

Using Evidence to Inform Social Policy in the Philippines in the Time of COVID-19

Results from the RECOVR Survey

September 1, 2020



Today's Panelists



Nassreena Sampaco-Baddiri
Country Director,
Philippines
Innovations for
Poverty Action



Dr. Elliott Collins
Director for
Poverty
Measurement,
Innovations for
Poverty Action



Mariel Bayangos
Division Chief,
Planning Service -
Policy Research
and Development
Division,
Department of
Education



Dr. Aniceto Orbeta, Senior
Research Fellow,
Philippine
Institute for
Development
Studies



Peter Srouji,
Senior Research
Manager,
Philippines,
Innovations for
Poverty Action



Raquel Celeste
Statistician III,
Policy
Development and
Planning Bureau -
Research &
Evaluation Division,
Department of
Social Welfare and
Development



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POVERTY ACTION

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lives**



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—Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel



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in our network



850+ Evaluations to date
in 51 countries



17 Years of generating
evidence and moving
evidence to policy

IPA's Research for Effective COVID-19 Responses (RECOVR)



Rapid response surveys to answer critical policy questions (9 countries)



A global hub that centralizes research and policy lessons



A portfolio of IPA studies to generate rigorous evidence (80+ studies)



Advising 15+ governments on evidence-based approaches



Research-on-Research to strengthen the quality of remote data collection

Survey Information

Dates of survey: 18 June - 1 July

Sampling method: Random Digit Dialing of a nationally representative sample of registered phone numbers with service coverage in the TNT network

Sample size: 1389 respondents out of 8378 call attempts

Average Respondent Demographics: RECOVR vs. 2015 Census



Younger
(32 vs. 52 y.o.)

More Female
(70% vs. 49%)

More Educated
(52% vs. 25%)

More Urban (NCR)
(19% vs. 13%)



**Comparable
Household
Size**
(4.8 vs. 4.6)

RECOVR Survey: Key Takeaways



64% of employed individuals have spent fewer hours working for pay/running a business/helping on a family business than they did in a typical week before the government closed schools



89% of households have received support from the government in response to COVID-19. Of those that are receiving support, 97% are receiving food and 45% are receiving cash



26% of respondents say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times more than once in the past week



Respondents cited lack of access to internet, devices, and learning materials as major barriers children will face if schools do not open in August and instead offer distance learning

Philippines RECOVR: Survey and Policy Timeline

Feb 3 Feb 17 Mar 2 Mar 16 Mar 30 Apr 13 Apr 27 May 11 May 25 Jun 8 Jun 22 Jul 6



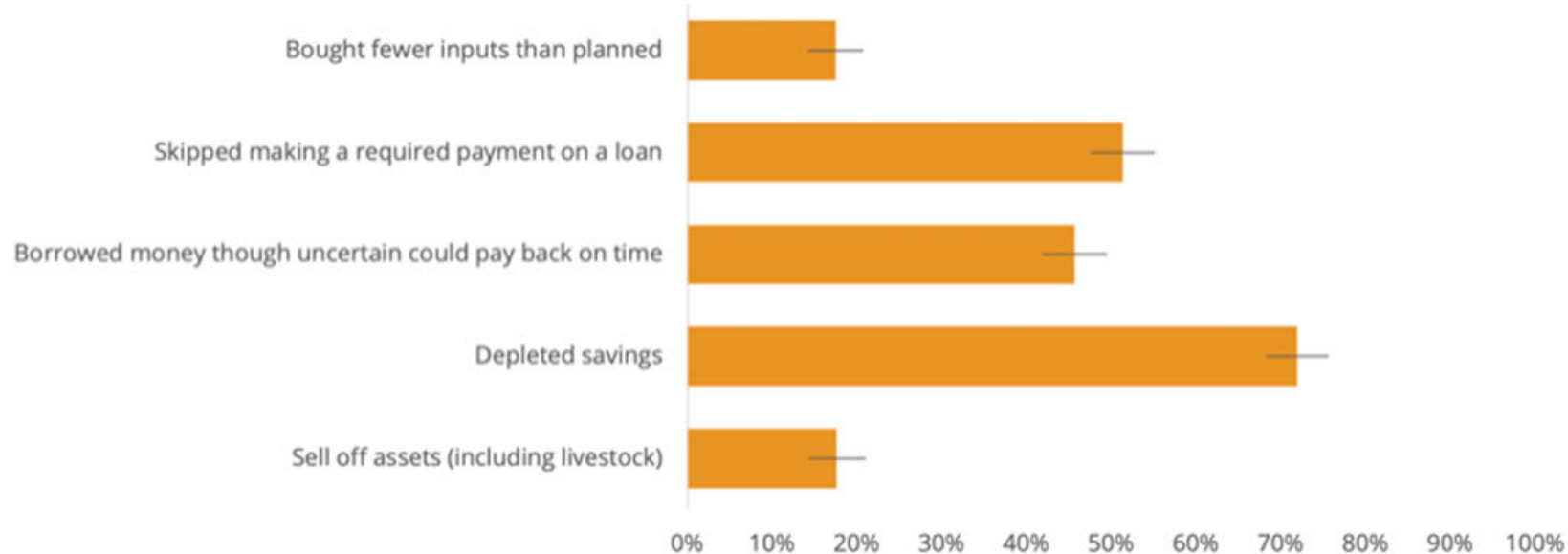
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Social Protection & Financial Resilience

