

Assessment of Food Security Among Vulnerable Groups in Odisha during COVID-19



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ACRONYMS

AAY	Antyoday Anna Yojana
CFM	Complaints and feedback mechanism
FCS	Food consumption score
FHH	Female-headed households
FPS	Fair Price Shop
GoO	Government of Odisha
HCM	Hot cooked meals
HH	Household
MDM	Mid-day meals
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
NFSA	National Food Security Act
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PHH	Priority Households
PMGKY	Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana
PMAY	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
r-CSI	Reduced Coping Strategies Index
THR	Take Home Rations
TPDS	Targeted Public Distribution System
UNICEF	United National Children’s Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WSHG	Women’s self-help groups

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In April 2020, shortly after the nation-wide lockdown began in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Inter-Agency Group (IAG) in Odisha, including Oxfam India, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision India, Caritas India, HelpAge India along with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WFP commissioned a 'Joint Rapid Needs Assessment'. The initial findings, especially of WFP's specific analysis on food and nutrition security, prompted the Government of Odisha (GoO) to request WFP to carry out a follow up study to examine the current status of food security, nutrition and livelihoods among specific vulnerable population of Odisha such as daily wage earners, returnee migrant workers, small/marginal farmers.

The follow-up assessment was initiated in September 2020 in partnership with the State Government and the IAG with the following objectives:

- Examine the current status of food and nutrition security and identify any changes since the observations in the first report, with a focus on vulnerable groups, such as daily wage earners, returnee migrant workers, small/marginal farmers, urban slum dwellers and Tribal populations.
- Assess the responsive measures of national and state government to the crisis, the extent to which recipients benefitted from them, and identify the gaps in access and need by vulnerable groups.
- Identify the food and basic needs among the vulnerable groups.
- Examine the impact of COVID on the livelihoods of households dependent on social safety nets/schemes, especially small and marginal farmers, and daily wage earners, with reference to the harvest and markets.
- Provide recommendations to the GoO for further refining their response to the COVID crisis

Methods

Similar to first round of assessment, the follow-up assessment employed mixed-method approach of desk review and a household survey which was quantitative, consisting of a structured questionnaire. The survey was conducted in 15 districts of the Odisha, including different livelihood zones, Aspirational Districts and Tribal areas. A total of 5 districts were selected from each of the three divisions of state, namely southern, northern, and central divisions for a total of 820 households. A second sample of 300 households was drawn from three districts with urban slums, namely Sambalpur, Khurda, and Ganjam - 100 slum dwelling households from each.

Main findings

- The average household size for the sample was 4 persons, except for households headed by women, where the average size was 3 persons. Female headed households were more likely to be found in the daily wage labour group while slum dwelling households were most likely to be hosting at least one migrant worker (20 percent). Nearly 10 percent of households identifying as scheduled tribes had migrant workers. Physically or mentally disabled persons were slightly more likely to be found in the slum dweller households but in general, were not so common amongst the sample.
- Asset ownership is a good proxy of relative household wealth but may be less accurate for slum dwellers. Tribal households are the poorest in terms of asset wealth, followed by female-headed households. Households accumulate assets in a particular way, but mobile phones are the most important assets for all wealth groups, followed by electric fans.
- In the survey, households were asked to name their top three livelihood activities. Rural households rely on wage labour – both agricultural and non-agricultural (around 60 percent of households) while about one-quarter also rely on crop sales and over 10 percent on livestock/livestock products for their livelihoods. Urban households also relied heavily on non-agricultural wage labour (45 percent), followed by Government schemes and programmes (22 percent), skilled labour (19 percent), small business (18 percent) and salaried work (18 percent). For both groups, the type of livelihoods used did not change much due to COVID; however, the intensity of the engagement likely was affected by the pandemic.
- Nearly half the households reported loss of jobs in past 30 days, which was highest in female headed

households and lowest in smallholder households. Reduction or loss of income in past 30 days was more common – most likely in slum dwellers, female headed households and those with migrants. Compared to same time last year, men’s income was more likely to have decreased in slum dwellers and households with migrants. For women, income lost or decreased was highest in female headed households, smallholders and Tribal households.

- Two-thirds of households reported having food stocks at the time of the survey – 71 percent of female headed households (high) and 58 percent of slum dwellers (low). However, the level of stocks was low in female headed households, with most having one week or less. Smallholders had the largest food stocks.
- All groups averaged 2-3 meals per day but female headed households and households hosting migrants were least likely to have more than 3 meals. HHs with acceptable dietary diversity and food frequency had daily consumption of cereals and oils, vegetables and pulses 4-6 days/week, dairy and sugar 3 days, meat/fish 2 days and fruits one day per week.
- Dietary diversity and food frequency were best in smallholder and Tribal households and worst in households hosting migrants. It was also lower in female-headed households and slum dwellers.
- Most HHs rely on purchase to access food – more so with slum dwellers. Overall, reliance on government schemes to access food was low. Female headed households, slum dwellers and households hosting migrants were most likely to rely on government schemes to access their food.
- Lack of affordability or high prices was cited as the main reason by households consuming insufficient quantities of food, more so among female-headed households. Fear of COVID-19, distance and closure of markets were cited as key reasons for lack of access to markets.
- When dealing with food shortages, female headed households and households hosting migrant were more likely to use preventative measures such as consuming less preferred foods or reducing intake. Tribal households were more likely to use reactive strategies such as reducing number of meals or not eating all day.
- Food insecurity was highest in households with migrants. Tribal households were least likely to be food secure and also had quite a few vulnerable households. Food security was best in slum dwellers, followed by female-headed households. In order to manage the impact of COVID-19 and the national lockdown, borrowing money was common (40-50 percent) while sale of assets was not.
- Slum dwellers are not benefitting from government programmes as much as other vulnerable groups where the outreach is good. It appears that there are both inclusion and exclusion errors for targeting of Government programmes. A systematic ‘clean-up’ process is needed. There could also be a problem with targeting Other Backwards Classes (OBC) for Government programmes.
- Outreach of Government information and support on COVID was good across all vulnerable groups. Wage earners, female-headed and smallholder households were the least likely to get food support. Most respondents were satisfied with the amount of food support but not with the timeliness of it. Dissatisfaction was higher among slum dwellers, wage earners and smallholders.
- Though Atma Nirbhar Bharat was designed primarily to benefit migrants, only 13 percent households with migrants reported benefiting from it compared to 44 percent of Tribal households and 39 percent of small holder households. Targeting errors and the limited implementation of ONORC are likely some of the main reasons for this.
- Television and social media are the most preferred and effective media for providing information. Fewer than a third of the respondents were aware of the Government’s complaints and feedback mechanism, indicating a challenge in ensuring accountability to the people.
- Cash, food, and employment are the three major longer-term needs of respondents across all vulnerability categories. Healthcare and education are also important long-term needs, especially of Tribal households, which could be located in more remote areas and face poorer coverage of health centres and schools.

Recommendations

The study found some clear challenges with respect to food and nutrition security in all groups and the following are summary recommendations based on the findings:

1. Livelihoods support emerges as a key area of Government intervention, as more than half of the households suffered loss of livelihoods or reduced incomes. This is particularly a priority for migrant labour, wage labour, and women-headed households. The Government should prioritize them in enrolment in livelihood programmes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in case their usual livelihood is lost.
2. There is a need to prioritize migrant households, wage earners, tribes and female-headed households for emergency food assistance such as during lockdowns. They have less food stock for the longer periods and have high dependence on market for food. These groups have also reported affordability / lack of money as a key reason for not having sufficient quantity of food in the past week.
3. Migrants face relatively higher challenge in accessing FPS, indicating the need to focus on enhancing implementation of the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) initiative, possibly through an IEC campaign among them or enforcement drives involving FPS as well. Doorstep delivery of rations could be considered for households headed by women and those with disabled members during emergencies, as travel restrictions are a key inhibiting factor impeding their market access. Regularity of Fair Price Shops (FPS) timings needs to be enforced as 'FPS being closed' was given as a primary reason by most groups for not accessing them in the past months.
4. Higher stress and vulnerability among migrants, wage earners, smallholders and tribes indicate the need for prioritizing these groups for livelihood and income enhancement programmes. Besides schemes like MGNREGS, among smallholders, enhancing market linkage and income diversification, such as through women's self-help groups (WSHGs) could be an effective strategy. Tribal households could also benefit from enhanced market linkage for forest products.
5. The Food Department could conduct a community survey to identify and add left-out eligible people into targeted public distribution system (TPDS). Slum populations clearly need to be targeted for special measures to enforce TPDS implementation – including ONORC enforcement, TPDS enrolment camps in partnership with non-government organisations (NGOs).
6. Improved monitoring is important to enhance FPS access by vulnerable groups. This could be a participatory process involving community consultations to identify issues with operations of FPS and addressing any irregularities in implementation. Awareness campaign on complaints and feedback mechanism is required to enhance awareness among vulnerable groups. At the same time functionality of the mechanism must be ensured.
7. For the longer-term evidence-based planning and strategizing to enhance food security and livelihoods, specific to the different vulnerable groups, is required such as community-specific vulnerability assessment (primary and secondary) supported with community consultation to understand ground level challenges.
8. Multi-department convergence to ensure holistic solutions and coordinated implementation and demand generation through community outreach while at the same time systems improvement to enhance scheme coverage, implementation, monitoring and coordination.

Part 1 - Background and Objectives

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Government of India initiated a national lockdown, the largest in the world, on March 24th which resulted in a mass exodus of 80 million migrant workers returning back to their home villages. The lockdown and the subsequent return migration were expected to have a major impact on food security, especially of vulnerable groups. So in order to understand its impact among the small/marginal farmers, landless/daily wage labourers, urban slum dwellers, and migrant labours in the post COVID-19 situation, the Inter-Agency Group (IAG) in Odisha, including Oxfam India, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision India, Caritas India, HelpAge India along with UNICEF and WFP commissioned a 'Joint Rapid Needs Assessment' in April 2020.

The assessment covered six critical sectors including Food and Nutrition Security, which was analyzed by the WFP Country Office team. Further, based on the same data (collected by IAG), WFP performed the detailed analysis of the food and nutrition sector, presenting findings in a special report which was well received by the State Government and was also included in the repository of COVID-19 management in Odisha. The measures by the government included actions for all the recommendations made in the report.

Keeping in mind the relevance of WFP's specific report on food and nutrition security, in July 2020, Government of Odisha (GoO) requested WFP to carry out a follow up study to examine the current status of food security, nutrition and livelihoods among specific vulnerable population of Odisha such as daily wage earners, returnee migrant workers, small/marginal farmers. A follow-up assessment was initiated in September 2020 in partnership with the State Government and the IAG.

The **objectives** of the study, as laid out by the Government, are to:

1. Examine the current status of food and nutrition security and identify any changes since the observations in the first report, with a focus on vulnerable groups, such as daily wage earners, returnee migrant workers, small/marginal farmers, urban slum dwellers and Tribal populations.
2. Assess the responsive measures of national and state government to the crisis, the extent to which recipients benefitted from them, and identify the gaps in access and need by vulnerable groups.
3. Identify the food and basic needs among the vulnerable groups.
4. Examine the impact of COVID on the livelihoods of households dependent on social safety nets/schemes, especially small and marginal farmers, and daily wage earners, with reference to the harvest and markets.
5. Provide recommendations to the GoO for further refining their response to the COVID crisis

The assessment collected in-depth information about the aspects of recent migration, livelihoods, sources of income, access to food and market, food consumption, exposure to shocks, use of coping strategies, access to government safety nets/programmes, other COVID-related support received and the expected priorities of the households of the vulnerable groups. Due to the sudden occurrence of floods in Odisha, impact of floods among the vulnerable people was also investigated. Information collected in the repeat assessment as per the tools designed by WFP was much more detailed, as compared to the first round.

Unlike first round, exhaustive information about the background characteristic of the household such as social group, source of drinking water, toilet facility, type of house, source of fuel for cooking, type of ration card(s) and asset wealth were collected in the second round, which facilitated in conducting the analysis dis-aggregated by various socio-economic characteristics. Dis-aggregated findings supported in providing evidence-based specific recommendation to the government for their appropriate decision-making and action. Besides, in the second round, data was collected from the urban slums, as available literature suggest that population residing in urban slums are particularly vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity during the COVID-19 crisis.

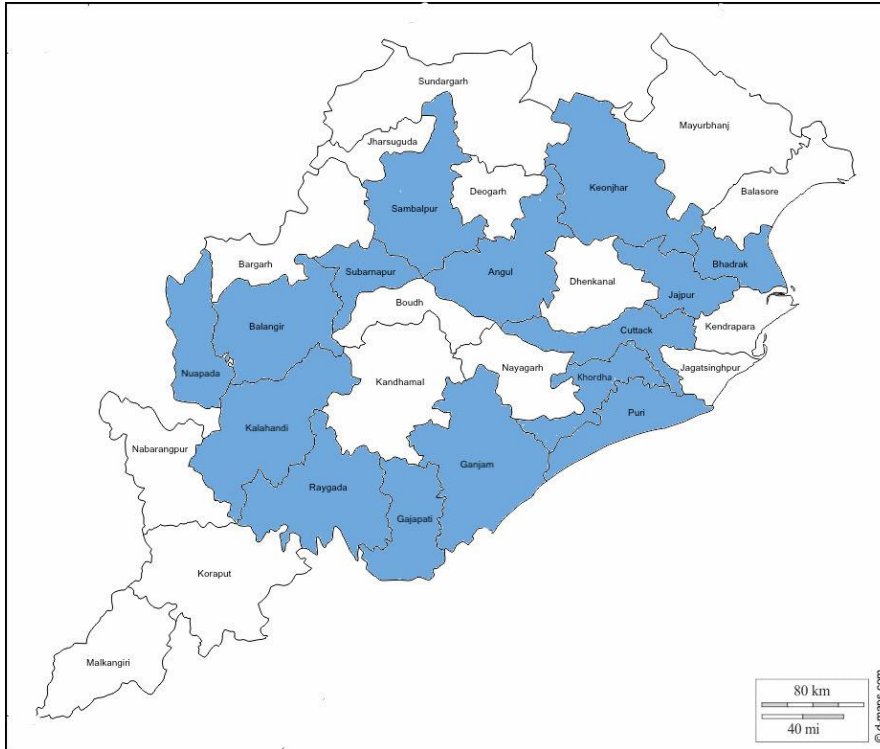
Comparative analysis between the findings of the first round with the second round facilitated in identifying changes since the observations in the first round of assessment focusing vulnerable groups.

Part 2 - Methodology

Similar to first round of assessment, repeat assessment employed mixed-method approach of desk review and a household survey. The Desk Review included a review of documents, articles, and reports on issues around food security, nutrition, and livelihoods of vulnerable people of Odisha during COVID-19 was conducted. Desk review facilitated identification of key areas of investigation through this assessment.

The household survey was quantitative in nature and consisted of a structured questionnaire. Household survey was conducted in the 15 districts of the Odisha, including different livelihood zones, Aspirational Districts and Tribal concentrate: 5 districts from each of the three divisions of state, namely southern, northern, and central divisions were selected.

Map 1: Map of Odisha showing Sample Districts



Rural households: The Census of India, 2011 served as the sampling frame for the selection of Primary Sampling Unit (PSUs) or clusters. PSUs were villages in rural areas. Number of sample households to be surveyed from each district were identified using the Probability proportion to Size (PPS) methodology, thus districts with higher number of households contributed higher number of sample households as compared with districts with lower number of households. Further, from each of the districts, villages were selected employing the PPS method, which means villages with higher number of households have higher chances of being selected as the cluster. 41 PSUs (rural villages) from the 15 districts of the Odisha were selected. From each of the identified village, approximately 20 households were selected. Approximately 820¹ households were surveyed in the follow-up assessment. Names of the sample villages are presented in Table 1.

Urban Slums: An additional 300² households from the urban slums were also included to provide the overall Odisha slum estimates around food and nutrition security. From the state, three districts with urban slums, namely Sambalpur, Khurda, and Ganjam were selected. Around 100 slum dwelling households from each of the three sample districts were identified.

¹ To compensate for the sample size shortfall in the first round, the difference between the initial and sample size estimates is added to the sample size to be used for the follow-up survey. Thus, the follow-up survey sample size: $n = 606 + (606 - 473) = 606 + 133 = 739$. Accounting the non-responses (10%), sample size would be 820. Thus, in the repeat survey around 820 households were investigated.

² To estimate 50% with a precision of +/-6% requires 270 samples.

The statistically most efficient two-stage cluster design in which (1) clusters are selected with PPS at the first stage of sample selection and (2) a constant number of households is chosen from each cluster at the second stage was adopted. 10 clusters from the slums of each of the three districts were identified using PPS methodology. From each of the cluster, approximately 10 households were surveyed. Table 1 shows the names of slums (which have been identified as clusters), selected based on the PPS method. Sample clusters were selected using systematic sampling with probability-proportional-to-size.

