

Informing Policy on COVID-19 with Rapid Data: Results and Responses from the RECOVER Survey in Ghana

Today's Panelists



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INNOVATIONS FOR
POVERTY ACTION

Using rigorous
research to reduce
poverty & improve
lives



A Nobel Prize-Winning Approach

“IPA plays a crucial role in assisting researchers to run and implement experiments throughout the world.”

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



More than just RCTs



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



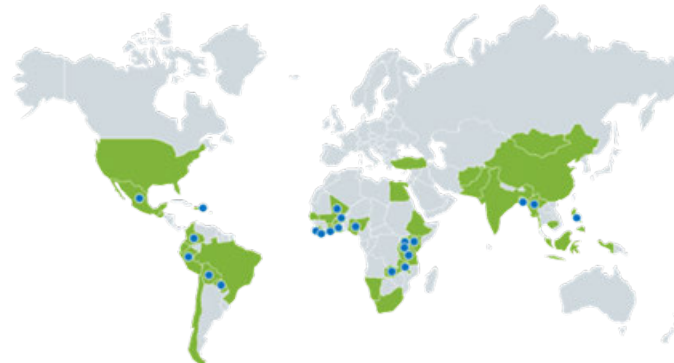
8 Program Areas



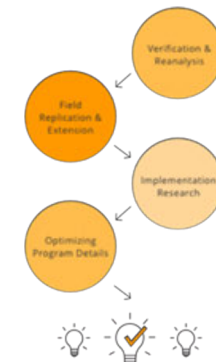
700+ Partners



600+ Researchers
in our network



850+ Evaluations to date
in 51 countries



17 Years of generating
evidence and moving
evidence to policy

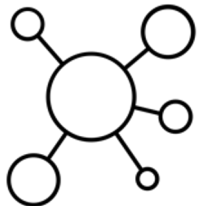
IPA's Research for Effective COVID-19 Responses (RECOVR)



Conducting a rapid response survey to answer key policy questions: IPA has built a rapid response panel survey to directly inform key government partners on the health, economic, and social ramifications of the pandemic, and is running it **in eight countries**.



Advising governments on evidence-based approaches: We are collaborating with dozens of governments and peer organizations to share information, resources, and data to inform global stakeholders and advocate for more funding to be allocated to economic responses, especially in the global south.

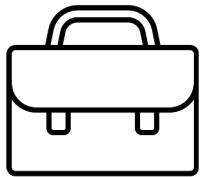


Curating a global hub that centralizes research and policy lessons: We are rapidly developing **more than 80 new individual evaluations** related to the COVID-19 response. Some build on existing studies, and others are new studies that have been quickly developed to inform the design of new programs aimed at **mitigating the impacts of the crisis on health, livelihoods, learning**, and other outcomes.

RECOVR Survey: Key Takeaways



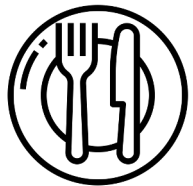
25% of respondents say they feel someone in their household is at risk of contracting COVID-19. For those who do not feel at risk, the vast majority (92%) say that it is because they are following preventative measures



While 65% of respondents report working in February, 41% of households report working in the past 7 days. Of those still working, 41% earned less and 29% worked fewer hours in the past week