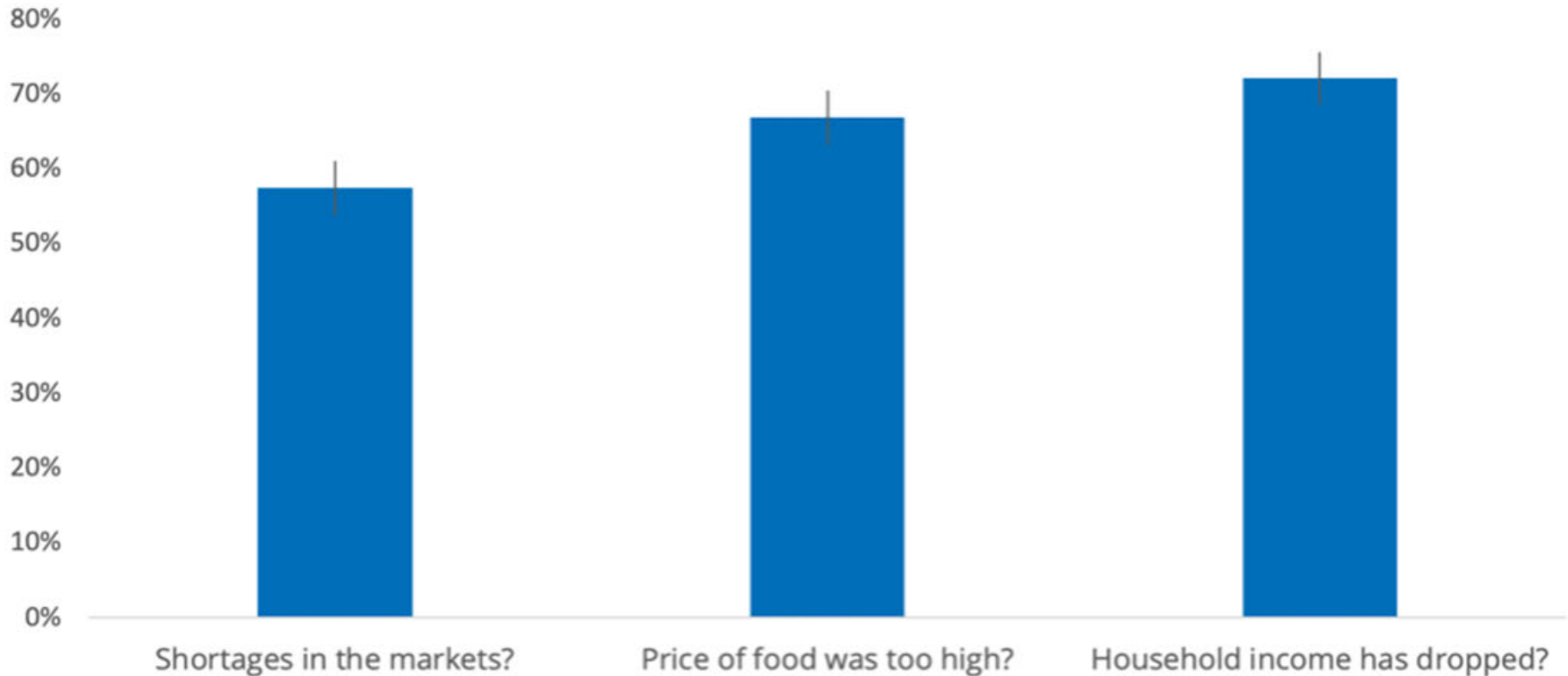
Government cash transfer program in response to COVID-19

- The government rolled out the **Social Amelioration Program (SAP)**, an emergency subsidy program providing cash assistance to low-income families
 - Phase 1: April- May
 - Phase 2: July- August
 - Rollout of digital cash transfers
- Target beneficiaries: conditional cash transfer beneficiaries (4Ps), informal sector workers, PWDs, solo parents, senior citizens, pregnant women, overseas Filipino workers in distress, Indigent Indigenous Peoples, other members of vulnerable sectors

70% of respondents say they have had to deplete savings to pay for food, healthcare, and other expenses since February 2020

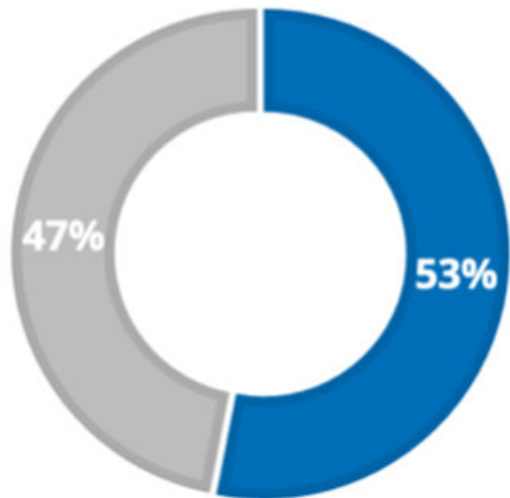


Over 70% of respondents say they have had difficulty buying the amount of food they usually buy because household income has dropped

