and I am working, and he has exams coming up soon. I try to work with him, but I am starting to get my own level of despondency from having to keep up with the strenuous job and keep folks at home calm during this time." – Female, 55 years

WIDER IMPACTS | Coping and adapting

▶ Feelings of anxiety and stress remain widespread but contrast with some positive experiences, due to the varying impacts and lived realities of COVID-19.

Distribution of sentiments across open-ended survey responses



Respondents were given the space to provide more insight on how they are adjusting to the impacts of the pandemic ten months following its declaration. Respondents from Trinidad and Tobago continue to express stress about employment and providing food for the family. Those experiencing loss of income are worrying about how to meet bills and payments. Some with jobs described challenges of working from home with juggling childcare and domestic activities. The inability to see and interact with friends and family continue to be a source of stress among respondents. Some also expressed concerns about disruptions to their own or their children's education. Sentiment analysis revealed that there were both more very negative comments and more positive comments compared to June 2020. Such polarization of experiences indicates that while some respondents are starting to normalize technology for work, shop, education, and to connect with family and friends, others might not be unable to do so, with a growing proportion of people expressing very negative views.

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.

WIDER IMPACTS | Coping and adapting

Common themes on how respondents are adapting and coping

FEBRUARY 2021

JUNE 2020

APRIL 2020

CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

LIVELIHOODS | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

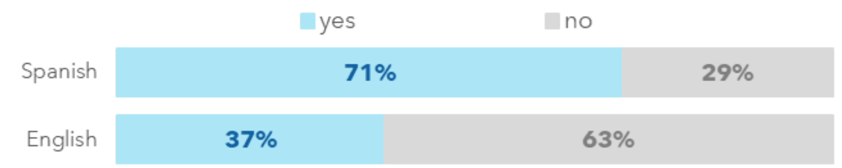
► Spanish speakers from Trinidad and Tobago are the group most widely affected by socio-economic impacts.

The survey was available in English, French and Spanish. One in five survey respondents in the Caribbean identified as Spanish speaker, and of these 91% are residing in Trinidad and Tobago. It is assumed that Spanish speakers in Trinidad and Tobago are Venezuelans who may be facing uniquely impacts from COVID-19. There are nearly 20,300 Venezuelans registered with UNHCR in the country.

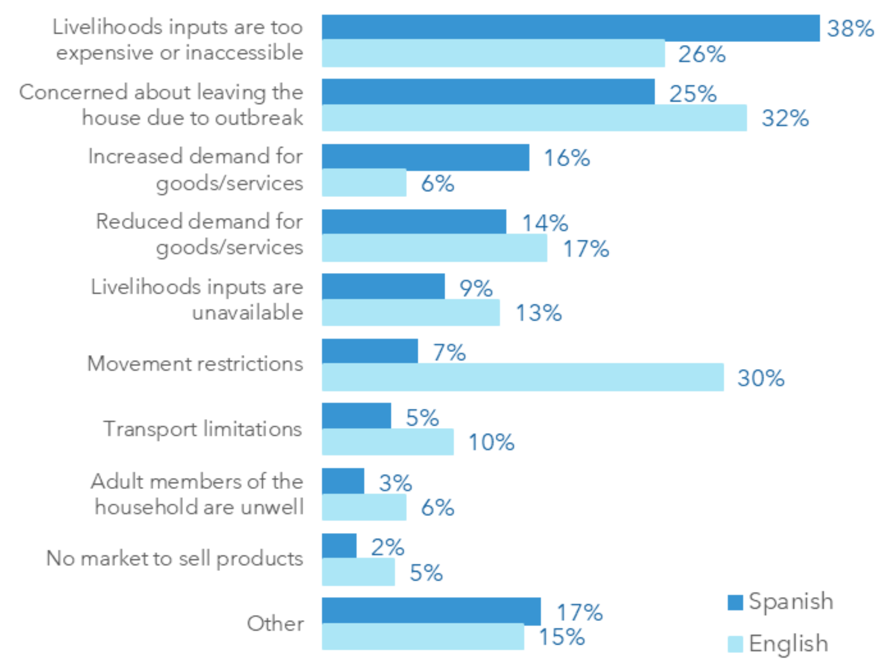
The responses of Spanish speakers residing in Trinidad and Tobago continue to differ significantly from those of English speakers and from the survey averages in the region, which is indicative of the precariousness of their situation. Spanish-speaking respondents mainly rely on informal daily/casual labour for their income (43%) at almost four times the rate of English speakers (12%). Compared to the June 2020 survey, the proportion of Spanish speakers who rely on this income source, alongside support from family and friends or the government, is increasing while the reliance on salaried employment has decreased. At the same time, Spanish speakers are more likely to report below or well below income levels (74%) compared to English speakers (63%).