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

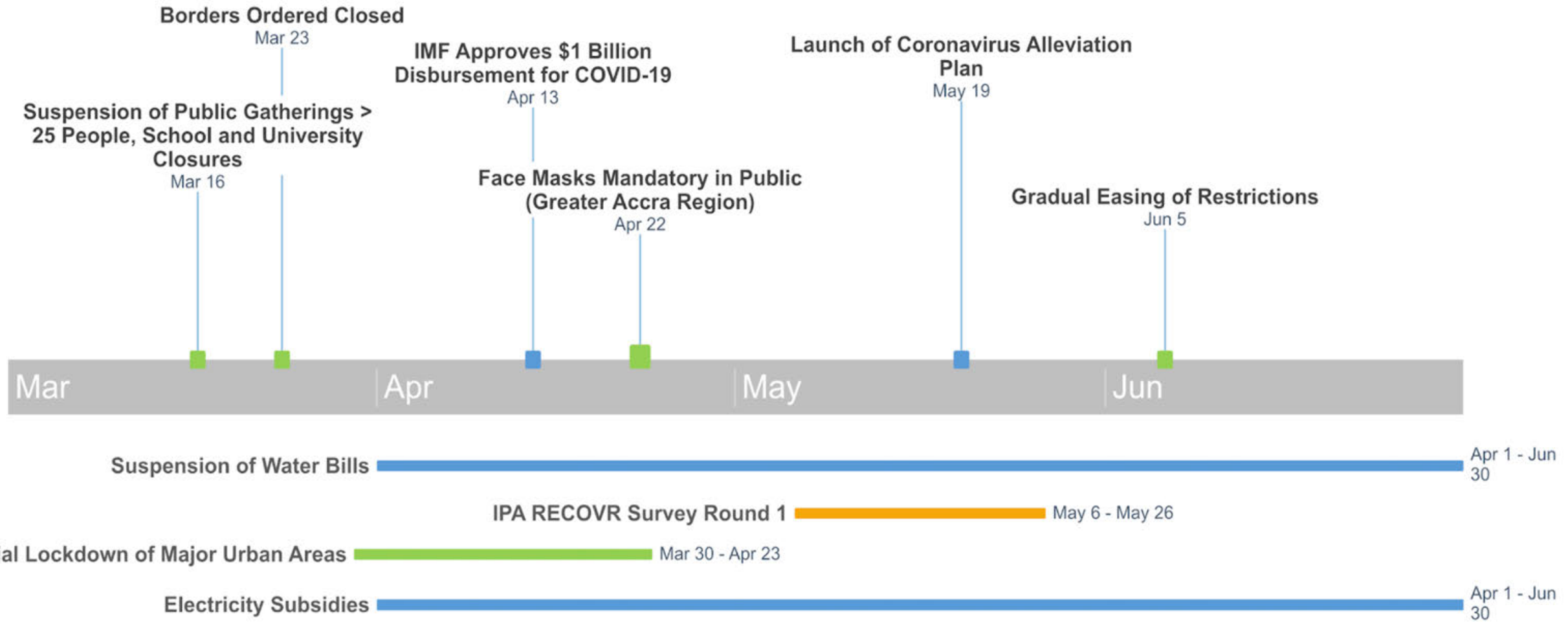


More than 40% of respondents say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times or reduce the number of meals in the past week



Respondents report that 64% of primary and 57% of secondary school children are spending time on education at home since schools were closed. However, children spend only an average of 6 hours per week on education.

Ghana RECOVR Survey: Policy and Survey Timeline



Ghana Survey Information

Dates of survey: May 6 to 26, 2020

Sampling method: Random Digit Dialing of a nationally representative sample of phone numbers

Sample size: 1,357 respondents out of 10,781 call attempts

Average Respondent Demographics: RECOVR vs. Ghana Statistical Services' Living Standards Survey

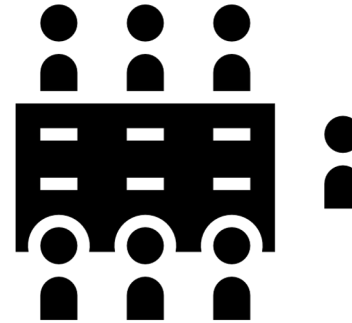


Younger
(32 vs. 40 y.o.)

More Male
(60% vs. 54%)

More Urban
(34% vs. 18%)

More Educated
(36% vs. 15%)

