Informing Policy on COVID-19 with Rapid Data in Sierra Leone and Liberia

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Today's Panelists

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ipa
INNOVATIONS FOR
POVERTY ACTION

Using rigorous
research to reduce
poverty & improve
lives

THE SVERIGES RIKSBANK PRIZE
IN ECONOMIC SCIENCES IN MEMORY
OF ALFRED NOBEL 2019

Illustrations: Niklas Elmehed

Abhijit
Banerjee

Esther
Duflo

Michael
Kremer

"for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty"

THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

A Nobel Prize-Winning Approach

More than just RCTs: A Nobel Prize-Winning Approach

1: Create Stronger Evidence

To deepen knowledge on how
to reduce poverty

2: Share Evidence Strategically

To influence conversations
& inform decisions

3: Equip Decision-Makers to Use Evidence

To improve the lives of the
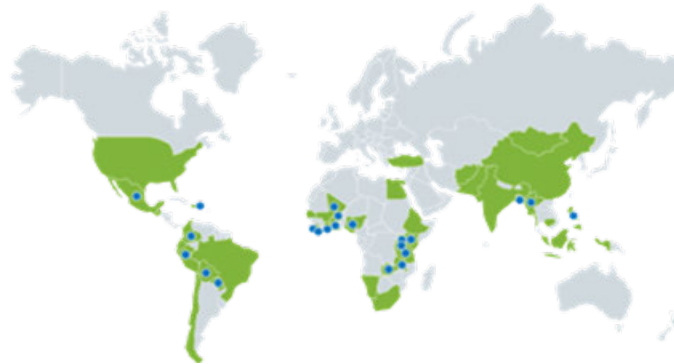global poor

IPA at a Glance

22 Country Offices

Agriculture   Education   Financial Inclusion   Governance

Health   Peace & Recovery   Small & Medium Enterprises   Social Protection

8 Program Areas

700+ Partners

600+ Researchers 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 (8+ 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

Sierra Leone RECOVR: Survey and Policy Timeline

Average Respondent Demographics: RECOVR Sierra Leone

Age
32.5 Years Old

Gender
65% Male

Under Poverty Line
24% (Using PPI)

Education Level
22% completed more than secondary school

Average Household Size
5.6 people
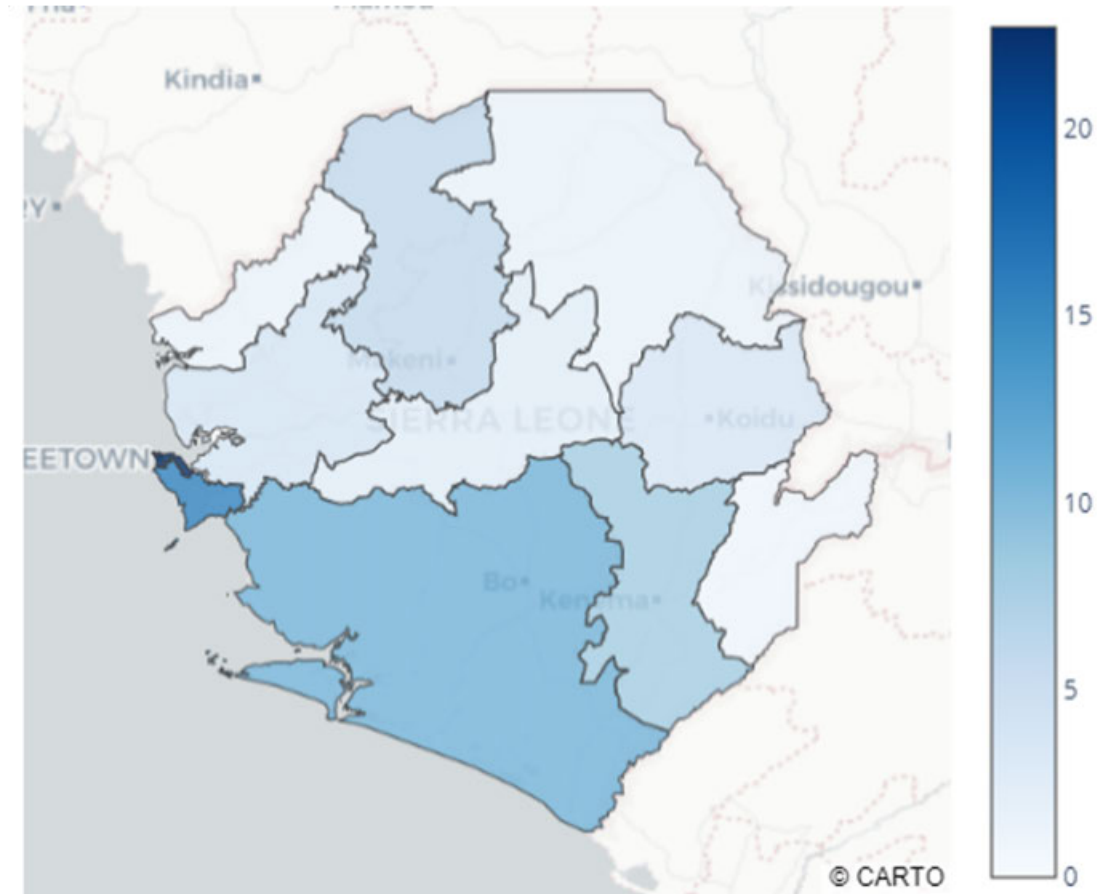
RECOVR Survey: Key Takeaways

