

# Caribbean Food Security & Livelihoods Survey

## Natural Hazards and the Cost of Living Crisis

### Antigua and Barbuda | August 2023

Successive shocks and crises over the last few years continue to reverberate on the food security and livelihoods of people in the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The pandemic and the cost of living crisis have severely affected peoples' purchasing power where more people are forced to make difficult compromises to meet their food and other essential needs. These trends are exacerbated by the ever-present threat of natural hazards in the region, which could be devastating for those already living in poverty and a tipping point for those on the margins.

To inform decision-making in the Caribbean, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the World Food Programme (WFP) launched the Caribbean Food Security and Livelihoods Survey to highlight the impact of the pandemic, the cost of living crisis and the effect of natural hazards on food security and livelihoods over time.

This report analyses data for Antigua and Barbuda from the sixth round of data collection, which took place from 10 to 28 May 2023. It compares findings with three previous survey rounds conducted between June 2020 and August 2022.

#### Main results from the Antigua and Barbuda surveys

\*Comparison with the April 2020 and February 2022 survey rounds are not included because of the low number of responses from Antigua and Barbuda.

	May 2023	Aug 2022	Feb 2021	Jun 2020	
<b>LIVELIHOODS</b>	Disrupted livelihoods	51% <span style="color:red">▲</span>	46%	56%	63%
	Reduction/loss of income	31% <span style="color:green">▼</span>	43%	64%	78%
<b>MARKETS</b>	Lack of market access	32% <span style="color:green">▼</span>	36%	24%	30%
	Change in shopping behaviour	88% <span style="color:green">▼</span>	91%	85%	85%
	Increase in food prices	99% <span style="color:green">▼</span>	98%	61%	72%
<b>FOOD SECURITY</b>	Reduced food consumption	32% <span style="color:green">▼</span>	32%	39%	38%
	Lack of food stock	29% <span style="color:green">▼</span>	27%	18%	16%



**May 2023**

**133**

Respondents

76% | 24%  
Female | Male

**Aug 2022**

**168**

Respondents

78% | 22%  
Female | Male

**Feb 2022**

\*Not included because of the low number of responses from Antigua and Barbuda.

**Feb 2021**

**111**

Respondents

71% | 29%  
Female | Male

**Jun 2020**

**166**

Respondents

77% | 23%  
Female | Male

**Apr 2020**

\*Not included because of the low number of responses from Antigua and Barbuda.



## Cost of living crisis

Antigua and Barbuda relies heavily on food imports, which make up 92 percent of all food trade (excluding fish; FAOSTAT, 2021). This means that local food prices are highly vulnerable to fluctuations in regional and global food markets. According to FAO’s Food Price Index, global food prices have decreased by 23.5 percent as of May 2023 since the all-time high in March 2022. However, food inflation continues in Antigua and Barbuda (food prices increased by 7.7 percent in May 2023 compared to 2022). This trend decreases people’s purchasing power, which is particularly a challenge for lower income families.

The majority of respondents from Antigua and Barbuda continue to report significant price increases in food, housing, health and education. However, compared to August 2022 a slightly smaller proportion noted significant increases in gas and other fuels.



## Natural hazards

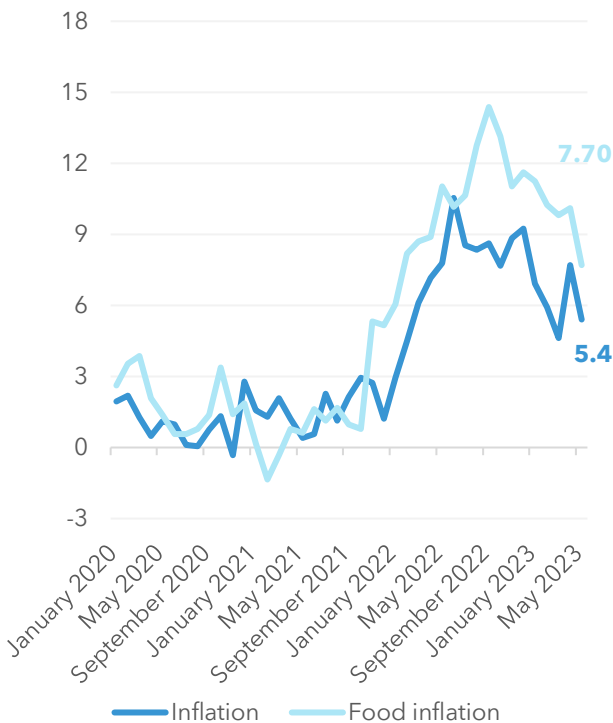
Antigua and Barbuda is exposed to natural hazards which can pose a significant threat for climate sensitive livelihood activities and people’s lives. Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) shows that there were 10 reported natural hazards in Antigua and Barbuda between 1980 - 2022. The majority of these were storms (nine out of 10), followed by drought (one).

Recorded events between 1980-2022 accumulatively affected over 127,000 people in Antigua and Barbuda, with tropical storms resulting in total adjusted damages of over US\$1.3 billion. These storm events have the propensity to cause widespread impact potentially leading to loss of life, displacement of households, and destruction to critical infrastructure.

### Inflation in Antigua & Barbuda (Jan 2020 - May 2023; %)

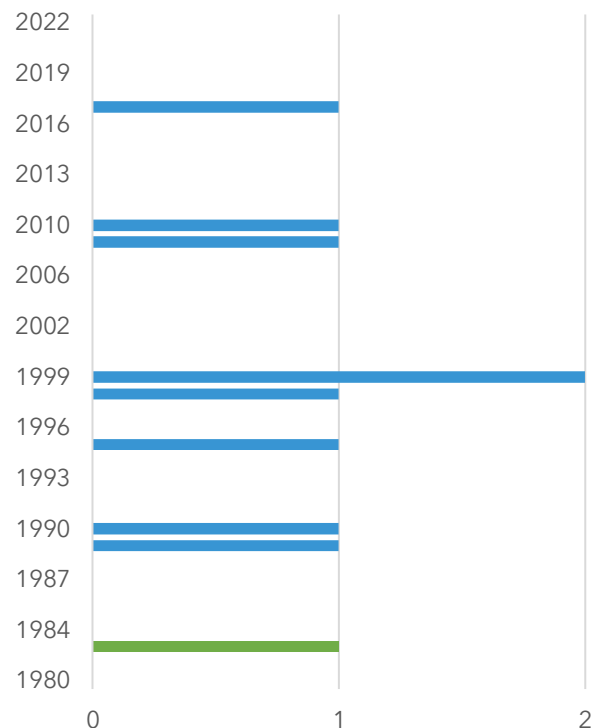
Point to point inflation.

Source: Statistical Office of Antigua and Barbuda and FAOSTAT



### Reported natural hazards in Antigua and Barbuda (1980-2022)

■ Storm ■ Drought





## Livelihoods

### The cost of living crisis continues to impact people's livelihoods in Antigua and Barbuda.

People continue to experience challenges to their livelihoods with half of respondents facing disruptions in the 30 days prior to the survey. Unaffordability of livelihood inputs remains the main driver cited by 69 percent of those affected by disruptions.

**31 percent of respondents reported that their household has experienced job loss or reduced salaries** in the six months prior to the survey. Reported loss of income and jobs has been decreasing since the all-time high in June 2020 survey of 78 percent. However, the proportion of those having to resort to secondary or alternative source of income has been steadily increasing since April 2020, suggesting the continuation of economic hardship.



## Markets

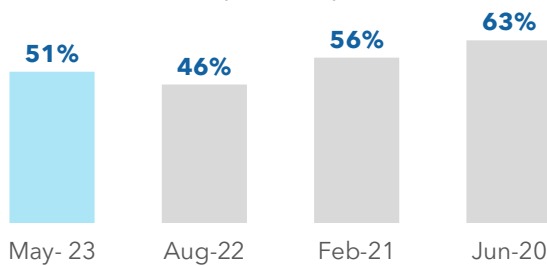
### One third of respondents reported challenges accessing markets in the week prior to the survey.

Lack of financial means continues to be overwhelmingly reported as the main reason for limited market access, cited by 95 percent of those unable to access markets. Respondents are changing their shopping behaviour by increasingly buying cheaper and less preferred foods (74 percent) and purchasing smaller quantities than usual and going to different stores (61 percent).

**Respondents continue to report increased prices in commodities, especially food.** Nearly all respondents (99 percent) reported an increase in the 3 months prior to the survey. The most significant price increases in non-food items have been observed for housing (51 percent reported a significant increase) and health (41 percent reported a significant increase).

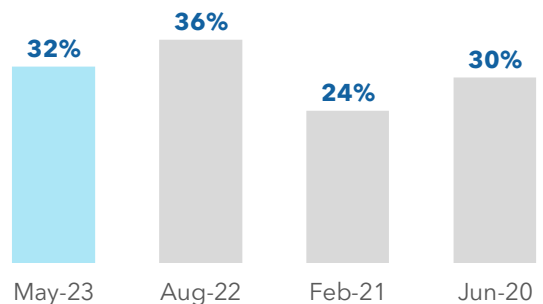
### Respondents reporting that their ability to carry out livelihood activities was affected in the 30 days prior to the survey

Recall period was changed from 2 weeks to 30 days in the May 2023 survey round.



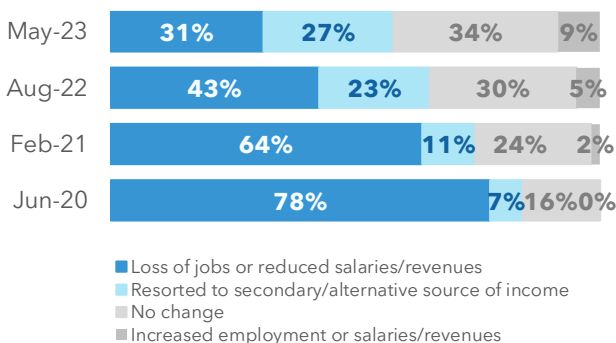
### Respondents unable to access markets in the 30 days prior to the survey

Recall period was changed from 7 to 30 days in May 2023.

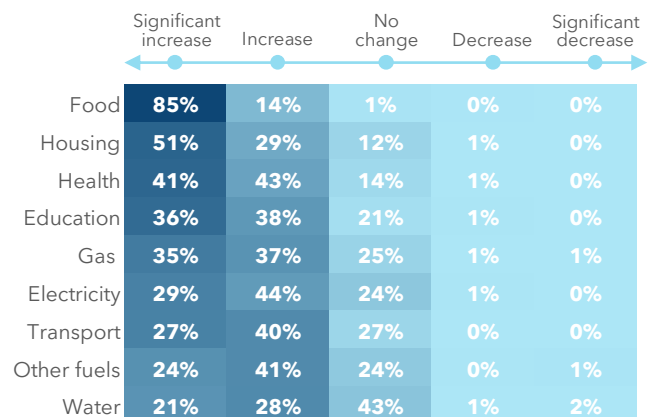


### Has your household income changed in the 6 months prior to the survey?

Recall period changed from "since Covid-" to "in the 6 months prior to the survey" in May 2023 survey round.



### Respondents reporting a change in the costs of the commodities in the 3 months prior to the survey





## Food consumption

**Food consumption patterns continue to be a concern**, with 72 percent of respondents skipping meals, eating less preferred foods, or going an entire day without eating in the seven days prior to the survey. These results are similar to August 2022 (70 percent).

**Many respondents are employing negative coping strategies to meet their food needs.** Respondents may be compromising their future livelihoods by selling productive assets (24 percent), spending savings (74 percent) or reducing expenditures on health and education (49 percent).

**In May 2023, 29 percent of respondents reported that their household had no food stock at home**, while 32 percent reported having less than a week's worth of food supplies. This is very similar to the results from August 2022.