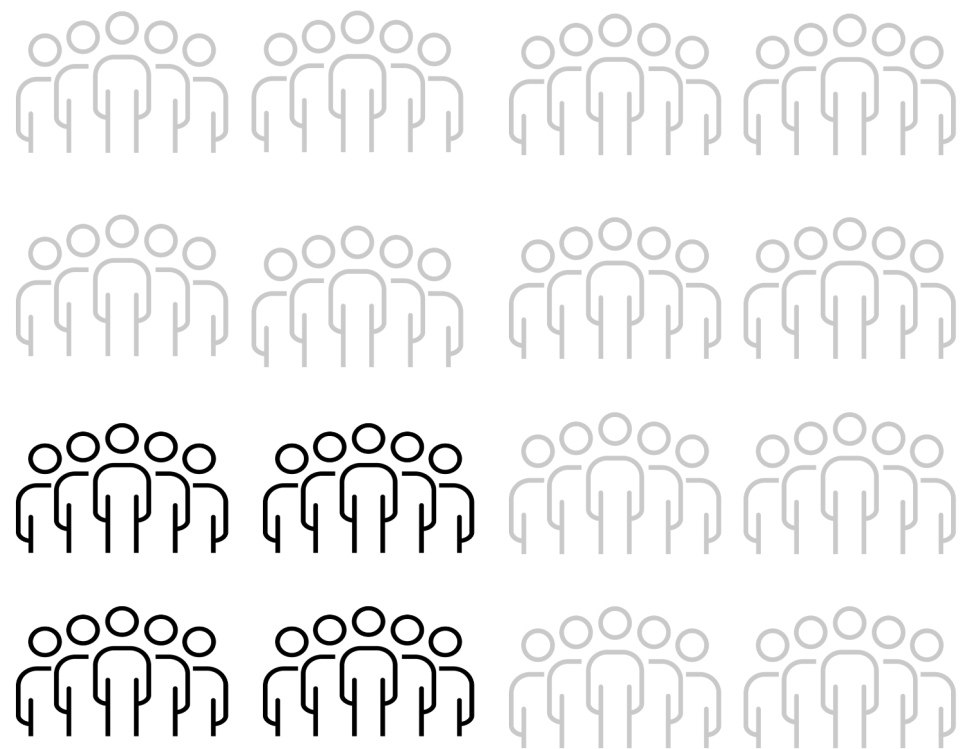


**Comparable
Household Size**
(5.3 vs. 5)

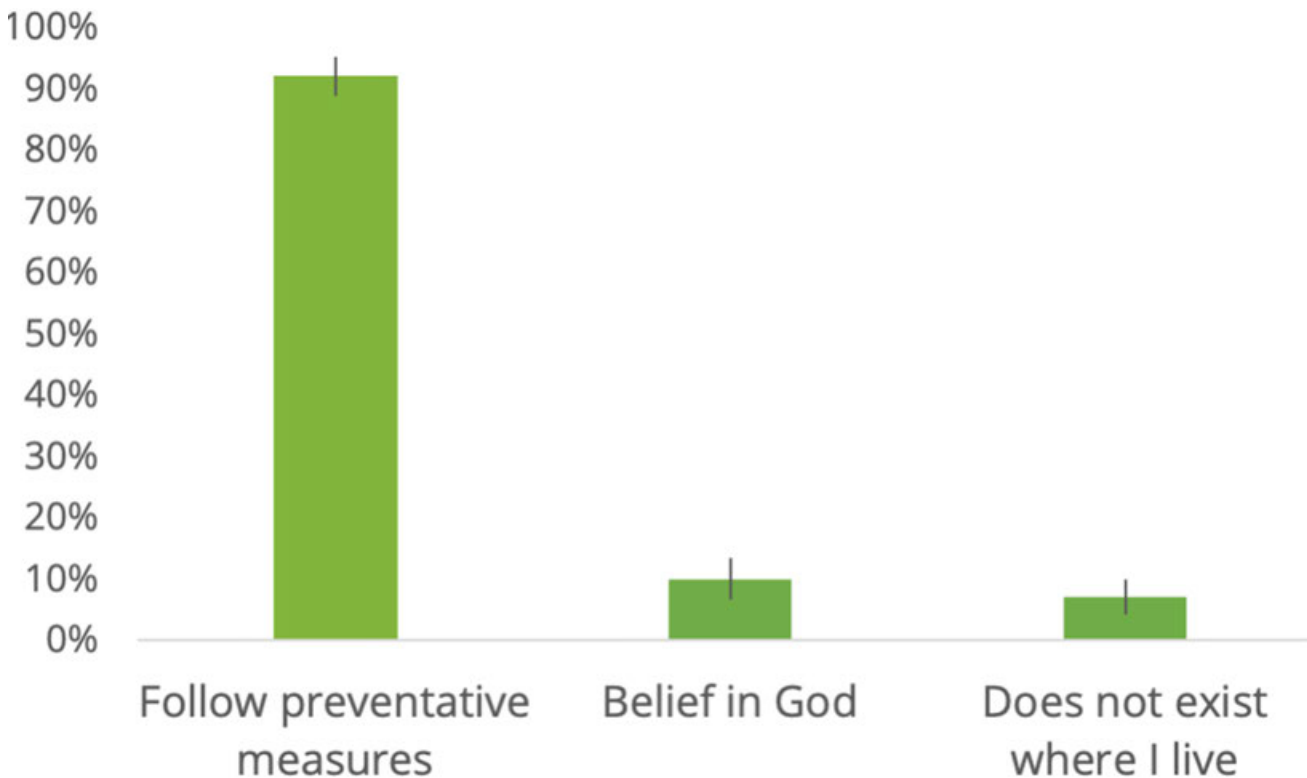


Health & COVID-19 Mitigation

25% of respondents say they feel someone in their household is at risk of contracting COVID-19



For those who do NOT feel at risk, the vast majority (92%) say that it is because they are following preventative measures



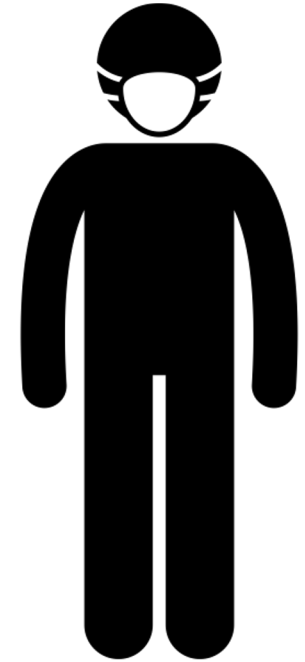
Respondents report increases in virus-mitigating health behaviors