Health: 10% of respondents reported on nascent mental health symptoms

Employment: 45% of employed earned less

Financial Security: 60% needed to deplete savings to pay for food

Food Security: 2 out of 5 had to reduce portion sizes or number of meals

Education: 63%'s main concern for children was them falling behind in education

Health & COVID-19 Mitigation

80% of respondents do not feel at risk of contracting COVID-19, mainly due to following preventative measures

1 in 10 respondents have developed mental health symptoms since COVID-19 reached Sierra Leone
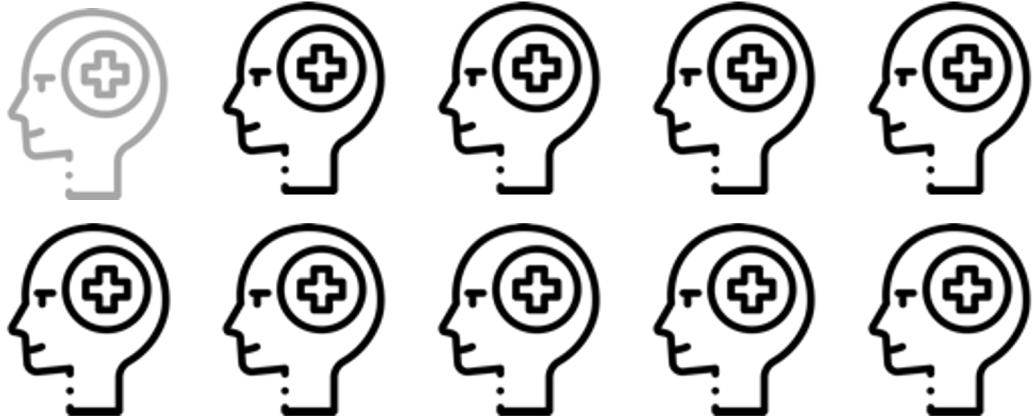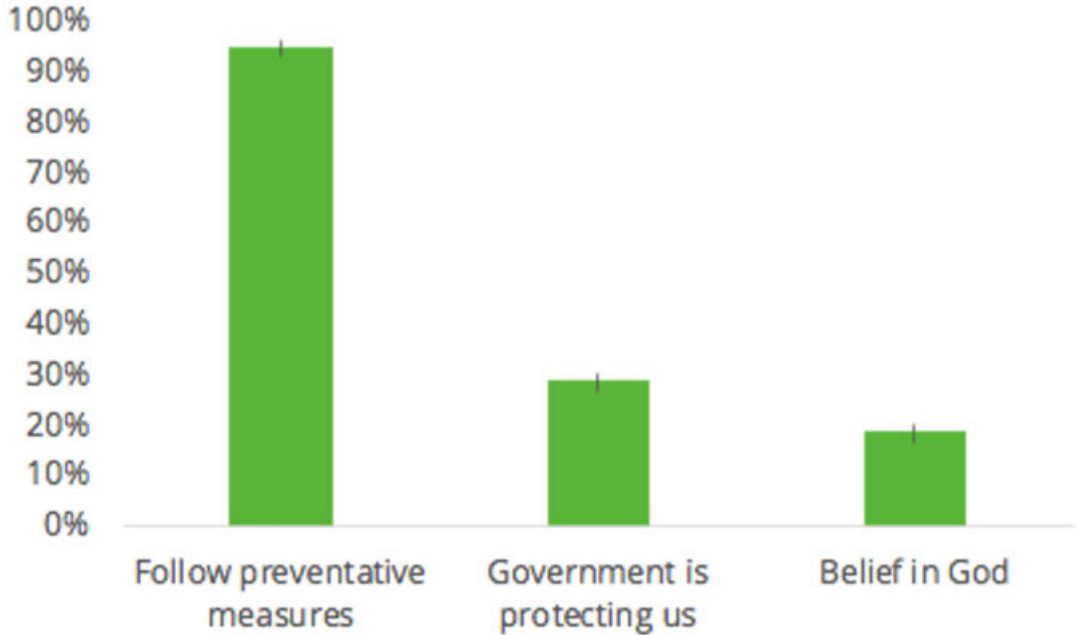
Respondents report accessing healthcare and sanitation services

70% have access to a Veronica bucket in their home/compound
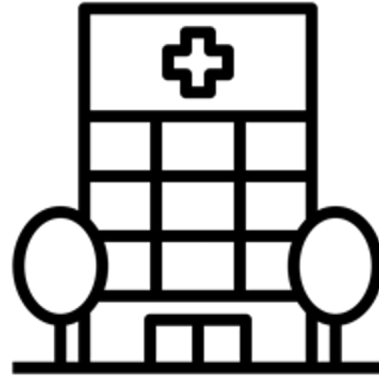
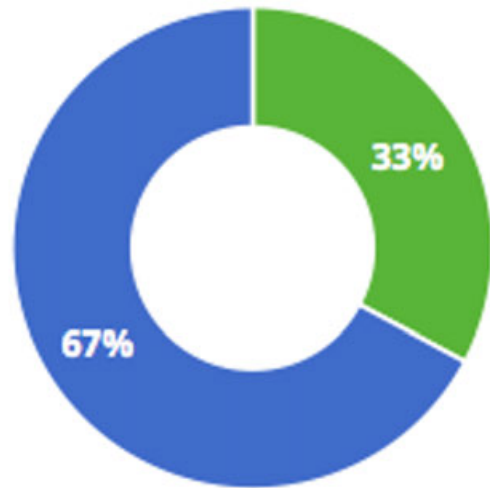**Over 80%** of respondents continued visiting community health centers for vaccinations and antenatal care
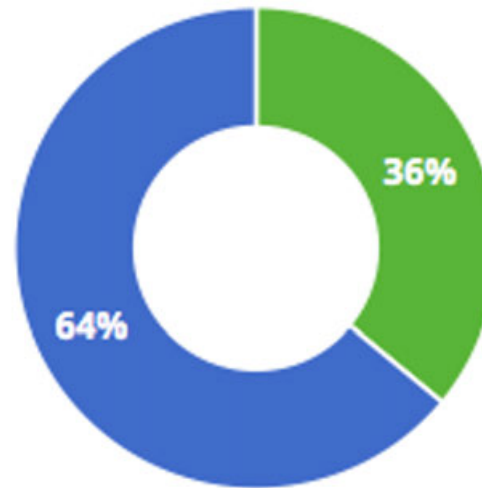
8% were unable to obtain prescription medications
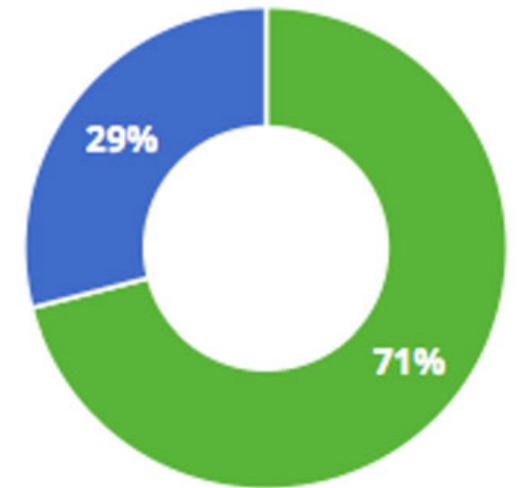
Economic Activity & Employment