Spanish speakers were almost twice as likely to experience disruptions to their livelihoods in the two weeks prior to the survey. For Spanish speakers, expensive or inaccessible livelihood inputs were the main reason for livelihood disruption while movement restrictions are much less of a concern.

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



For those that reported livelihood disruptions, the main reasons were...
Multiple choices could be selected.
By language



CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

LIVELIHOODS | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

► A large majority of Spanish-speaking respondents has experienced a job loss or reduced income due to the impacts of COVID-19.

The vast majority of Spanish speakers (86%) has experienced loss of jobs or reduced salaries since the COVID-19 outbreak, compared to every second English speaker. Consequentially, they were also much more likely to engage in negative coping strategies to meet their food needs, including through spending savings, reducing expenditure on education and health or selling productive assets or goods (see page 41). The latter is most worrisome as it undermines their long-term income generation capacity and may further undermine self-reliance and human capital development.

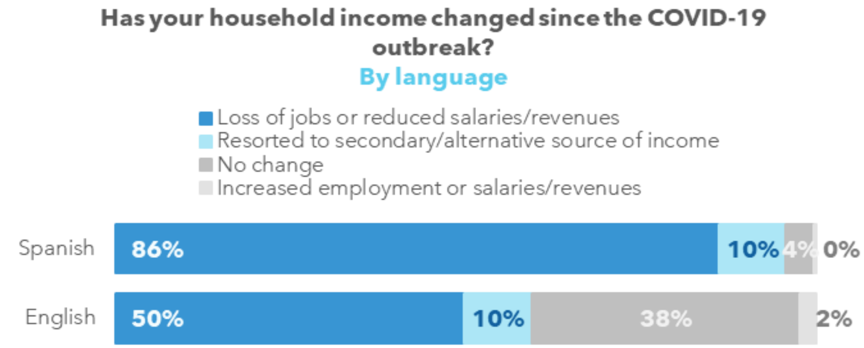
Over three quarters of Spanish speakers expect to experience at least a moderate impact to their livelihood as a result of current disruptions, compared to 61% of English speakers.

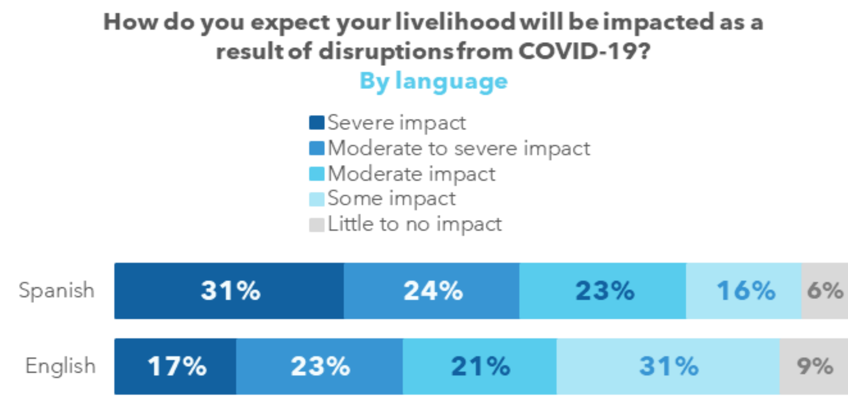
"Es difícil porque los trabajos han disminuido, por consiguiente los ingresos no son iguales. Se ha tenido que recurrir a conocidos y familiares por ayuda personal." - Female, 35 years