53% of respondents
report staying home all
day for 4+ days



90% of respondents
report more frequent
hand-washing since
mid-March

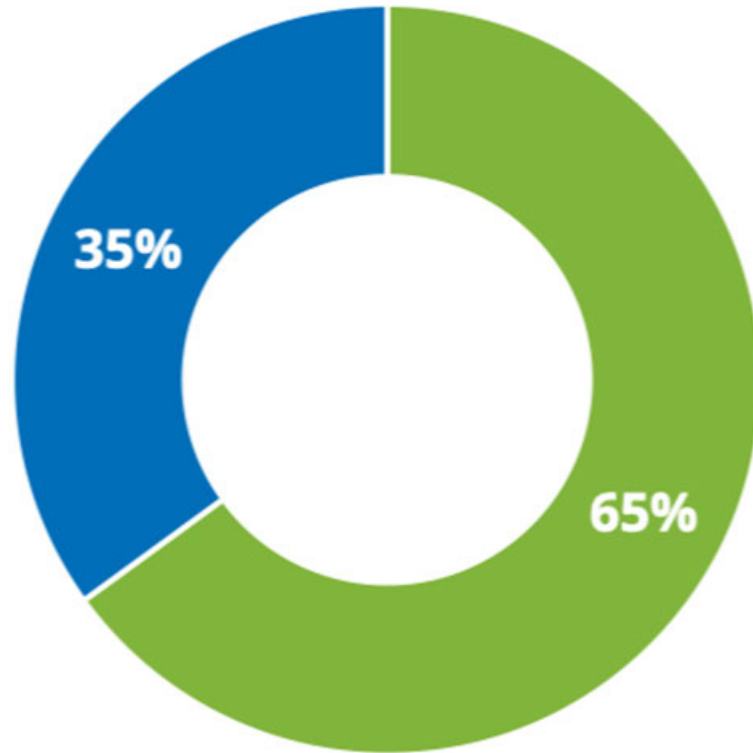


90% of respondents
report wearing a face
mask

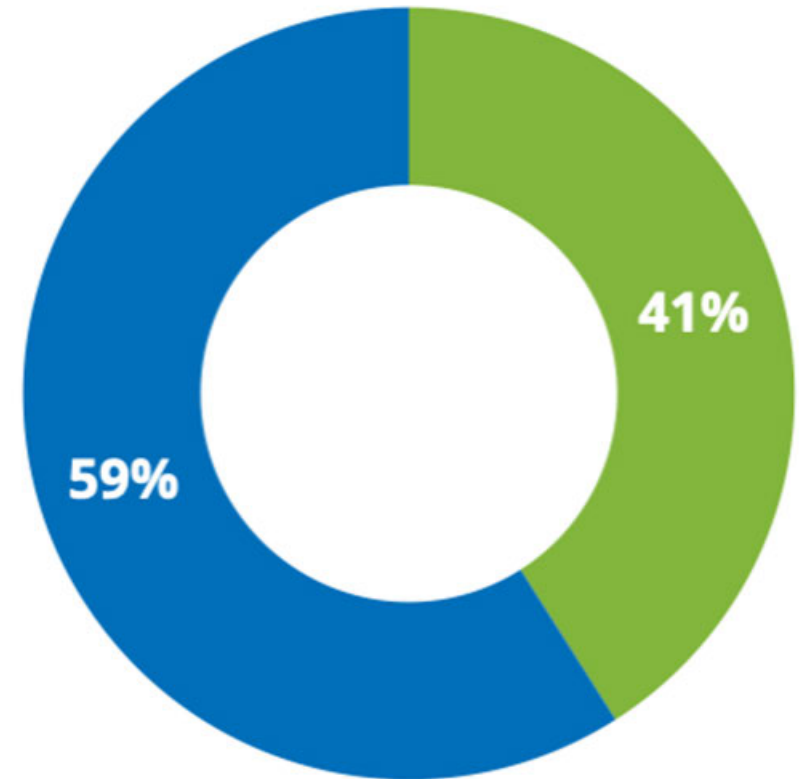
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Economic Activity & Employment

While 65% of respondents report working in February, 41% of households report working in the past 7 days

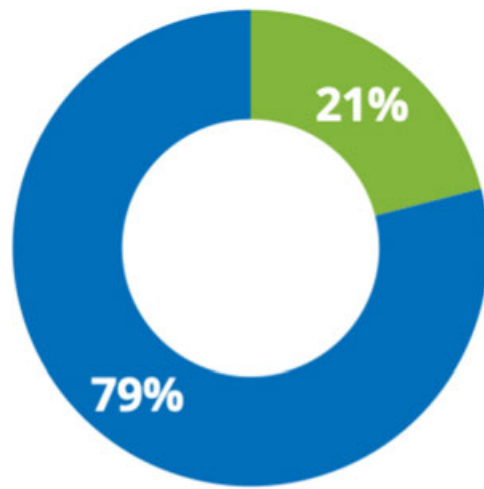


■ Working in February ■ Not working in February

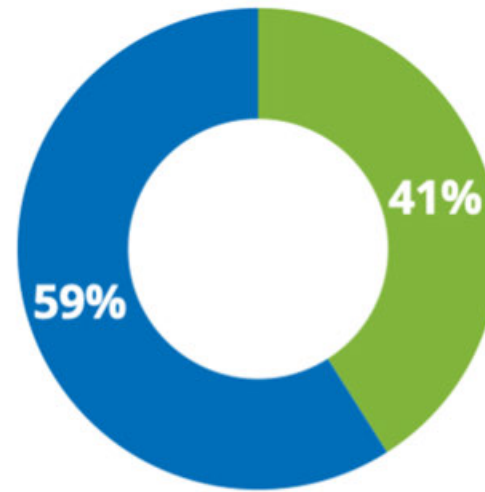


■ Working last week ■ Not working last week

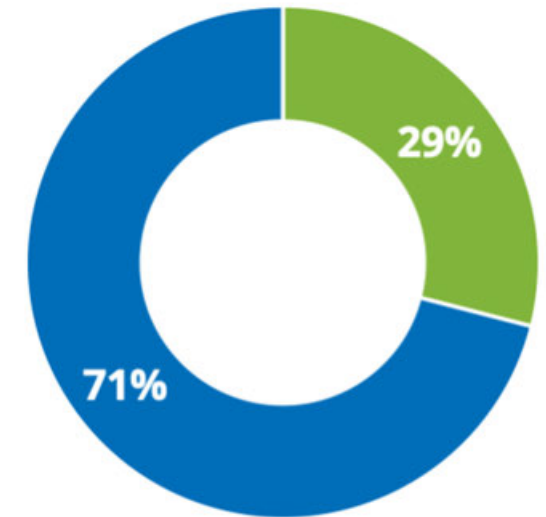
21% say their business/place of work is closed. Of those still working, 41% earned less and 29% worked fewer hours in the past week



■ Business/place of work since closed
■ Business/place of work not closed



■ Earnings decreased
■ Earnings did not decrease



■ Fewer hours
■ Did not work fewer hours

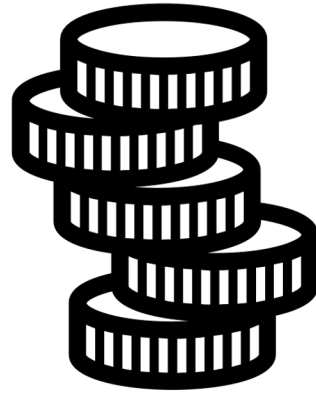
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Social Protection & Financial Resilience