Table 1: Details of Rural Villages and Urban Slums Samples by District

S.No.	Division	District	Rural Sample Villages	Urban Sample Slum/cluster	Total Samples
1	Central Zone	Cuttack	Banara, Chahapara, Kaitha, Korkor	n.a.	73
2		Puri	Ampora, Kesakera, Pubasasan	n.a.	60
3		Bhadrak	Karanpali, Rambila	n.a.	40
4		Jajpur	Bari, Brahmanabad, Sundaria	n.a.	60
5		Khurda	Gopanapur, Padmakesharipur, Sananuagan, Tihuri	Akhandalamani Basti, Bharatpur, Ganganagar Palli, Kadali Godam Basti, Kargil Basti, Niladri Vihar Slum, Rickshaw Colony, Salia Sahi, Simili Basti, Tarini Basti Khandagiri	180
6	Northern Zone	Keonjhar	Baxibarigaon, Govindapur, Gundurijoha,	n.a.	63
7		Bolangir*	Bhaler, Manahira, Salebhata	n.a.	61
8		Angul	Balijoradi, Tulasipal	n.a.	41
9		Subarnapur	Nuapada	n.a.	21
10		Sambalpur	Nuabarangamal, Singhapali	Bada Bazaar, Bangali Pada, Durgapali (Uparpada), Gandhi Pada, Goud Pali, Kamli Bazar 10Basti, Majhipada, Sakh11pada, Samleipadar, Sunapali	141
11	Southern Zone	Gajapati*	Dumiguda	n.a.	20
12		Kalahandi*	Kamthana, Phupgaon, Ratul	n.a.	60
13		Rayagada*	Guma, Haduguda	n.a.	41
14		Nuapada*	Amalapali, Poinr	n.a.	44
15		Ganjam	Badadumula, Barida, Hinjalapali, Manitara, Sikharapur, Sunamoti	Ankuli Mali Sahi, Chanchada Pathar, Dhoba Bandha Huda Sahi, Dondasi Sahi, Golapali Sahi, Jena Sahi, Lanjipalli Main Road, Radhakanta Sahi, Uttaramukhi, Uttareswar Harijan Street	220
Total					1125

*Aspirational District

Qualitative Survey: In order to collect the detailed information about the needs, requirements, preferences, problems and issues of the vulnerable groups (returnee migrant worker, daily wage earner, small and marginal farmers), qualitative data through the In Depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted from the vulnerable groups. Like first round of assessment, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were also conducted among the government officials currently engaged in COVID-19 response, local leaders like sarpanch, ward member or PRI members and representatives of NGOs.

Training of the Field Enumerators: Before the data collection, field enumerators of the various partner agencies of the IAG were virtually trained by the experts of WFP and IAG in September 2020. Training provided in-depth information about the various tools of the data collection (household schedule, IDI Schedule and KII topic guide), procedure for the data entry of the household schedule, sample selection in the rural and urban areas and quality-protocols/mechanisms to be followed during data-collection.

Data Collection: IAG supported WFP in the collection of data as per the tools devised by WFP. In order to collect data from 15 districts, more than 10 NGOs with their experienced staff were engaged. Field enumerators of the IAG collected the data using the hard copies of the schedules either telephonically or physically through maintaining social distancing norms and following COVID-19 appropriate behaviour. Further on daily-basis, data was transferred to the on-line data entry platform, which facilitated in the continuous monitoring of the quality of the data.

Field enumerators collecting data by following COVID-19 appropriate behaviour

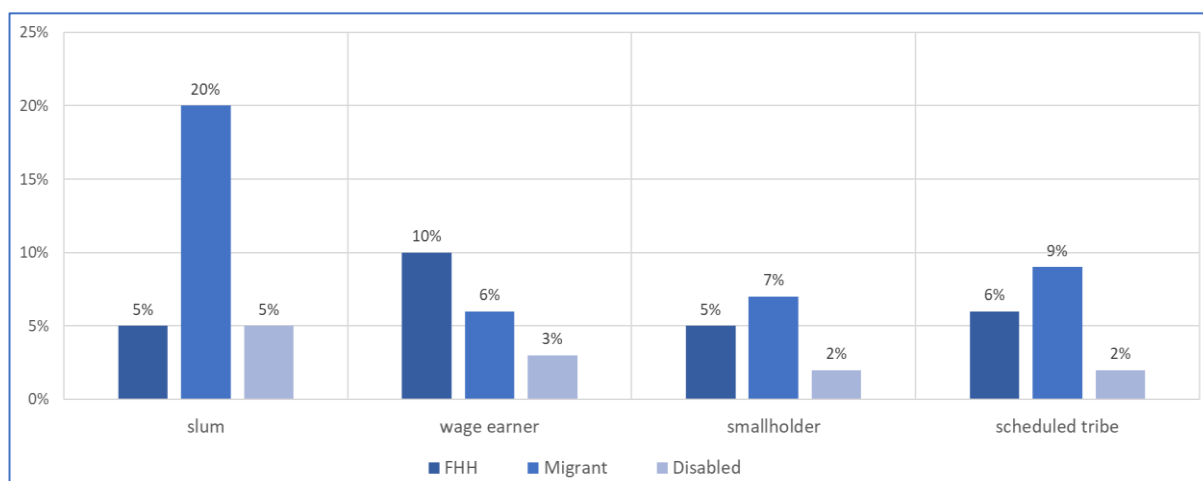


Part 3 - Description of Households

3.1. Summary demographics

The average and median household size for the sample was 4 persons, across all groups except for households headed by women, where the average size was 3 persons. Analysis of demographics within the vulnerable groups shows that the highest share of female headed households (FHH) are found in the daily wage labour households, with no difference between the others. Slum dwelling households were most likely to be hosting at least one migrant worker (20 percent) compared to the others. It is important to note that 9 percent of households identifying as scheduled tribes had migrant workers. Physically or mentally disabled persons were slightly more likely to be found in the slum dwellers but in general were not so common amongst the sample.

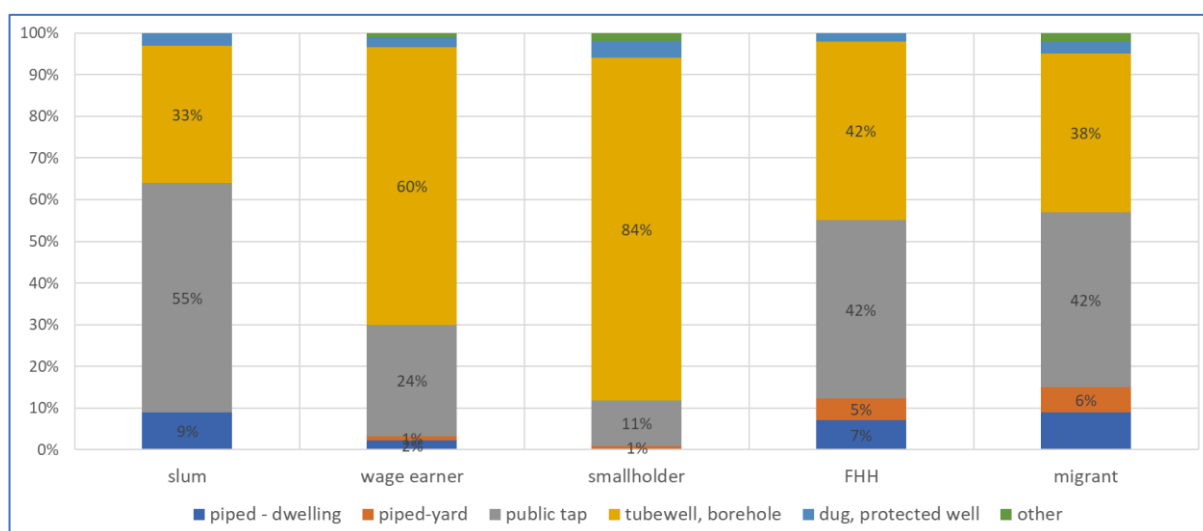
Chart 1 – Summary demographics



3.2. Housing and other amenities

Sources of drinking water varied a bit by group, but in general households relied on either public tap or tube well/borehole for their drinking water. Slum dwellers, being in urban or peri-urban areas, were more likely to use public taps for drinking water (55 percent) compared to wage earning households and smallholder households who were more likely to rely on tube wells/boreholes.

Chart 2 – Main source of drinking water, by group



About one-half of the sample households had no toilet, mostly practising open defecation. Households in the slums and those relying on wages were more likely to use pit latrines while smallholder households were more likely to practice open defecation.

In terms of housing, about one-third each had pucca³, semi-pucca⁴ or kutcha⁵ type houses. Those in urban areas were more likely to have a semi-pucca house while those in rural areas mostly had either pucca or kutcha houses.

Around two-thirds of the households were using LPG gas for cooking fuel, which was more common in urban households (85 percent) compared to rural households (55 percent). Tribal households were more likely to use wood for cooking (60 percent) than other groups, although 49 percent of households in Aspirational Districts were using firewood as well.

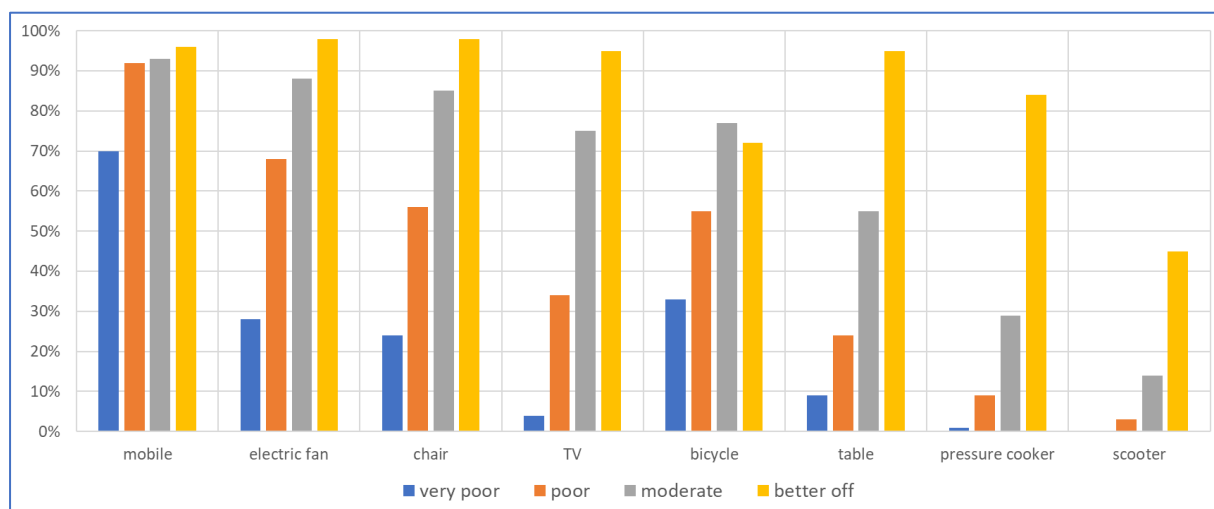
3.3. Asset Wealth

From the household interview, information on ownership of 16 different household and productive assets⁶ was collected. A simple asset wealth index was created by counting the number of different assets a household owns and then creating four asset wealth groups for the analysis:

- Very poor: 0-2 different assets
- Poor: 3-4 different assets
- Moderate: 5-6 different assets
- Better off: 7 or more different types of assets

The chart below shows how households prioritise asset ownership, in general. Asset poor households tend to own only a mobile phone, with a few owning an electric fan, bicycle or chair. As asset wealth increases, ownership of mobile plus electric fan, chair and bicycle increase. For moderate and better off households, there is increased ownership of televisions and tables. Bicycle ownership drops a bit in the better off households, likely in favour of owning a scooter. Pressure cookers appear to be a luxury item in this sample of households.

Chart 3 – Ownership of key assets by asset wealth



The chart below shows that the poorest households, in terms of asset wealth, are Tribal households where more than 60 percent are poor and very poor, followed by those headed by women (59 percent poor and very poor). The best-off are the wage earner households where 21 percent are better-off and only 40 percent are poor or very poor. Tribal households often do not keep many household assets, traditionally.

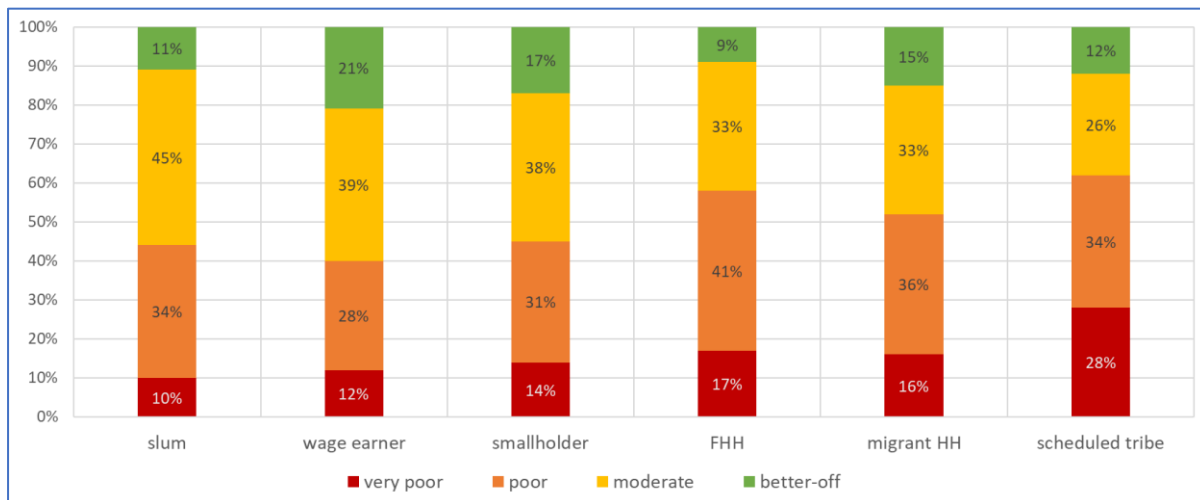
³ The walls made of burnt bricks, stones (packed with lime or cement), cement concrete, timber, etc. while the roof is made of tiles, galvanised corrugated iron (CGI) sheets, asbestos cement sheet, reinforced brick concrete(RBC), reinforced cement concrete(RCC) and timber.

⁴ A house that has fixed walls made up of pucca material, but the roof is made up of the material other than those used for a pucca house.

⁵ The walls and/or roof of which are made of materials such as unburnt bricks, bamboos, mud, grass, reeds, thatch, loosely packed stones, etc.

⁶ Mattress, chair, table, electric fan, pressure cooker, radio, television, mobile phone, sewing machine, air con/cooler, bicycle, motorcycle, car, animal cart, thresher, tractor

Chart 4 – Asset wealth by group



3.4. Conclusions

- Migrant workers tend to be living in urban slums and could be returnees from other states. The study did not investigate their places of origin.
- Access to sources of safe drinking water is good across all groups.
- Asset ownership is a good proxy of relative household wealth but may be less accurate for slum dwellers. Tribal households are the poorest in terms of asset wealth, followed by female-headed households.
- Households accumulate assets in a particular way, but mobile phones are the most important assets for all wealth groups, followed by electric fans.

Part 4 - Livelihoods and income changes

The survey sample was stratified in order to study the vulnerability of three distinct groups: slum dwellers, daily wage earners and smallholder farmers. Since two of the strata are based on livelihood activities, the analysis of livelihoods was stratified by urban/rural status, Aspirational/non-Aspirational district, and household headship.

4.1. Livelihoods and changes due to COVID-19

In the survey, households were asked to name their top three livelihood activities. For the sample, **rural households** were likely to rely on wage labour – both agricultural and non-agricultural (around 60 percent of households) while about one-quarter also rely on crop sales and over 10 percent on livestock/livestock products for their livelihoods. There were not many changes in livelihoods due to COVID, with slightly fewer households relying on non-agricultural wage labour.

Urban households also relied heavily on non-agricultural wage labour (45 percent), followed by Government schemes and programmes (22 percent), skilled labour (19 percent), small business (18 percent) and salaried work (18 percent). There was a slight increase in reliance on government schemes and programmes, skilled labour and small business after COVID as there would likely be a demand for those activities after the lockdown.

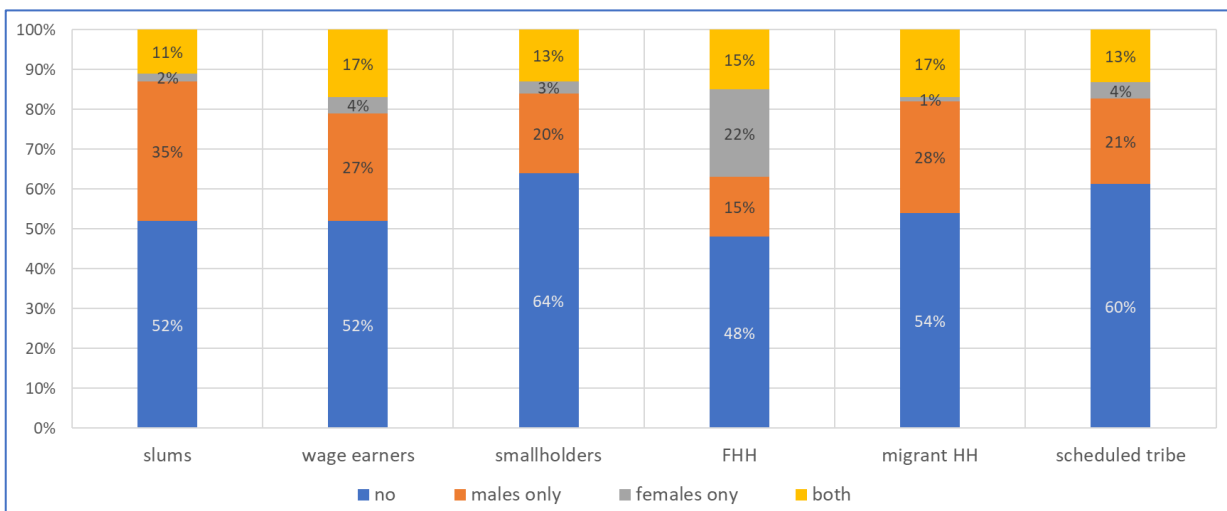
Households in **Aspirational districts** relied heavily on wage labour, both agricultural (80 percent) and non-agricultural (78 percent), along with crop production and forest products (around 30 percent each).