"Como inmigrante es aún más difícil sobrevivir por la discriminación y el no tener acceso a empleos." - Male, 38 years

"Debido a todo lo que esta ocurriendo mayoria de Venezolanos hemos perdido trabajando." - Female, 24 years

"Disminucion de trabajo y temor a ser desalojado por no pagar." – Male, 34





"Es muy dificil conseguir trabajo para la compra de alimentos." - Male, 37 years

"Perdida de mi empleo por el cierre de los negocios." - Female, 35 years

CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

MARKETS | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

► Spanish speakers are over three times more likely to experience difficulties in accessing markets due to COVID-19 than English speakers.

COVID-19 and measures to contain the virus are impacting market access, with 68% of Spanish-speaking respondents reporting that they could not access stores and markets at some point in the seven days prior to the February survey. This is over three times more frequent compared to English speakers in Trinidad and Tobago (19%) and over twice as likely when compared with the regional average of 30%.

Lack of financial means is overwhelmingly reported as the main reason for limited market access among Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago, cited by 97% of those who faced a time when they could not access markets in the week prior to the survey. This is a larger proportion compared to English speakers (90%) and the Caribbean region as a whole (84%).

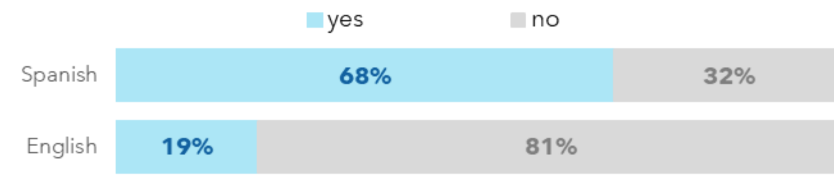
"Bueno me he estado adaptando a lo que puedo ya que me he visto en la obligacion de pedir prestado para comprar comida." - Male, 30 years

"En no poder tener dinero para comprar medicamentos al enfermarme." - Female, 43 years

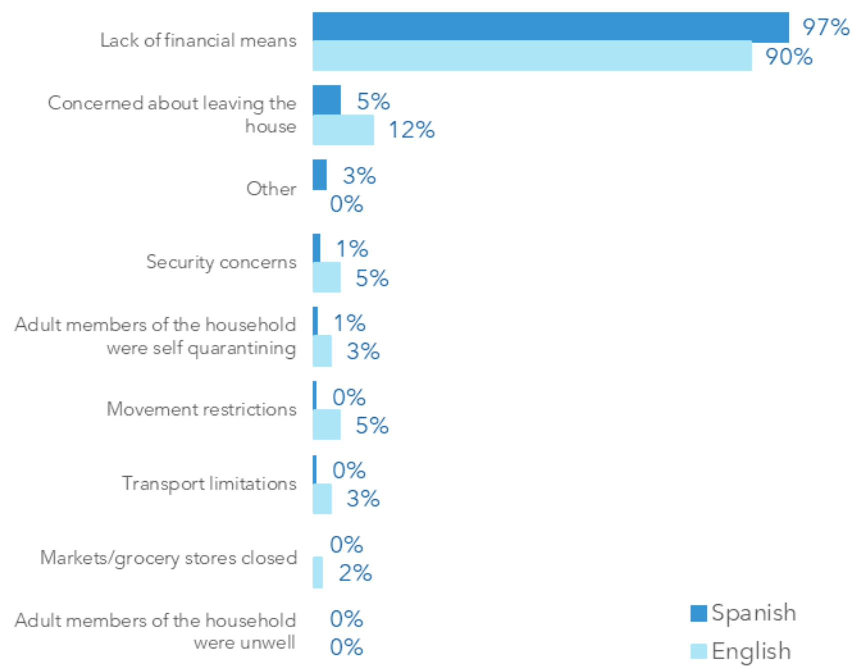
"Salir menos y comprar lo necesario para alimentarse." - Male, 48 years

"No tener trabajo y reduciendo los gastos solo comprar los necesario." - Female, 46 years

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



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 language



CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

MARKETS | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

► Spanish speakers are buying cheaper foods and smaller quantities more frequently compared to English speakers.