33% say their business/place of work is closed. Of those still working, 36% earned less and 71% worked fewer hours in the past week

33%

67%

- Business/place of work closed
- Business/place of work open

36%

64%

- Earnings decreased
- Earnings did not decrease

29%

71%

- Fewer hours
- Did not work fewer hours

Social Protection & Financial Resilience

Respondents have experienced sharp, adverse effects from the economic fallout of COVID-19 restrictions

54% report shortages in the markets prevent them from buying food

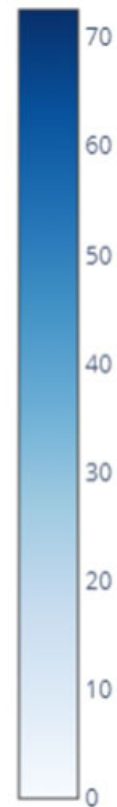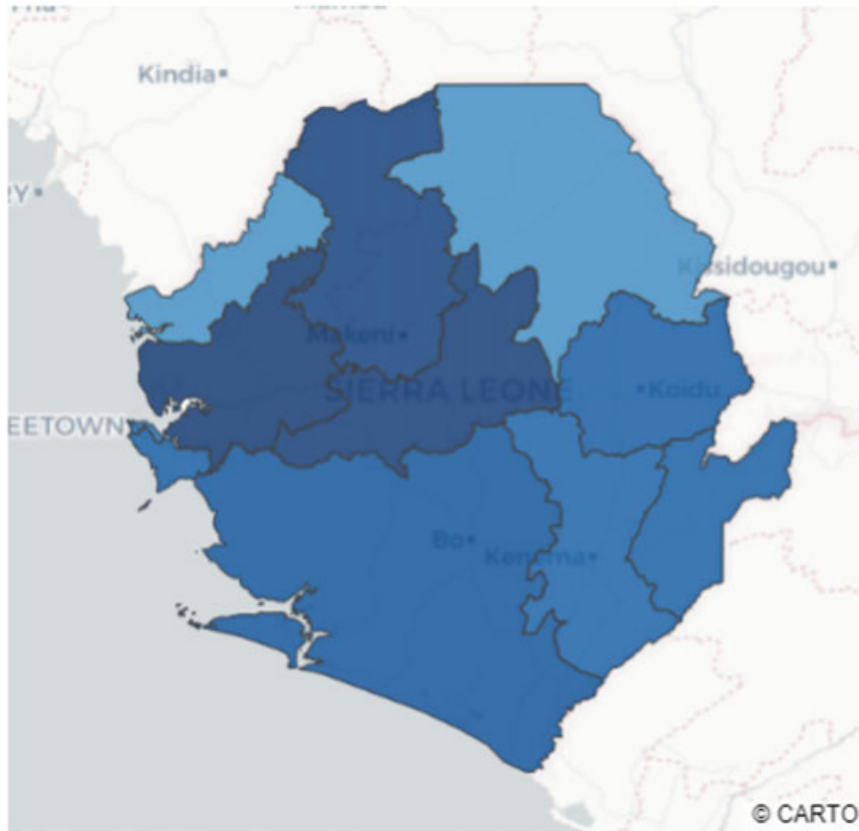**70%** report drops in income prevent them from buying food

Nearly 80% report the price of food was too high

More than **40%** say they've had to limit portion sizes or reduce the number of meals in the past week