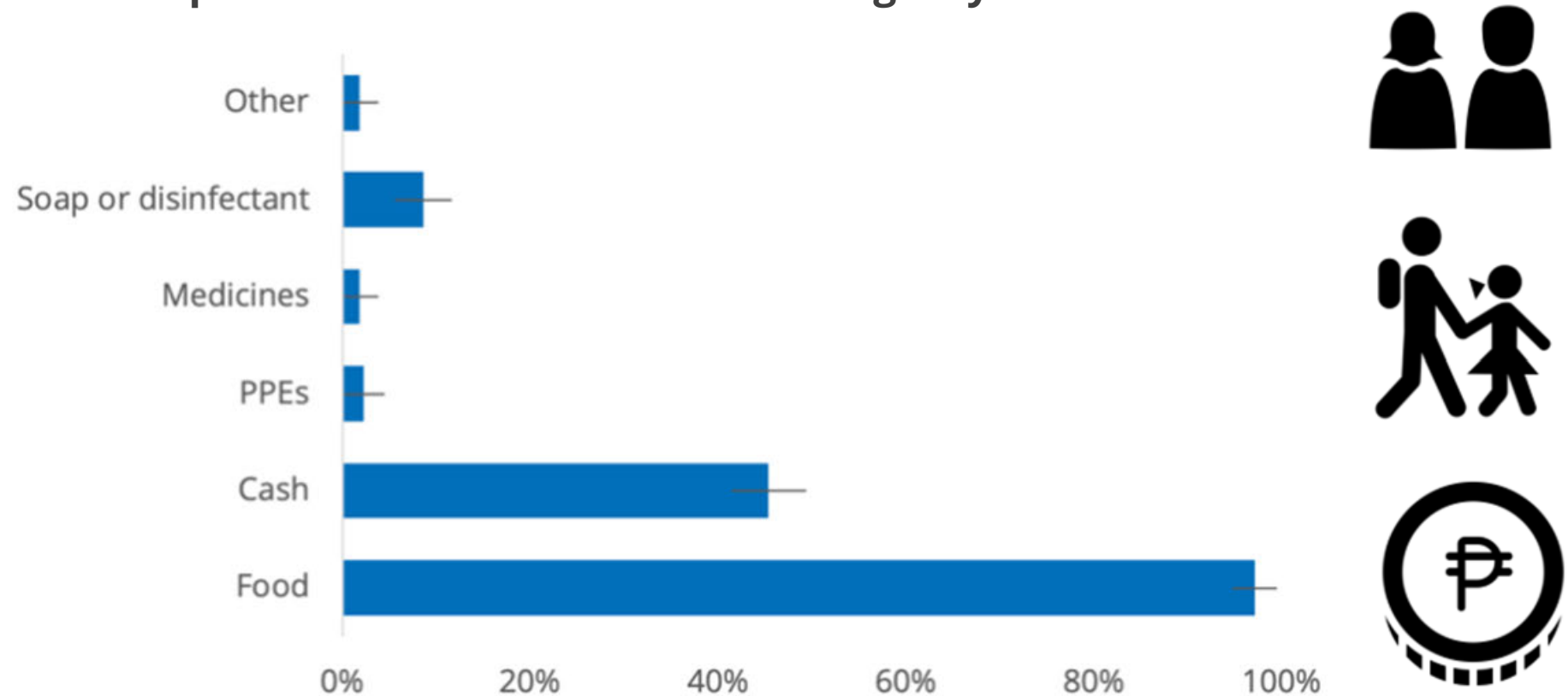


More than 50% of respondents say they have access to an account where they can make and receive payments

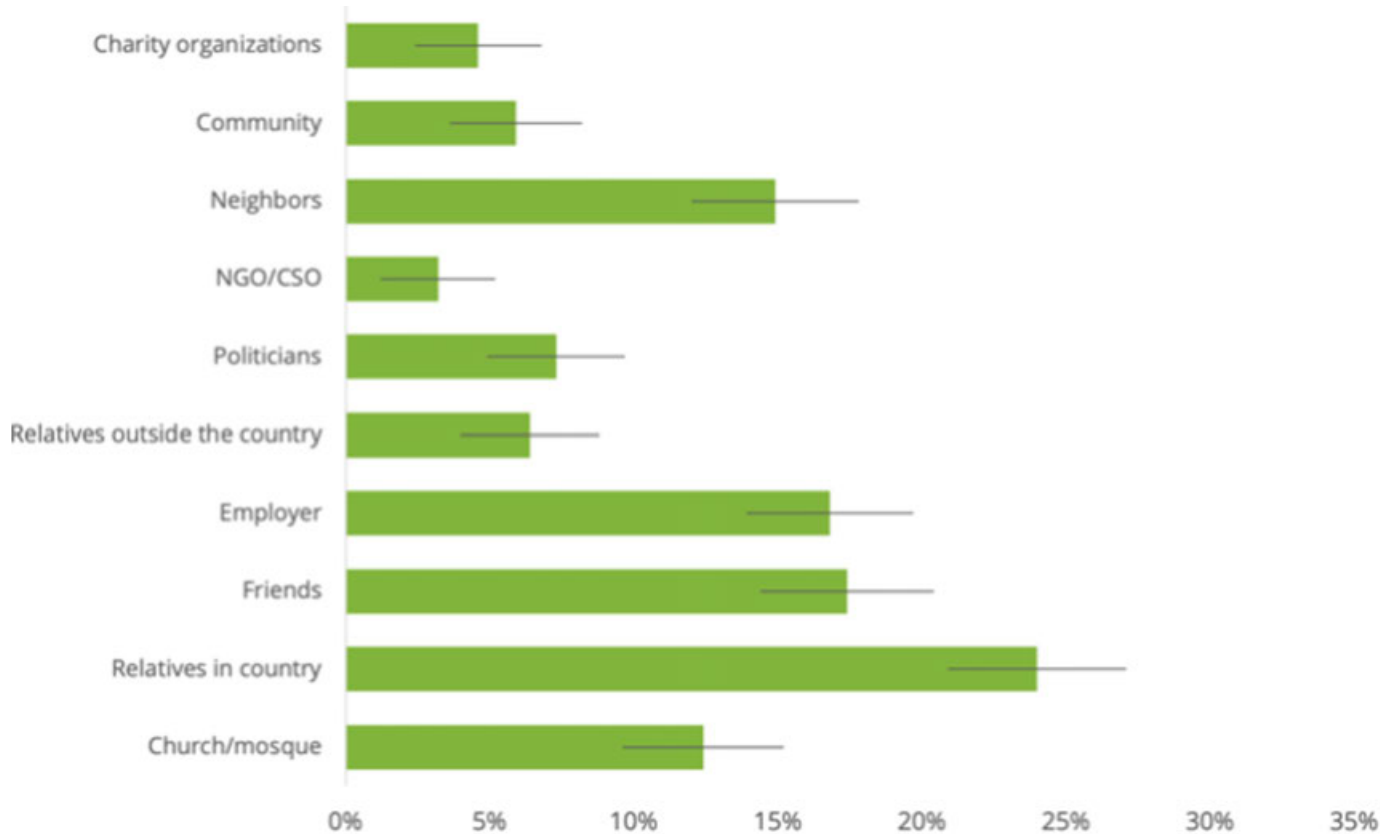
■ Has Account ■ Does not have account



89% of households have received support from the government in response to COVID-19 in the following ways



33% of households have received non-governmental support in response to COVID-19 from the following sources



Policy Implications: Social Protection & Financial Resilience



89% of households have received government support in response to COVID-19, mostly in the form of food and cash assistance. However, more than half of the respondents say they have had to deplete their savings to pay for food, healthcare, or other expenses, and have had difficulty in buying their usual amount of food.

How can we make sure households have the resources they need for a potentially prolonged period?



Poorer respondents are more likely than wealthier respondents to report having to borrow money pay for food, healthcare, or other expenses since February 2020. **Are we adequately providing support to those who need it most?**



Poorer respondents are less likely to have access to a bank or mobile money account to receive or make payments. **How can government partners increase usage of bank or mobile money accounts among the poor to provide immediate economic relief?**

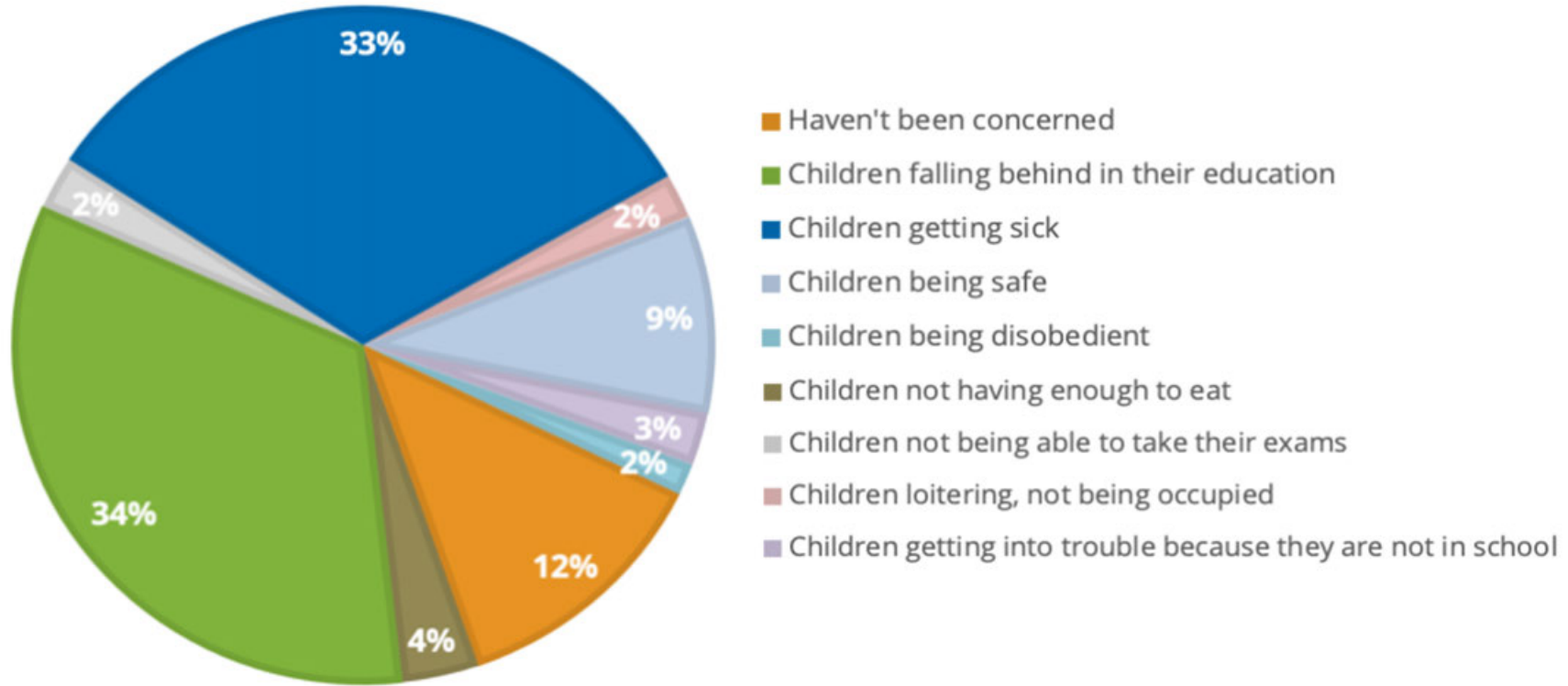
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Education

Key education policies for the continuity of learning

- DepEd issued the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for SY 2020-2021
- BE-LCP outlines the guidelines for the adoption of distance learning modalities:
 - modular distance learning, online distance learning, TV and radio-based instruction
- Opening of classes in basic education public schools was initially set in August but now moved to October
- No face to face (F2F) classes until COVID-19 vaccine is available but may allow limited F2F classes by Jan 2021 in low-risk areas
- Enrollment in basic education was held from June 1 to July 15, but late enrollment allowed until last week of Sept 2020

Respondents say their main concerns regarding children in their household are children falling behind in their education (34%) and children getting sick (33%)

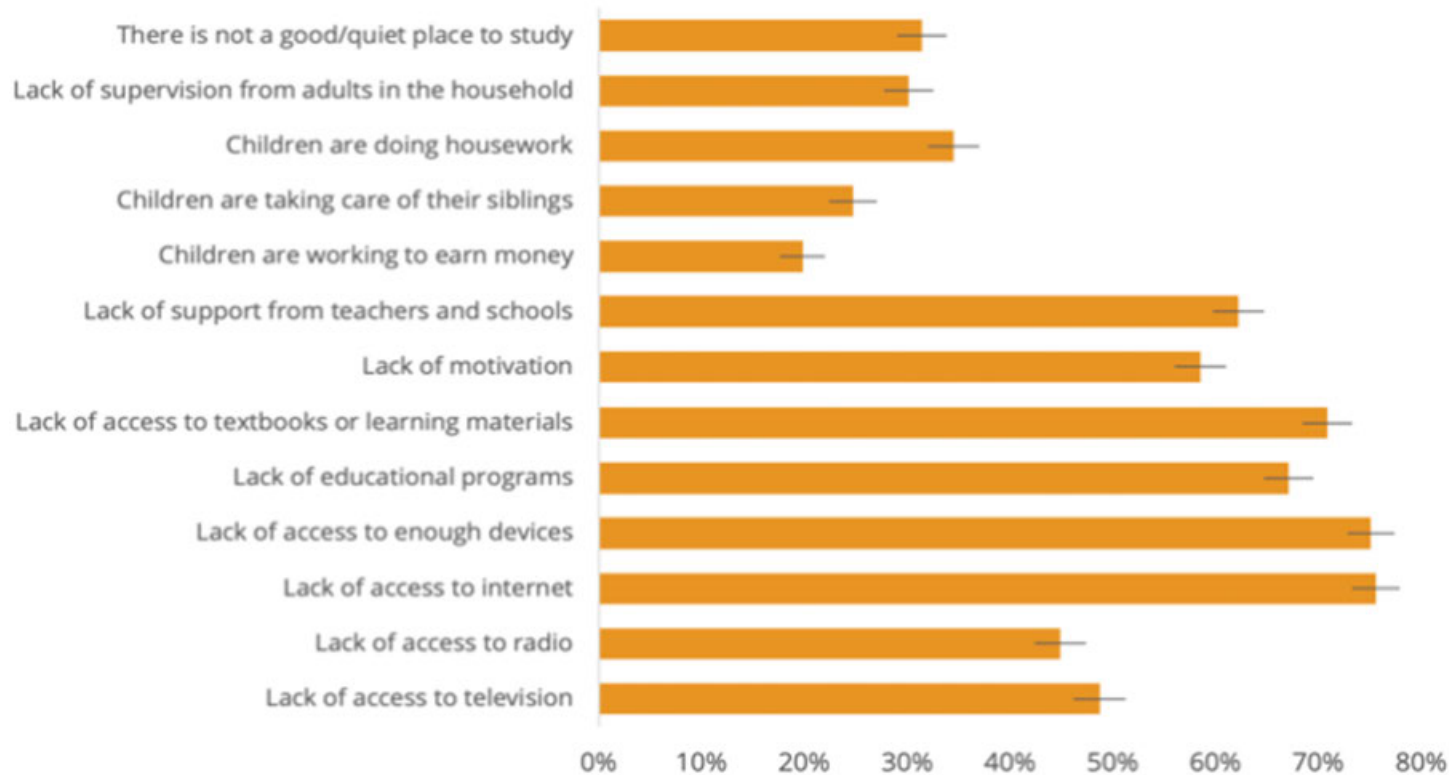


School reopenings present difficult decisions for parents

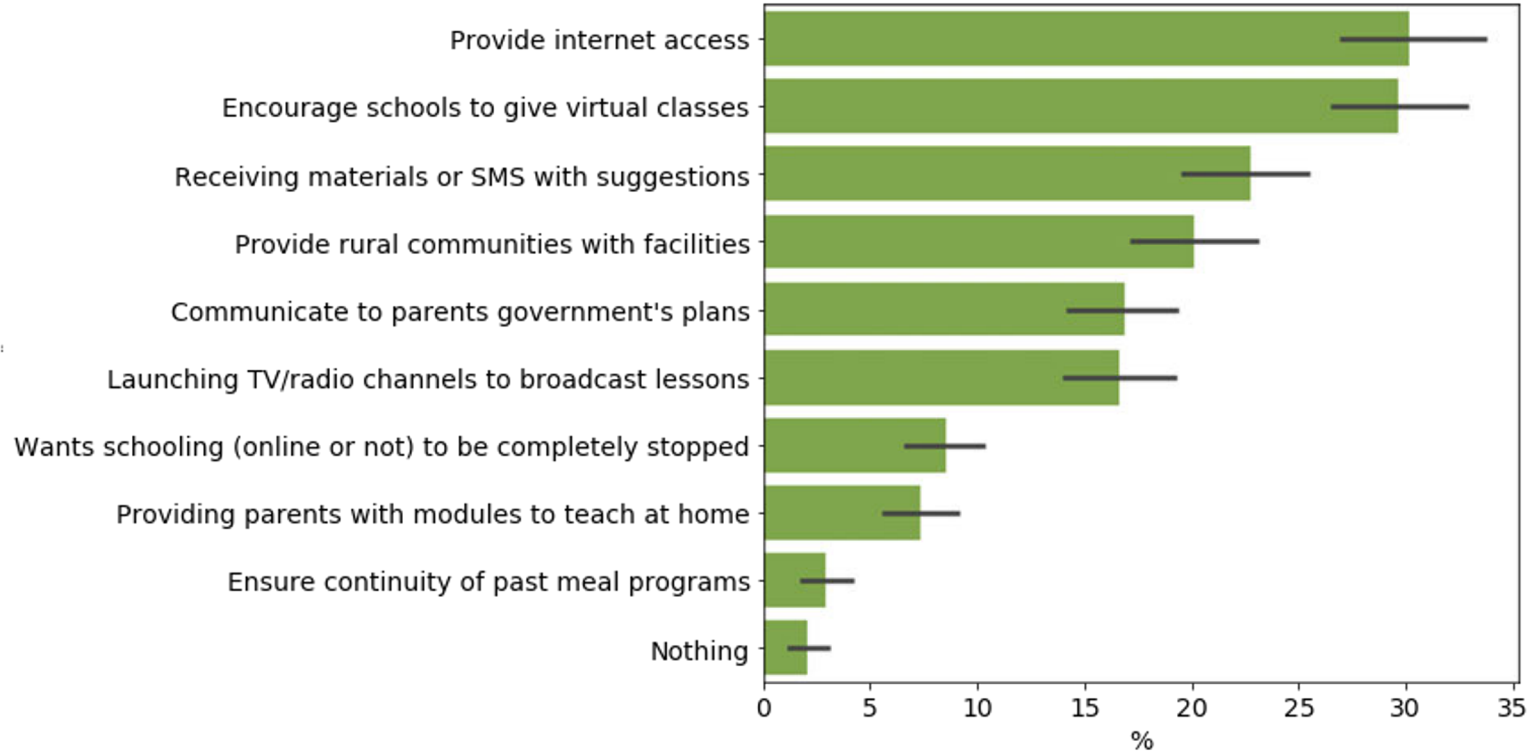


- While 60% of respondents indicated that their children have already enrolled in basic education, 20% indicated that their children would NOT enroll in school if they are reopened in August.
- Of those who would not enroll their children, 88% cited concerns over school safety

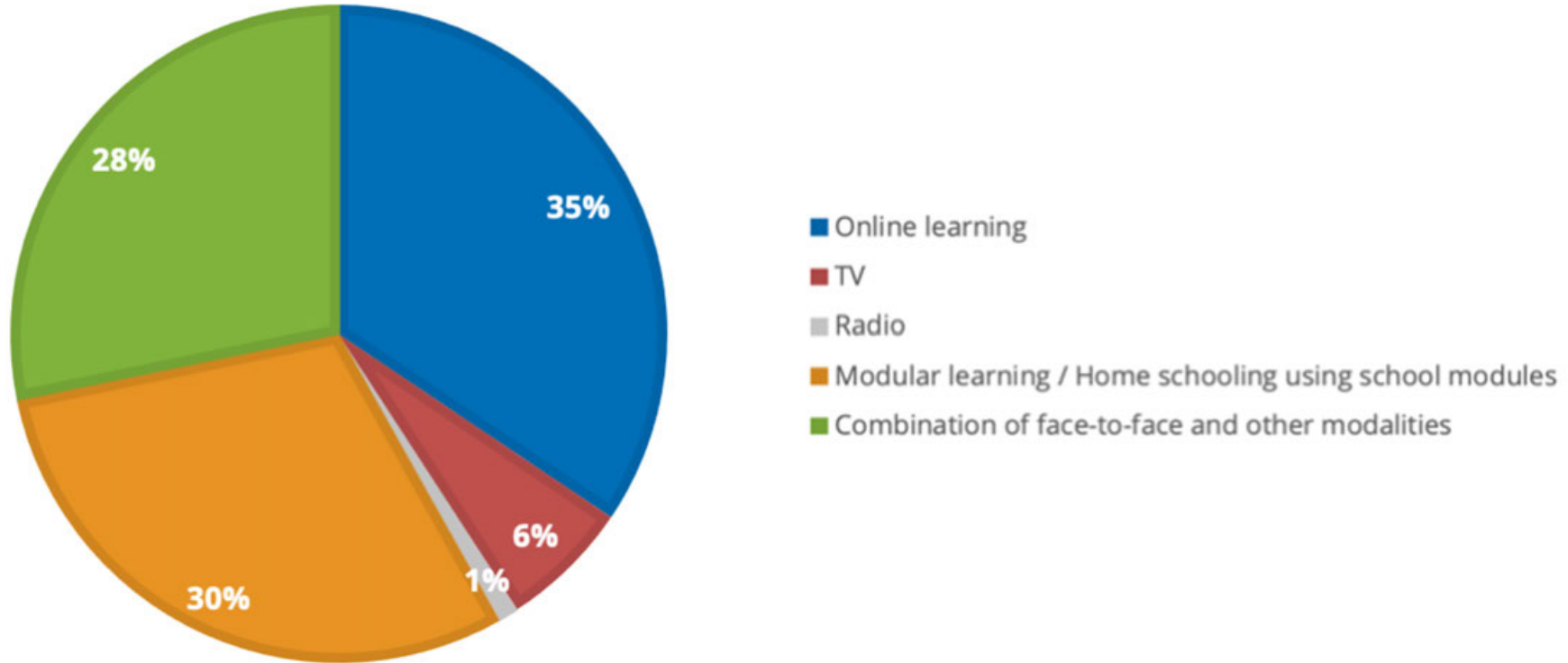
Respondents cite lack of access to internet, devices, and learning materials as barriers children will face if schools do not reopen and instead offer distance learning



Most respondents indicate that the Department of Education can help with internet access & virtual classes to support children



Respondents prefer online learning and homeschooling using school modules as their preferred distance learning modalities for their children



Policy Implications: Education




Respondents are most concerned about children falling behind education. **How can we make sure that children do not fall behind education? How can we assist parents/guardians to support their child's learning at home?**



Respondents prefer their children to take online classes but they cited lack of access to internet and devices as major challenges when schools resume in October. **How can we help learners be engaged in distance learning?**



Households with school-age children experience difficulties in accessing food, and paying for food, healthcare, and other expenses. **How can government partners provide adequate support to address other financial constraints experienced by families with basic education learners?**

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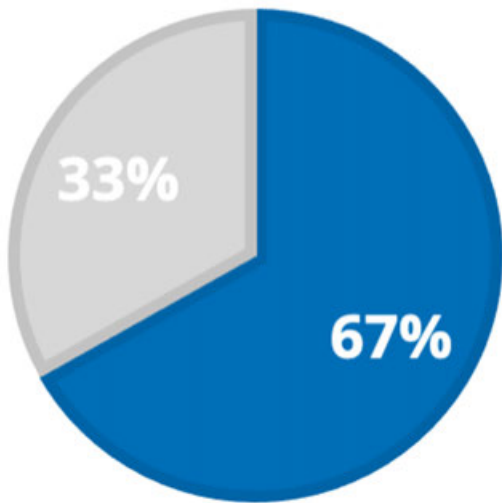
Economic Activity & Employment

Key policies to support workers affected by COVID-19

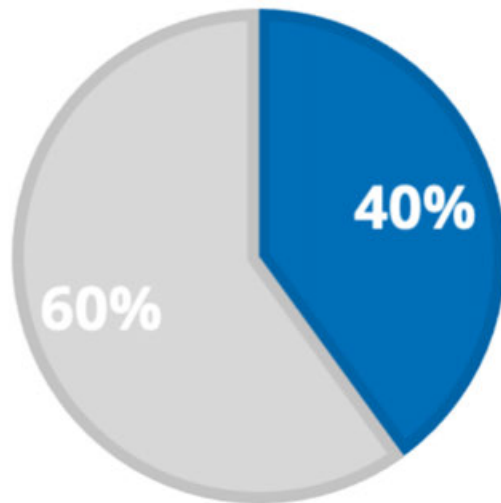
- DOLE issued guidelines on flexible work arrangements to mitigate risk of termination of services or total closure of establishments (Labor Advisory No. 09-20, 4 March)
- Government approved wage subsidy package for small business workers affected by the lockdown (Small Business Wage Subsidy program, 15 April)
- DTI and DOLE issued interim guidelines for institutions operating during quarantine period (30 April)
- DOTr issued protocols for resumption of public transport operations at reduced capacity (30 April)
- DTI released guidelines on operations of certain establishments according to community quarantine status (DTI MC No. 20-22, 5 May)

67% of respondents worked at least one hour during February 2020, but only 40% worked at all last week

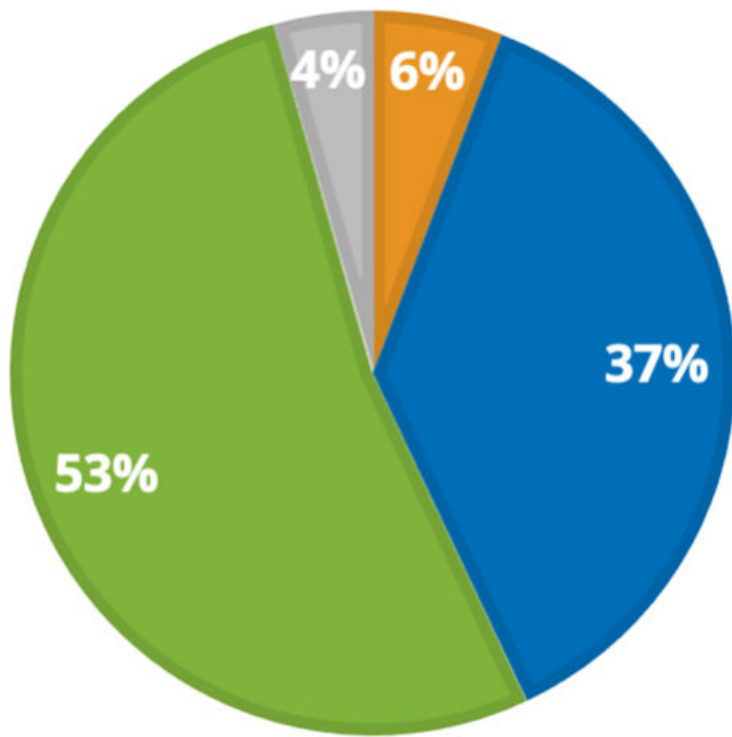
■ Worked in Feb ■ Did not work in Feb



■ Worked last week ■ Did not work last week

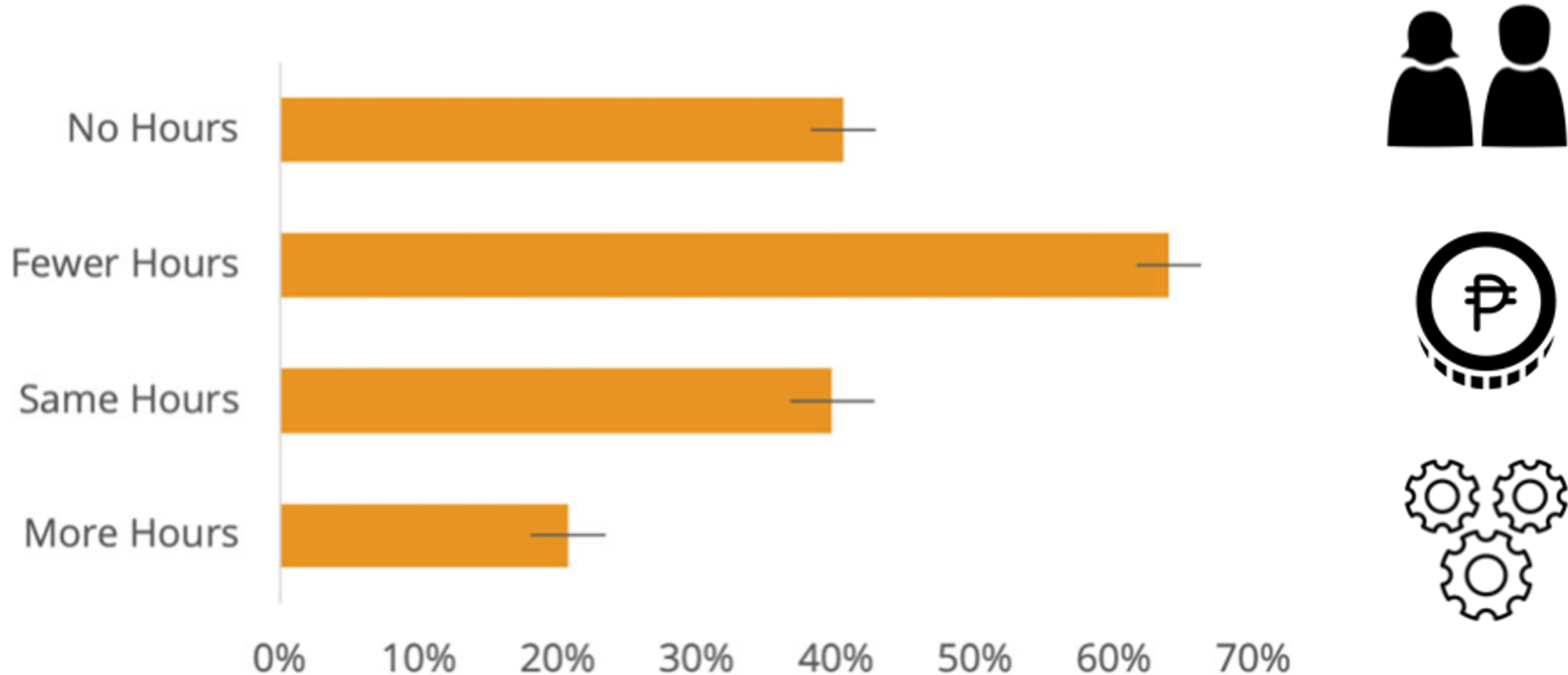


Of those still working, over 50% of respondents reported decreased earnings

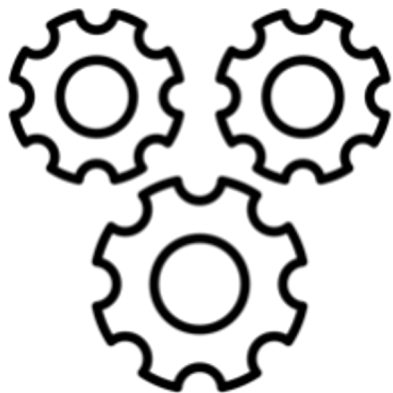


■ Earnings Increased ■ Earnings Unchanged ■ Earnings Decreased ■ Did not answer

64% of employed individuals have spent fewer hours working than they did in a typical week before COVID-19 started to affect the Philippines



Respondents in all sectors were similarly likely to have worked February 2020, while respondents working in agriculture were more likely to have worked in the week prior



Of those still working, respondents working in manufacturing and retail were slightly more likely to report decreased earnings

Respondents in services and manufacturing & retail were more likely to have spent fewer hours working than in a typical week before COVID-19 started to affect the Philippines

Policy Implications: Economic Activity & Employment



The government has created the Small Business Wage Subsidy program to provide support to small business workers affected by the pandemic. **Is the program adequately providing support to those who need it most?**



41% of those who had work last February reported that they did not work in the past week from the time of the survey. More than half (58%) cited their business being closed as the reason. **How can government help people who have lost their jobs and employers that closed business operations?**

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