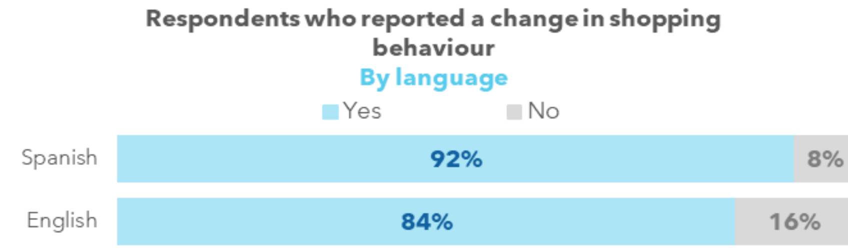
The pandemic has changed how people shop. The majority of Spanish-speaking respondents (92%) has changed their shopping behaviour compared to before the pandemic, which is a slightly larger proportion than for English-speaking respondents (84%).

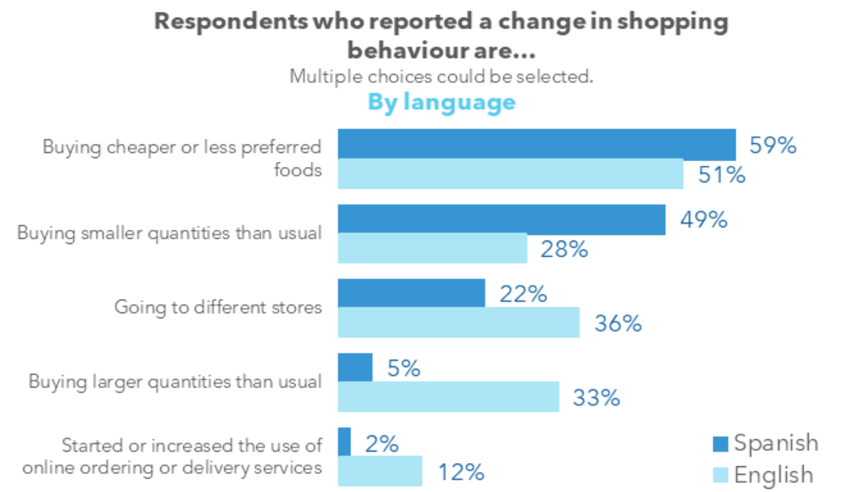
Spanish speakers are more frequently resorting to buying cheaper or less preferred foods (59%) and smaller quantities (49%) than English speakers (51% and 28% respectively). Such shopping behaviour is consistent with the trends in the Caribbean, where the most common changes in shopping behavior are buying cheaper foods (46%) and smaller quantities (32%), however the proportion of Spanish speakers in Trinidad and Tobago resorting to these two strategies is higher than in the region.

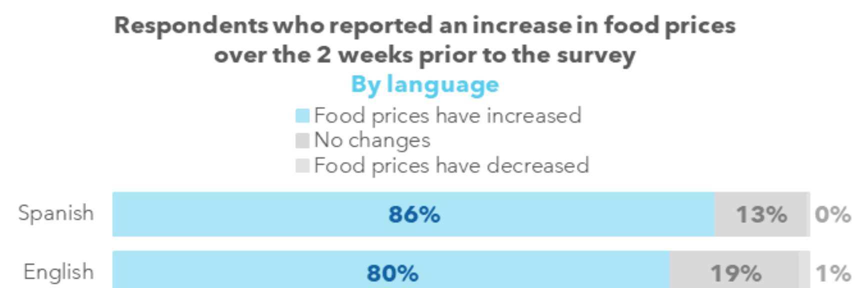
In addition, Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago more frequently indicated an increase in the cost of food over the two weeks prior to the survey (86%) compared to English speakers (80%) or compared to the regional average (71%). This could potentially be explained by having fewer shopping options or that they are more sensitive to price changes given limited income.