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



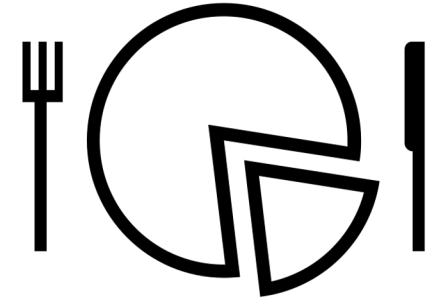
29% report shortages in the markets prevent them from buying food



57% report drops in income prevent them from buying food



64% 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

Households with school-age children are more likely than those without children to report being unable to buy the usual amount of food because household income has dropped



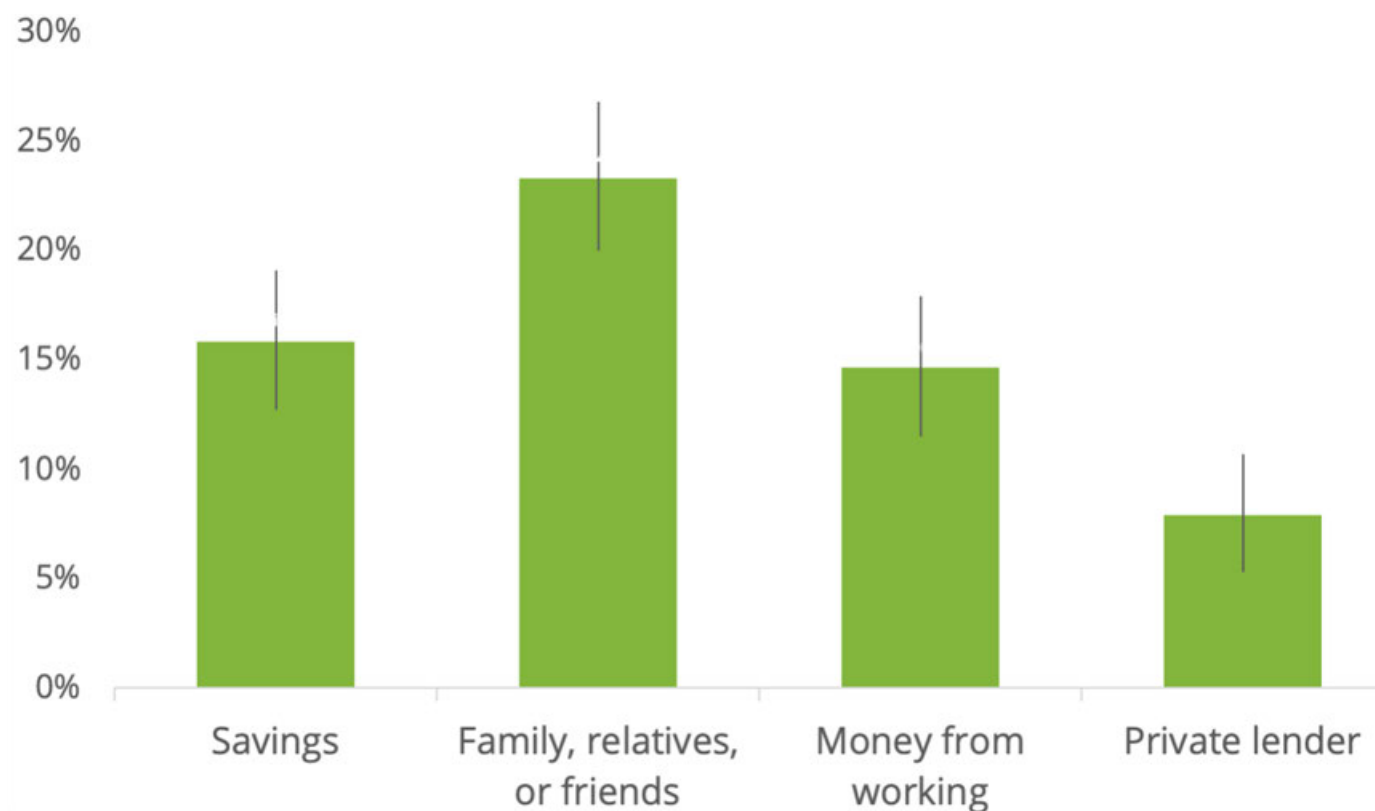
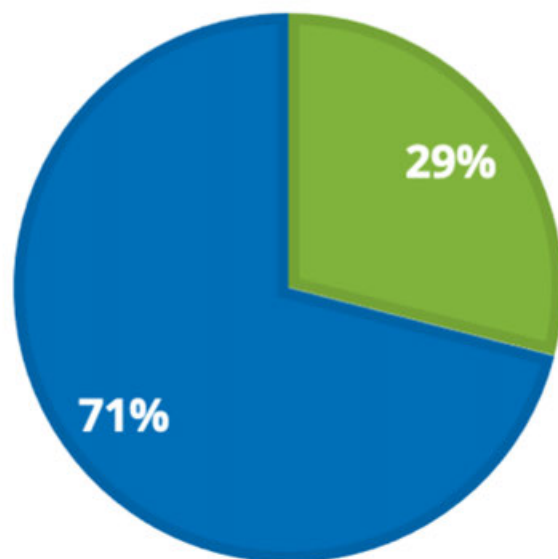
Almost half of respondents say they have had to deplete their savings to pay for food, healthcare, or other expenses since February 2020