Households in **non-Aspirational** districts also relied on wage labour but to a lesser extent. Compared to Aspirational districts, these households relied a bit more on government schemes and programmes and salary work. There was little change in livelihoods due to COVID-19.

Compared to households headed by men, **female headed households** were more likely to rely on non-agricultural wage labour (69 vs 60 percent) and government schemes (22 vs. 9 percent). Male headed households relied more on agricultural wage labour than female headed households (47 vs 40 percent) and on crop production and skilled labour.

Households were asked if any member had **lost a job in 30 days prior to the survey**. As shown in the chart below, just over half the households responded in the affirmative. As expected, the smallholders were the least likely to have lost a job (46 percent - they are mostly self-employed), while female-headed households were the most likely (52 percent). By sex, men were most likely to have lost a job (participate more in paid work than women) and this was highest amongst the slum dwelling households (35 percent). More than 20 percent of women in female headed households had lost a job in the past 30 days (they are likely among the main breadwinners). In around 14 percent of households, both men and women had lost a job which was highest in the wage earner and migrant household groups (17 percent).

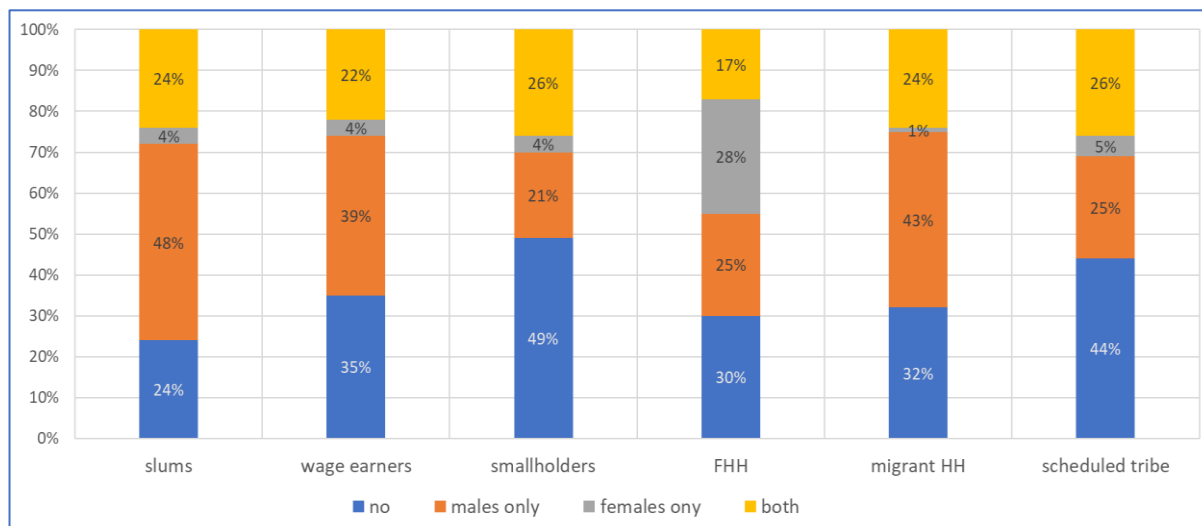
Chart 5 – Who has lost a job in the past 30 days?



4.2. Changes in income

Reduced or lost income was a more common issue for the surveyed households. Around 60 percent of households were affected, with slum dwellers the most likely to have lost or reduced income (76 percent), along with female headed households (70 percent) and those with migrants (68 percent). Smallholder households are the least likely to be affected by lost or reduced income. In slum dwelling, wage earner and migrant households, males were more likely to be affected while in smallholder and scheduled tribe households, both men and women were more likely to be affected. In female headed households, women were more likely to be affected.

Chart 6 – Who has lost or reduced income in the past 30 days?



When asked if incomes of male members had changed compared to the same time last year, more than 90 percent of households reported decreases (some or a lot). Nearly all migrant households reported decreases in men’s income, with more than 70 percent reporting decreasing ‘a lot’.

Incomes of women also decreased in many cases, but to a lesser extent, for about two-thirds of the households. Women in Tribal households were most affected (80 percent), followed by smallholders (77 percent) and female headed households (75 percent). Women in migrant households and slumdwellers were the least affected.

“Due to the pandemic, our family has lost our livelihood and have received no daily wages due to the lockdown. Hence, no money to manage our day-to-day expenses especially, food”

Daily Wage Worker, Puri

4.3. Conclusions and Recommendations

- Comparing pre-COVID to the current situation, there were no major changes in actual livelihoods activities by the different groups.
- However, the intensity of work in these activities and their contribution to total income has likely changed.
- Nearly half the households reported loss of jobs in past 30 days, which was highest in female headed households and lowest in smallholder households.
- Reduction or loss of income in past 30 days was more common – most likely in slum dwellers, female headed households and those with migrants.
- Compared to same time last year, men’s income was more likely to have decreased in slum dwellers and households with migrants.
- For women, income lost or decreased was highest in female headed households, smallholders and

Tribal households.

Recommendation

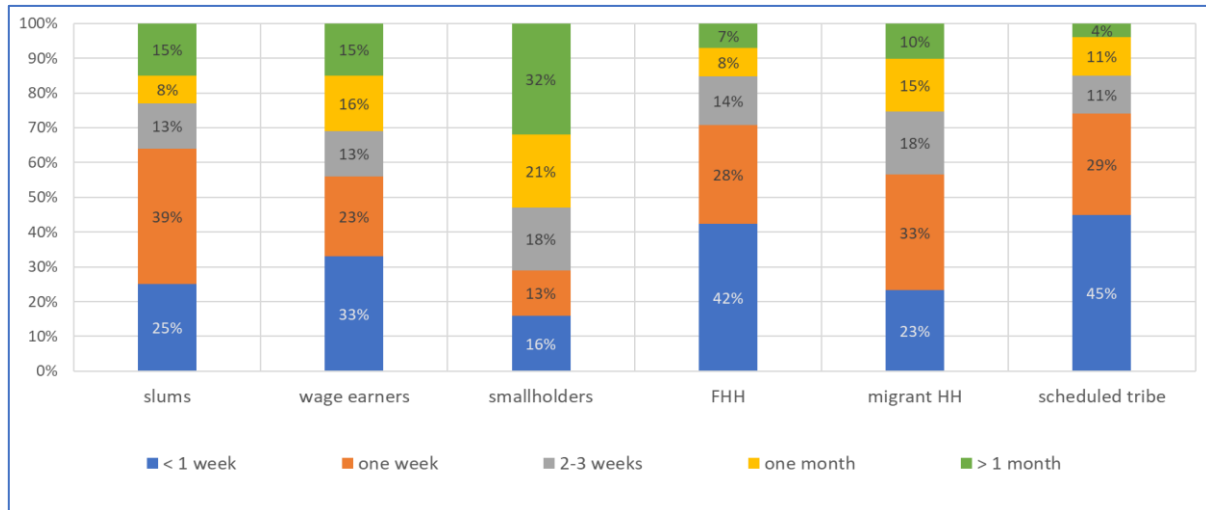
Livelihoods support emerges as a key area of Government intervention, as more than half of the households suffered loss of livelihoods or reduced incomes. This is particularly a priority for migrant labour, wage labour, and women-headed households. The Government should maintain a record of all wage labourers or migrant labourers and women-headed households, and reach out to them with cash/food assistance in situations such as the COVID wave, and prioritize enrolment in livelihood programmes such as MGNREGS in case their usual livelihood is lost.

Part 5 - Household Food Consumption

5.1. Household food availability

When asked about current food stocks, around 65 percent of the households reported having food in stock, ranging from a low of 58 percent for slum dwelling households to 75 percent of female headed households. However, when asking about how long the stocks will last, the chart below shows that most households have only a few weeks of food stocks available. Only 30 percent of female headed households with food stocks had more than one week of food, while even fewer Tribal households (26 percent) had substantial stocks. As expected, smallholder farming households have the most substantial food stocks, with more than half reporting stocks lasting one month or more.

Chart 7 – How long will food stocks last?



5.2. Dietary diversity and food frequency

Analysis of household dietary diversity and food frequency is a good proxy indicator of household food security. Often when households are in stress, they reduce the number of meals as well as the diversity in the diet, often to save money. These changes at the household level are not always equal, as often children are prioritised over adults, or men are prioritised over the rest of the household members when eating, as they are the main earning members of the household. Often these intra-household food access and consumption patterns are simply cultural in nature.

When asked, most households reported eating 2 or 3 meals in the previous day with smallholder households slightly more likely to eat 3 or more meals (27 percent). About one-fifth of the households indicated that the previous days' meals were actually less than usual for their household, which was more common amongst Tribal households.

More than one-quarter of the households reported consuming less food than usual, while 12-13 percent reported eating more than usual. Female-headed households were the least likely to have increased their consumption (6 percent) compared to the other groups. Tribal households were the most likely to be eating less than usual (33 percent).

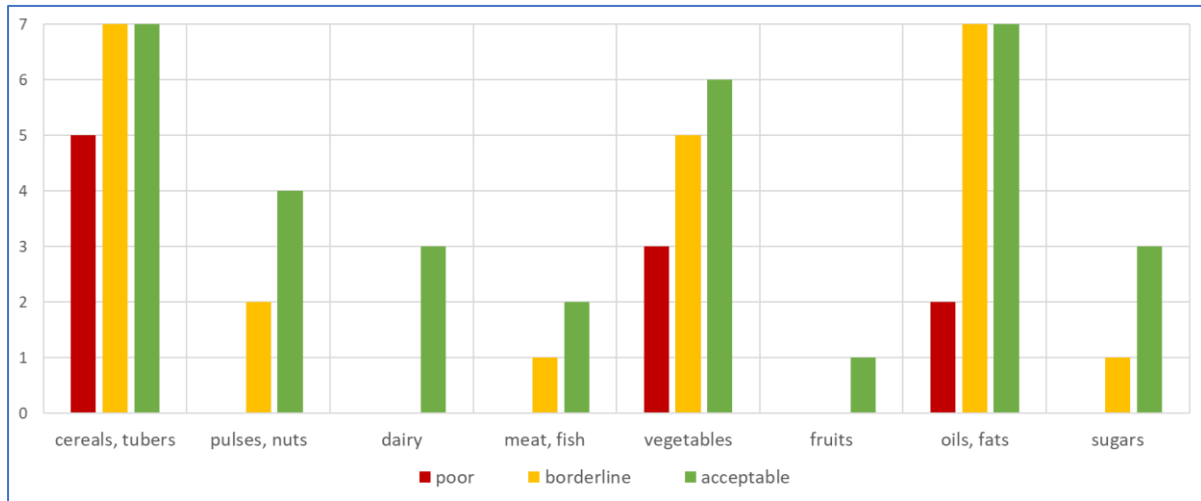
In 2005, WFP developed the food consumption score which measures the quality of household intake using a 7-day dietary recall to look at frequency and diversity of the diet. Eight foods/food groups are included and HHs are asked the number of DAYS they consumed that food in the past week. A score is then calculated, and households are classified into three groups:

- Poor dietary diversity and food frequency (FCS < 28.0)
- Borderline (FSC 28.5 – 42.0)
- Acceptable (FCS 42.5 or more)

The chart below shows that households with **poor** consumption on average, eat cereals five days a week, vegetables 3 days per week and oils/fats only 2 days per week. However, households with **borderline**

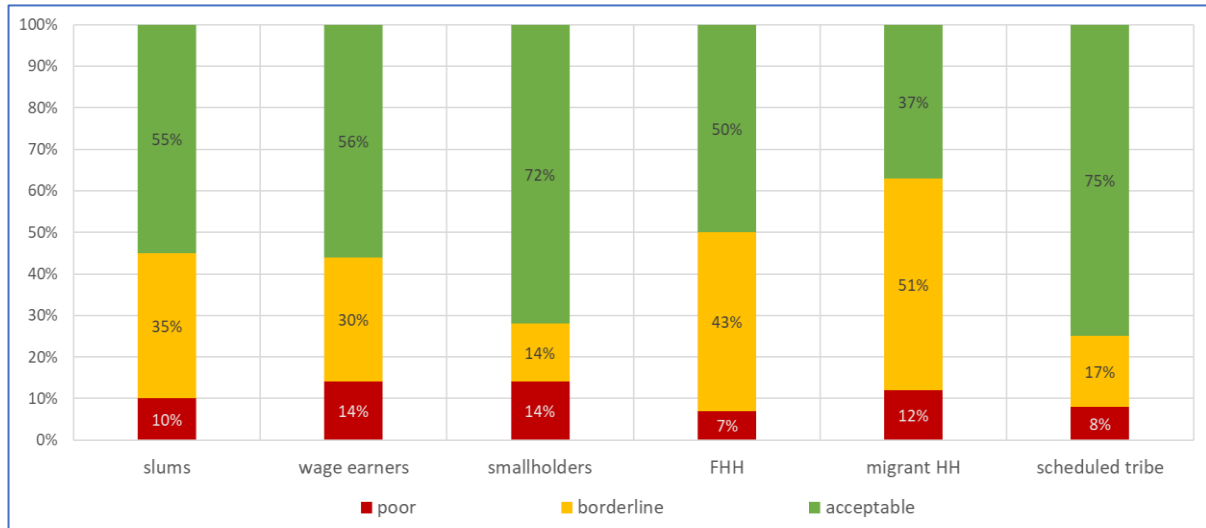
consumption eat cereals and oils daily, vegetables 5 days per week, pulses two days a week and then meat/fish and sugars one day per week. Lastly, households with **acceptable** consumption have daily consumption of cereals and oils, vegetables 6 days per week, pulses 4 days, dairy and sugars 3 days, meat/fish 2 days and fruits 1 day per week.

Chart 8 – Weekly consumption by food consumption group



When considering household dietary diversity and food frequency, Tribal households had the best consumption, with three-quarters of the group having acceptable consumption, followed by smallholder households (72 percent). Households hosting migrants were the least likely to have acceptable consumption (37 percent) while 14 percent of wage earner and small holder households had poor consumption, in terms of dietary diversity and food frequency.

Chart 9 - Household dietary diversity and food frequency by group



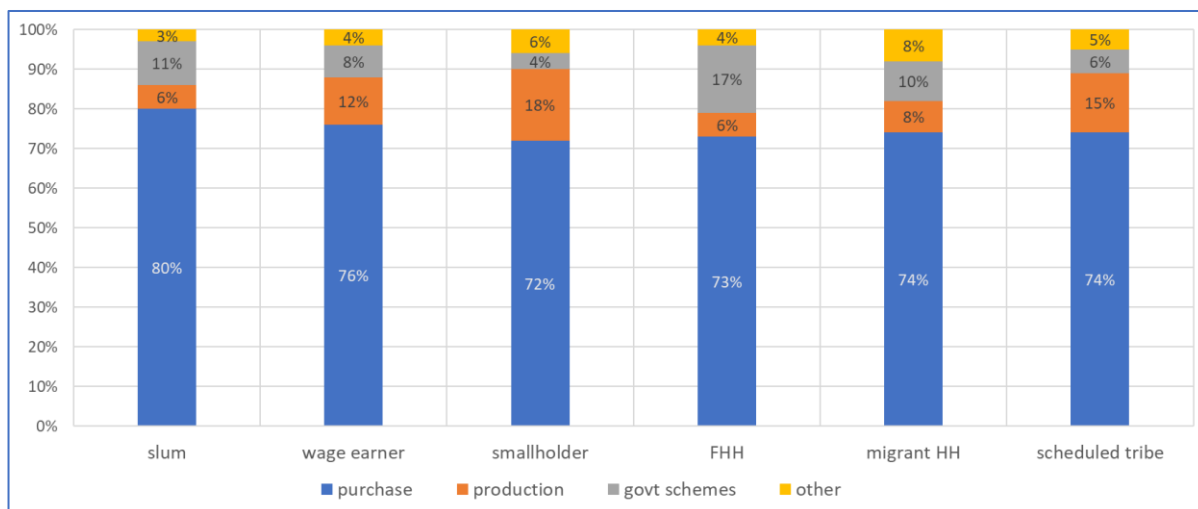
5.3. Sources of food consumed

For each food/ food group consumed, households were asked the main source of the food. In the analysis only three main sources of food emerged – purchase, own production and government schemes. Some households also bartered or exchanged to access their food, but they were not major sources.

As shown in the chart below, most households depend on purchases to access their food – whether from the main market, local market or other vendor. As expected, the slum dwelling households were most dependent on purchase to access their food (80 percent), while smallholders were most likely to access food from own production (18 percent). Households headed by women were the most likely to rely on government schemes/safety nets (17 percent) for their food, followed by slum dwellers (11 percent) and households with

migrant workers (10 percent).

Chart 10 – Main source of food consumed in the past week



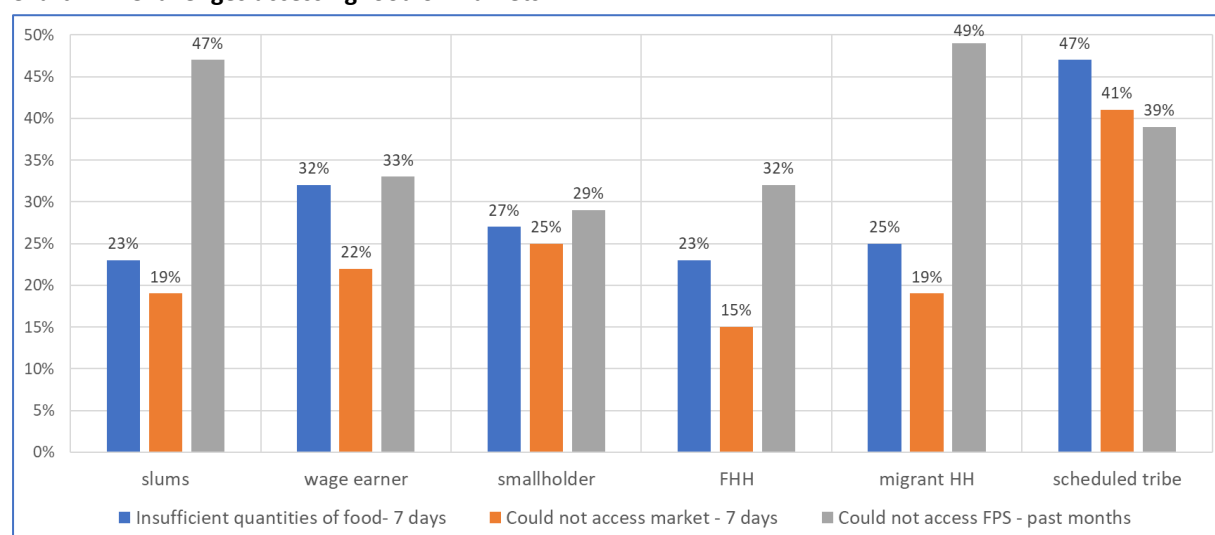
5.4. Access to markets and food

Households were also asked if, in the past week, they had insufficient quantities of food. The chart below shows that Tribal households were the most likely to report having insufficient quantities of food (47 percent), followed by daily wage earners (32 percent) and smallholder (27 percent) households.

They were also asked about accessing the market in the past week – again, Tribal households were the most likely to report having difficulties accessing the market (41 percent). For the others, 15-25 percent reporting market access difficulties.

Lastly the households were asked if they faced any challenges in accessing the Fair Price Shops (FPS) in the past months. Indeed, about half of the households hosting migrants, faced this challenge, along with 47 percent of slum dwelling households and 39 percent of Tribal households.

Chart 11 – Challenges accessing food or markets



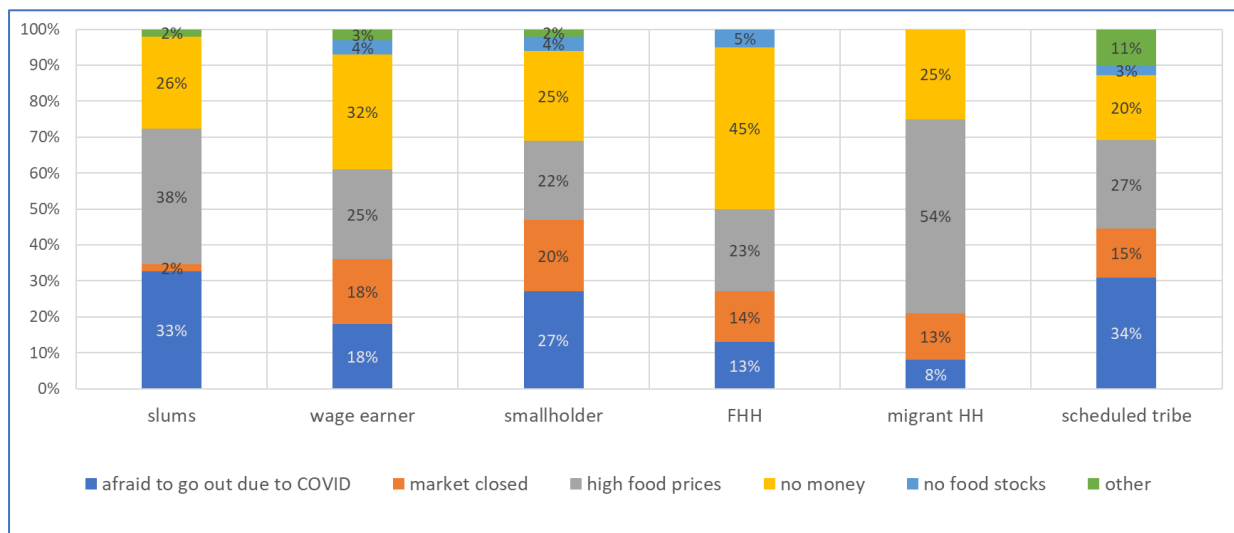
“After COVID-19, we were unable to purchase oil, dal and vegetables. Prices of all goods increased. Even transportation costs were high”.

“The biggest challenges during COVID period are money and food. So many times, we stay hungry because of the lack of food”.

Farmer, Nuapada

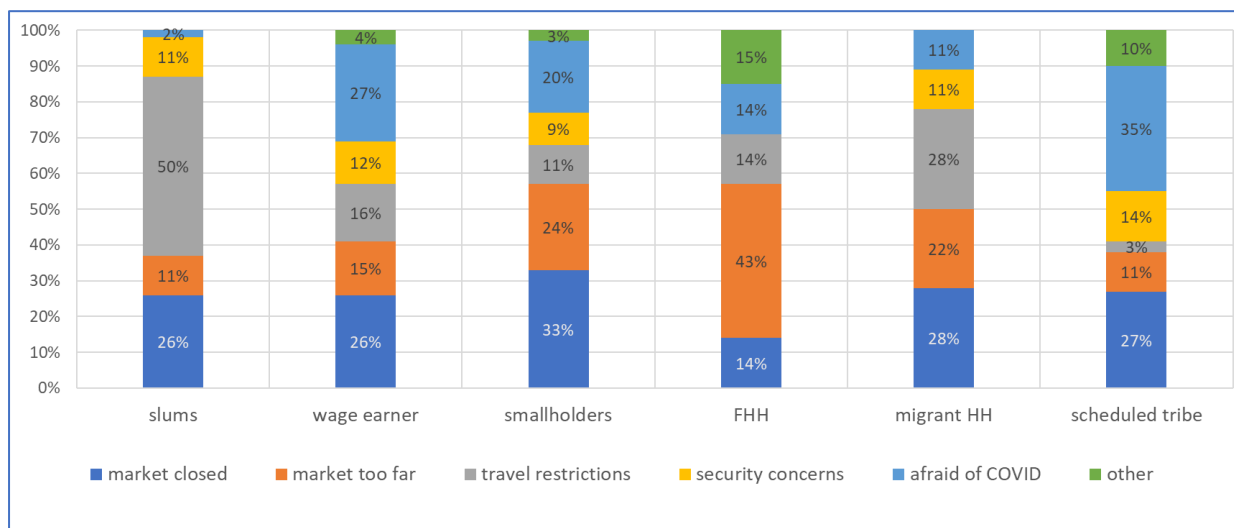
The main reasons for having insufficient quantities of food in the past week were varied, but most were related to affordability and purchasing power. More than half of the households hosting migrants cited high food prices as the main reason for insufficient quantities of food, followed by 38 percent of the slum dwelling households. Forty-five percent of female headed households who had insufficient quantities of food cited lack of money to purchase food as the main reason. About one-fifth of smallholder households indicated that the market was closed, while one-third of slum dwelling and Tribal households could not access enough food due to fear of COVID-19.

Chart 12 – Main reasons for insufficient quantities of food in past week



The main reasons that households could not access markets in the past week were also varied, ranging from fear of COVID (35 percent in Tribal households, to travel restrictions for slum dwellers (50 percent), to distance from market for female headed households (43 percent). Market closure was a common thread for most of the groups where around 25-30 percent of households not accessing markets, indicated that their markets were closed.

Chart 13 – Main reasons for not accessing market in the past week

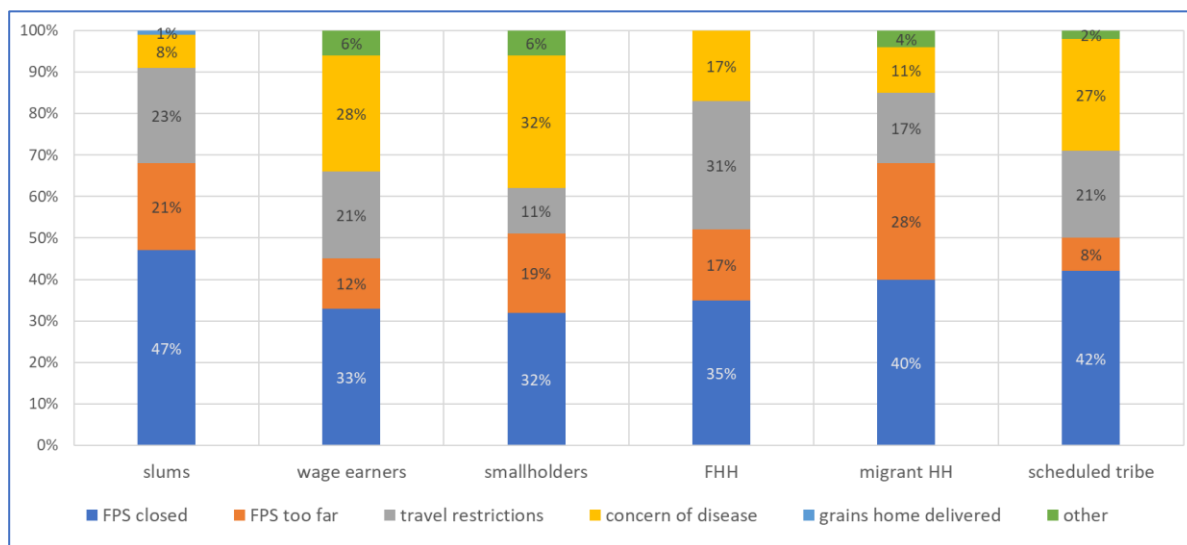


The question around accessing Fair Price Shops (FPS) was a bit vague as the reference period was ‘the past months’ and the survey took place in October. So, there was not a fixed recall period for the households. Regardless, many indicated that they had trouble accessing them for their public distribution system entitlements. The main reason stated was that the FPS was closed, which was more of an issue for slum dwellers (47 percent), Tribal households (42 percent) and households with migrants (40 percent). Prior to

lockdown there were advance distributions and during lockdown FPS were closed. However, after the lockdown, perhaps some of the FPS were closed on times and dates when these people had time to access.

Female headed households were more likely to state that travel restrictions prevented them from accessing the FPS (31 percent) while migrant households also indicated that FPS was too far from them (28 percent), likely because the national portability (One Nation One Ration Card) was not yet being implemented at the time of the survey.

Chart 14 – Main reasons for not accessing Fair Price Shops in the past months



5.5. Conclusions and Recommendations

- Two-thirds of households reported having food stocks at the time of the survey – 71 percent of female headed households (high) and 58 percent of slum dwellers (low). However, the level of stocks was low in female headed households, with most having one week or less. Smallholders had the largest food stocks.
- All groups averaged 2-3 meals per day but female headed households and households hosting migrants were least likely to have more than 3 meals.
- Compared to normal, meal frequency was more likely to decrease in Tribal households and least likely to decrease in female headed households and those hosting migrants. The amount of food consumed was most stable in slum dwellers and female headed households.
- HHs with acceptable dietary diversity and food frequency had daily consumption of cereals and oils, vegetables and pulses 4-6 days/week, dairy and sugar 3 days, meat/fish 2 days and fruits one day per week.
- Dietary diversity and food frequency were best in smallholder and Tribal households and worst in households hosting migrants. It was also lower in female-headed households and slum dwellers.
- Most HHs rely on purchase to access food – more so with slum dwellers. Overall, reliance on government schemes to access food was low. Female headed households, slum dwellers and households hosting migrants were most likely to rely on government schemes to access their food.
- Lack of affordability or high prices was cited as the main reason by households consuming insufficient quantities of food, more so among female-headed households.
- Fear of COVID, distance and closure of markets were cited as key reasons for lack of access to markets.
- HHs faced problems accessing Fair Price Shops (FPS) in the months preceding the survey (recall period not specified), especially migrant households and slum dwellers. This was mostly due to closure of the FPS (40 percent).

Recommendations

- There is a need to prioritize migrant households, wage earners, tribes and female-headed households

for emergency food assistance such as during lockdowns. They have less food stock for the longer periods and have high dependence on market for food, therefore are more likely to suffer acute food shortage in case of sudden loss of market access. These groups have also reported affordability / lack of money as a key reason for not having sufficient quantity of food in the past week.

- Migrants face relatively higher challenge in accessing FPS, indicating the need to focus on enhancing ONORC implementation, possibly through an IEC campaign among them or enforcement drives involving FPS as well.
- Doorstep delivery of rations could be considered for households headed by women and those with disabled members during emergencies, as travel restrictions are a key inhibiting factor impeding their market access.
- Regularity of FPS timings needs to be enforced as 'FPS being closed' was given as a primary reason by most groups for not accessing them in the past months.

Part 6 - Food security and coping

Food security is a multi-dimensional measure of a household's ability to access and consume adequate nutritious foods on a regular basis in order to meet their daily needs. There is no one single measure of food security so for the purposes of this study, the analysis will consider two different measures:

1. Household dietary diversity and food frequency, as measured by the food consumption scores, which reflects current access to, and consumption of food
2. Reduced coping strategies index which uses the frequency and severity of food based coping strategies – those behaviours used by households when they are faced with food shortages. This is a measure of their ability to cope with changes in food access.

6.1. Reduced coping strategies index

Households were asked if, in the past 7 days, had there been times when they did not have enough food or money to buy food, and on how many days did the household have to:

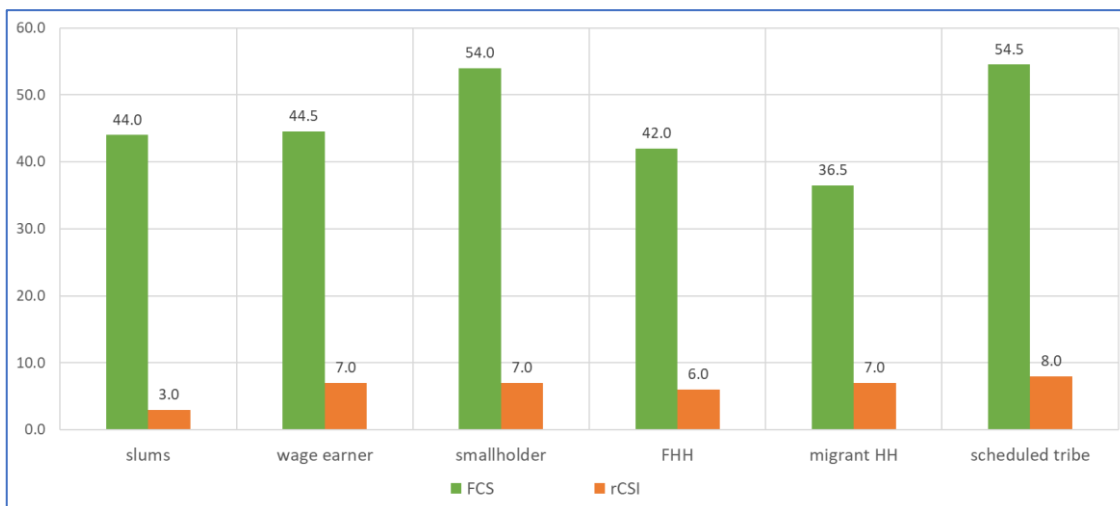
- Rely on less preferred and less expensive food (Severity = 1)
- Borrow food, or rely on help from a friend or relative (Severity = 2)
- Limit portion size at mealtimes (Severity = 1)
- Restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat (Severity = 3)
- Reduce the number of meals eaten in a day (Severity = 1)

A reduced coping strategies index (r-CSI) is then calculated for each household and then they are classified into one of three categories:

1. Low coping = 0-3
2. Medium coping = 4-9
3. High coping = 10 or higher

The chart below shows that the dietary diversity and food frequency was highest in the Tribal and smallholder households, while it was lowest in the households hosting migrants. Stress, as measured by the reduced coping strategies index (r-CSI), was highest in the Tribal households and lowest in the slum dwelling households. For the other groups, it was stable, and similar to the Tribal households. Perhaps levels of stress were lower in September 2020, which was several months after the national lockdown was lifted.

Chart 15 - Median food consumption score and reduced coping strategies index



6.2. Other coping strategies

Non-food based coping strategies were also assessed. As seen in the chart below, more than half of the households hosting migrants borrowed money during the main COVID crisis, followed by Tribal households (49 percent) and female-headed households (45 percent). Smallholder households were the least likely to have borrowed money during COVID (36 percent).

“In this lockdown situation, I had to borrow money from relatives and local money lender to purchase food for family”.

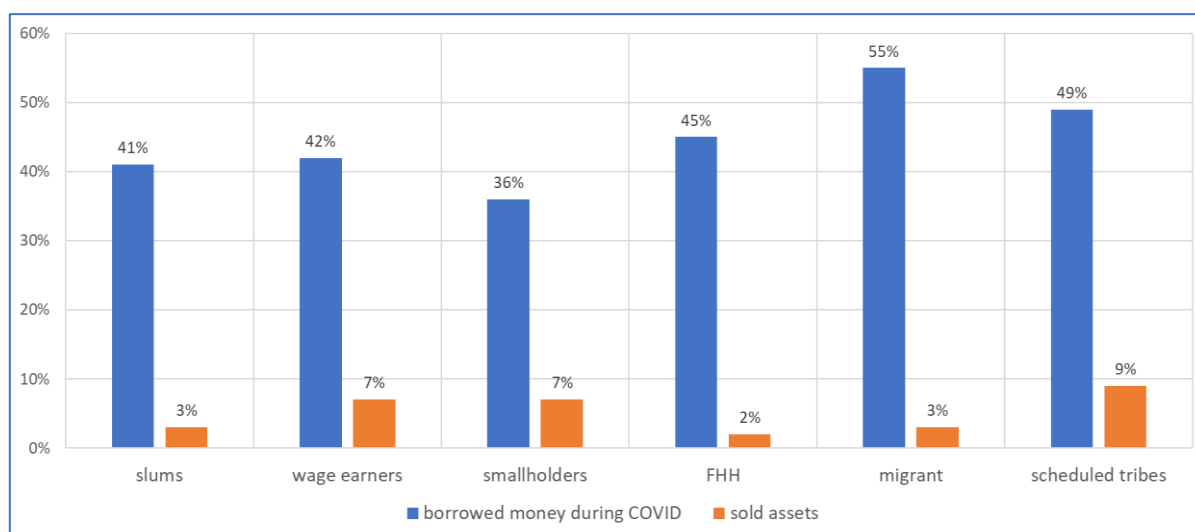
Farmer, Sambalpur

“I am a migrant laborer. During COVID-19 and lockdown, I could not come back to my family . My wife arranged money from SHG loan for survival. We used that money for food”.

Migrant, Ganjam

Asset sales were not common among the sample households, with only 9 percent of Tribal households selling assets, compared to 2 percent of female headed households. However, many of these households have no assets to sell so these figures must be interpreted with care.

Chart 16 - Coping: Borrowed money or sold assets to meet family’s needs during COVID-19



6.3. Household food security

Using the available data on household dietary diversity and food frequency and reduced coping strategies index (r-CSI), households were classified as having ‘poor’, ‘borderline’ or ‘acceptable’ consumption using the food consumption score (FCS), and as having ‘low’, ‘medium’ or ‘high’ coping using the reduced CSI.

The following table summarizes the percentage of households with the following sets of characteristics, and colour-coded by food security status, with **red** = food insecure, **yellow** = vulnerable and **green** = food secure.

- **Food insecure:** Households with high rCSI + poor or borderline FCS or medium rCSI and poor FCS
- **Vulnerable:** Households with low rCSI + poor FCS; medium rCSI + borderline FCS; or high rCSI + acceptable FCS
- **Food secure:** Households with low rCSI + borderline or acceptable FCS or medium rCSI and acceptable FCS.

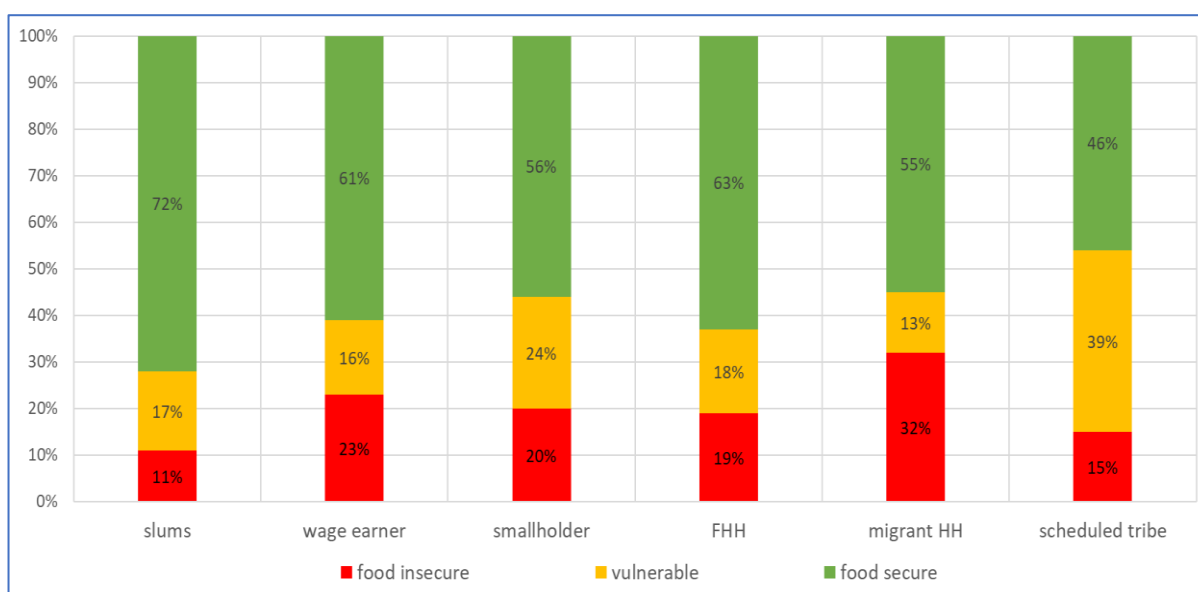
Chart 17 – Classification and distribution of households by food security status

	High rCSI	Medium rCSI	Low rCSI
Poor FCS	6.4	4.0	1.6
Borderline FCS	6.9	13.5	8.8
Acceptable FCS	14.3	13.3	31.1

Overall, about 17 percent of the households are food insecure, another 30 percent are vulnerable and lastly, around 53 percent are food secure.

The levels of food security vary by group, with the slum dwelling households more likely to be food secure, followed by female headed households and wage-earning households. The highest levels of food insecurity are found in the households hosting migrants (32 percent), followed by those relying on daily wages (23 percent).

Chart 18 – Food security by group



6.4. Conclusions and Recommendations

- When dealing with food shortages, female headed households and households hosting migrant were more likely to use preventative measures such as consuming less preferred foods or reducing intake. Tribal households were more likely to use reactive strategies such as reducing number of meals or not eating all day.
- Food insecurity was highest in households with migrants. Tribal households were least likely to be food secure and also had quite a few vulnerable households. Food security was best in slum dwellers, followed by female-headed households.
- In order to manage the impact of COVID-19 and the national lockdown, borrowing money was common (40-50 percent) while sale of assets was not.

Recommendation

Higher stress and vulnerability among migrants, wage earners, smallholders and tribes indicate the need for prioritizing these groups for livelihood and income enhancement programmes. Besides schemes like MGNREGS, among smallholders, enhancing market linkage and income diversification, such as through WSHGs could be an effective strategy. Tribal households could also benefit from enhanced market linkage for forest products.

Part 7 - Government Safety Net Programmes and Ration Cards

In June 1997, the Government of India launched the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) with a focus on ensuring that the poorest people in India received food grains in a transparent and accountable manner through a network of Fair Price Shops (FPS) across the country.

Then in 2013, The National Food and Security Act (NFSA) was passed to provide a certain quantity and quality food to people at subsidized prices.

Before the introduction of NFSA, the state governments issued ration cards for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) populations under the TPDS. In addition, **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)** provided grains to the poorest of the poor at highly subsidised prices. After passing the NFSA, BPL and APL were combined into **Priority Households (PHH)**.

- Entitlements under AAY include: 35 Kgs of rice or wheat per household per month.
- Entitlements under PH include: 5 Kgs of Rice/wheat per person per month

The **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA)**, is a social security measure that guarantees the right to work, by enhancing livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

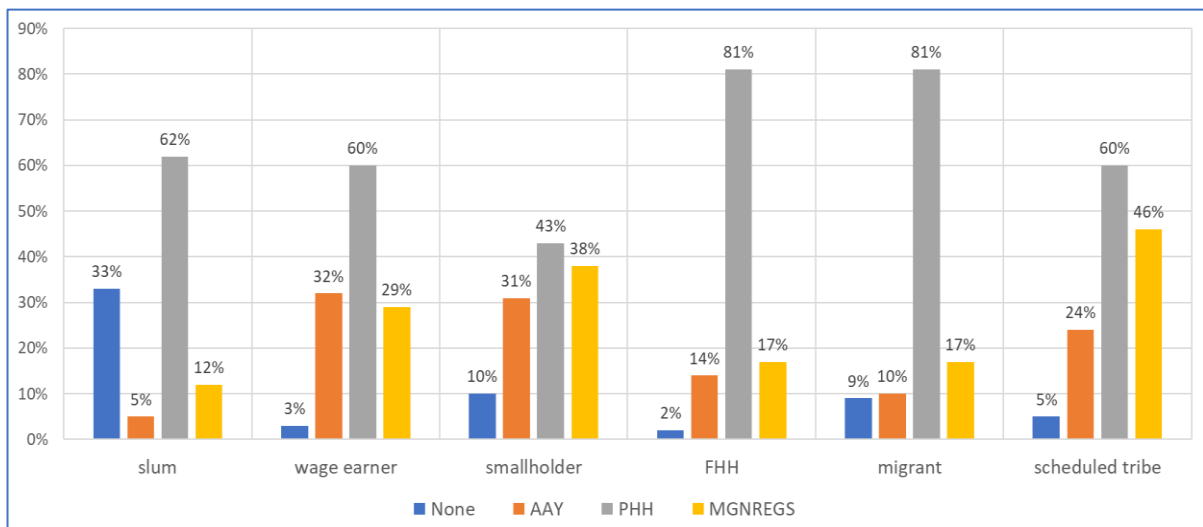
In Odisha, the Government undertook an exercise across the state to identify and enrol beneficiaries of Priority Households (PHH) through application of well-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria and issued new ration cards for AAY and PHH. Additionally, the Odisha Government used its own resources to implement a state food security scheme covering 500,000 beneficiaries. These beneficiaries receive assistance similar to that of Priority Households under TPDS.

7.1. Card Ownership

The chart below shows some variation in card ownership by vulnerable group:

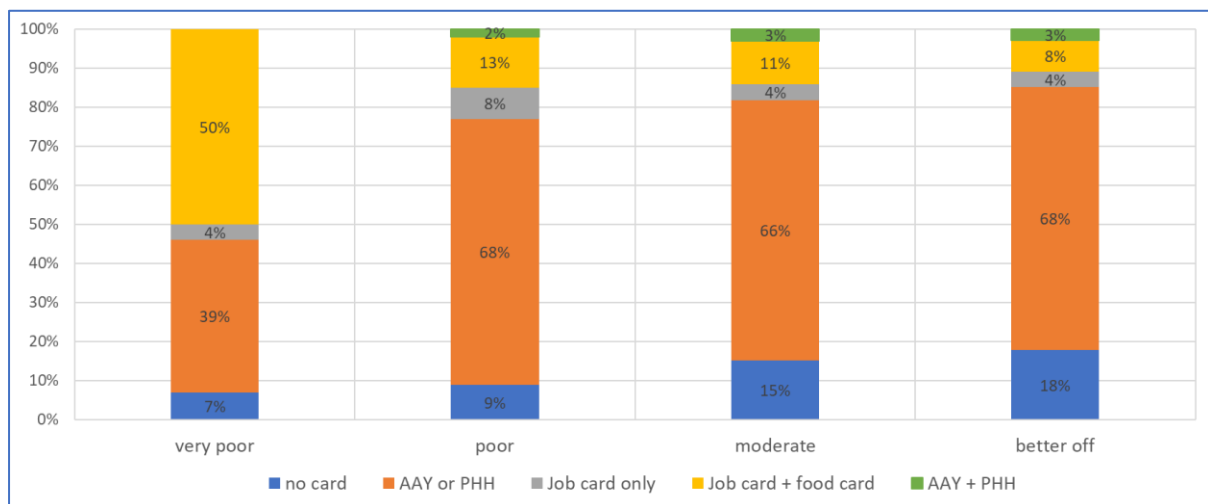
- One third of slum dwelling households indicated they didn't have either AAY or PHH cards; 62 percent had PHH cards while 12 percent were also enrolled in MGNREGS. The survey didn't investigate enrolment in the state food security scheme, so it is not possible to know if these people were enrolled or not.
- For daily wage-earning households, 60 percent had PHH cards and 32 percent were enrolled with AAY; 29 percent had MGNREGS job cards.
- Smallholder households were less likely to have PHH or AAY cards, but 38 percent had job cards.
- More than 80 percent of female headed households and those hosting migrants had PHH cards, with some having job cards as well.
- Tribal households were also less likely to have AAY or PHH cards, but 46 percent were enrolled in MGNREGS.

Chart 19 – Ration card ownership by group



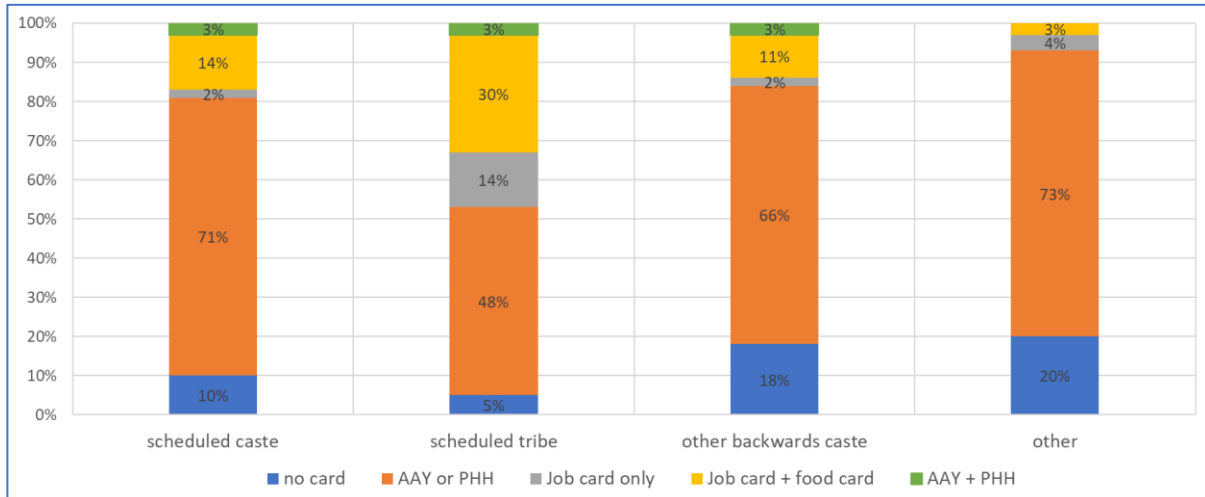
When looking at asset wealth and card ownership, some interesting trends appear as shown in the chart below. For the very poor households, half have both a job card (MGNREGS) and a food card (AAY or PHH), while 39 percent only have a food card. Only a few are not enrolled in any scheme. For the other wealth groups, the majority of households are holding either AAY or PHH cards, with only a few holding different combinations. Nearly 10 percent don't have any cards. The percentage without cards increases with asset wealth group.

Chart 20 – Card ownership by asset wealth



When looking at card ownership by social group it is clear that the situation for Tribal households is different than the rest, where 30 percent have both a job card and a food card (AAY or PHH). In addition, only a few of them don't have any cards, showing that Tribal households are a priority for government programmes.

Chart 21 – Card ownership by social group

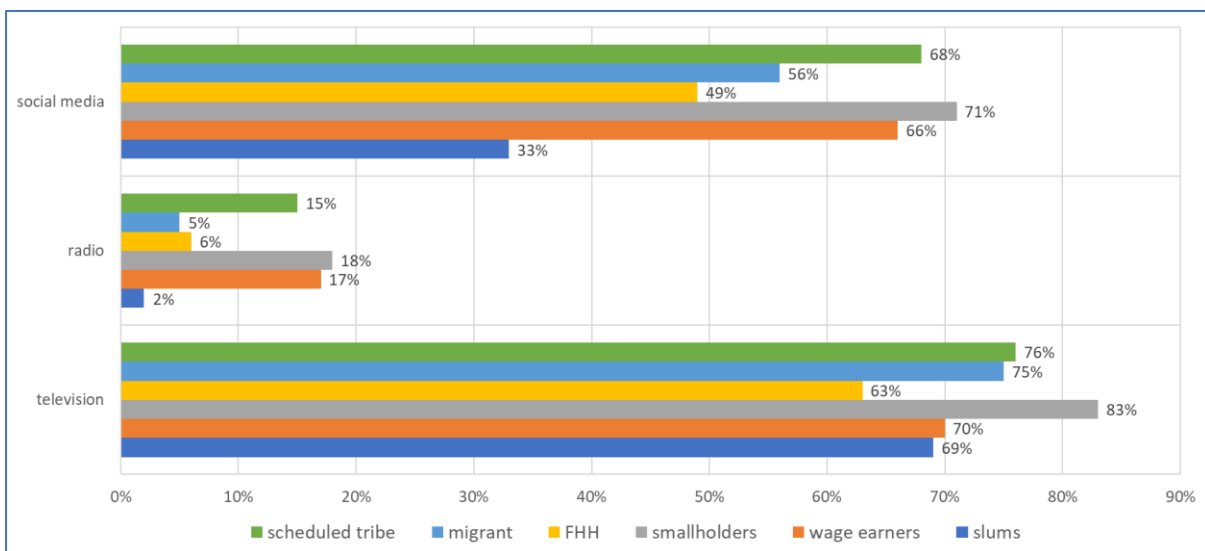


7.2. COVID support from Government

Nearly all sampled households reported receiving information from the Government about COVID, ranging from 94 percent of slum dwelling and daily wage households, to 98 percent of Tribal households. Slightly fewer households reporting receiving support from the Government, ranging from 88-89 percent of Tribal and smallholder households, to 98 percent of female headed households.

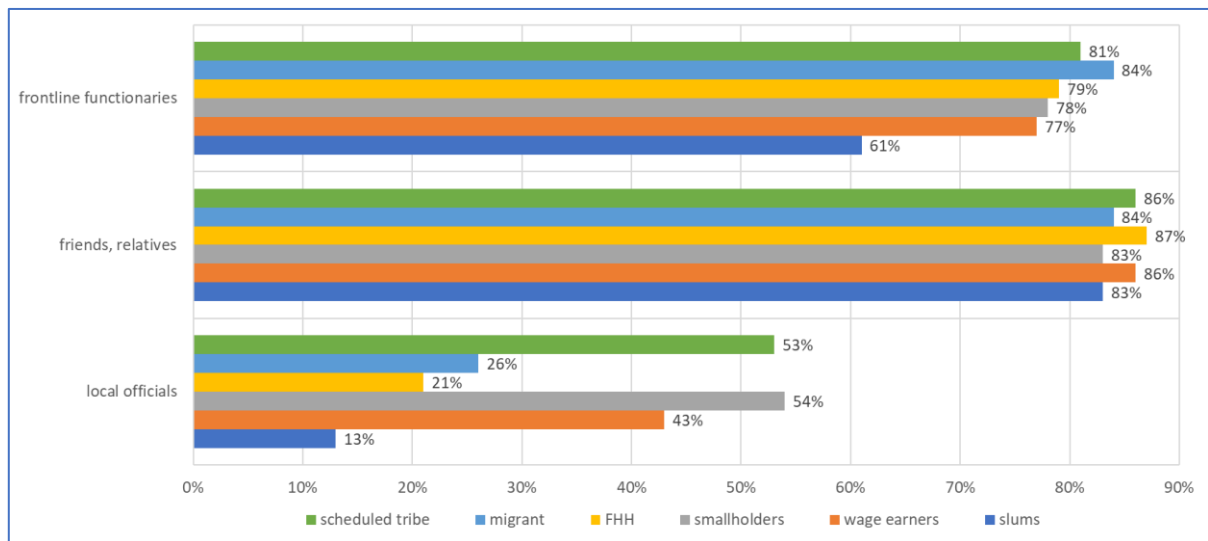
Media was a major source of information from the Government, as illustrated in the chart below. Television was the main media source of information on COVID for the sample and most common amongst smallholder households (83 percent) and least common amongst female headed households (63 percent). Social media was used more by smallholders (71 percent), Tribal (68 percent) and wage earner (66 percent) households. Slum dwelling households either do not have access to, or do not rely on, social media for information (33 percent). The radio was not a major source of information from the Government.

Chart 22 – Sources of information from Government –electronic media



Overall, it appears that face-to-face sources of information are the most often used by the sample population, which could also be due to poverty and low levels of literacy. Nearly 80 percent of all households relied on frontline functionaries for Government information on COVID, except for slum dwellers, where it was just 61 percent. Friends and relatives were the most common source for all groups – around 85 percent relied on this source. Local officials were a good source of information for Tribal and smallholder households (53-54 percent) and for wage earning households, to a lesser extent (43 percent).

Chart 23 – Sources of Government information on COVID – face-to-face



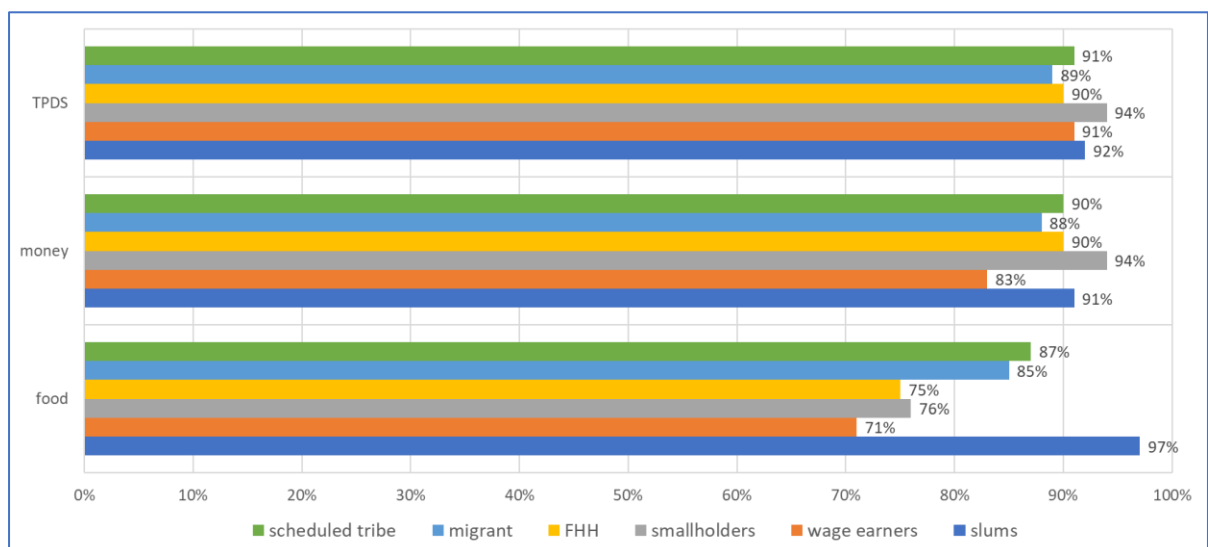
Multiple types of support were available to households, some specifically targeting for the socio-economic response to COVID and others that are more regular safety net programmes which also provided support to buffer the effects of COVID.

Early on in the national lockdown, the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) was adjusted to provide advance distribution, allowing beneficiaries to take up to three months of food at one visit. Also, for some, the rations of rice or wheat grain were increased, as well as the additional of pulses. The chart below shows that 90 percent of more of the sample households received benefits from the TPDS in response to COVID-19 in 2020. This was slightly lower for households hosting migrants, as many were not in their place of registration and the ONORC programme was not in place at that time.

The Government of Odisha (GoO) also provided additional food and cash handouts to respond to COVID. The smallholder households were more likely to benefit from GoO cash responses (94 percent) while daily wage earners were the least likely (83 percent).

Additional food benefits appear to have targeted slum dwellers, where 97 percent received this additional support from the Government. The daily wage earners were the least likely to have received additional food (71 percent).

Chart 24 – General Government support



As part of the qualitative in-depth interviews, vulnerable people were asked about the challenges in availing the government benefits. Main challenges cited by the respondents in accessing the TPDS were:

- travel restrictions,
- no money for transportation,
- misinformation/correspondence,
- migrants facing difficulty in accessing their entitlements and
- no redressal of grievances.

Besides, nutritional support schemes such as THR/HCM through the AWCs were closed and families were left with PDS grains, that are not nutritious enough to support the nutritional needs.

“Accessing TPDS support has been a big challenge specially for migrants who have come from other states. Even now, Panchayat-level ration cards have not been issued to them. Even MGNREGS job cards have not been issued so they are still are not employed under MGNREGS.”

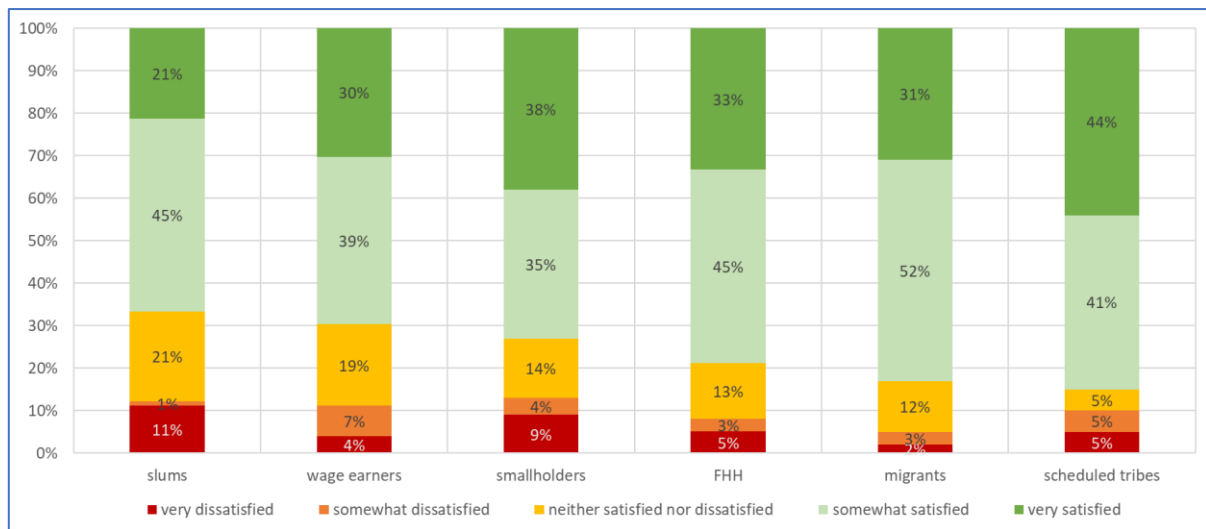
Farmer, Puri

7.3. Beneficiary satisfaction with Government COVID support

A series of questions were asked of the beneficiaries of government support, to determine their satisfaction with what they received.

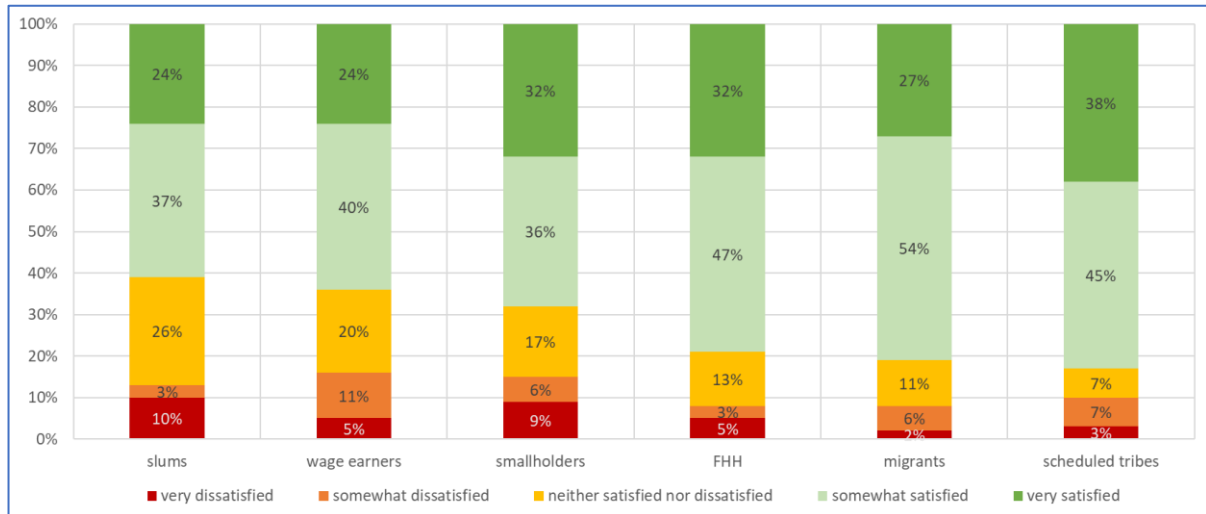
The chart below shows that around 70 percent of the households were somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of Government support they received, ranging from a high of 85 percent in Tribal households to a low of 66 percent in slum dwellers, who were the least satisfied with the amount of assistance they received.

Chart 25 – Satisfaction with the AMOUNT of Government support



Satisfaction with the timeliness of Government support was slightly lower, with around two-thirds being somewhat satisfied or very satisfied. Again, the slum dwelling households were the least satisfied with the timeliness (61 percent) while Tribal households were the most satisfied (83 percent), followed closely by migrant households (81 percent) and female headed households (79 percent).

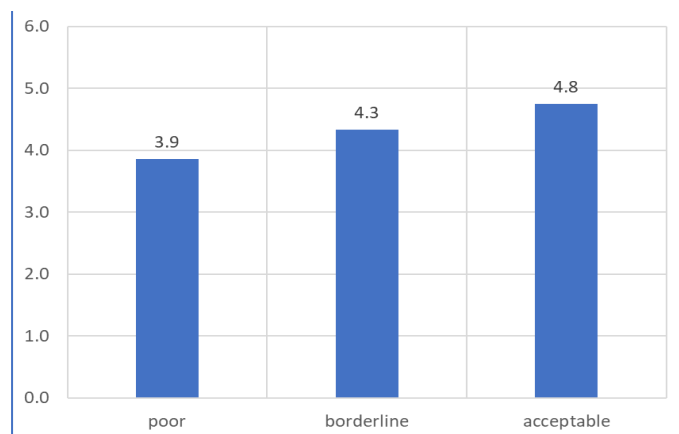
Chart 26 – Satisfaction with the TIMELINESS of Government support



Satisfaction with the quality of Government support was similar to the satisfaction with the timeliness of support, but where female headed households were more likely to be somewhat or very satisfied (85 percent) than the other groups.

The chart on the right shows the average number of different government benefits received by food consumption classification. Households with poor dietary diversity and food frequency are receiving the fewest government benefits. Average number of benefits increases with improved household food consumption.

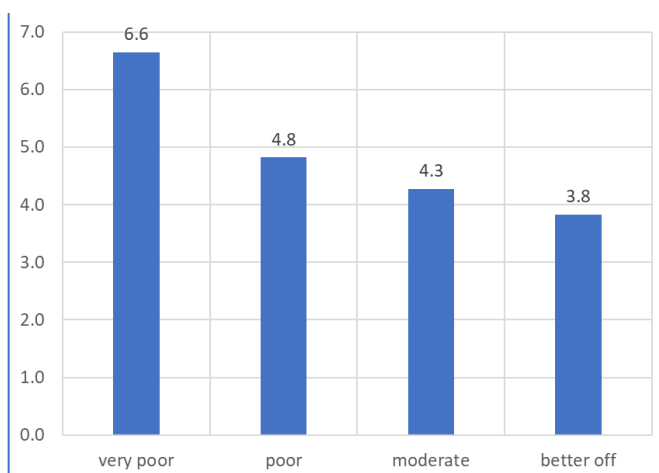
Chart 27 – Relationship between number of Government benefits and household food consumption



This could reflect the benefits of the programmes on household food consumption or could be a targeting error – as it’s not clear what the consumption was like prior to receipt of benefits.

The chart below shows the relationship between the number of government benefits received and asset wealth.

Chart 28 – Relationship between number of Government benefits and asset wealth



The poorest households received the most Government benefits which shows that targeting based on wealth is likely effective.

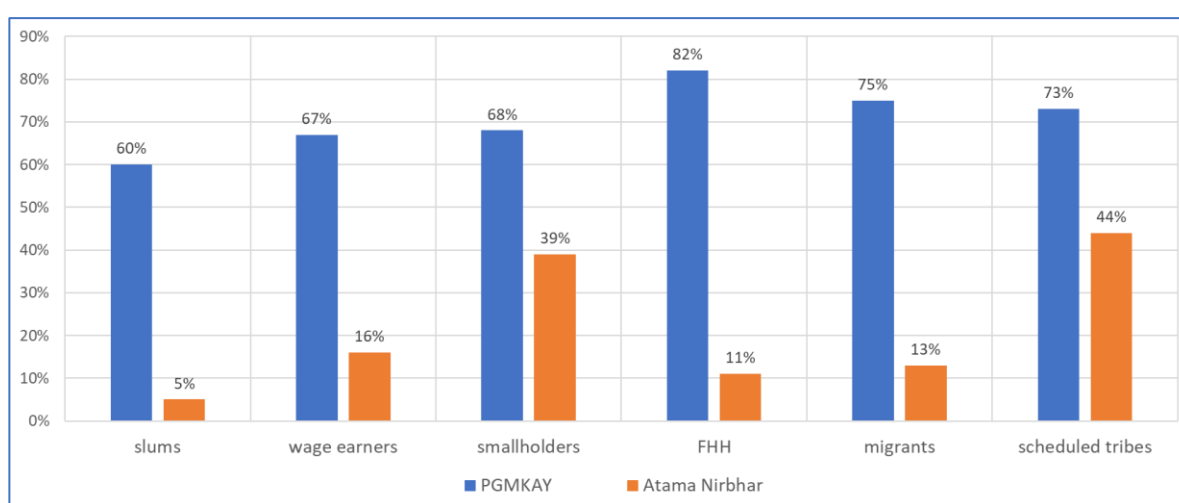
As asset wealth increases, the average number of Government benefits decreases.

7.4. Other Government food schemes in response to COVID

In addition to the food entitlements under the NFSA (TPDS), 2 new schemes - the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) and Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package were announced to mitigate the hunger crisis faced by poor and vulnerable population. Under PMGKAY, 813 million NFSA beneficiaries were provided 5 kgs of rice or wheat per person, per month and 1 kg of pulses per family per month, free of cost, for eight months, from April to November 2020. Another 500,000 people received similar assistance under the GoO State Scheme. Under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat package, the Government of India provided 5 kgs of food grains per month plus 2 months of pulses, free of cost, to about 80 million migrant labourers who were not covered under NFSA or any other State food security scheme.

The chart below shows that not many households benefited from the Atma Nirbhar Bharat scheme, with the exception of 44 percent of Tribal households and 39 percent of smallholder households. However, around two-thirds of the households received pulses from the PGMKAY scheme – as high as 82 percent of female headed households and 75 percent of households hosting migrants. Fewer beneficiaries of Atma Nirbhar Bharat could be on account of its targeting of only those without access to PDS or state food scheme.

Chart 29 – Received pulses from Government schemes



The beneficiaries of the PGMKAY programme were asked about the satisfaction with the intervention, and their responses are summarised in the bullets below:

- **Amount:** Most households were satisfied with the amount of pulses received in the programme, with around 85 percent being somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with the quantity received. Around 20 percent of the slum dwellers were indifferent about the amount received.
- **Quality:** The satisfaction with quality was around the same as with quantity – 85 percent somewhat or fully satisfied.
- **Inclusion:** The respondents were slightly less satisfied with the inclusion of pulses – around 82 percent in total were somewhat or very satisfied. There was some dissent amongst smallholder households where 10 percent were somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with inclusion, and around 7 percent in households with migrants – compared to 0-4 percent in the other groups.

7.5. Knowledge of Government's Complaints and Feedback Mechanism

Around 30 percent of the households were aware of the Government's complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFM), which was lowest amongst the most vulnerable groups (female headed households and migrant households – 23 percent) and highest amongst the Tribal households (45 percent). Slum dwellers were also less aware of the CFM – only 27 percent were aware.

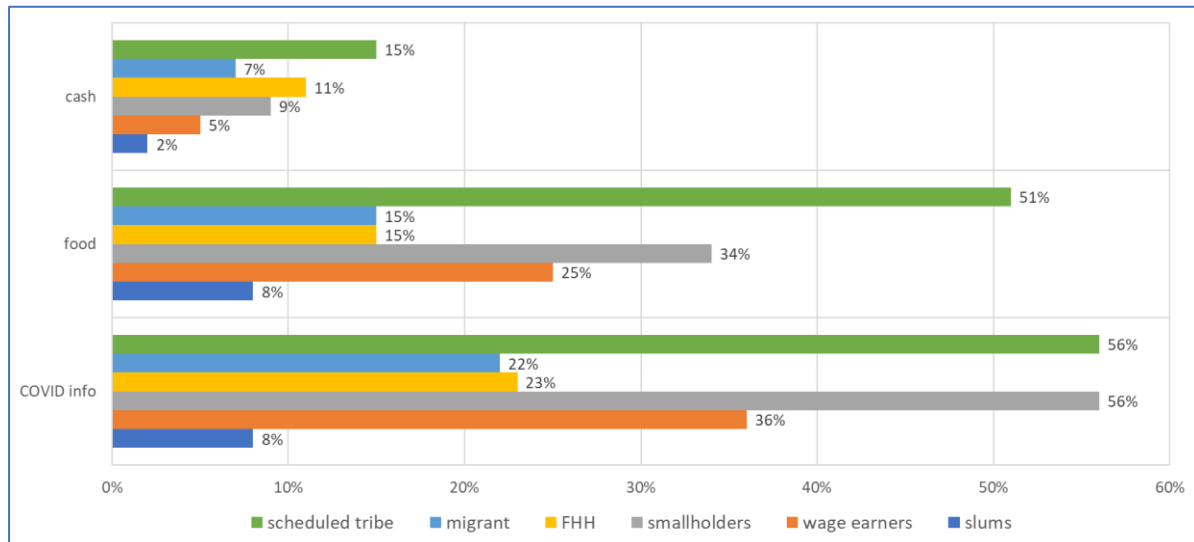
7.6. NGO COVID Support

Households were also asked if they had received any support from NGOs in order to cope with the COVID-19 crisis. Many national NGOs and civil society organisations were working with vulnerable groups across the country during the lockdown and afterwards.

The chart below shows that there was great variance between groups, on who received NGO support. In terms of information, Tribal households and smallholders were the most likely to have received information about COVID-19 from NGOs, likely (56 percent) because the NGOs were already working with these groups. Slum dwellers were the least likely to have received any information on COVID-19 from NGOs.

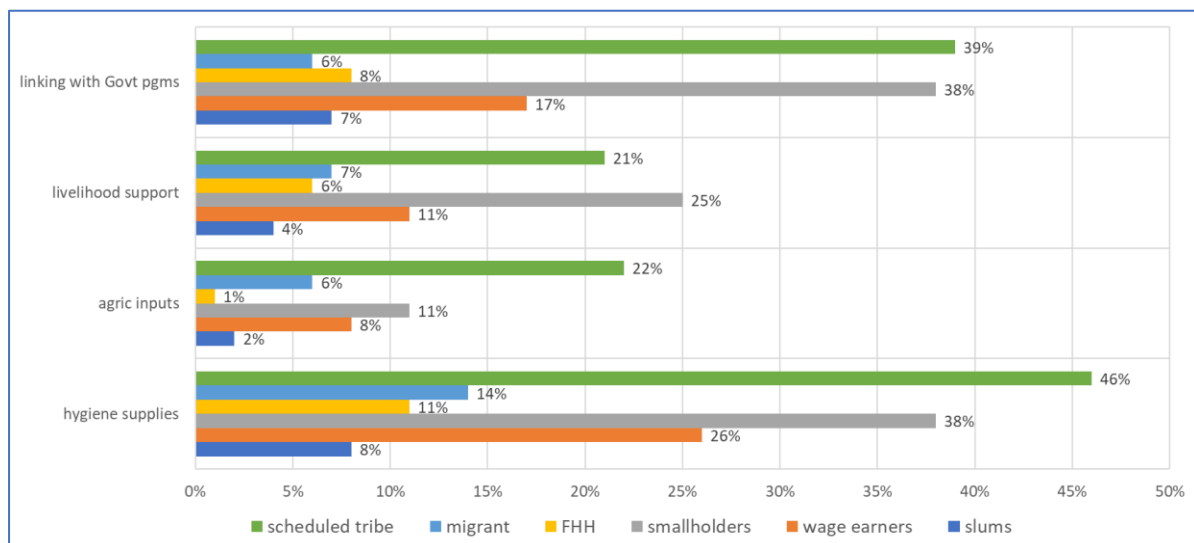
In terms of food and cash, more than half of the Tribal households reported receiving food from NGOs, compared to only 8 percent of slum dwellers and 15 percent each of female headed and migrant households. Around one-third of the smallholder households also received food from NGOs in response to COVID-19. Cash was not provided to many households – 15 percent of Tribal households, 11 percent of female headed households and only 2 percent of the slum dwelling households.

Chart 30 – NGO support received – cash, food and information



In terms of other types of support, hygiene supplies were provided to 46 percent of Tribal households and 28 percent of smallholder households by NGOs. About one-quarter of daily wage earners also received hygiene supplies. Nearly 40 percent of Tribal and smallholder households received help to link with Government programmes. More than 20 percent of Tribal and smallholder households also received livelihoods support from NGOs, along with 11 percent of daily wage-earning households. Lastly, Tribal households also were the most likely to have received agricultural inputs support from NGOs (22 percent), which was more than double than that of any other group.

Chart 31 – NGO support received – Other support



Beneficiary households were also asked about their satisfaction with NGO support received in the COVID-19 response. In terms of amount, timeliness and quality, the responses were almost the same:

- 85 percent of **slum dwellers** were ‘somewhat satisfied’ and the rest were indifferent.
- More than half of **wage-earning** beneficiary households were ‘very satisfied’ and another 20 percent were somewhat satisfied, while 14 percent were either ‘somewhat’ or ‘very dissatisfied’.
- Three-quarters of **smallholder** households were ‘very satisfied’ with the support they received, which makes sense as they were one of the biggest recipients of NGO support. However, 11 percent were ‘very dissatisfied’ with the support they received.
- Only 60 percent of **female headed** households who received NGO support were ‘somewhat’ or ‘very satisfied’ – the lowest of all groups. One-quarter were indifferent while the rest were dissatisfied.
- Despite not receiving much assistance, more than 80 percent of those who did, amongst **migrant** households, were satisfied. Only 4 percent were dissatisfied.
- As expected, **Tribal** households were the most likely to be satisfied with the NGO support they received – 93 percent were either ‘somewhat’ or ‘very satisfied’. Only 4 percent were dissatisfied.

7.7. Conclusions and Recommendations

- Slum dwellers are not benefitting from government programmes as much as other vulnerable groups where the outreach is good.
- It appears that there are both inclusion and exclusion errors for targeting of Government programmes. A systematic ‘clean-up’ process is needed.
- There could be a problem with targeting Other Backwards Classes for Government programmes.
- Outreach of Government information and support on COVID was good across all vulnerable groups. Wage earners, female-headed and smallholder households were the least likely to get food support.
- Most respondents were satisfied with the amount of food support but not with the timeliness of it. Dissatisfaction was higher among slum dwellers, wage earners and smallholders.
- Though Atma Nirbhar Bharat was designed primarily to benefit migrants, only 13 percent households with migrants reported benefiting from it compared to 44 percent of Tribal households and 39 percent of small holder households. Targeting errors and the limited implementation of ONORC are likely some of the main reasons for this.
- Television and social media are the most preferred and effective media for providing information.
- Fewer than a third of the respondents were aware of the Government’s complaints and feedback mechanism, indicating a challenge in ensuring accountability to the people.

Recommendations:

- The Food Department could conduct a community survey to identify and add left-out eligible people into TPDS.
- Slum populations clearly need to be targeted for special measures to enforce TPDS implementation – including ONORC enforcement, TPDS enrolment camps in partnership with NGOs.
- Improved monitoring is important to enhance FPS access by vulnerable groups. This could be a participatory process involving community consultations to identify issues with operations of FPS and addressing any irregularities in implementation
- Awareness campaign on complaints and feedback mechanism is required to enhance awareness among vulnerable groups. At the same time functionality of the mechanism must be ensured.

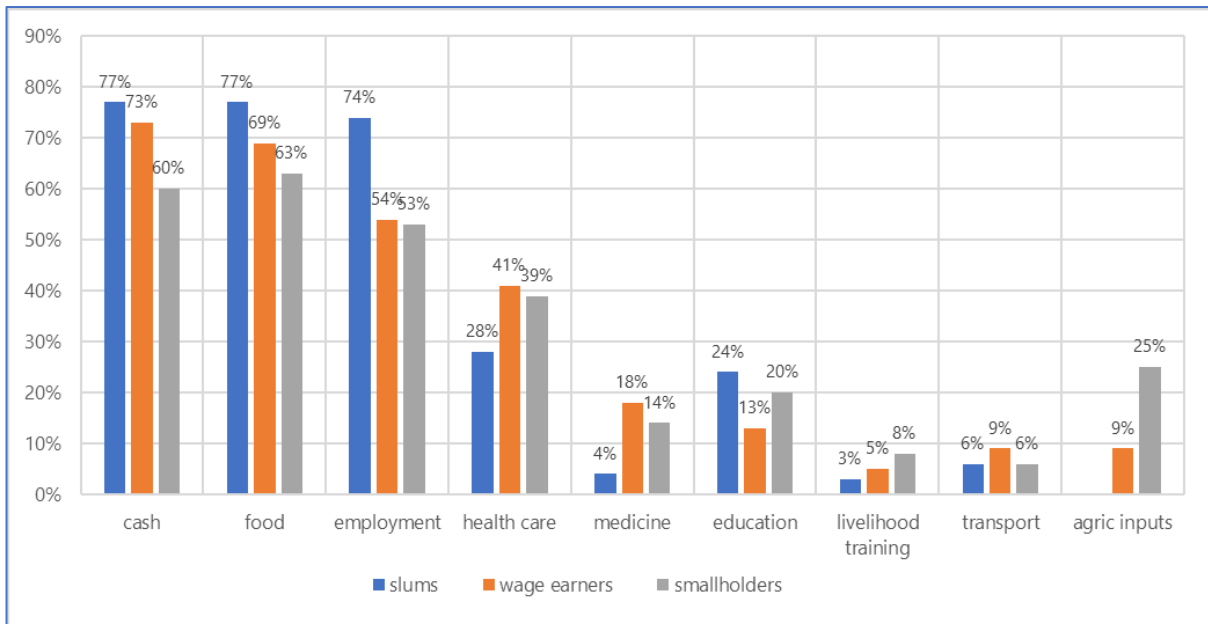
Part 8 - Longer Term Needs

At the end of the survey, the households were asked about their priorities for the longer term. The question was fairly open-ended and was somewhat linked to COVID-19 response but also likely includes views which have longer-term developmental implications.

Below is a group-by-group summary of longer terms needs of the various groups in this survey.

- **Slum-dwellers** require cash, food and employment, more than any other group. Around one-quarter of these households are interested in health care and education as well.
- **Daily wage earners** also have cash and food requirements for longer term support, but less so than slum dwellers. Employment and health care are their next biggest needs, with a few requiring medicine and education.
- **Smallholders** seem to be doing a bit better in terms of self-sufficiency, but still require cash and food support in the longer term, plus employment and health care. They also require some support with agricultural inputs and education, to some extent.

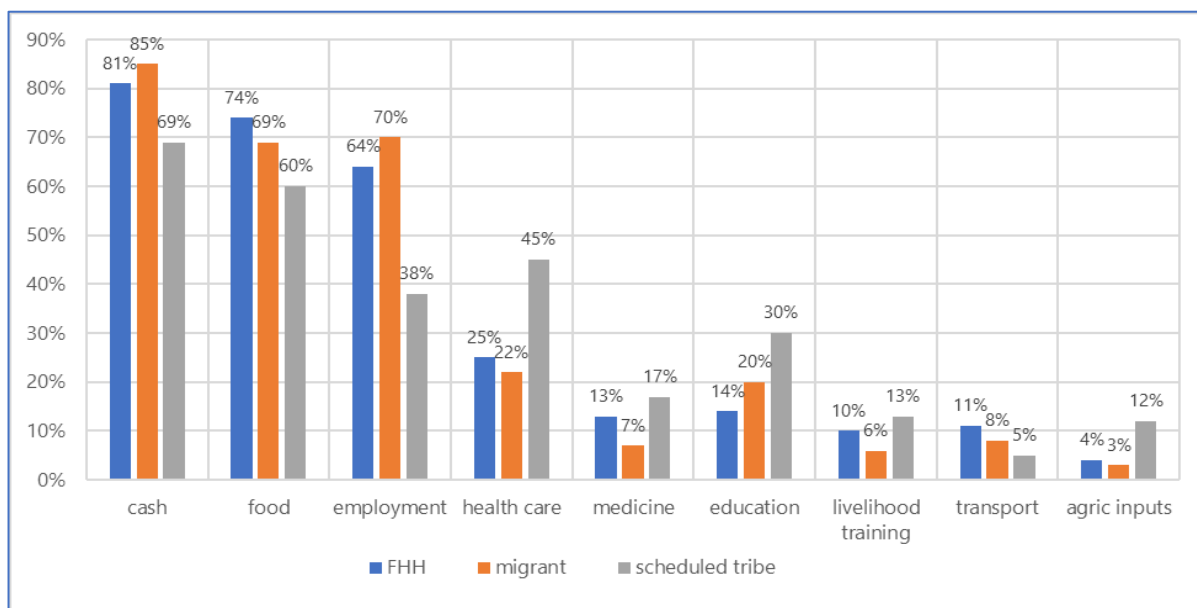
Chart 32 – Longer term needs of vulnerable livelihood groups



By social group, the needs vary and are also a bit different than the livelihood groups. The following are summaries by group:

- **Female headed** households have huge cash and food requirements, despite benefitting from many government programmes already. They also noted that there are employment needs in the longer term, along with health care, for about one-quarter of those households. Of all the groups, they have the highest need for transport, although it's still for only 11 percent of female headed households.
- **Migrant** households have the highest requirement for cash in the longer-term which makes sense, as their members migrate to find work for cash. They also have high food and employment requirements. Around one-fifth also require health care and education in the longer-term.
- **Tribal** households have received the most COVID-19 response support, so their food and cash and employment needs are lower than the other groups. However, 45 percent indicated that health care is a longer-term need, which is much more than any other group. Also, education is important for 30 percent of Tribal households. Linked to earning potential, a small share is also interested in livelihoods training and agricultural inputs.

Chart 33 – Longer-term needs of vulnerable social groups



During the qualitative in-depth interviews, migrants, daily-wage earners and small farmers provided suggestions to improve Government’s response and relief measures. Some of the most widely reported suggestions were:

- to strongly implement COVID-19 rules,
- provide health care support to the needy,
- increase cash transfers by 2-3 months,
- include mask and sanitizer in the TPDS,
- effectively communicate and disseminate government related information and to counter rumors through public awareness campaigns and
- to provide special package to farmers and daily wage earners.

A few suggestions provided by Government functionaries during key informant interviews are provided below:

“Government should continue to provide free food to below poverty line (BPL) families. Government should arrange some work for daily wage labourers to help them earn some money and live their lives. Government should also focus on health care”.

A Ward Member, 47, Male

“Government should provide home delivery of Aahar Yojna to elderly persons, widows, disabled, and single women for the entire year/long term basis. Also, the food provided for pregnant and lactating mothers [take home rations under ICDS] should be adapted as per local habits”.

Anganwadi worker, 37, Female

8.1. Conclusions and Recommendations

- Cash, food, and employment are the three major longer-term needs of respondents across all vulnerability categories.
- Healthcare and education are also important long-term needs, especially of Tribal households, that could be located in more remote areas and face poorer coverage of health centres and schools.

Recommendations

For the longer-term evidence-based planning and strategizing to enhance food security and livelihoods, specific to the different vulnerable groups, is required.

- Community-specific vulnerability assessment (primary and secondary)
- Community consultation to understand ground level challenges
- Multi-department convergence to ensure holistic solutions and coordinated implementation
- Demand generation through community outreach while at the same time systems improvement to enhance scheme coverage, implementation, monitoring and coordination.

Annexure 1 - Key findings and recommendations from the first round of assessment

Key findings emerged from the first round of assessment have been discussed below:

Source of food: Respondents were asked about the main source of food in their households. More than half of respondents access their food from the market or grocery store.

Sufficiency of food: More than half of the respondents reported of having insufficient food in last 7 days. In this regard, aspirational districts (54 percent) and female headed households (56 percent) are slightly more vulnerable as compared to non-aspirational districts (47 percent) and male headed households (48 percent).

Reason for shortage of food: The most common reasons for household food shortages were lack of money to buy food and inability to access market due to lockdown. A higher proportion of respondents from the aspirational district (46 percent) and female headed households (44 percent) mentioned lack of money to purchase food, as compared to non-aspirational districts (33 percent) and male headed households (36 percent).

Change in price of food: It's a matter of concern that two out of every five respondents mentioned that the prices of food commodities increased in their locality. Remarkably, a much higher proportion of respondents residing in the Southern Zone (54 percent) mentioned that the prices increased in their locality, as compared to Central (40 percent) and Northern (31 percent) zones.

Food consumption: Findings shows that overall, all households had eaten cereals, roots and tubers while 89 percent had eaten vegetables/ leaves, 78 percent had consumed pulses and/or nuts and 72 percent had consumed oil/fat/butter in the last 24 hours. More than half (55 percent) had sugar or sweets. As compared to other food groups, consumption of meat (32 percent), dairy products (25 percent) and fruits (20 percent) were low. Male headed households have better consumption in terms of dietary diversity, as compared to households headed by women. A lower proportion of respondents from aspirational districts reported consumption of more than 4 food groups in the last 24 hours. Male headed households had the highest dietary diversity in terms of different food groups.

Coping during food shortages: Overall, 80 percent of respondents coped with food shortage by relying on less preferred and less expensive foods, while two out of every five households borrowed food, or relied on help from friends or relatives. Slightly more than half limited portion size at mealtimes, 39 percent restricted consumption by adults for small children to eat, and 40 percent reduced the number of meals eaten in a day to cope with food shortages. Residents of Aspirational districts and female headed households use a greater number of coping strategies.

Relation between consumption of food groups and coping strategy: With the increase in the number of food groups consumed in the last 24 hours, number of coping strategies used in the last 7 days decreases.

Change in intra-household food consumption: Due the crisis, adult men and women were the most likely members to reduce their consumption in around two-thirds of the households. Only a few changes in consumption for children and elderly were reported. However, in female-headed households, women and girls were more likely to reduce their consumption than men and boys.

Borrowing of money to meet food needs: Since COVID-19, almost half of the respondents had borrowed any money to help meet their family's food needs. Almost two-thirds of the sample in the Central Zone borrowed money, which is much higher than Northern (46 percent) and Southern (37 percent) zones.

Support from Government and Non-Government Organizations: Four out of five households reported receiving COVID response support. Among those who received support, almost all mentioned receiving the support from the government. Most common reported form of support received was cash.

Role of PDS during COVID-19 crisis: Almost two-thirds (65 percent) received support from the government's Public Distribution System (PDS), which shows that PDS was a major source of support during the COVID-19 crisis.

Type of support received from the government: A higher percentage of female headed households received support under other schemes like widow pension, old age pension, and Mamata. A much higher proportion of respondents residing in the Aspirational Districts received their support in the form of food, money, school mid-day meals (MDM), dry hot cooked meals (HCM) and 3 months emergency supply.

Information on COVID from the government: The majority of the respondents received information on COVID from the government, with the most often being through the television (61 percent) while the least common was social media (27 percent).

Most important concern under the COVID-19 circumstances: Most common reported concerns were shortage of food (30 percent) and lack of work (28 percent). People were least concerned about disruption of medical services or getting sick (2 percent each), or disruption of education institutes and shortage of medicine (1 percent each).

Households' immediate needs in the next 10 days: Almost three-quarters of the households requested food and money support. The need for hygiene supplies (39 percent) and access to health services/medicines (27 percent) is also high. A higher percentage of respondents from the Aspirational Districts indicated that food and money were the immediate needs over the next 10 days. Female headed households were more likely to mention hygiene supplies as compared to male headed households.

Households' long-term needs in next one month: Almost four out of every five households need food and money over next one month. Need for hygiene supplies (41 percent) and access to health services/medicines (35 percent) is also high. One in ten households need agricultural or livestock inputs. A higher percentage of respondents from the Aspirational District mentioned the need for food (95 percent) and money (87 percent) compared to other groups.

Households' preferences for assistance: It is to be noted that cash and food are the most preferred form of assistance. Preference for food and materials is much higher among the female headed households as compared to those headed by men.

Based on the results of the first round of assessment, following recommendations were suggested:

1. **Recommendation 1:** Increase diversity of food consumption, especially amongst the more vulnerable households as the analysis of household consumption, showed low diversity which can lead to malnutrition and poor health outcomes. This can be done by diversifying foods provided in assistance, through information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns and by ensuring availability of fresh foods in the markets.
2. **Recommendation 2:** Increase the quantity of food support and expand the coverage of COVID response systems to reach more vulnerable people, due to the high reliance on coping mechanisms by the sample of households.
3. **Recommendation 3:** Cash assistance should be continued and feasibility of increasing the amount of money and coverage of vulnerable households should be explored, as many households reported having cash shortages due to lack of work and loss of income during the lockdown.
4. **Recommendation 4:** Distribution of assistance through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) should be expanded since most households in the survey reporting relying heavily on the programme.
5. **Recommendation 5:** Households in Aspirational Districts and those headed by women have emerged to be the most vulnerable, thus it is recommended that the government should place more emphasis on the food and nutritional needs of these groups both during and after the COVID crisis.
6. **Recommendation 6:** Continue providing food and cash assistance to the vulnerable while exploring creative longer-term solutions, including strategies to reach the most vulnerable more efficiently and effectively.

Annexure 2 - A Snap-shot of Qualitative Findings

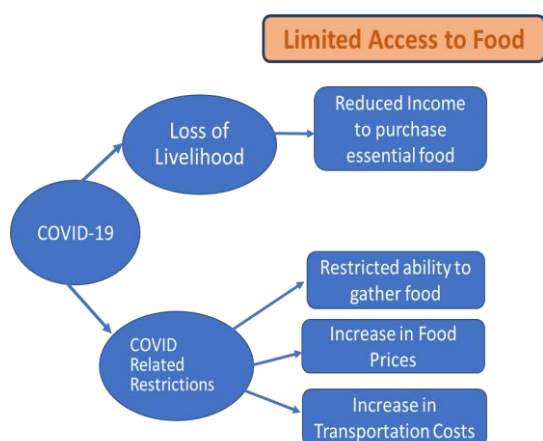
As mentioned earlier, qualitative data were collected from the returnee migrant workers, daily wage earners, and small and marginal farmers. Besides, key informant interviews were also conducted with government officials currently engaged in COVID-19 response, local leaders and representatives of NGOs. Based on the qualitative data analysis, five themes emerged:

Five Emergent Themes

1. Food Related Challenges
2. Coping Strategies of Families
3. Other Basic Needs of Families
4. Challenges of Availing govt. Support During COVID-19
5. Suggestions to Improve Govt. Response & Relief Measures

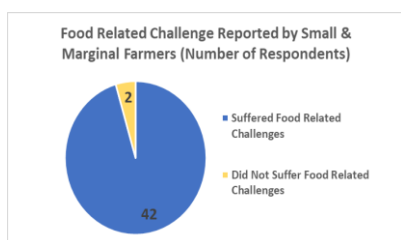
1. Food Related Challenges

Insights from Interviews with various 'At-risk' groups such as Small & Marginal Famers, Migrants and Daily Wage Earners have been mentioned below:



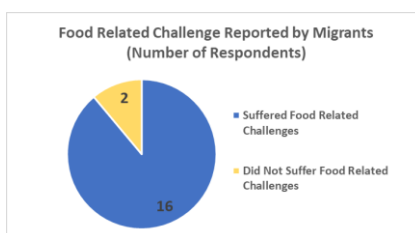
- Loss of Livelihoods reduced access to money and therefore, essential food commodities.
- COVID related lockdown, forced people to stay inside while also making transportation expensive— limited access to food
- Restrictions also limited the availability of foods in shops - Leading to increase in food prices

Inability to Access Food



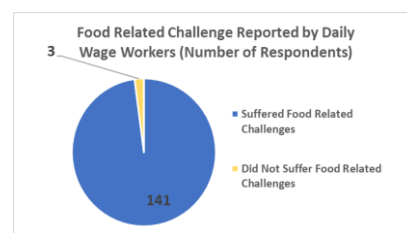
“After COVID-19, we were unable to purchase Oil, Dal & Vegetables. Prices of all goods increased. Even Transportation cost was high”.

A Farmer, Nuapada



“The biggest challenges during COVID period are money & food. So many times, we stay hungry because of the lack of food”.

A Migrant, Khodha



“Due to Pandemic, our family has lost livelihood. No daily wages due to lockdown. Hence, no money to manage our day-to-day expenses especially, food”

A Daily Wage Worker, Puri

Insights from KIIs conducted among State-level officials, District officials, Local leaders and NGOs are below:

“Before Covid-19 vulnerable people would work on field to earn a good living but after COVID-19 they are facing problems for food and money. Government support is not enough for them.”

Ward Member, 47, Male

“Dry food supply by govt through various scheme and direct money transfer to the beneficiaries is happening. However, the fresh food (milk, vegetables, fish) and daily cooking needs are being sold at higher rates due to restrictions on transportation and out of shortage of money due to lack of work, livelihood etc.”

Health Officer, 41, Male

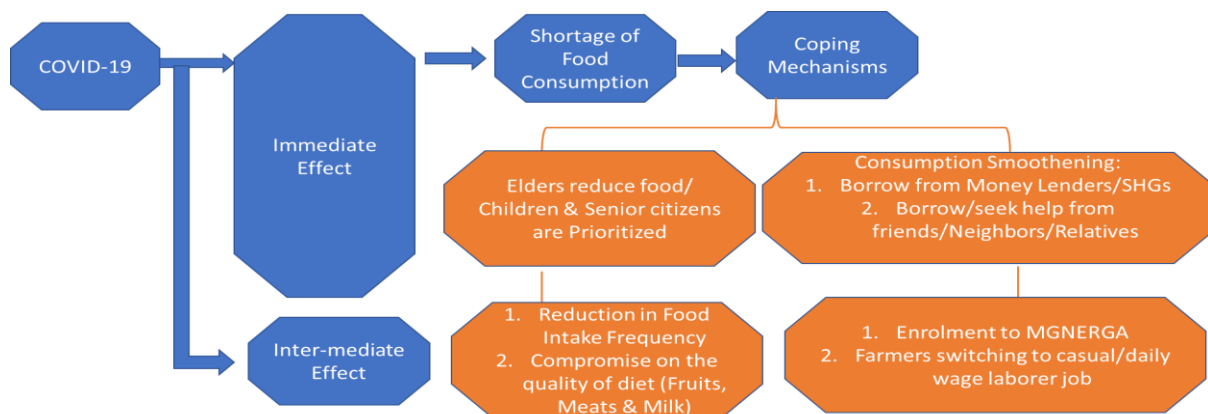
“Travel restrictions, shops are closed, medicines are not available etc. People are in hurry to get various things that is essential for human beings.”

Sarpanch, 40, Female

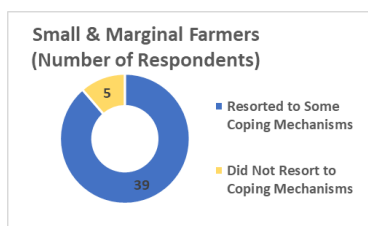
2. Coping Strategies

Families coped during pandemic in different ways. Among some of the immediate steps were by prioritizing food for children & senior citizens. Many tried to maintain their food consumption by resorting to loans from money lenders and SHGs. Some even relied upon their friends, neighbors and relatives. Many believed that even friends/relatives were stressed and therefore, their ability to help was also limited.

One of the biggest worries among all groups was about livelihood and access to some source of income. Therefore, many including farmers opted for MGNREGA jobs to receive a minimum salary.

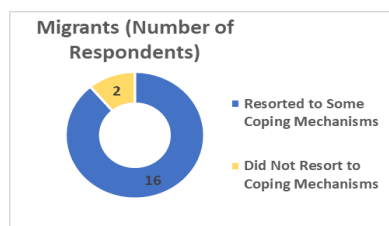


Inability to Access Food



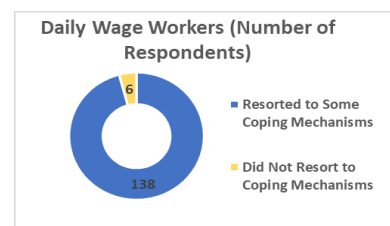
“In this lockdown situation, I had to borrow money from relatives and local money lender to purchase food for family”.

A Farmer, Sambalpur



“I am a migrant laborer. During COVID-19 and lockdown, I could not come back to my family. My wife arranged money from SHG loan for survival. We used that money for food”.

A Migrant, Ganjam



“Everyone here is worried about sufficient and reliable food during pandemic. We are not able to get such food as we lack resources. We therefore, gathered some green vegetables from the fields around the village every day.”

A Daily Wage Worker, Subarnapur

3. Family's Other Needs

Family's Basic Needs for Next 3 Months





The needs were primarily around 3 areas:

1. Food (Rations/Nutritious food/Pulses/Vegetables)
2. Livelihood Opportunities/ Cash Transfer
3. Medicines, Soap, Masks & Sanitizers

4. Challenges of Availing Government Support During COVID-19

Challenges in availing government benefits have been illustrated below:

	<p>Access to PDS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Travel restrictions & No money at hands of beneficiaries made transportation very expensive2. Miss Information/correspondence compounded the problems3. Migrants faced difficulty in getting their share4. No redressal of grievances
	<p>Nutritional Requirements not met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Critical nutritional support schemes -THR/Hot Cooked Meals through AWCs were closed2. Families were just left with PDS grains that were not nutritional enough to support the nutritional needs

According to one of the Migrants many migrants in his village are facing challenges in availing government support during Pandemic:

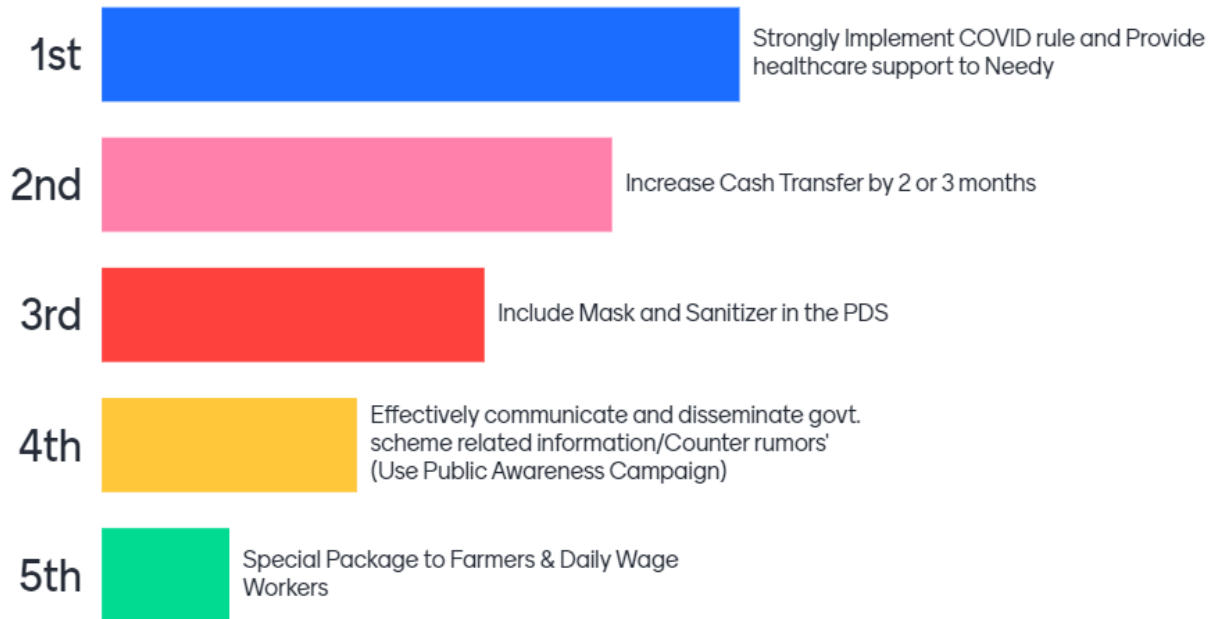
“Accessing PDS support has been a big challenge, especially for migrant people those have come from other states. Even now, Panchayat-level ration cards have not been issued to the migrant people. Even MGNREGS job card has not been issued to the migrant people still they are not involved under MGNREGS.”

“TPDS commodities are not nutritious enough to meet the immunity capacity for most vulnerable community such as elderly and sick people.”

Farmer, Puri

5. Suggestions to Improve Government Response & Relief Measures

Suggestions to improve government response and relief measures have been illustrated below:



In addition to above, the migrants have suggested support more livelihood/job opportunities and help with livelihood trainings

Insights from KIIs

“Government should continue free food distribution to BPL family. Government should arrange some work for daily wage labourers to help them earn some money and live their lives. Government should also focus on health care”.

Ward Member, 47, Male

“Door to door distribution of Aahar Yojna to every old age people, widows, disabled, single woman for the entire year/long term basis. Also, adapting the food for pregnant and lactating mothers as per local habits”.

Anganwadi worker, 37, Female



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