"Falta de dinero por no tener trabajo ah impedido las compras de comidas y artículos debido personal, además de no poder comprar pañales ni alimentos para mi hijo de 2 años." - Female, 26 years

"No tener dinero para comer y pagar renta." - Female, 49 years







CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

FOOD SECURITY | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

▶ Spanish speakers are roughly twice more likely to experience moderate or severe food insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic than English speakers.

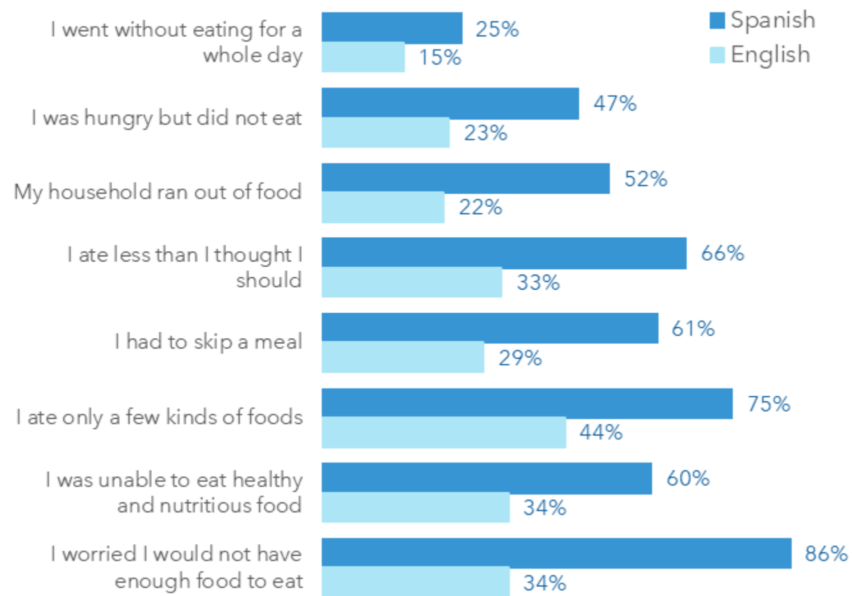
The Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) was used to provide a picture of food insecurity experienced by respondents during the 30 days preceding the survey. When Spanish-speaking respondents were asked about the 30 days leading up to the survey, 25% of respondents reported experiencing a time when they went a whole day without eating, 47% experienced a time when they were hungry but did not eat, and 66% experienced a time when they ate less than they thought they should. Worries about not having enough to eat were reported by a disturbingly large majority of respondents (86%). Besides quantity, the nutrition and the variety of foods consumed are also concerning among Spanish speakers, with 60% of respondents reporting a time when they were unable to eat a healthy and nutritious diet, and 75% reporting a time when they ate only a few kinds of food.

Based on the FIES methodology, it is estimated that 47% of Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago are moderately food insecure and additional 22% severely food insecure. This is well above the food insecurity levels of English speakers in Trinidad and Tobago as well as above the levels of the Caribbean region.

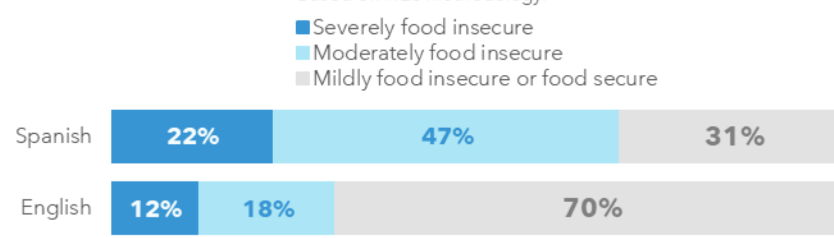
"En ocasiones he tenido que comer solo 2 veces al día para rendir la comida, tomar dinero de lo que he guardado para pagar renta y comprar comida." - Male, 26 years

"Me he visto afectada de manera monetaria porque no tenemos para comprar comida me estoy adaptando a comer solo 1 vez al día." - Female, 24 years

Was there a time in the past 30 days when you experienced the following?
Multiple choices could be selected.
By language



Prevalence rates of food insecurity by perceived household income
Based on FIES methodology.



CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

FOOD SECURITY | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

► Spanish speakers are forced to employ negative coping strategies to meet their food needs.

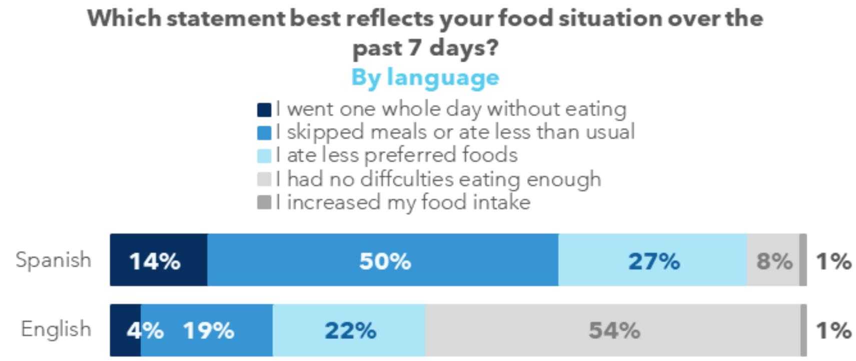
Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago were much more likely to compromise their food consumption due to the impacts of the pandemic than English speakers. In the 7 days prior to the survey, 14% of Spanish-speaking respondents went a whole day without food and an additional 50% of them skipped meals or ate less than usual. The alarming state of immigrants' food security is also reflected in the comments made by Spanish speakers, a substantial proportion of which revolve around the lack of food or difficulties in accessing adequate food.

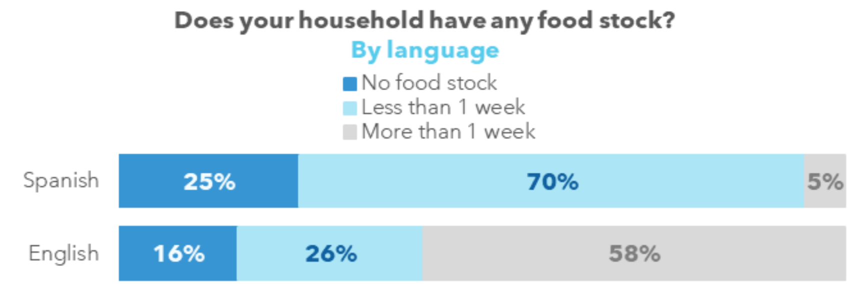
Only 5% of Spanish-speaking respondents had more than a week's worth of food stocks, compared to 58% of English speakers. In addition, Spanish speakers were also much more likely to try and meet food needs through the reduction of expenditure on education and health, sale of productive assets or spending savings. This could severely undermine their long-term income generation capacity, self-reliance and human capital development.

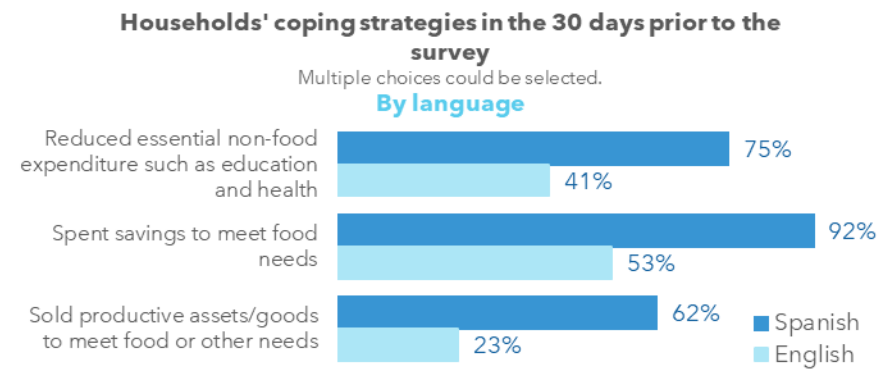
The inability to meet food and other essential needs are the main worries of Spanish-speaking respondents – cited by nearly three out of four respondents – which is significantly higher when compared to English speakers (see page 43).