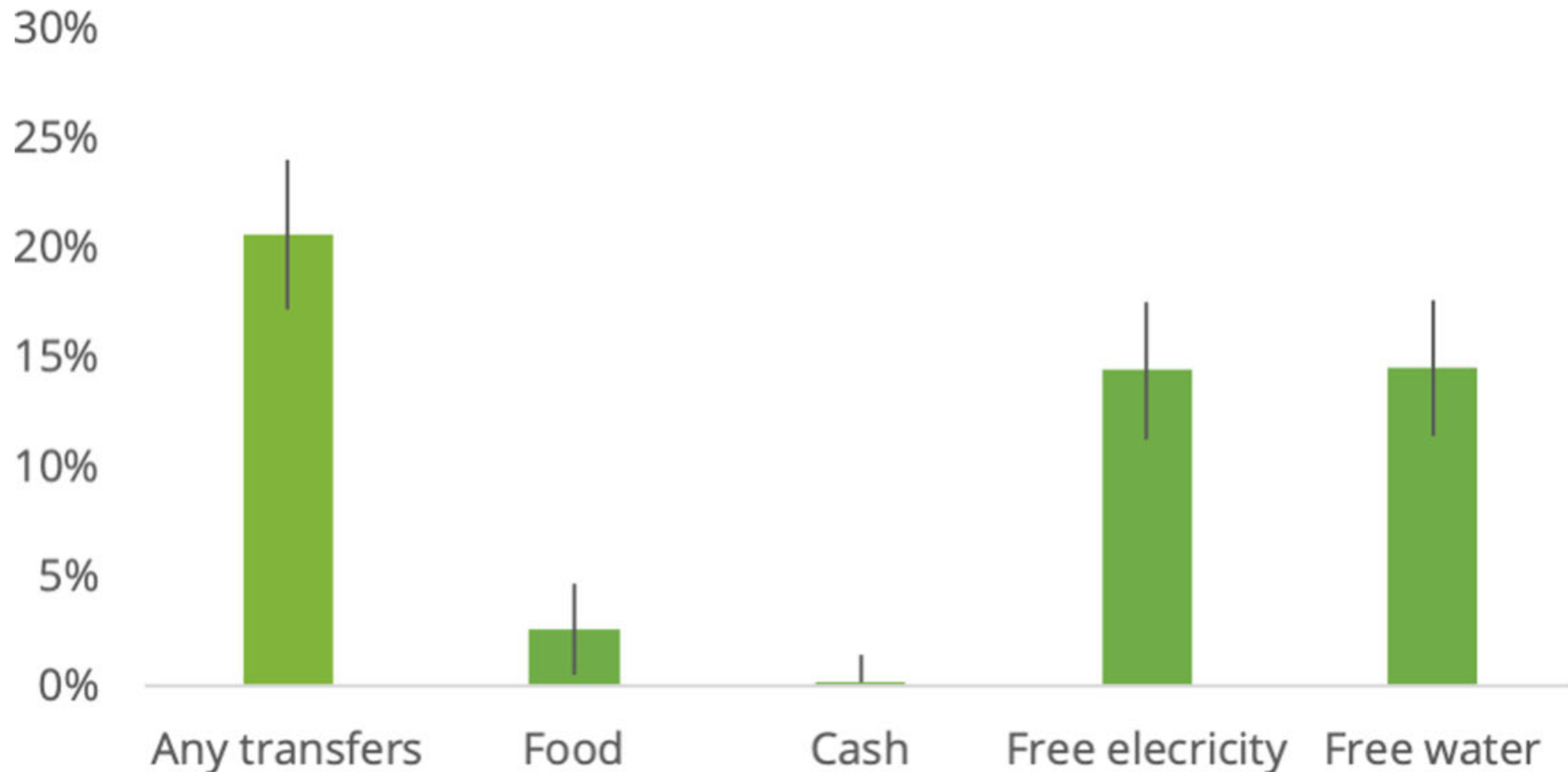
29% of respondents say they would not be able to find 500 cedis to pay for an emergency

Those who would be able to obtain those funds would receive them from family or friends (23%) or from their savings (16%)