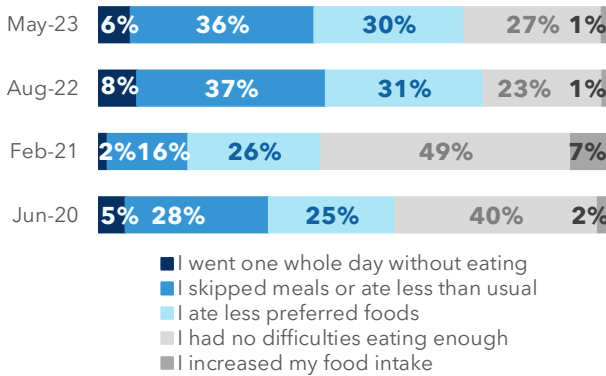


## Food insecurity

**Using the FIES methodology it is estimated that 46 percent of the respondents in Antigua and Barbuda are food insecure.** Out of these, 12 percent are estimated to be severely and 34 percent moderately food insecure. When compared to the previous survey rounds, food security has slightly improved. The prevalence of severe food insecurity is lower in Antigua and Barbuda compared to the Caribbean average.

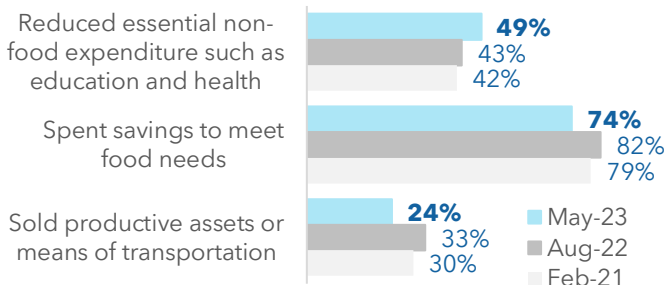
The negative experience most often reported by respondents was "eating only a few kinds of foods" (64 percent), followed by being "unable to eat healthy and nutritious food" (52 percent). Alarming, 13 percent of respondents went a whole day without eating in the 30 days prior to the survey. The poorest respondents appear to be the most affected across all individual negative food-related experiences.

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



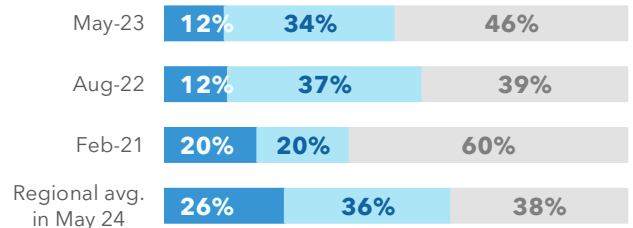
### Households' coping strategies

Multiple choices could be selected. New answer option added in May 2023 - "already carried out and cannot continue to do so" in addition to "yes", both are interpreted as if the strategy has been carried out.



### Prevalence rates of food insecurity in Antigua and Barbuda

Based on FIES methodology.



"Eat less and try to find substitute food and supermarket to use" - Female, 26

"Cost of living is on the increase.. governments can do a lot better in lowering or removing the taxes on food items" - Male, 51

"I am broke... everything is so expensive... sometimes I cut out lettuce or broccoli or whatever is too expensive at the time" - Female, 40



## Resilience capacity

**A range of natural hazards have affected almost half of respondents in Antigua and Barbuda over the 12 months prior to the survey.** The main reported hazards were heatwaves (38 percent) and droughts (23 percent). Of respondents affected by natural hazards over the last year, 44 percent reported moderate and eight percent reported severe impacts on their livelihoods or income.

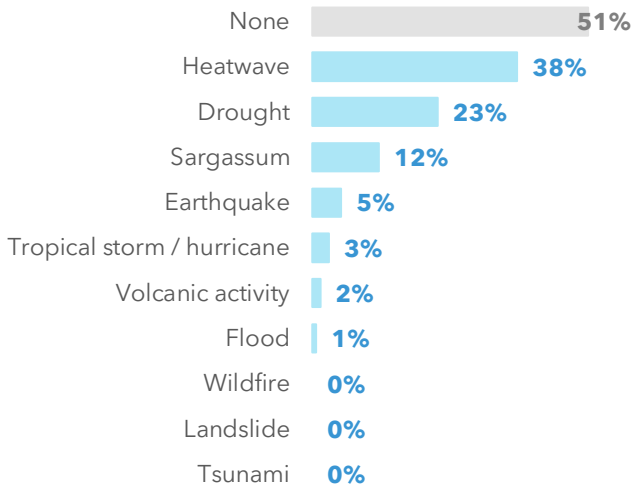
**The Resilience Capacity Score (RCS) indicator was used to measure respondents' perceptions of their resilience to natural hazards.** The method uses nine statements and respondents rate their level of agreement with each, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These generate a score that acts as a marker of overall subjective resilience.

**Based on the RCS, 24 percent of respondents have low capacity to cope with, recover from and adapt to natural hazards.** Only 6 percent of respondents are highly resilient, while 70 percent of the respondents have medium resilience capacity. Women, lower income groups and younger respondents appear to have the lowest overall resilience capacity.

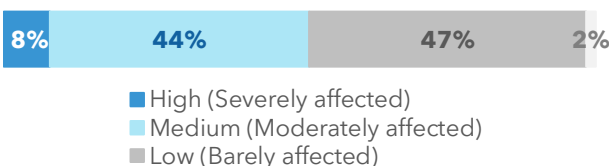
**Out of the nine resilience characteristics, respondents scored the worst on the financial (i.e. access to financial support) and institutional capital (i.e. support from government or other institutions).** On the other hand, respondents feel that they are better equipped with human capital, in that they learned lessons from past hardships, and information capital by having access to early warning information to deal with natural disasters.

### Natural hazards that affected respondents in the 12 months prior to the survey

Multiple choices could be selected.

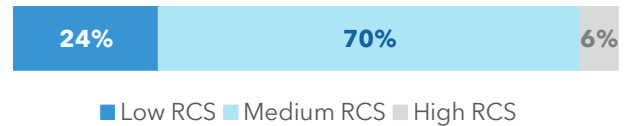


### Level of impact on livelihoods or income for respondents that were affected by natural hazard(s)



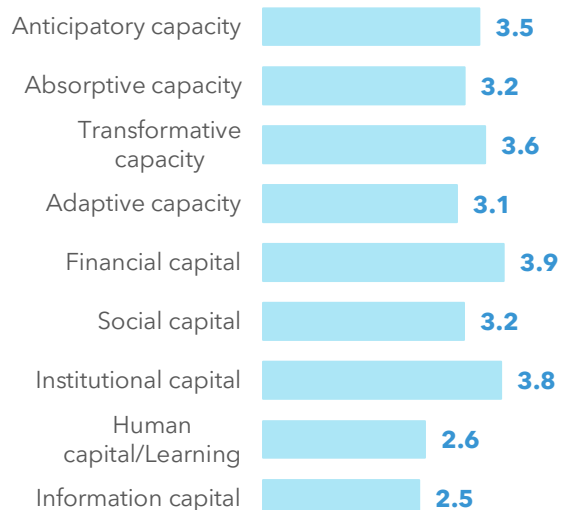
### Overall resilience capacity

Resilience capacity score (RCS)



### Average score for the nine resilience capacity characteristics

Scores range from 1 (high resilience capacity) to 5 (low resilience capacity). Higher score means lower resilience capacity.





## Worries and sentiments

**Inability to meet essential needs (50 percent) and worries about illness (41 percent) are the main concerns among respondents in Antigua and Barbuda**, followed by decreasing savings (34 percent), unemployment (32 percent) and inability to cover food needs (26 percent).

**Eleven percent of respondents reported receiving government assistance** in the year prior to the survey. This is more than reported in August 2022 (4 percent).

**Over half of respondents expressed negative or very negative sentiments.** Respondents were given the space to provide more nuanced insights on how they are coping and adapting. Out of the 133 respondents in Antigua and Barbuda, 34 responded to the open-ended question. Responses were analysed with Chat GPT to categorize and determine the degree of positive and negative emotions.

### Main worries expressed by respondents

Multiple choices could be selected. Answer options were adjusted in May 2023, adding new options and removing Covid-19 related options that are now displayed as "Other worries".

	May-23	Aug-22	Feb-21	Jun-20
Inability to cover essential needs	50%	51%	37%	40%
Illness	41%	26%	65%	59%
Decreasing savings	34%	34%	14%	15%
Unemployment / Income loss	32%	35%	49%	58%
Inability to cover food needs	26%	43%	25%	30%
Violence/crime in the community	18%	17%	5%	5%
Natural hazards	16%			
Inability to receive or repay loans	13%			
Child/dependent care	8%	17%	14%	13%
Inadequate infrastructure	6%			
Inadequate housing	6%			
Disruption of public services (edu., health)	3%	9%	13%	10%
Other worries	0%	13%	30%	0%
Violence/abuse in the household	0%	0%	0%	1%
No access to services due to migration status	0%	2%	3%	2%



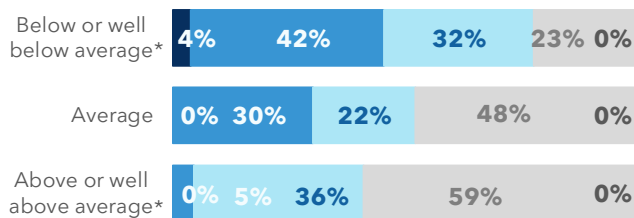
## Main differences

**Differences in results among respondents appear to be most pronounced when comparing income levels.** Households that reported below or well below average incomes indicate the poorest results on all key metrics of well-being and are at risk of further falling behind economically. Correspondingly, those relying on informal labour or assistance also performed worse.

The results suggest that women may be facing greater challenges compared to men. Younger respondents also appear to be experiencing greater challenges across majority of metrics. Respondents that are single parents or are living in mixed households were also performing worse. While the above findings should be treated with caution due to the low number of respondents, these are in line with regional survey trends.

### Which statement best reflects your food situation over the past 7 days? By perceived income level

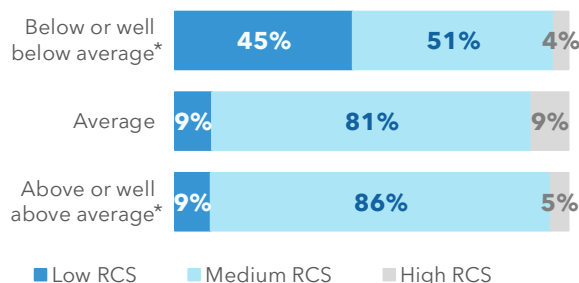
\*Low response numbers in this category may affect results.



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

### Overall resilience capacity By perceived income level

\*Low response numbers in this category may affect results.









#### INTERACTIVE DASHBOARD

The dashboard contains additional country-level data and analysis beyond the present report on the Food Security and Livelihoods Survey. It may take a second to load. Scan the QR code to access it or follow this link:

<https://analytics.wfp.org/t/Public/views/CaribbeanFoodSecurityLivelihoodsSurvey/Overview>

#### CARICOM

##### Caribbean Community Secretariat

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Website: [www.caricom.org](http://www.caricom.org)

#### World Food Programme

##### Caribbean Multi-Country Office

UN House, Marine Gardens

Christ Church, Barbados

Website: [www.wfp.org/countries/caribbean](http://www.wfp.org/countries/caribbean)

Email: [wfp.caribbean@wfp.org](mailto:wfp.caribbean@wfp.org)



#### REPORTS

The website contains links to all current and past regional and country reports on the Food Security and Livelihoods Survey. Scan the QR code to access it or follow this link:

<https://www.wfp.org/publications/caribbean-covid-19-food-security-and-livelihoods-impact-survey>