"Nos hemos visto afectado porque recurrimos a los ahorros que teníamos para poder cubrir los alimentos y la renta" - Male, 38 years

"Nos hemos visto afectados porque no hay trabajo (…), ya no trabajamos. Los ahorros los hemos gastado para la comida medicinas para nuestros hijos" - Female, 28 years







CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

WIDER IMPACTS | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

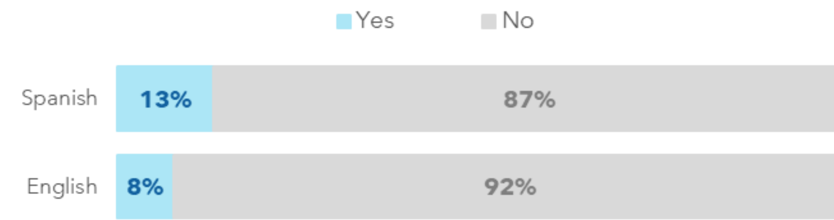
▶ Spanish speakers are almost three times more worried about meeting their food and essential needs than English speakers.

A slightly larger proportion of Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago reported to have received government assistance in response to COVID-19 pandemic (13%) compared to English speakers (8%). However, even in light of this additional support Spanish speakers reduced their shopping activity more drastically (83%) than English-speaking respondents (59%). While the increase in domestic work and childcare is reported by similar proportion of Spanish- and English-speaking respondents, Spanish speakers did not report a major increase in home gardening as was the case with English speakers.

In addition, Spanish speakers were significantly more worried about the inability to meet their food and other essential needs – cited by nearly three out of four respondents – which is almost three times higher when compared to English speakers and twice higher than in the Caribbean region where main worries were fear of illness and unemployment. Spanish-speaking respondents also more frequently reported worries of being unable to access services (15%) than English-speaking respondents (4%) in Trinidad and Tobago (see page 43).

Respondents were also given the space to provide more nuanced insights on how they are adjusting to the impacts of the pandemic ten months following its declaration. Spanish-speaking respondents continue to express stress about unemployment and lack of money with many highlighting that they do not have funds to provide sufficient food for themselves and their families.

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



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

Spanish	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	47%	42%	9%	6%	7%
No change	26%	22%	6%	27%	24%
Decreased	22%	17%	83%	28%	24%
Not applicable	5%	19%	2%	39%	45%

English	Domestic	Childcare	Shopping	Home gardening	Community work
Increased	46%	39%	18%	43%	12%
No change	44%	26%	21%	34%	43%
Decreased	8%	7%	59%	7%	18%
Not applicable	2%	28%	1%	17%	27%

CHALLENGES FACING MIGRANTS

WIDER IMPACTS | Spanish-speaking respondents in Trinidad and Tobago

Common themes on how respondents are adapting and coping

Main worries expressed by respondents

Multiple choices could be selected.

By language

	Spanish	English
Inability to cover food needs	74%	26%
Inability to cover essential needs	71%	28%
Unemployment	39%	44%
Fear of illness	36%	55%
Unable to access services	15%	4%
Social isolation	9%	26%
Having to resort to savings	3%	13%
Child(ren)/dependents care	3%	13%
Disruptions to education	2%	12%
Violence in the community	1%	16%
Movement restrictions	1%	14%
Violence in the household	1%	1%
Other worries	1%	1%

"La falta de trabajo e ingreso ha afectado mucho el hogar a veces no tener para comer. Ni para comprarle los pañales a mi bebé; es muy difícil. Así como también no tener dinero para pagar renta. O otras necesidades básicas en el hogar." - Female 25

"Desempleo y falta de dinero para la compra de alimentos y salud." - Female, 32 years

CONCLUSION

Ten months on following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, people living in Trinidad and Tobago have had to adjust to shifts in lockdown measures and protocols. Following a spur of new COVID-19 cases on the island in September 2020, the resumption of many economic and commercial activities since June 2020 were interrupted, which continued to impact negatively on livelihoods and consequences for market access and food consumption.