- Could not come up with 500 cedis
- Could come up with 500 cedis

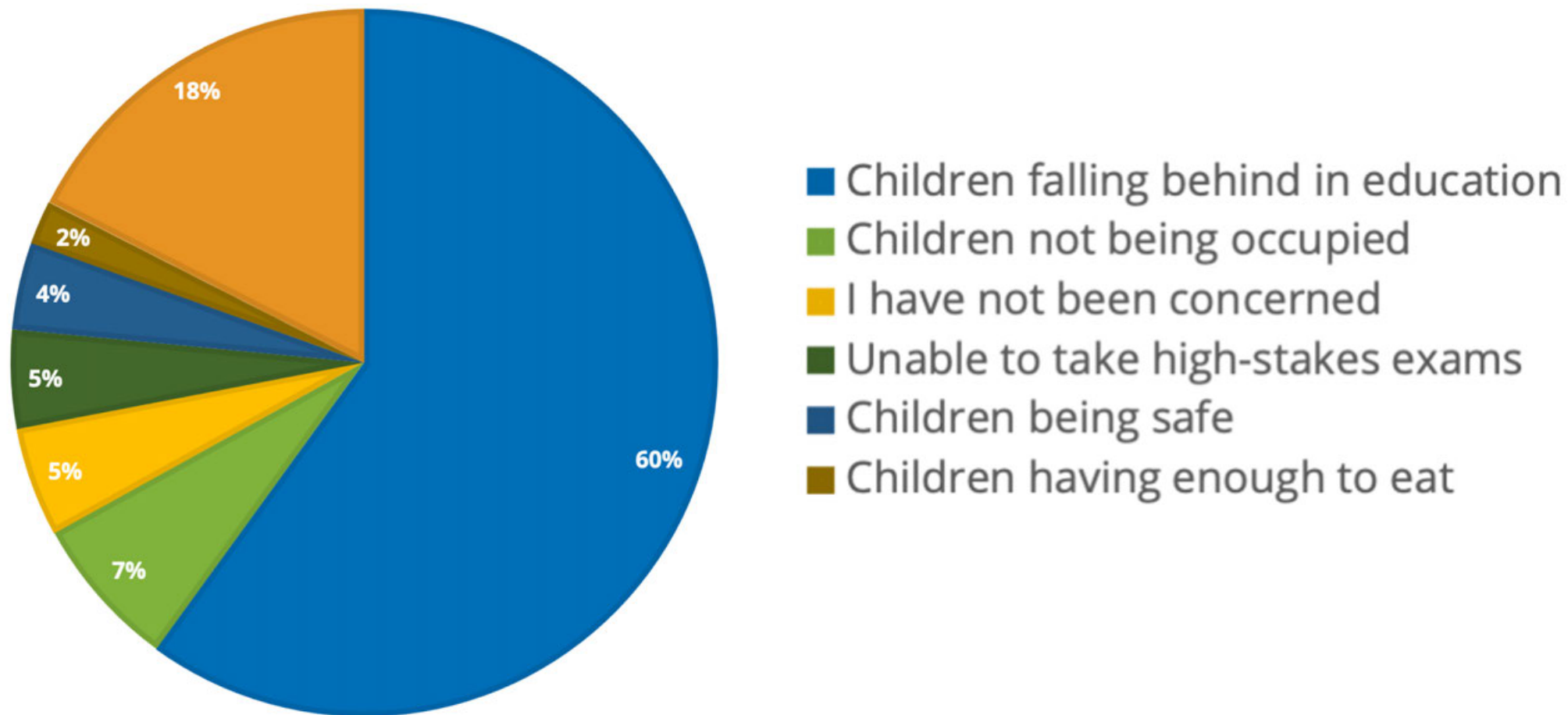


2.8% of households have received food/cash from the government in response to COVID-19, while 14% have received free electricity or water



4 Education

60% of respondents say their main concern regarding children in their household is children falling behind in education



Respondents report that approximately **60%** of all children are spending time on education at home since schools were closed.



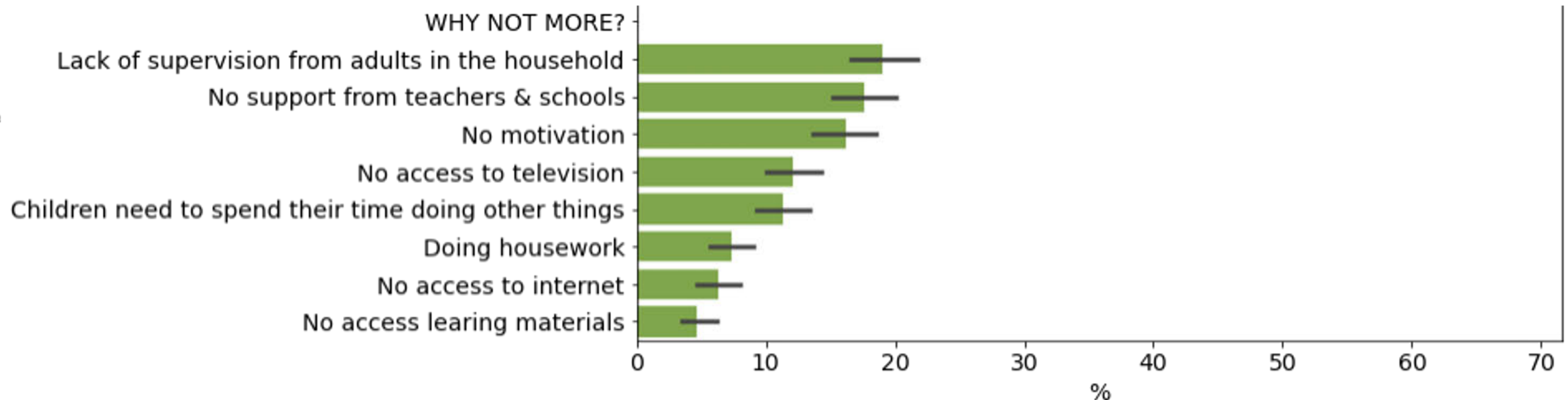
However, they report that children in the household are spending an average of only **5.9 hours per week on education.**