60% of respondents say they have had to deplete their savings to pay for food, healthcare, or other expenses since February 2020
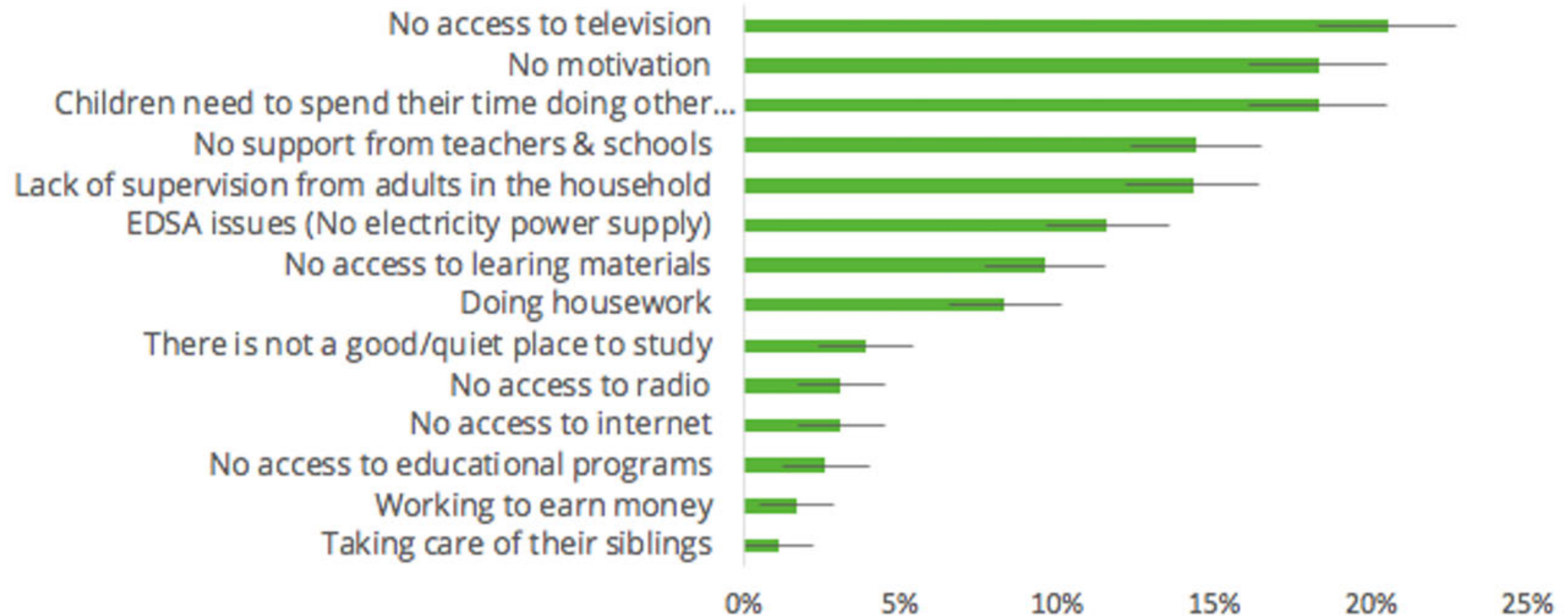
Education

75% of all children are spending time on education at home

Children spend about 2 hours per day on education

At home, children face the following barriers to spending time on education:

Policy Questions

Policy Questions

How can we make sure respondents have access to and are aware of mental health services?

Is the government adequately providing support to those who need it most?

Is the government considering a food ration program or reinstating school feeding programs before school starts?

How can we ensure students don't fall behind when school resumes? How can we ensure students have access to distance learning platforms?

Q&A

Partner with us

As a Researcher:

- We connect researchers with partners, assist with research design, implement data collection, and much more.

As a Practitioner:

- We can help answer your questions and support you in using evidence to make your programs or policies as effective as possible.

As a Funder:

- Our funders make it possible for us to generate evidence and inform debates about how to effectively reduce poverty and improve lives.

Get in touch at contact@poverty-action.org

Thank you

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in linkedin.com/company/innovations-for-poverty-action

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