Trends in Trinidad and Tobago are largely consistent with regional trends,* with the most severe impacts reported by self-perceived low-income households and Spanish-speakers, who are assumed to be migrants from Venezuela. Most respondents still expect a moderate to severe impact to their livelihoods and worries about meeting food and other essential needs are more wide-spread, particularly among low-income households and Spanish-speakers.

The interruptions caused by COVID-19 to people's livelihoods have impacted on how markets are accessed. Although those reporting price increases at the market, and adjustments in shopping behavior seem to be somewhat levelling out when compared with June 2020, lack of financial means continues to be the main hindrance for market access, regardless of respondents' economic or other backgrounds.

The reported lack of financial means reported by respondents are also consistent with respondents diving into their savings to meet their food needs. Increasingly, they are meeting these at the expense of investment in education and health or through the sale of productive assets, which is expected to undermine their future income generation capacity and human capital development.

The impact on food security was most striking when observed between perceived income groups. Households with below average incomes, and Spanish-speakers in particular, faced disproportionately greater challenges in providing for household members and meeting their food and other basic needs. These challenges are also reflected in widespread worries to meet those same needs and their negative expectations of future livelihood disruptions.

Efforts by the government of Trinidad and Tobago and various private entities have attempted to curb the impacts of the pandemic by offering support in the form of food hampers, income support and social assistance. With only 8% of respondents reporting to have received government assistance, it is crucial that continued efforts are made to ensure the most vulnerable are being supported.

While the survey found responses from women and men were largely congruent, results also point to disproportionate impact on women incomes and domestic responsibilities and there are concerns that existing gender disparities risk being exacerbated. More specific analysis is needed to minimize the gaps on existing inequalities which were already existent before the pandemic.

**Responses from Trinidad and Tobago made up a large percentage of overall regional responses (26%).*

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.

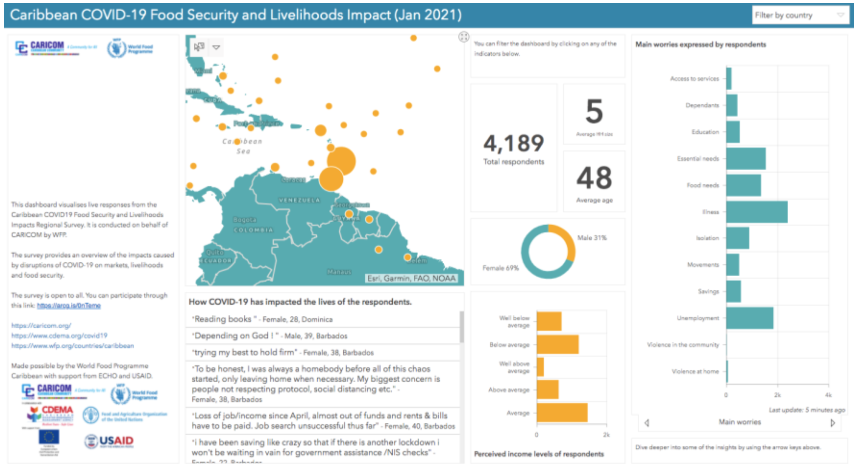
WFP expresses warm appreciation to Flow and Digicel for distributing the survey link by SMS in Barbados, Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago. Special thanks to the International Telecommunication Union for their support in facilitating the SMS distribution.

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. For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, nearly a quarter of the population does not use the internet. 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 22 and page 40).

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 22 and page 40).

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

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