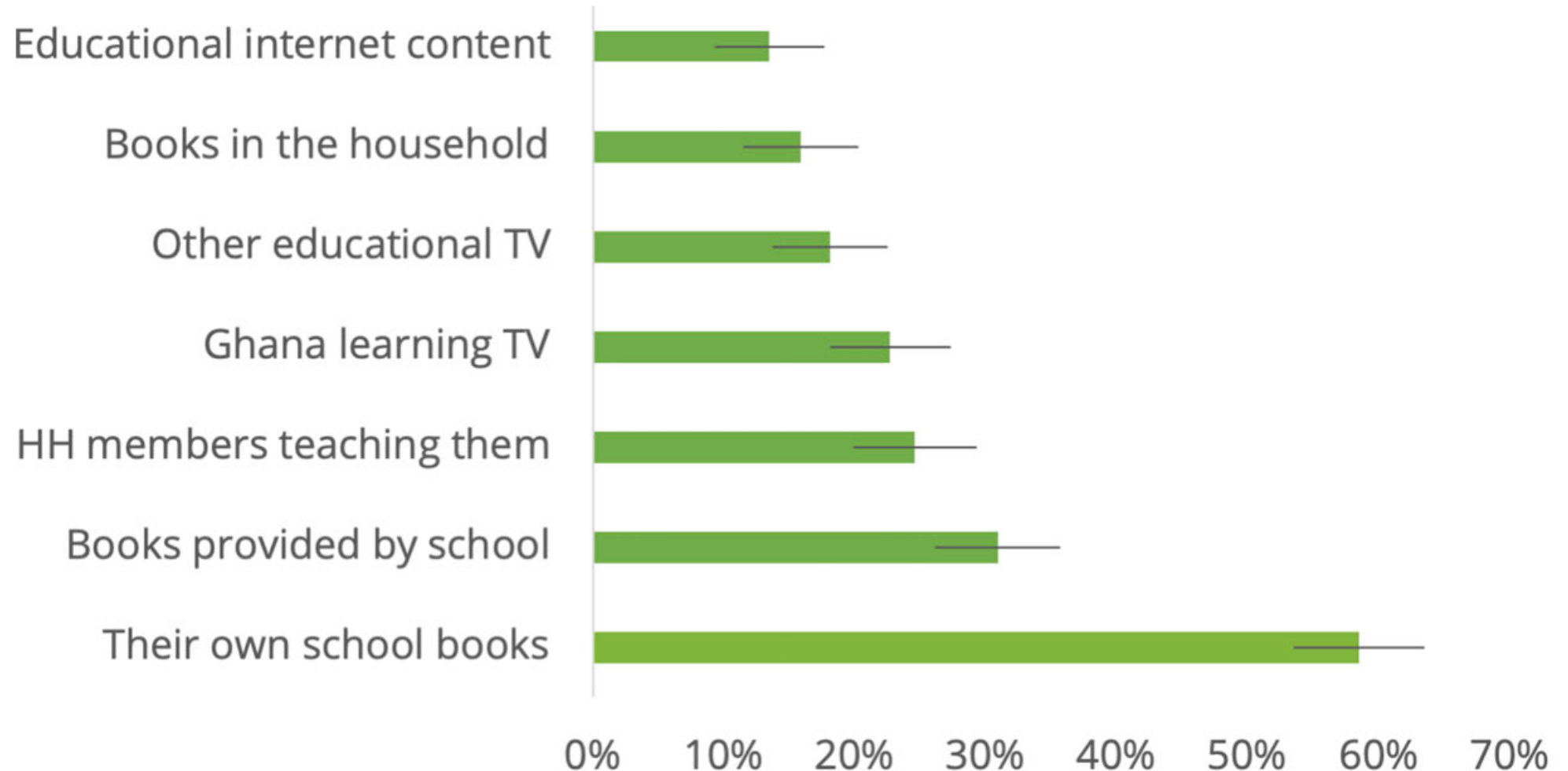
32% of households with a child in school have received communication from their children's school



Households report that the main reasons why children are not spending more time on education include lack of supervision from adults in the household, lack of support from teachers and schools, and lack of motivation



Almost 60% of respondents report that children are using their own school books to spend time on education at home.



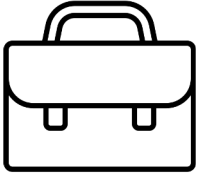
A photograph showing two men from behind, walking down a dusty, unpaved street in what appears to be a developing urban area. They are wearing bright green t-shirts with a logo on the back that includes a map of Africa and the letters 'ipa'. The man on the left is carrying a black backpack and holding a small blue folder or notebook. The man on the right is carrying a large brown messenger bag. In the background, there are several multi-story buildings, some with balconies, and a few other people walking. On the left side of the street, there are some green metal carts or structures. The overall scene suggests a field research or community engagement activity.

Policy Implications

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The government made wearing face masks mandatory nationwide as of June 15. **How can we make sure respondents are following preventive measures correctly? And continue to do so for a longer period of time?**



The government has created the Coronavirus Alleviation Programme to provide support to SMEs impacted by COVID-19. **Is the programme adequately providing support to those who need it most?**



Only a small percentage of respondents are taking advantage of government-provided water and electricity subsidies. **How can the government increase awareness / encourage take-up of these subsidies?**



Households with school-aged children are particularly affected by income losses and reduced food consumption. **Is the government considering a food ration program or reinstating school feeding programs before school starts?**



Children are spending only an average of 6 hours per week on education. **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



Thank you



<https://www.poverty-action.org/recovr>

The Ghana RECOVR Survey was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation