

# Learning from Rapid Data to Inform Policy on COVID-19 in Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso

Results from RECOVR Round 2

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April 29, 2021



# Today's Panelists and Moderator



**Andreas Holzinger,**  
Country Director,  
Innovations for Poverty  
Action, Francophone  
West Africa

(formerly for Sierra  
Leone and Liberia)



**Joseph Sunday  
Sinnah,**  
Professional  
Head, Ministry of  
Gender and  
Children's Affairs,  
Sierra Leone



**Fatu Conteh,**  
Policy &  
Research  
Associate,  
Innovations for  
Poverty Action,  
Sierra Leone



**Dr. Shana Warren,**  
Research Scientist,  
Path-to-Scale,  
Innovations for  
Poverty Action



**Dr. Abbie Clare,**  
Senior Research  
Manager,  
Development  
Media  
International

# 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)



**Rapid response surveys to answer critical policy questions (10 countries)**



**A global hub that centralizes research and policy lessons**



**Advising 15+ governments on evidence-based approaches**



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# RECOVR Sierra Leone



# Sierra Leone Survey Information

Dates of survey: May (Round 1) and October (Round 2), 2020

Sampling method: Random Digit Dialing of a nationally representative sample of phone numbers, limited to respondents age 18+ (panel survey- follow ups with original respondents)

Sample size: 1,070 respondents (Round 2)  
1,304 respondents (Round 1)

<u>Average respondent demographics</u>	
% women	35%
Average age	33
% that completed more than secondary school	60%
Household size	3.8
% working in informal sector	55%
% Under national poverty line:	61% (Estimated with the <a href="#">PPI</a> )

# Sierra Leone RECOVR: Survey and Policy Timeline

Mar 16    Mar 30    Apr 13    Apr 27    May 11    May 25    Jun 8    Jun 22    Jul 6    July 21    Aug 4    Aug 20    Sep 7    Sep 22    Oct 2    Oct 16

**12-month State of Emergency (National Curfew through Oct 27)**

**Closure of Land Borders**

Mar 24-Jun 24

**School Reopenings**  
Oct 5

**National Lockdown 1**  
Apr 5-7

**National Lockdown 2**  
May 3-5

**Use of Facemasks required in public**  
Jun 1

**RECOVR Round 2**  
Oct 1-16

**Closure of Educational Institutions**  
Mar 31

**RECOVR Round 1**  
May 26- Jun 15

**World Bank Announces \$7.5 million grant for health response**  
Apr 2

**Government issues one-time targeted cash transfers before second lockdown**  
May 2

## Legend

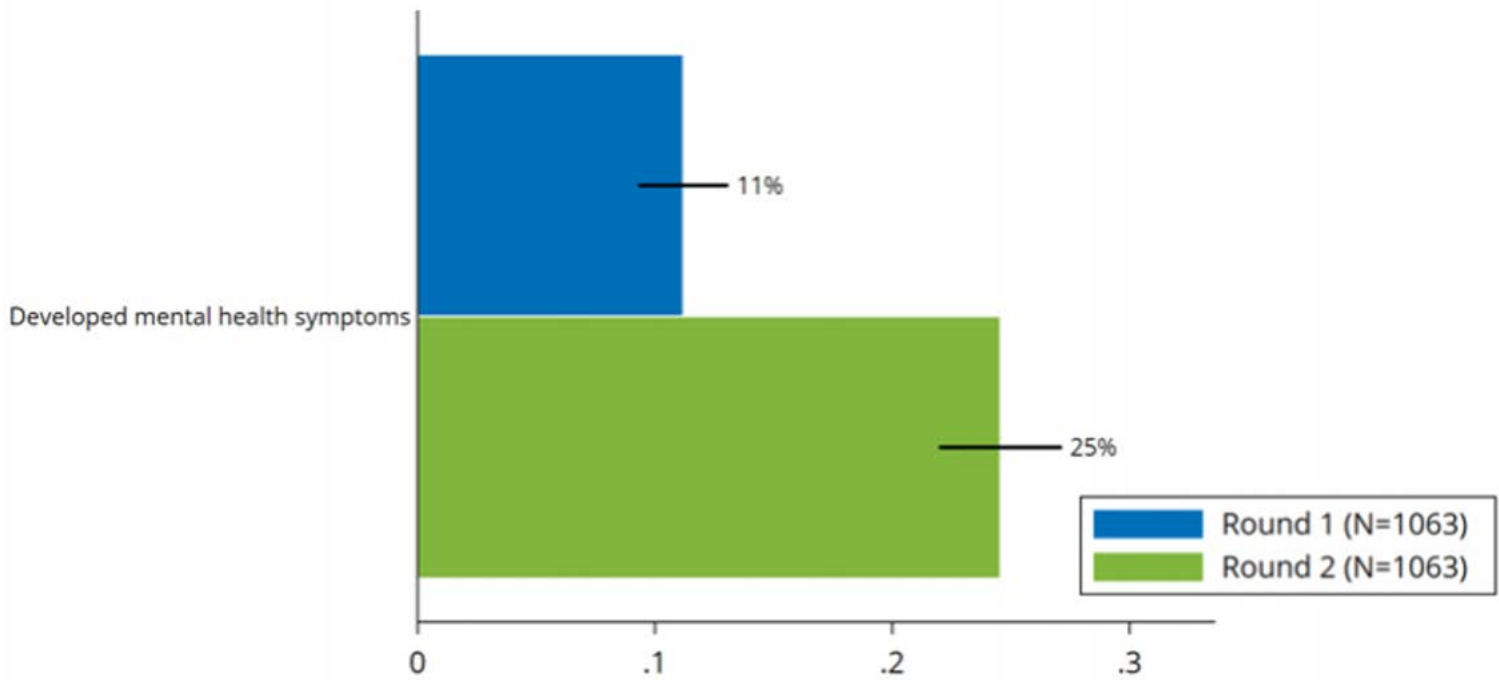
- Public Health Measures
- Economic Measures
- IPA RECOVR



# Health & COVID-19 Mitigation

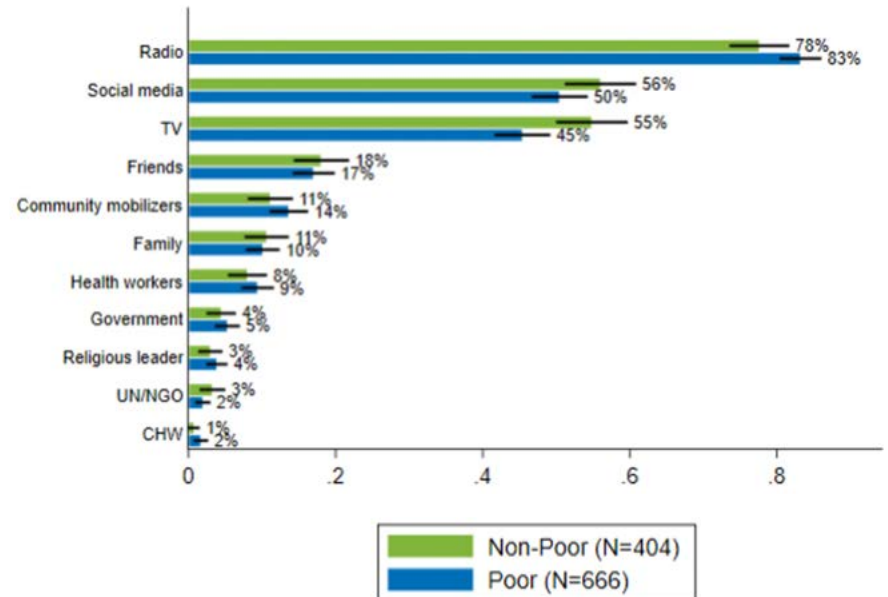
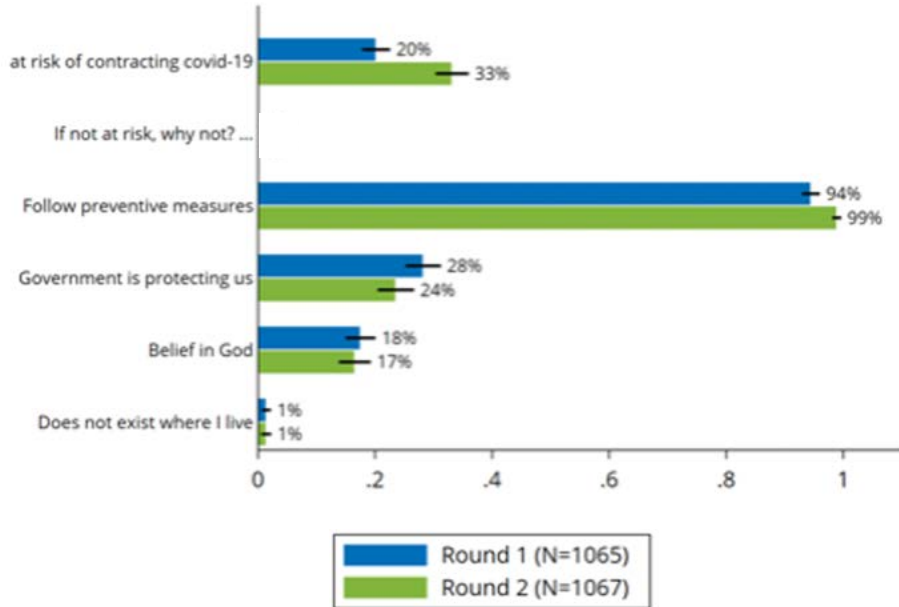


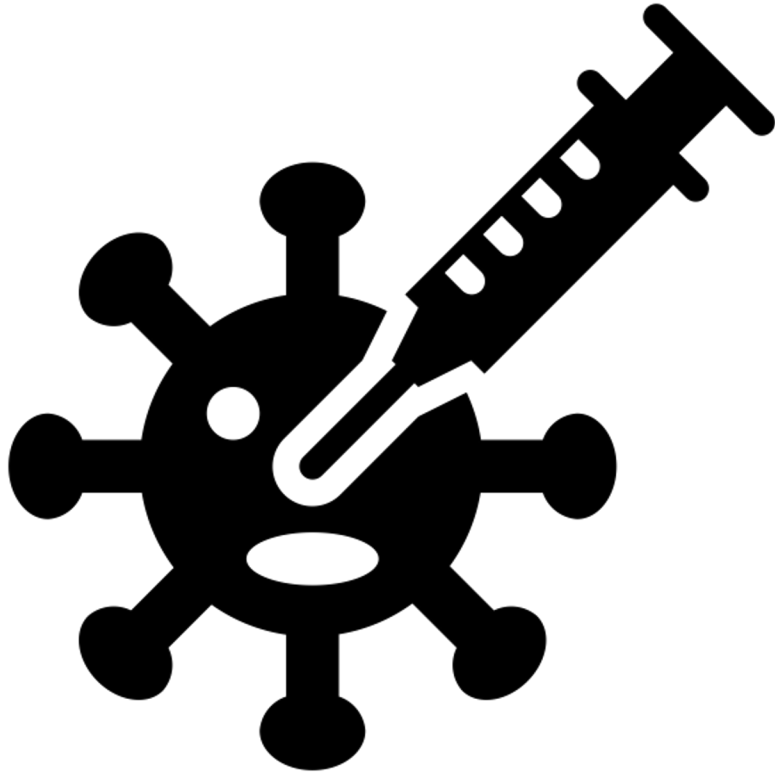
**One in four** respondents reported that they or someone in their household developed mental health symptoms.



**One in three** respondents believes they or someone in their household is at risk of contracting COVID-19, an increase from R1.

**Radio is the most frequently cited medium from which respondents receive information about COVID-19.**





**78%** of respondents indicate that they would take a COVID-19 vaccine.

Of the **22%** of respondents who would not take the vaccine, **54%** cite worries about its side effects. **20%** cite conspiracy theories.

**81%** of respondents receive information about COVID-19 from the radio.



# Food Security & Financial Resilience

# Respondents continue to experience sharp, adverse effects from the economic fallout of COVID-19



**64%** report shortages in the markets prevent them from buying food



**79%** report drops in income prevent them from buying food

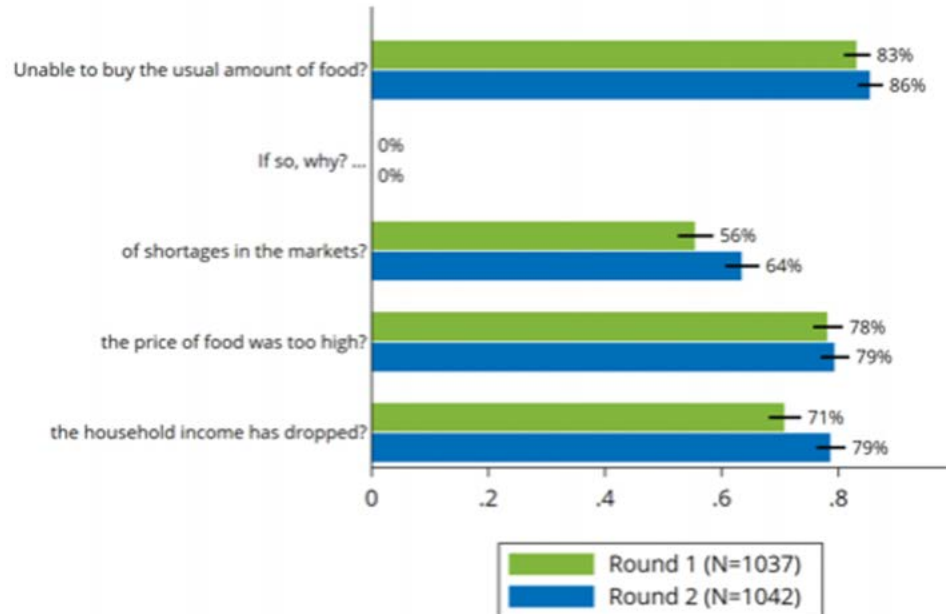
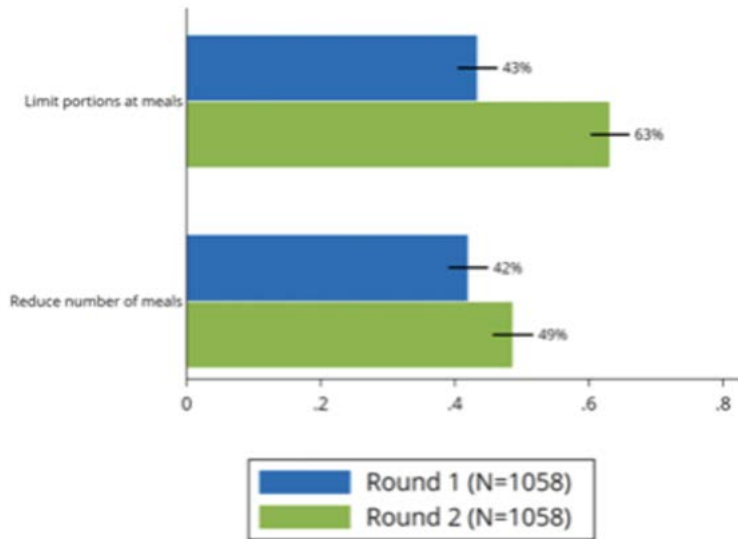


**79%** report the price of food was too high

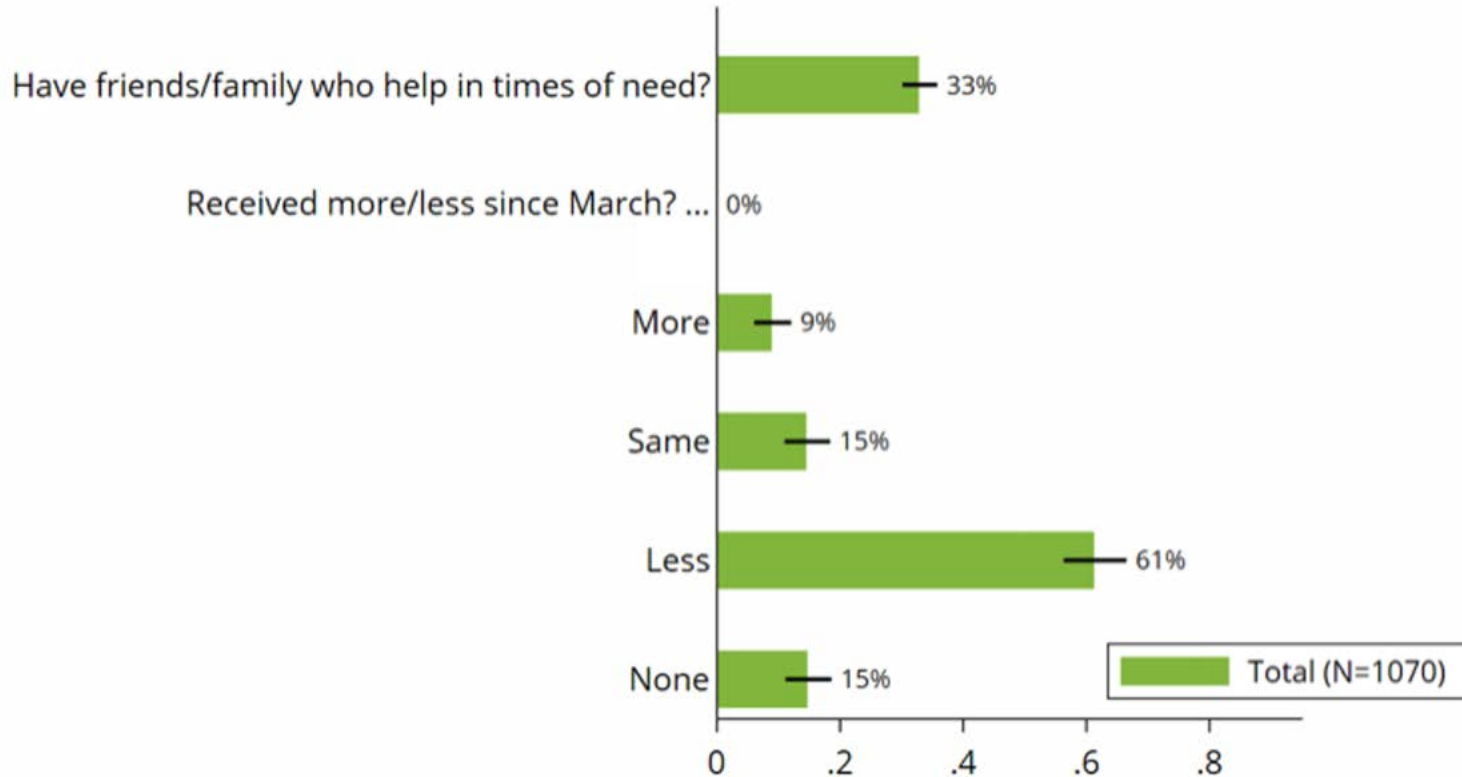


**63%** of adults say they've had to limit portion sizes in the past week

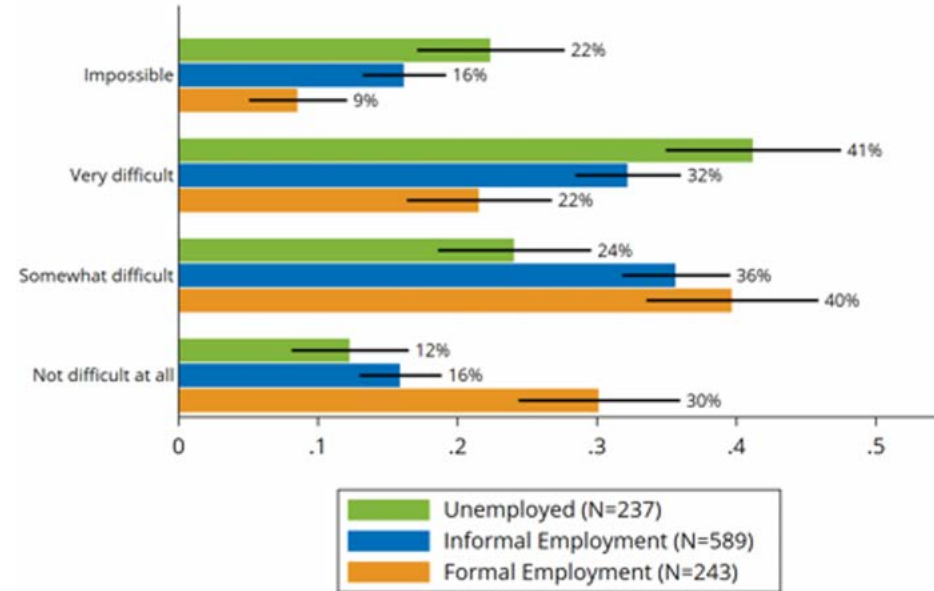
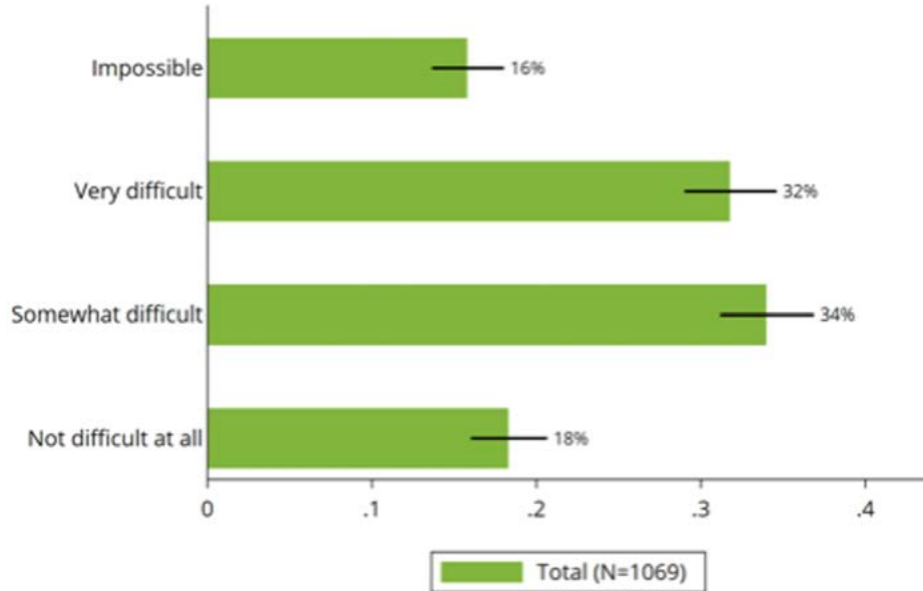
# Most measures of food insecurity worsened across rounds.



While **one third** of respondents typically receives assistance from family and friends, **almost two thirds** received less assistance since March 2020.



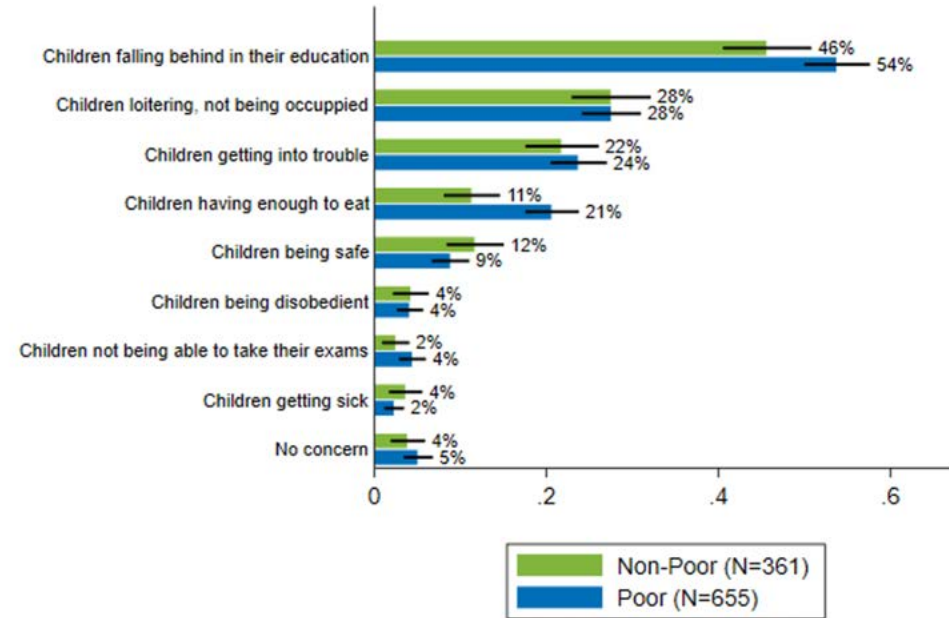
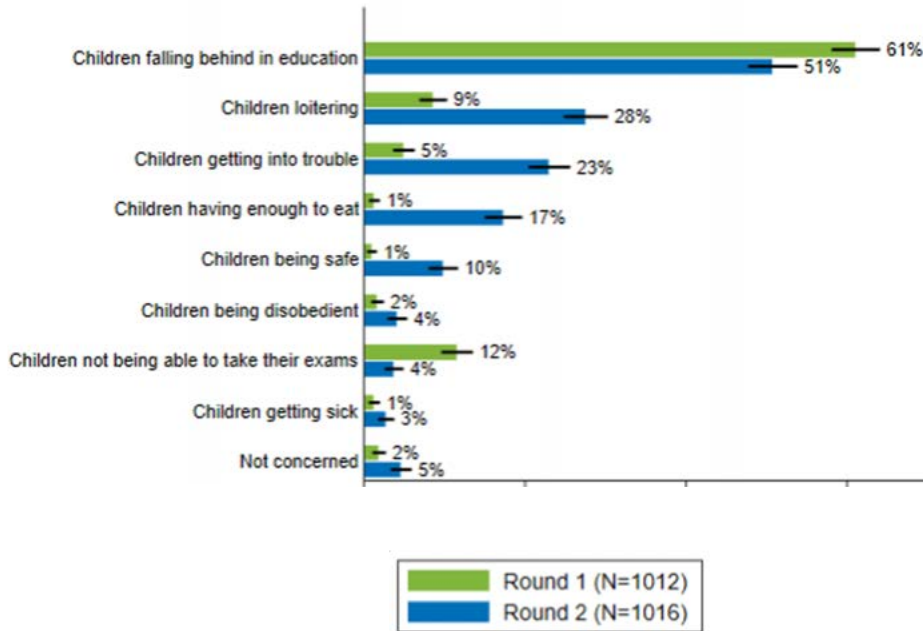
# Nearly half of respondents face severe difficulties in obtaining emergency funds (200,000 Leones) within 30 days.



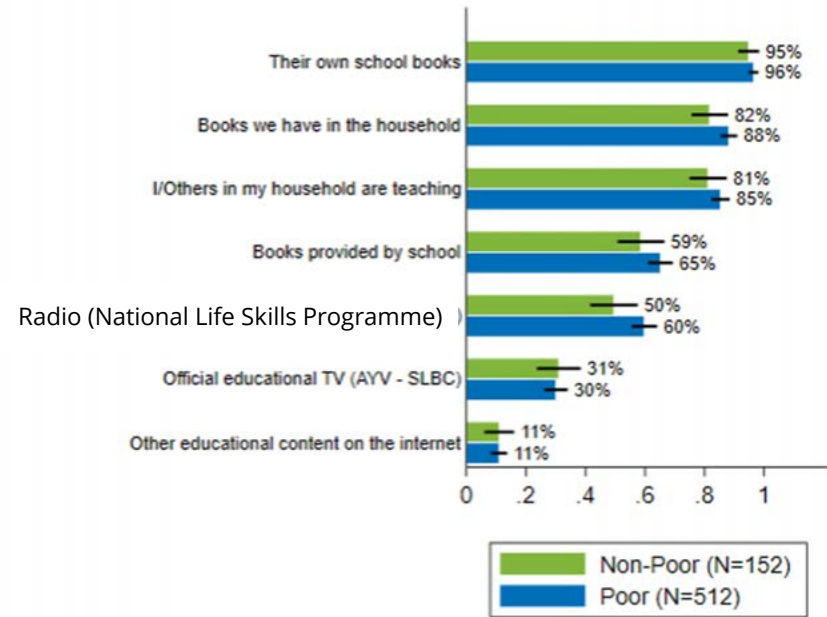
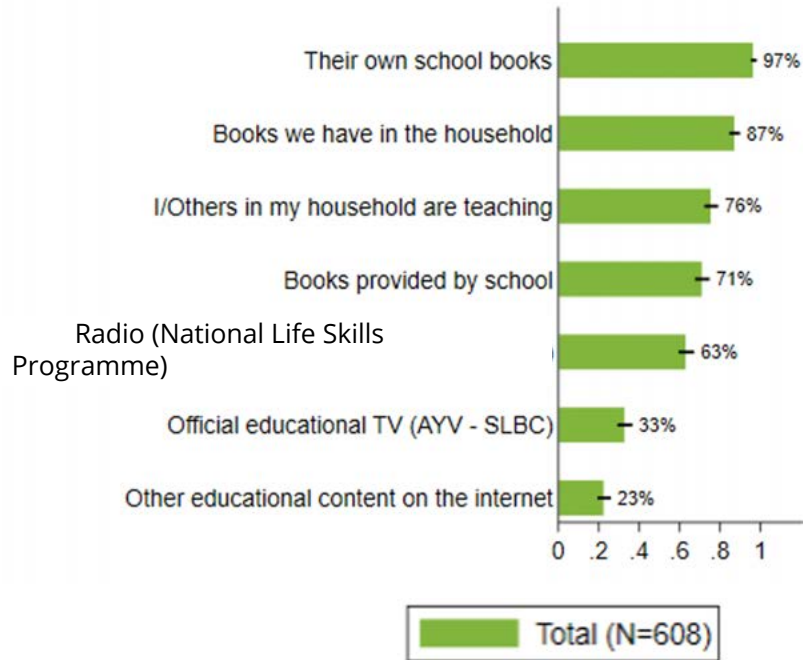


# 3 Education

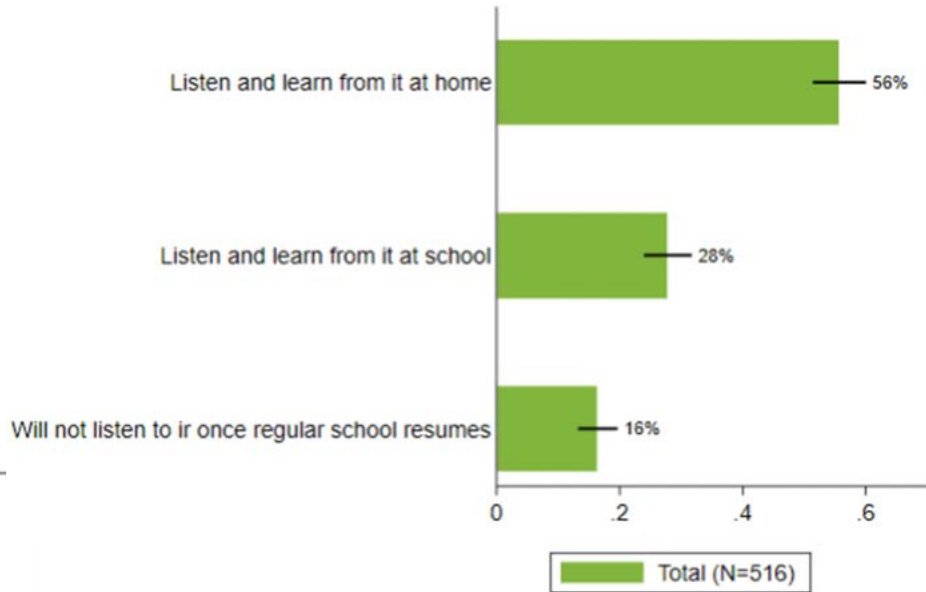
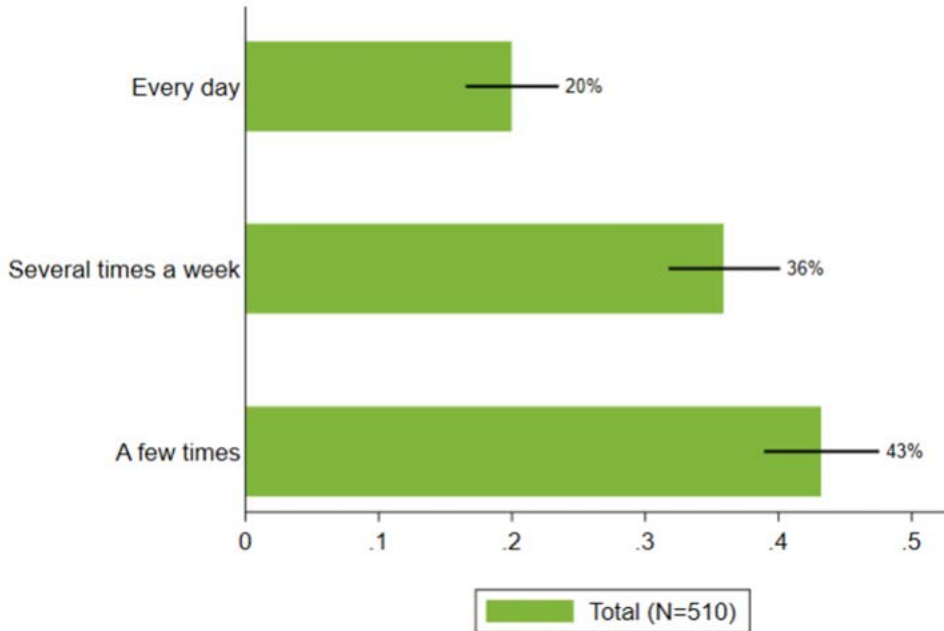
# Parents' concerns for their children during the pandemic shifted across rounds.



**Nearly all** primary school students are using their own school books for educational continuity. Radio is a more popular medium for poorer students.



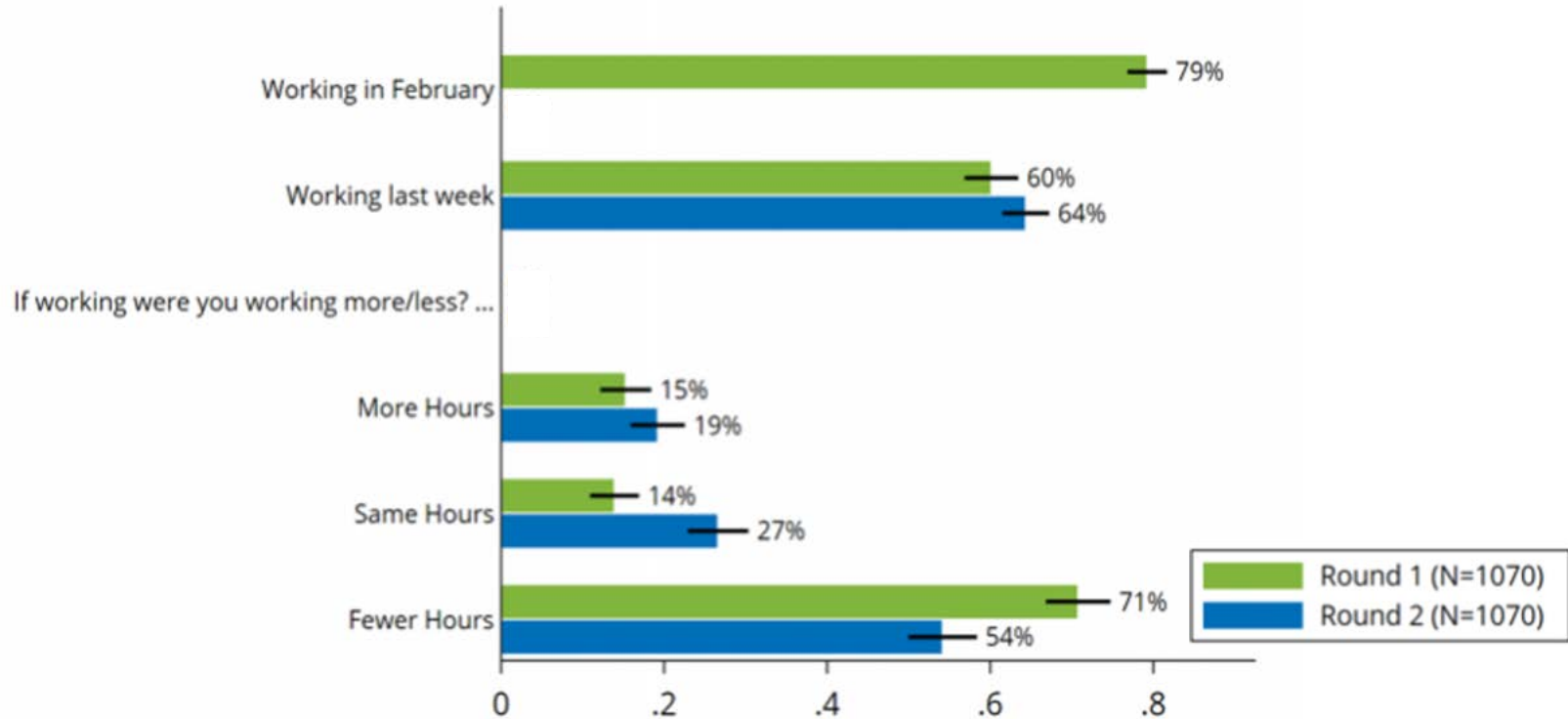
# More than half of respondents report listening to the National Life Skills Program every day or several times a week.



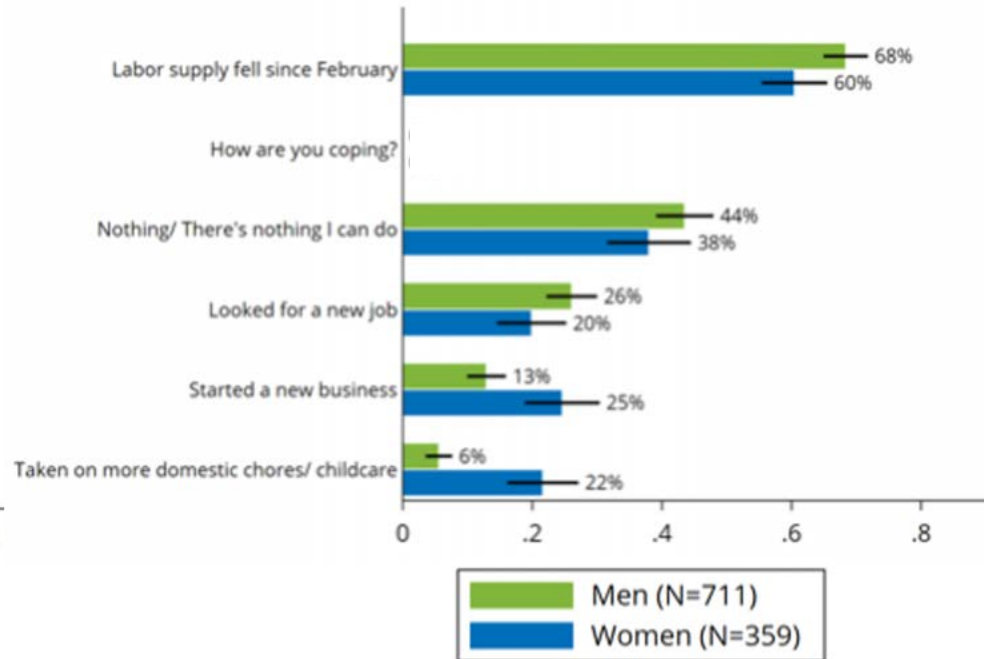
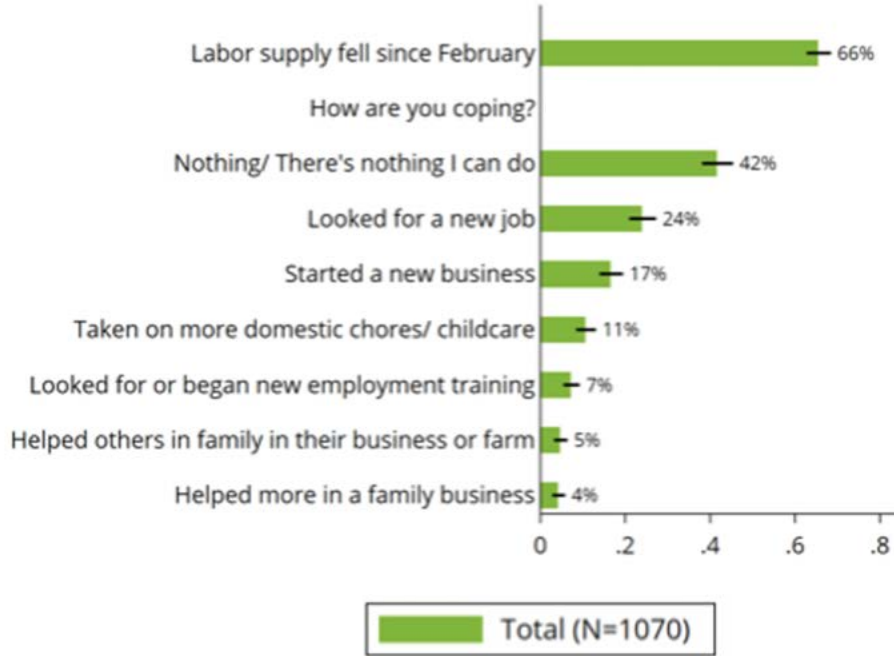
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## Economic Activity and Employment

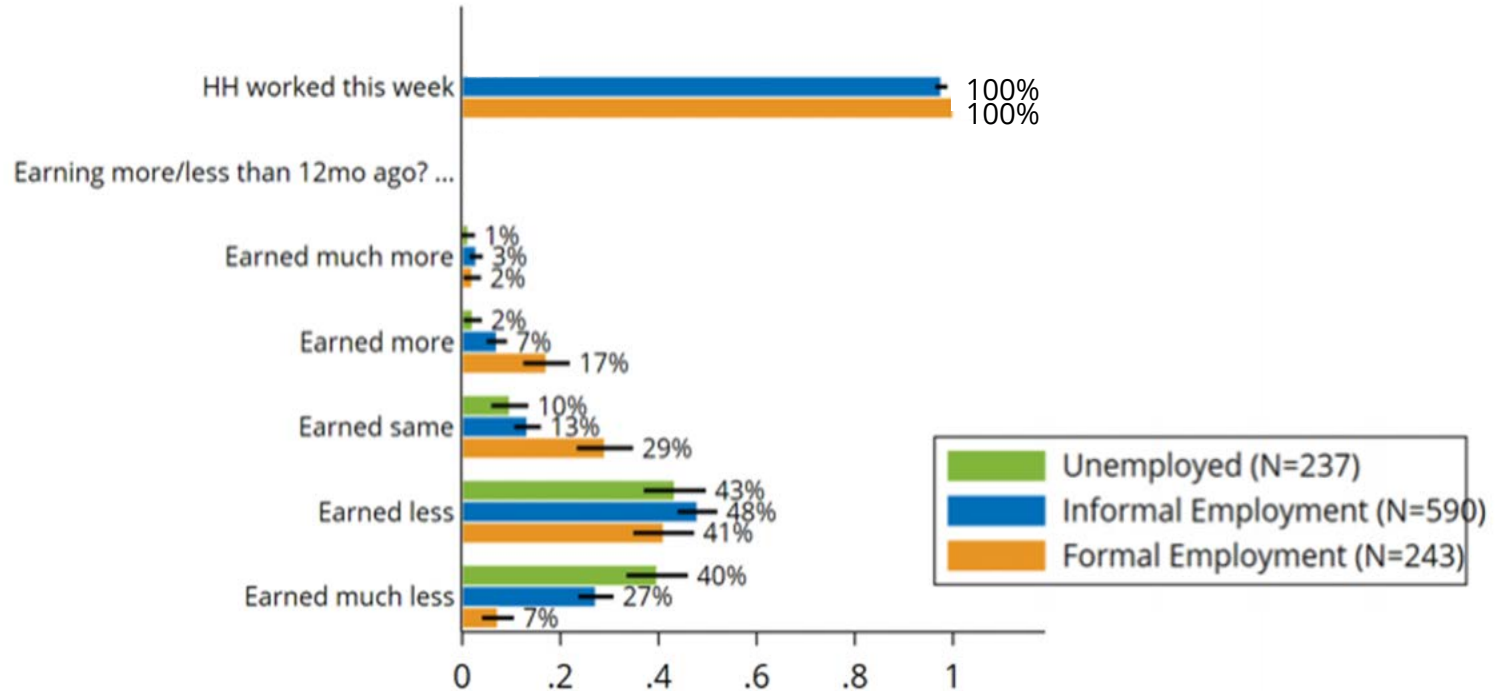
Compared to June, employment **increased slightly** by October, and those working were working more, but not yet at pre-Covid-19 level.



# Among those working less since February 2020, **four in ten** report being unable to cope, and almost one quarter have looked for a new job.



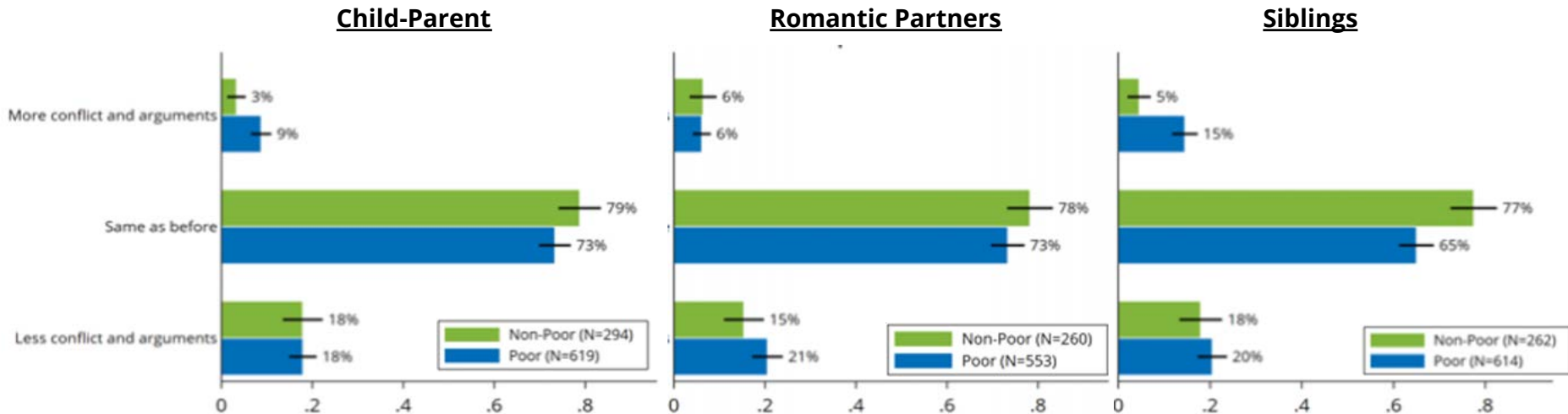
# Just less than half of formally employed households (46%) were able to earn more or the same as a year before.





# 5 Family Relationships

A larger proportion of poor respondents (15%) report increased conflict and arguments between siblings than non-poor respondents (5%).



# One fifth of respondents are concerned about physical violence towards minor children or between romantic partners.



# Policy Implications: Sierra Leone



# Policy Implications

- **Meeting students at their learning level when they return to school:** [Rigorous research has shown](#) that targeted instruction improved learning in Ghana, Kenya, India, and elsewhere.
- Research in [Cote d'Ivoire](#) and [Brazil](#) found that **engaging parents in children's education using SMS messages** can improve learning even while schools are in session.
- **Impact on girls:** Crises/school closures may increase women's chances of school dropout, sexual exploitation, early marriage/pregnancy, and increased household responsibilities, which can cut into learning time (e.g. evidence from [Sierra Leone](#) and [Liberia](#) during Ebola).



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**RECOVR Côte d'Ivoire**



# Côte d'Ivoire Survey Information

Dates of survey: October 22nd to 30th, 2020 (Round 2)

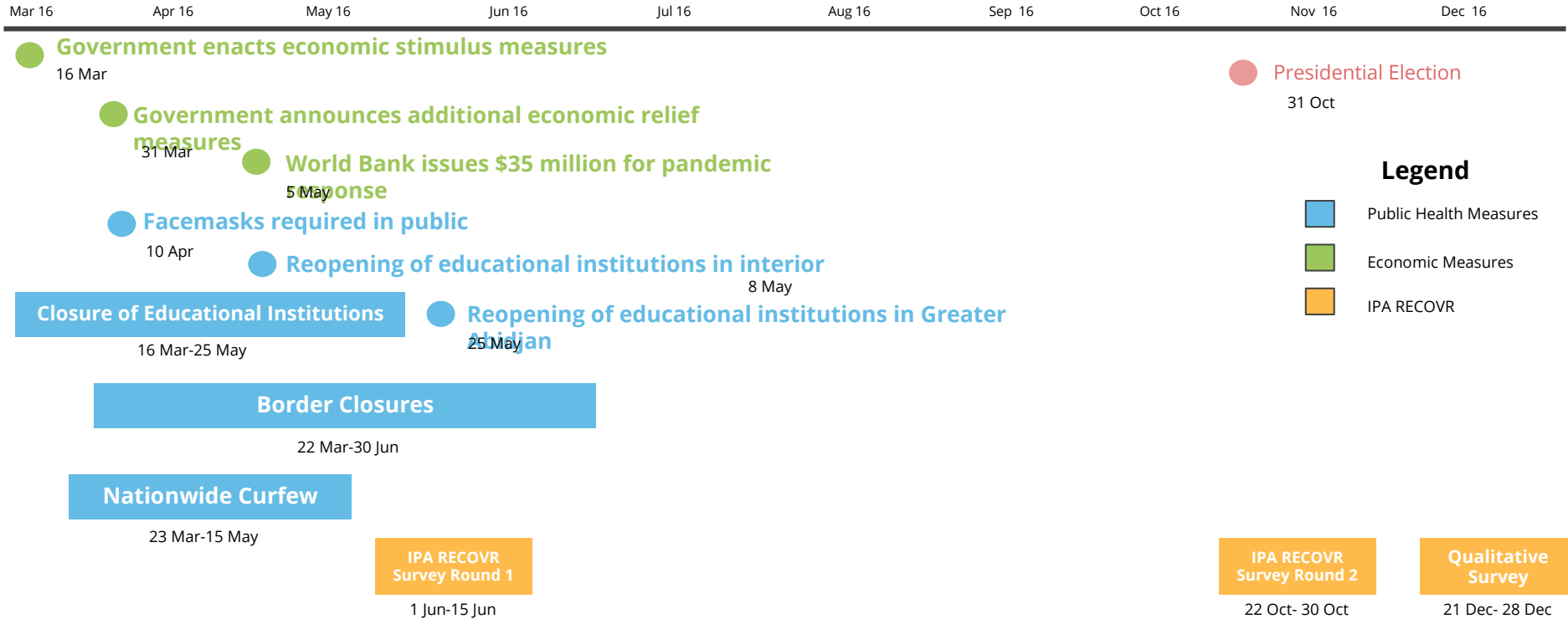
Sampling method: Random sample from Integrated Regional Survey on Employment and in the Informal Sector (ERI-ESI 2017)

Sample size: 994 respondents (Round 2)  
1,329 respondents (Round 1)

Average respondent demographics:

- Age: 40
- % women: 32%
- Household size: 6.4
- % that completed more than secondary school: 45%
- % Under national poverty line: 36% (Estimated with the [PPI](#))

# Côte d'Ivoire RECOVR: Survey and Policy Timeline



## Legend

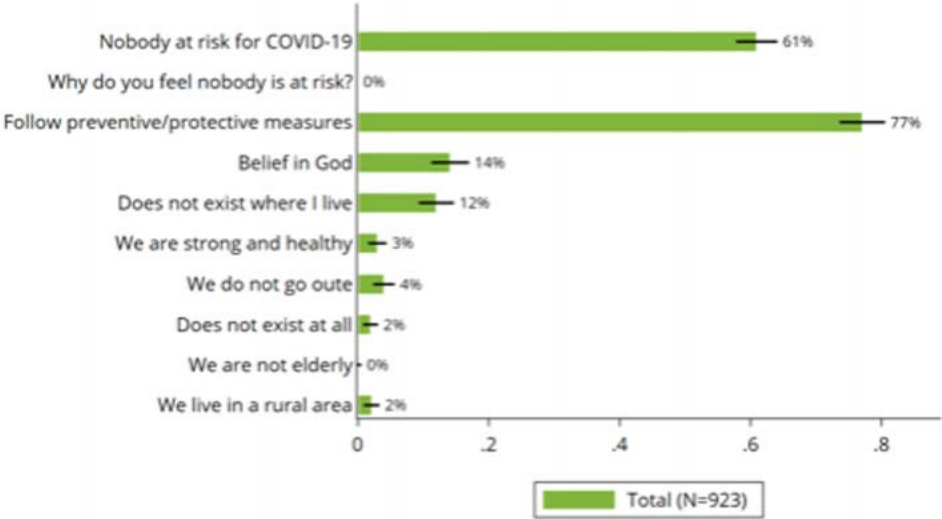
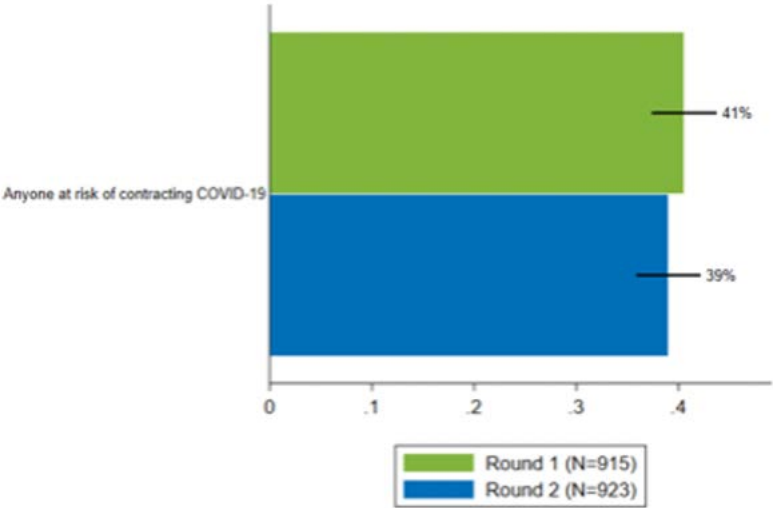
- Public Health Measures
- Economic Measures
- IPA RECOVR



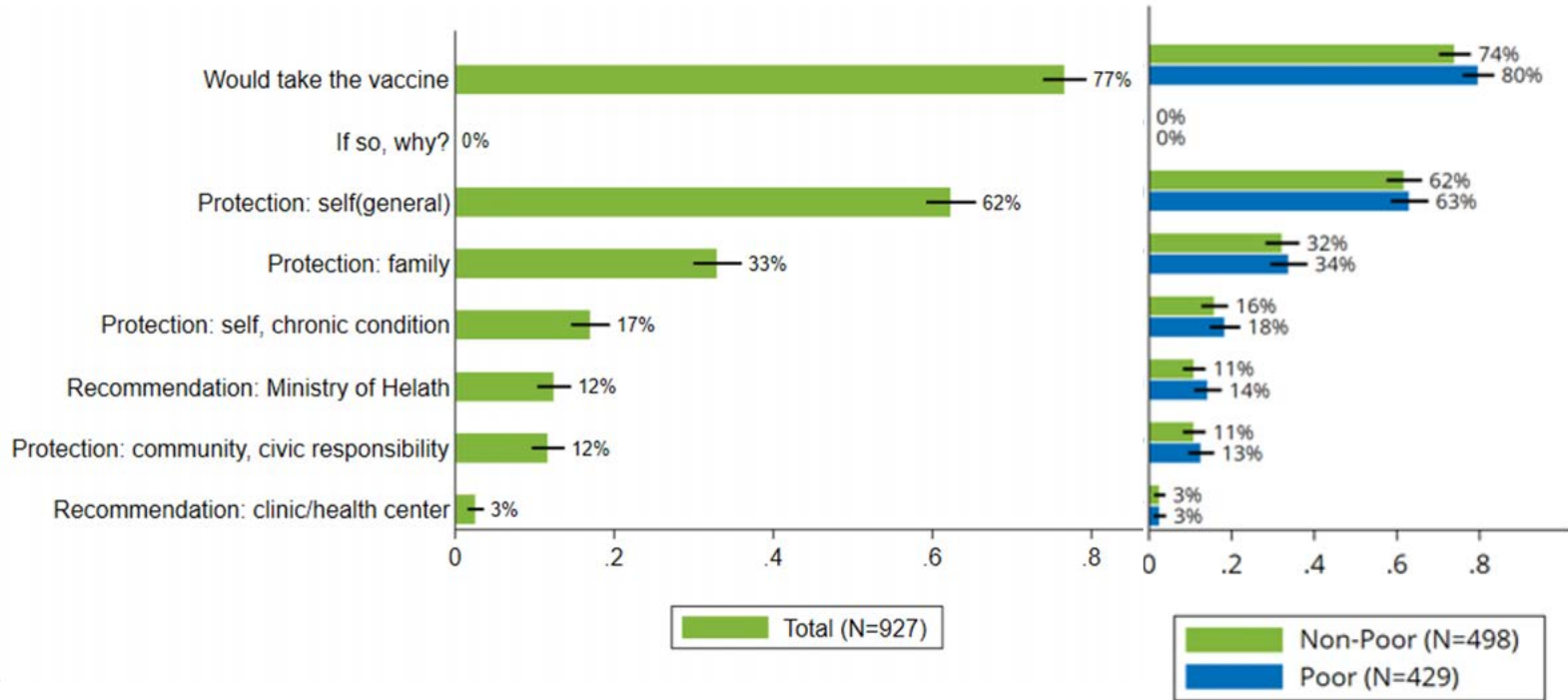


# Health & COVID-19 Mitigation

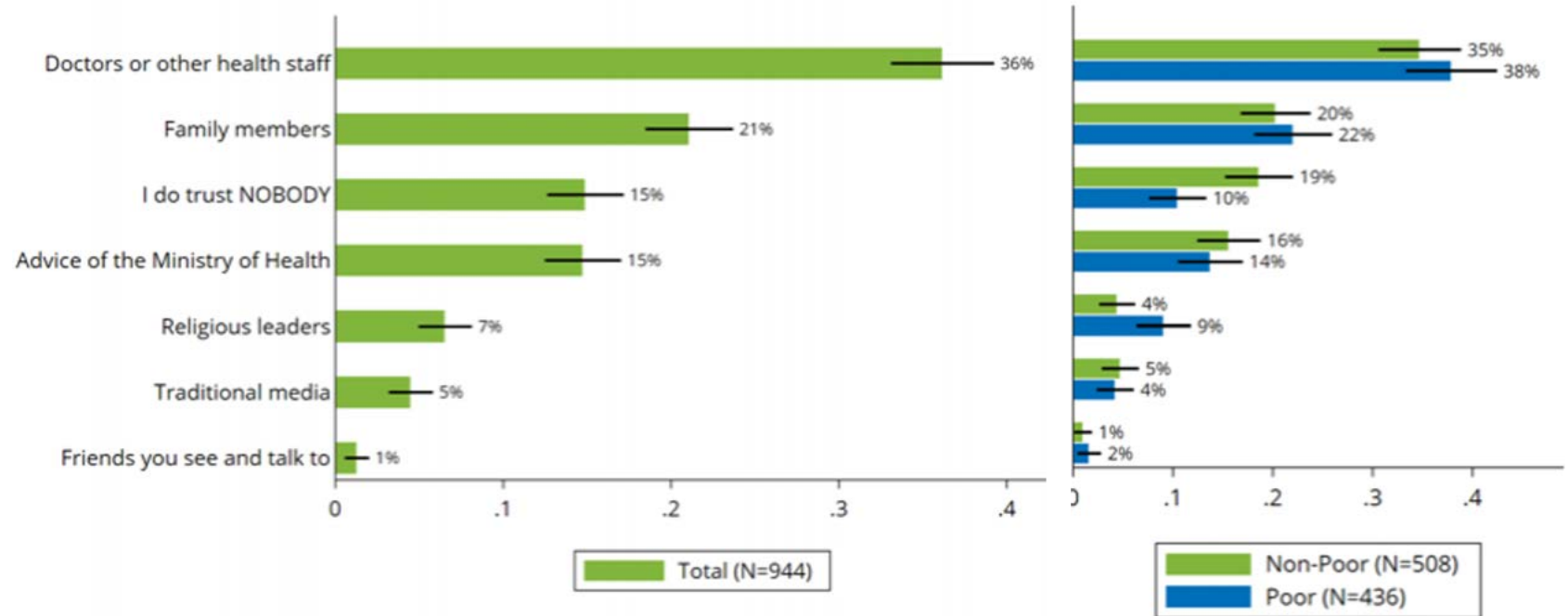
Risk perceptions and fear of COVID-19 were mostly consistent across rounds. For those respondents who do NOT feel at risk for COVID-19, 77% cite that it is because they follow protective measures, but 61% cite that it is because nobody is at risk for COVID-19.



# 77% of respondents would take the COVID-19 vaccine, and this **does not vary significantly** by socioeconomic status.



# One third of respondents indicate that doctors and other health staff are their most trusted source for vaccine information.





# Food Security & Financial Resilience

# The economic fallout from COVID-19 continued to hamper respondents' ability to access sufficient food.



**28%** report shortages in the markets prevent them from buying food



**54%** report drops in income prevent them from buying food

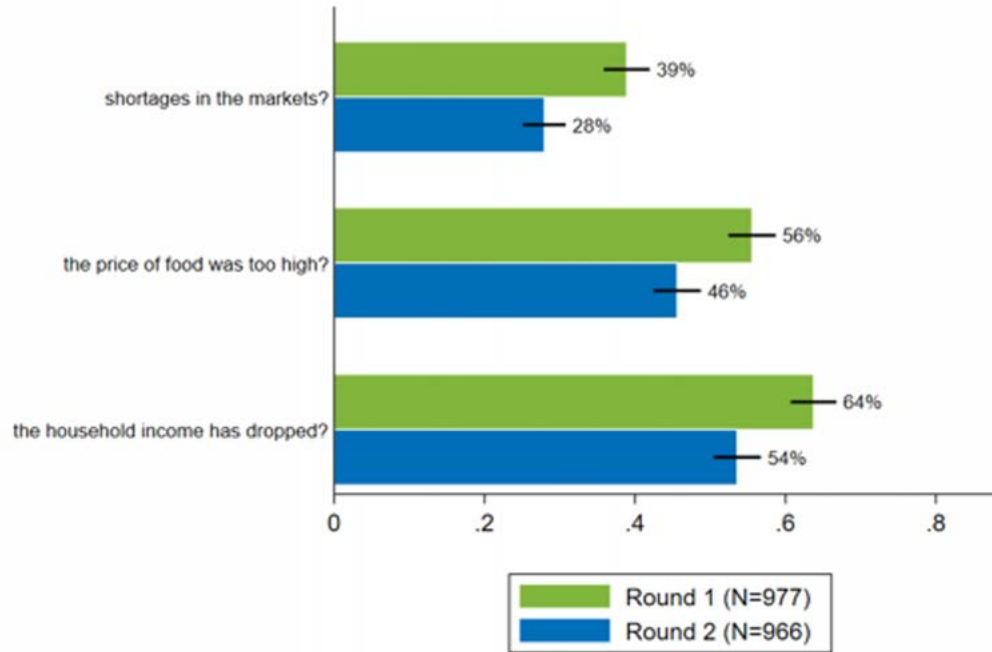


**46%** report the price of food was too high

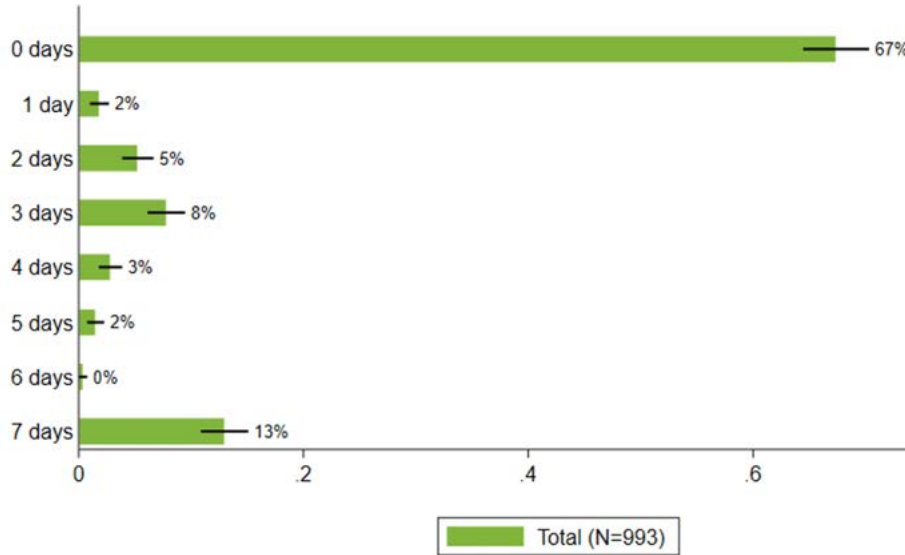


**31%** of respondents with children indicate that their diets are less healthy

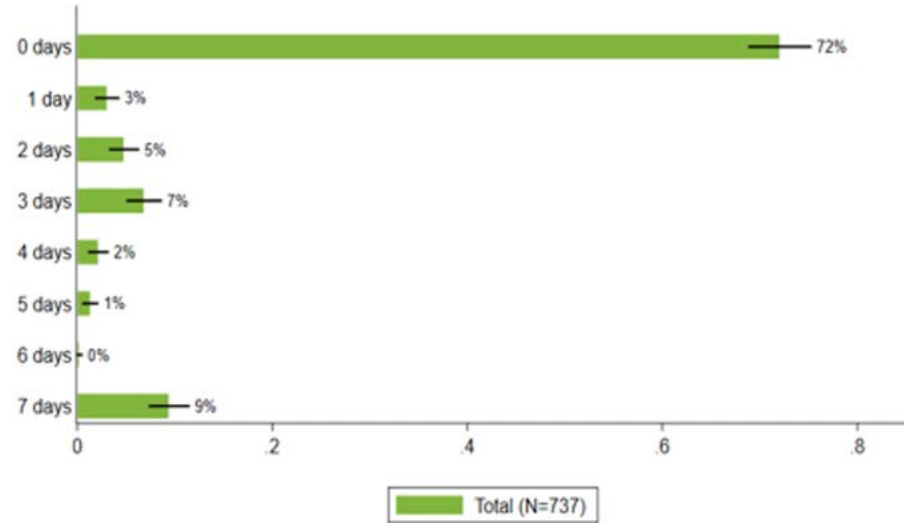
# The proportion of respondents who cite specific barriers in accessing sufficient amounts of food decreased across rounds.



**13%** of adults report limiting portion sizes due to an inability to buy food for all 7 days in the last week, compared to **9%** of those under 18. The majority have not had to limit portions during the last week.



Adults

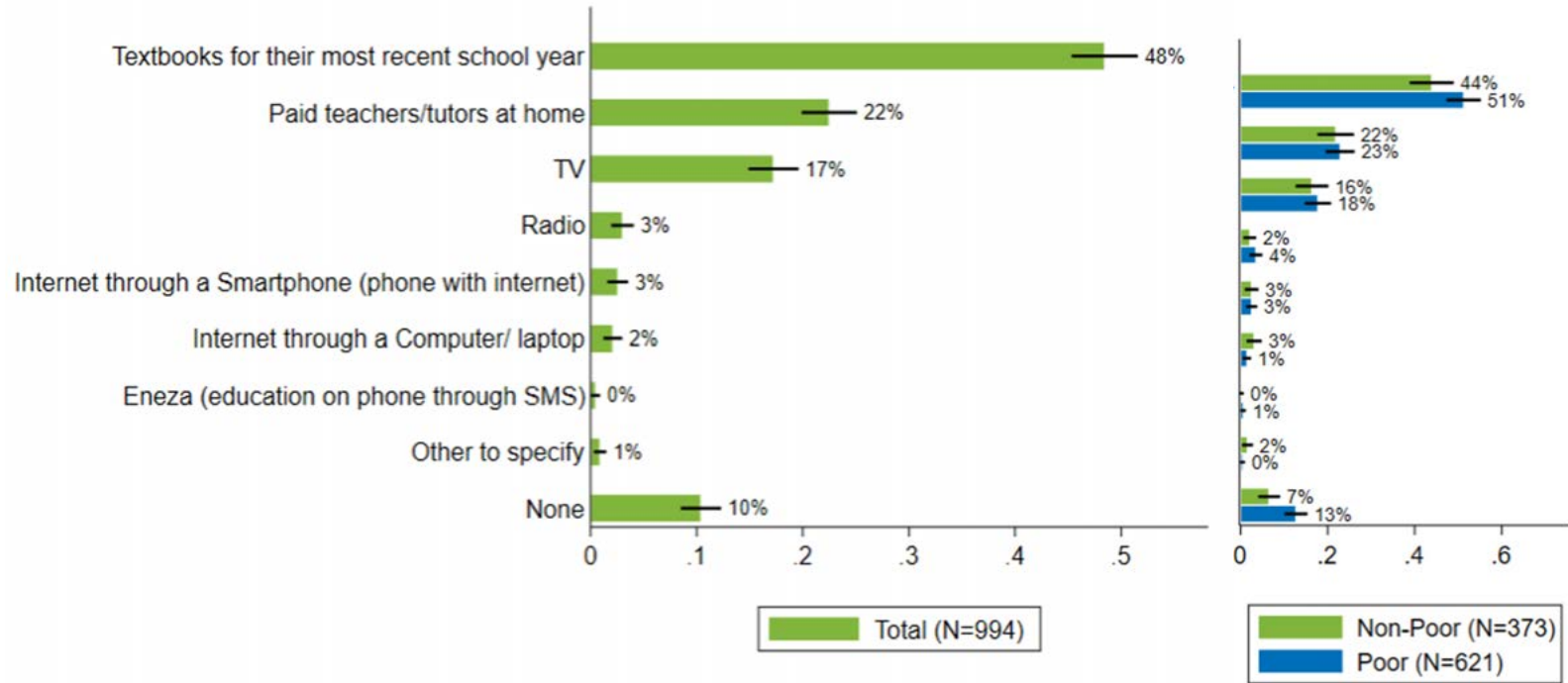


People under 18

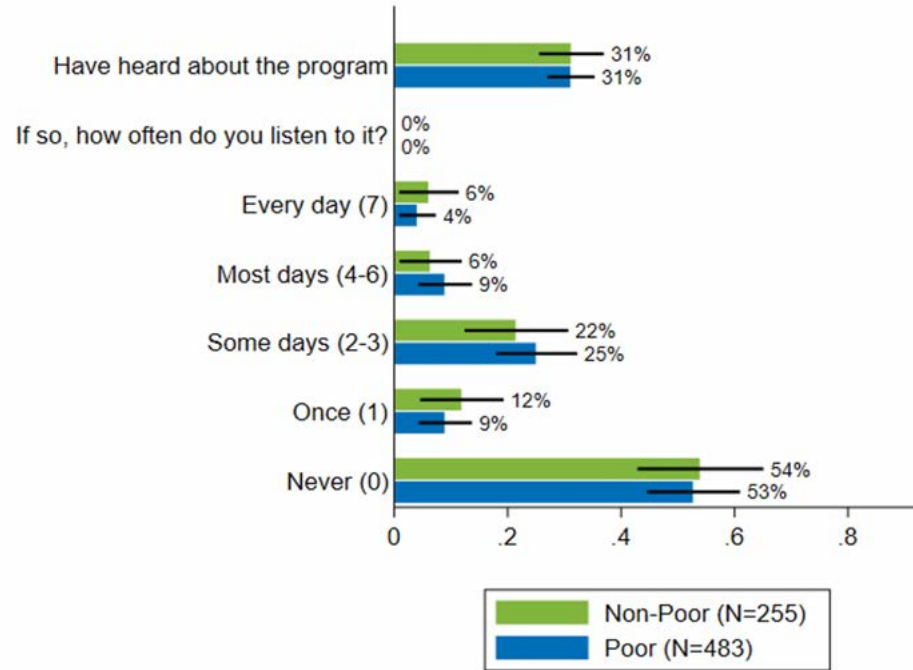


# 3 Education

# Students most frequently use textbooks to continue their educations at home. A slightly higher proportion of poorer students uses textbooks to continue their education at home.



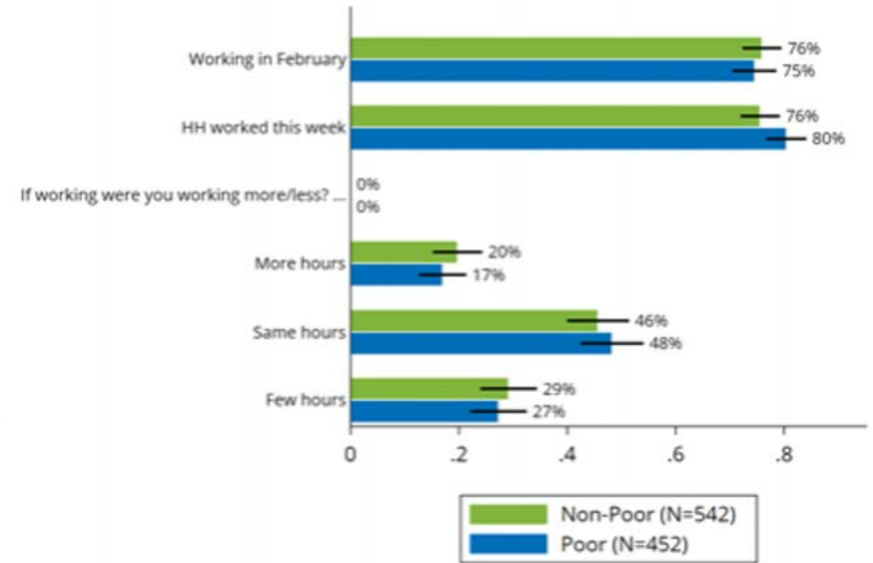
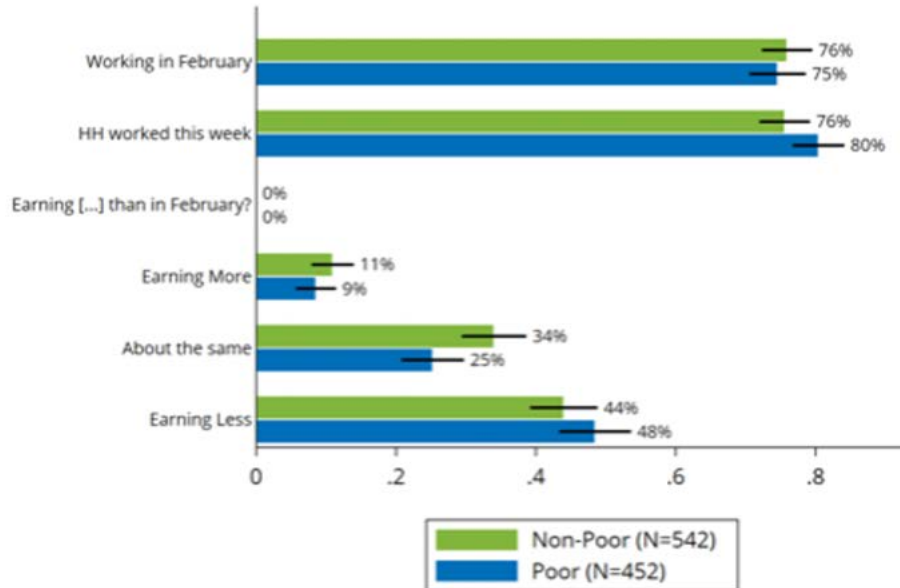
**31%** of respondents have heard of the "Ma radio, mon école avec Tonton Jojo" radio program, though more than half of those never listen to it.



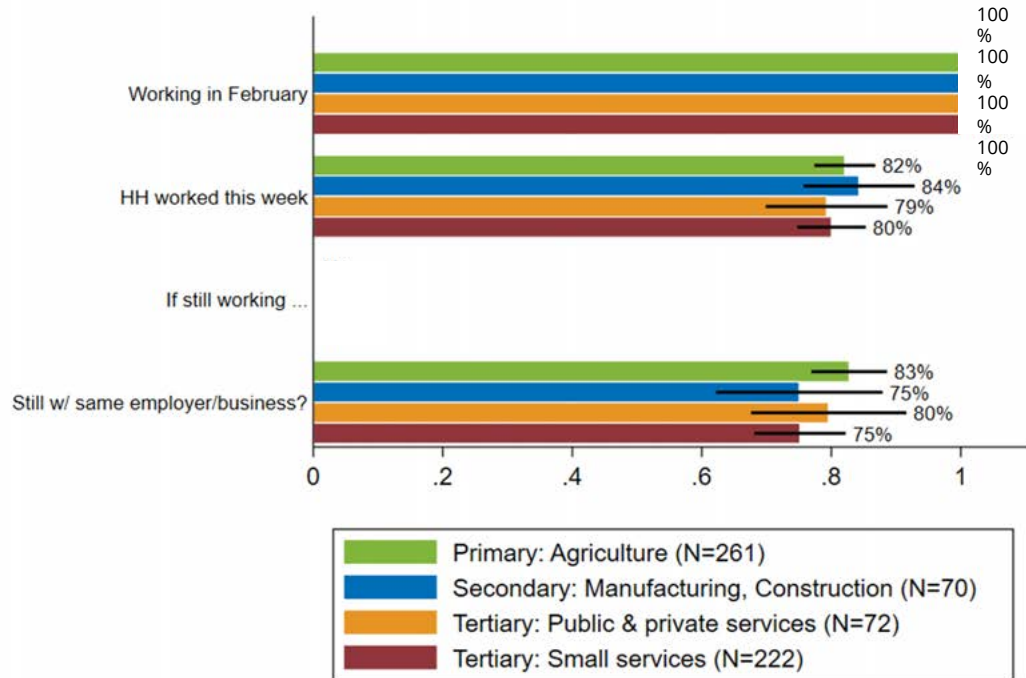
# 4

## Economic Activity & Employment

**78%** of heads of household worked in the week the survey was administered and, of those, **46%** are earning less and 47% maintain the same hours.



# Among respondents still working, a majority within each sector reported still working with the same employer/business.





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# RECOVR Burkina Faso



# Burkina Faso Survey Information

Dates of survey: October 15 - December 4, 2020 (Round 2)

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

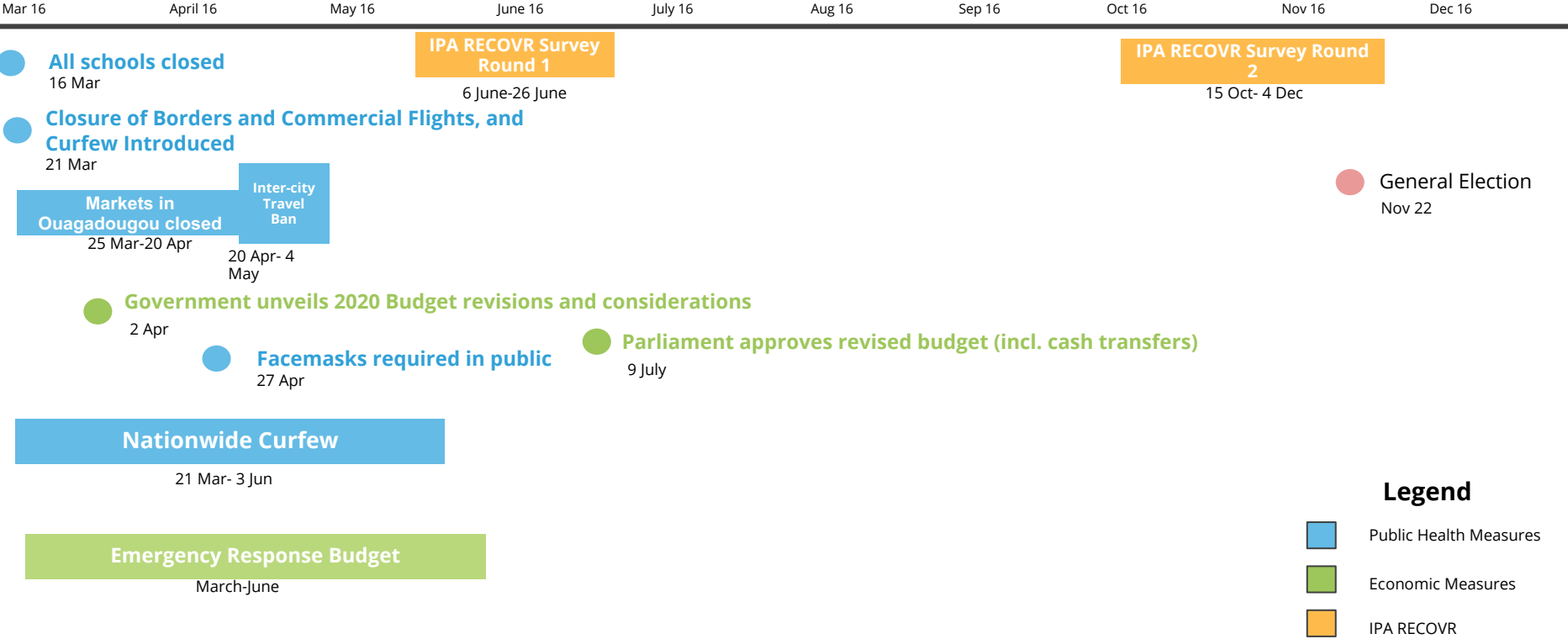
Sample size: 977 respondents (Round 2)  
1,356 respondents (Round 1)

Average respondent demographics:

- Age : 33 (S.D.: 11.5)
- % female : 27.94%
- Average household size : 6.75
- % of respondents with post-secondary education: 39%
- % under the national poverty line (Estimated with the PPI): 46.4%



# Burkina Faso RECOVR Survey: Survey and Policy Timeline



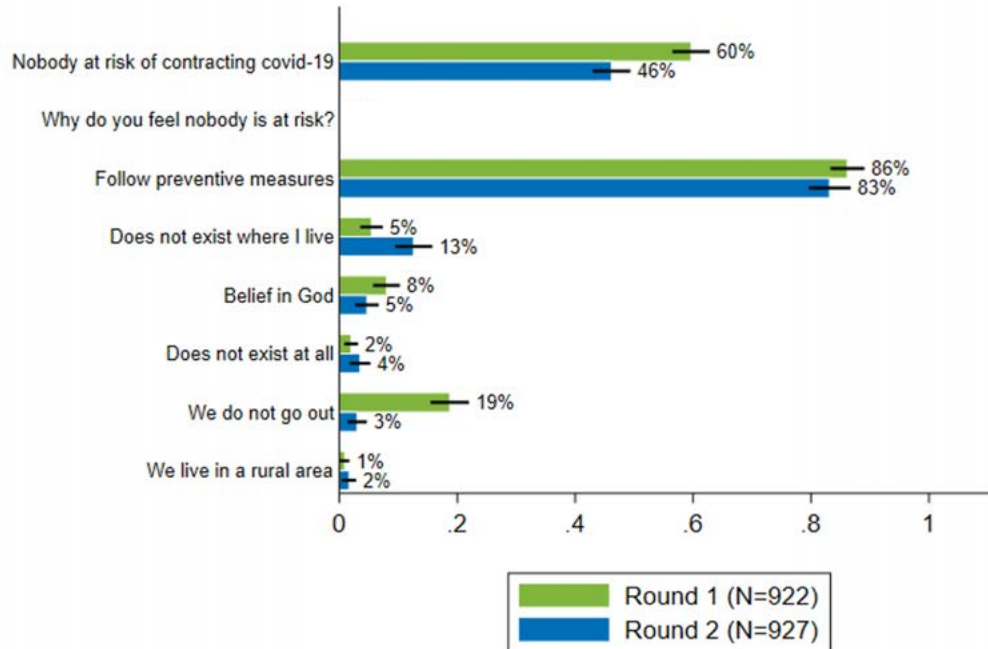
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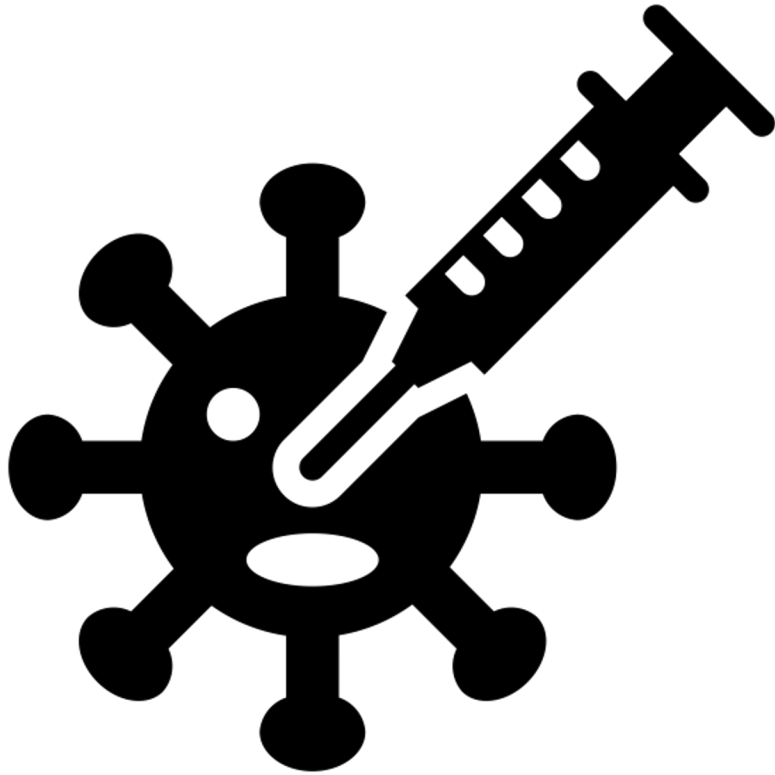
- Public Health Measures
- Economic Measures
- IPA RECOVR



# Health & COVID-19 Mitigation

**For those who do not feel at risk of contracting COVID-19, the vast majority indicate that it is because they follow preventive measures.**





**69%** of respondents indicate that they would take a COVID-19 vaccine and would vaccinate their children. The majority of these respondents would do so for self-protection, followed by family protection.

Of the **31%** of respondents who would not take the vaccine, **45%** cite worries about its side effects. **20%** cite conspiracy theories.

**52%** of respondents indicate doctors and healthcare professionals are their most trusted source for vaccine information.



# Food Security & Financial Resilience

# Various aspects of food insecurity affect about **one in four** respondents.



**18%** report shortages in the markets prevent them from buying food



**24%** report drops in income prevent them from buying food

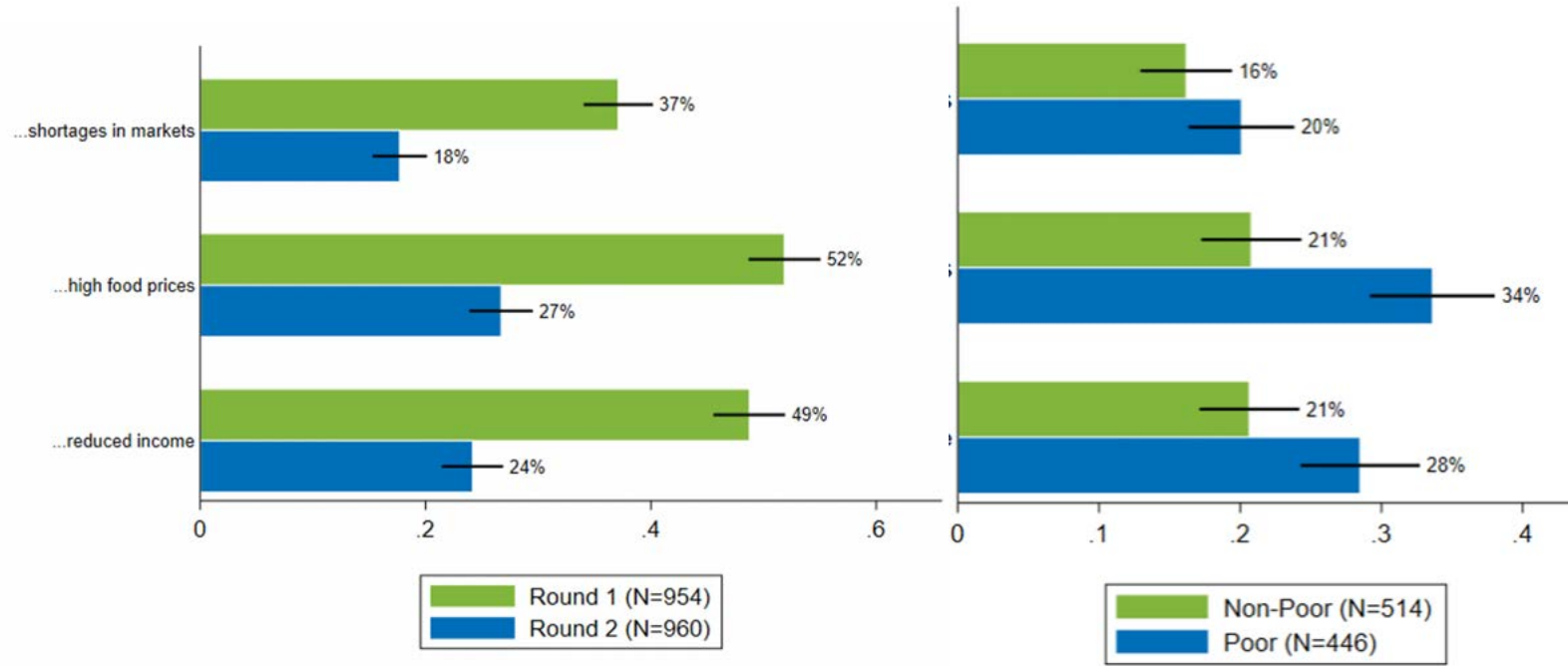


**27%** report the price of food was too high

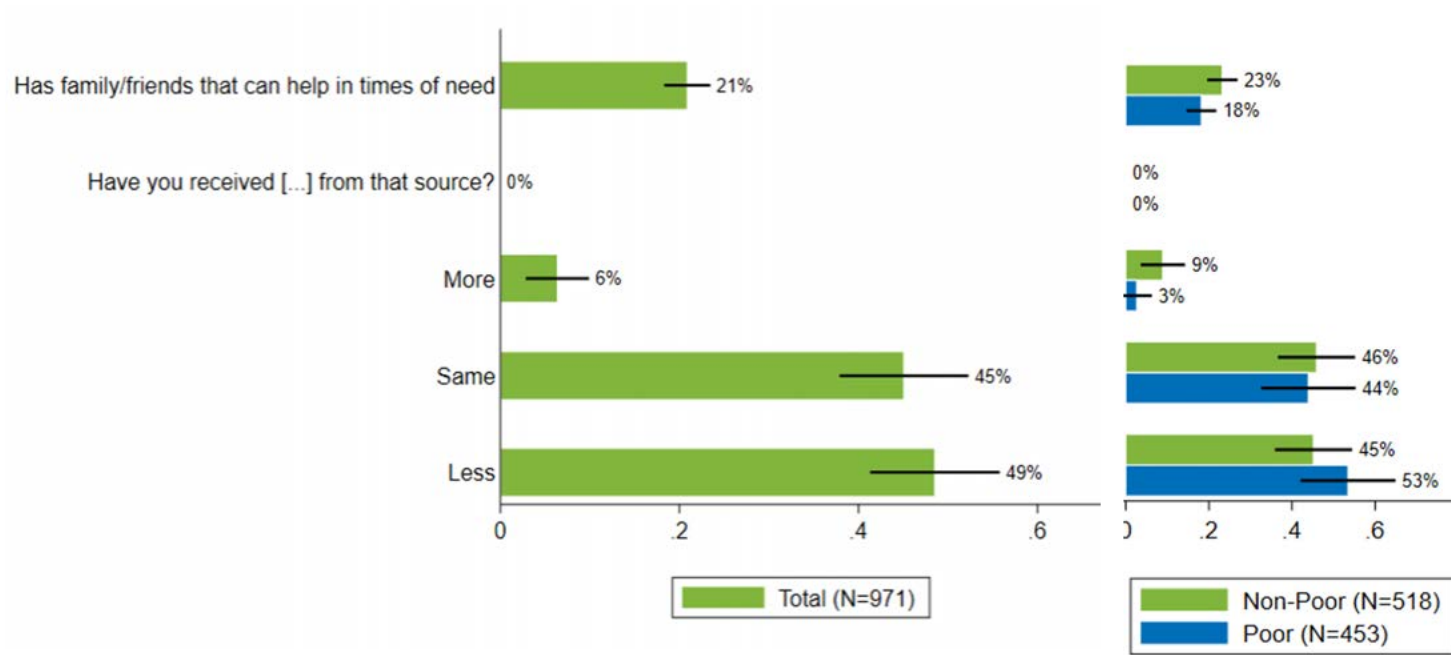


**60%** of respondents with children indicate that their diets have remained about the same since schools closed.

There have been **decreases between 19-25 pp** in respondents' ability to buy their usual amounts of food from markets because of market shortages, high food prices, or reduced incomes.

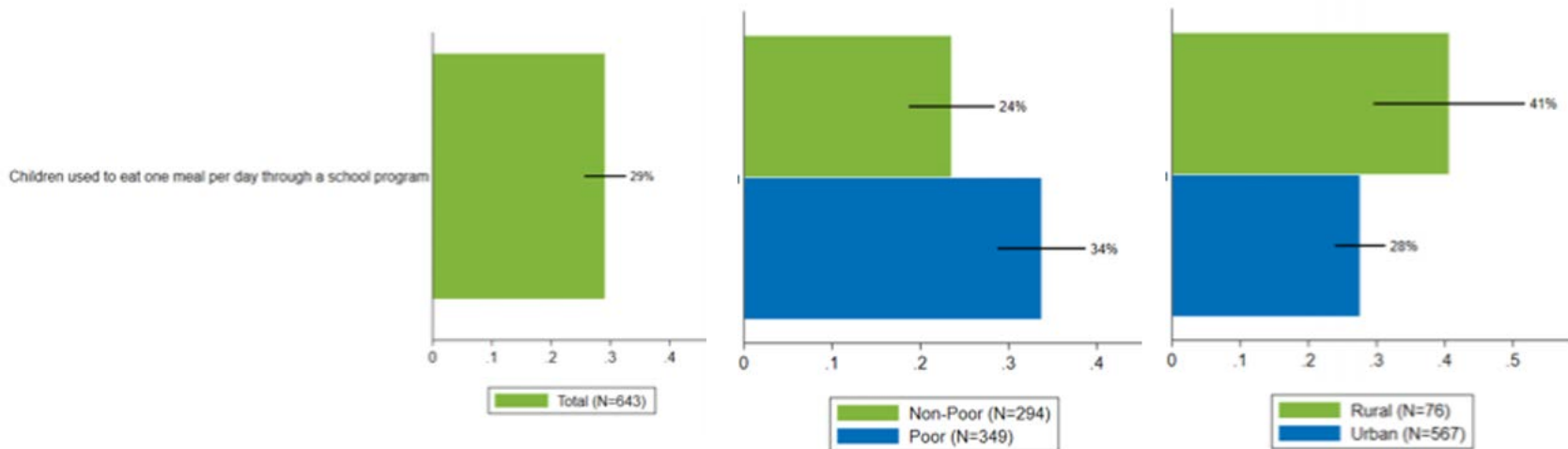


While **21%** of respondents indicate that they have family/friends that can help in times of need, nearly half (**49%**) report receiving less than usual support from that source.

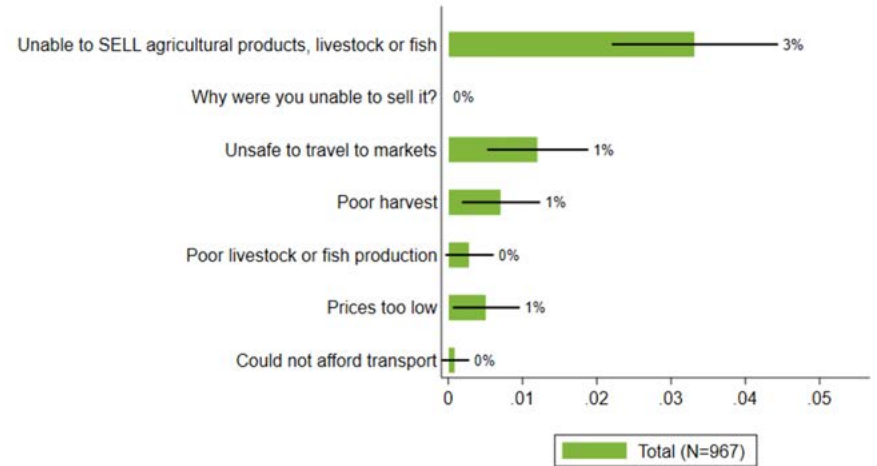
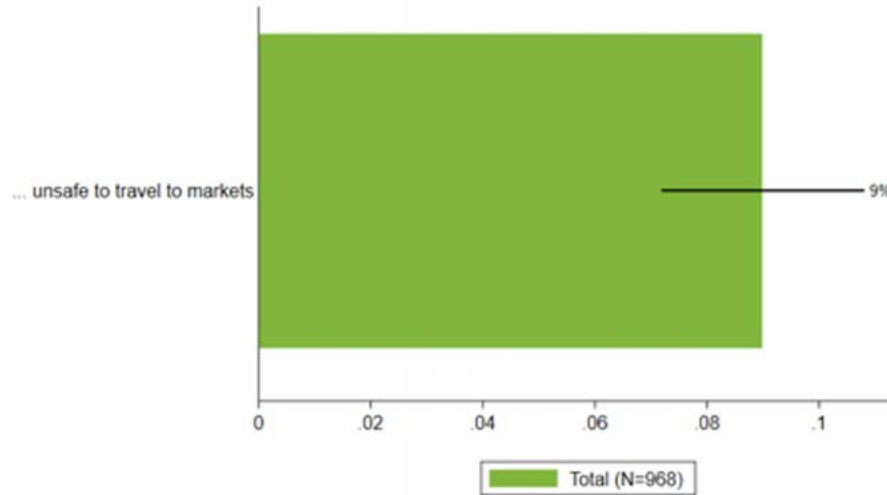




Almost one third (29%) of respondents indicate that their children used to eat at least one meal per day through a school feeding program (before schools closed). 34% of poor respondents' and 41% of rural respondents' children ate at least one meal per day through a school feeding program (before schools closed).

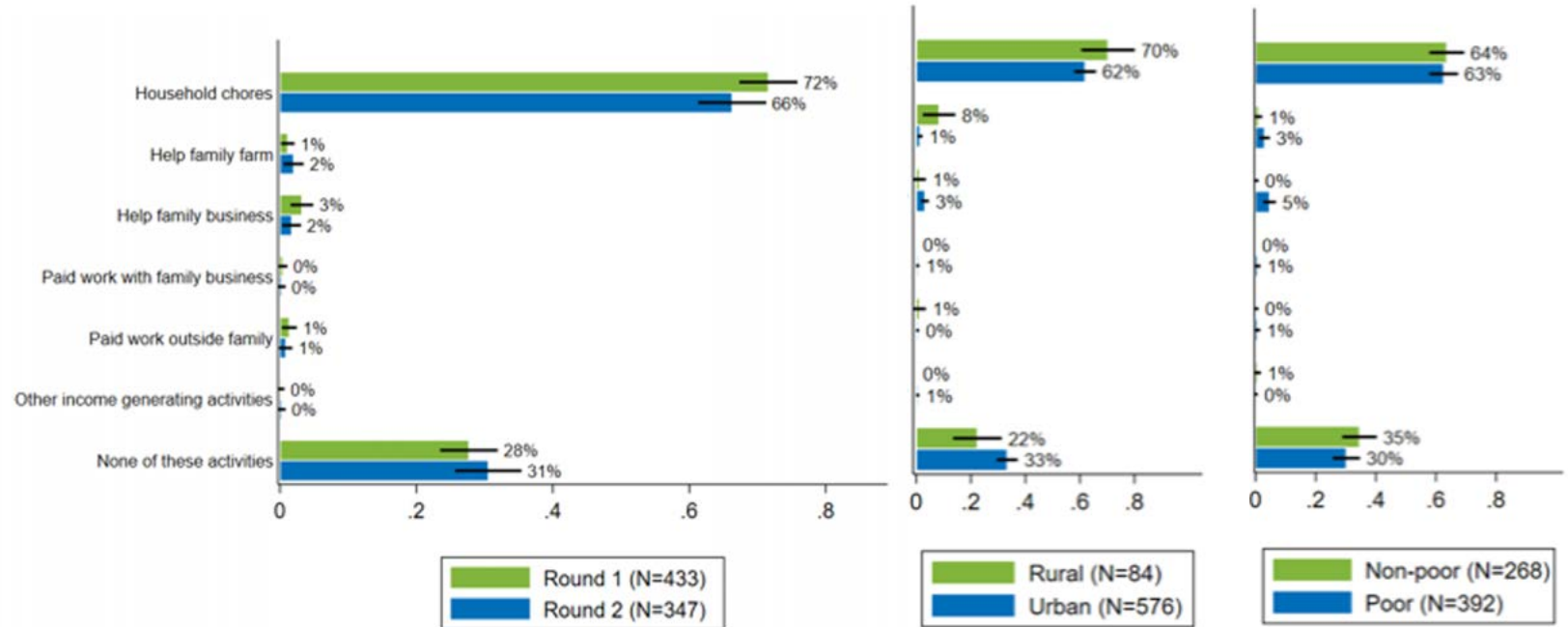


Almost **one in ten** respondents indicate that they feel it is unsafe to travel to markets, due to security concerns.



# 3 Education

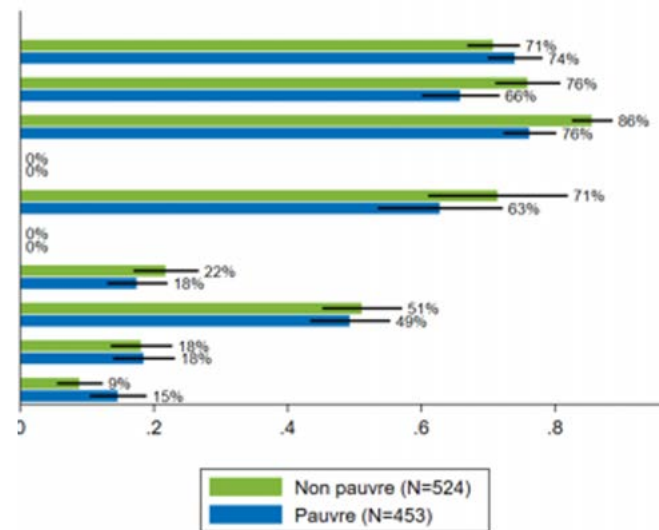
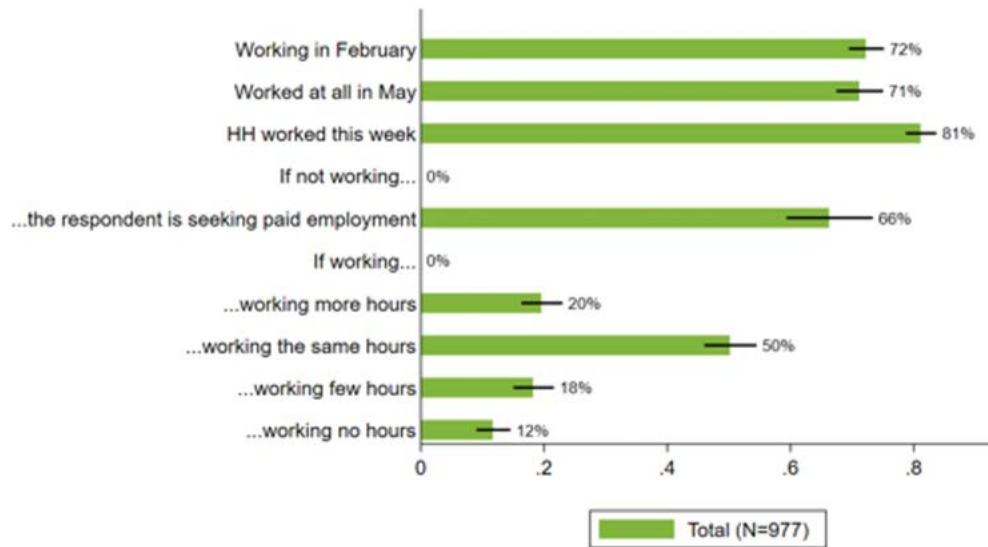
# Besides education, household chores are the predominant activity that primary school students spend time doing.



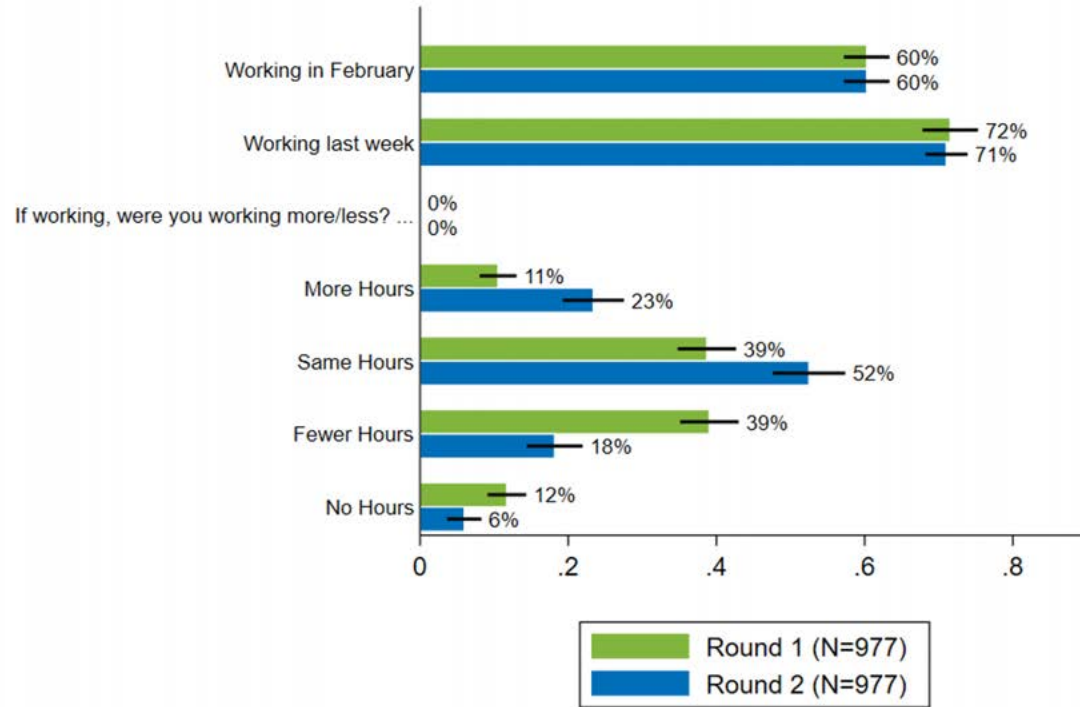
# **Economic Activity & Employment**

A majority (81%) of heads of household or respondents report working in the last week.

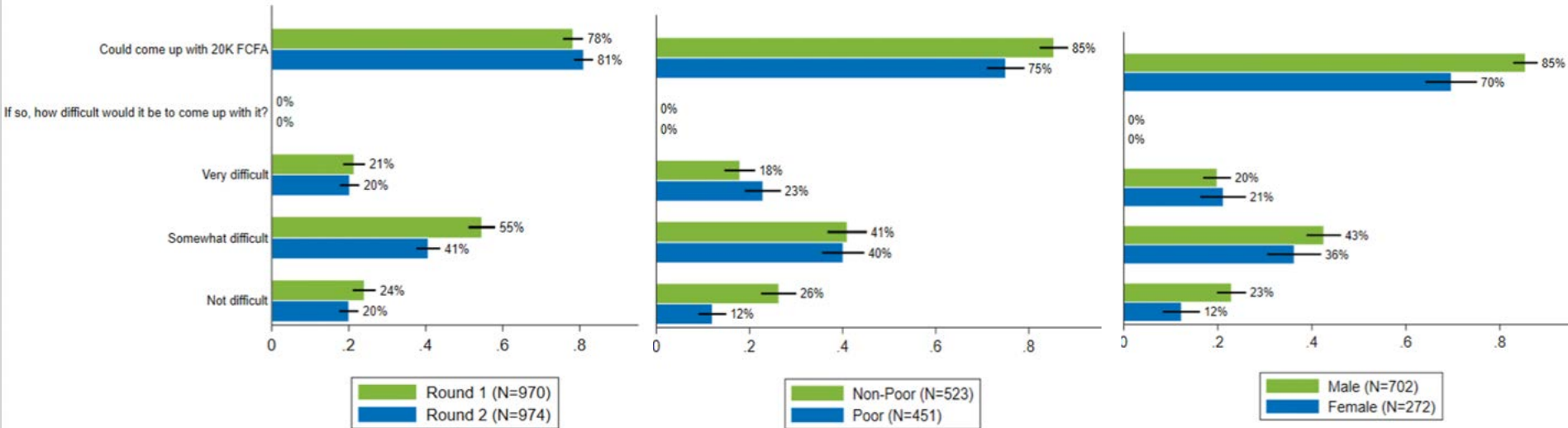
A greater proportion (86%) of non-poor heads of household or respondents indicate working in the past week compared to poor heads of household/respondents.



Among those working in the last week, the proportion working fewer hours decreased by **38pp** across rounds.



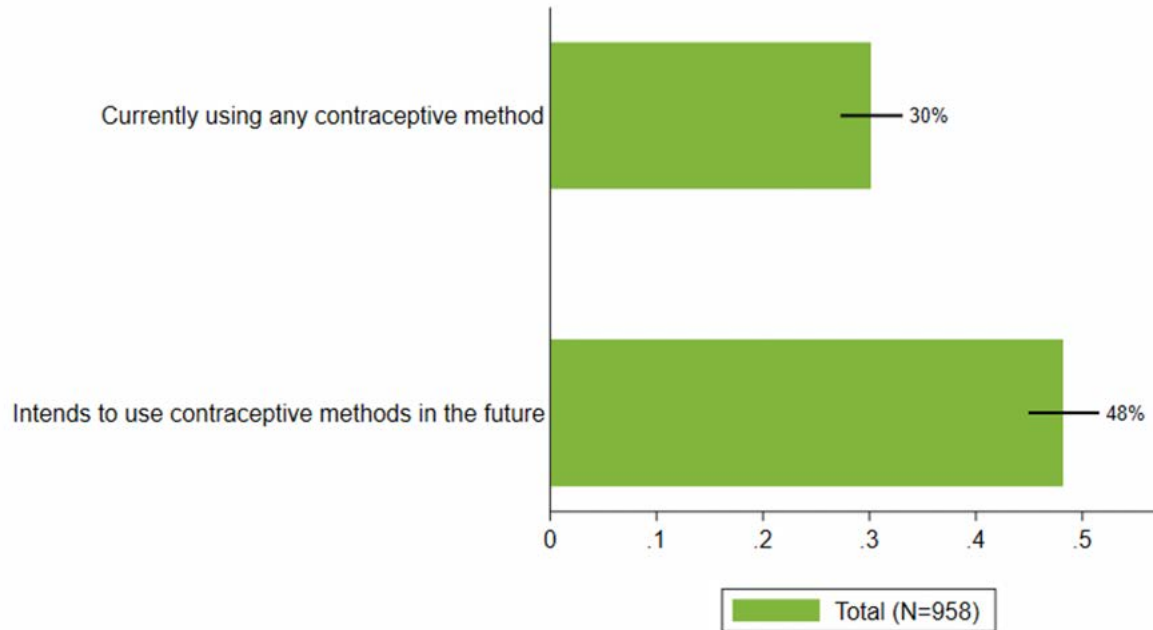
Across rounds, **a majority** of respondents could obtain emergency financial sources (20k FCFA) in 1 month, though more than one in four would find it somewhat difficult.



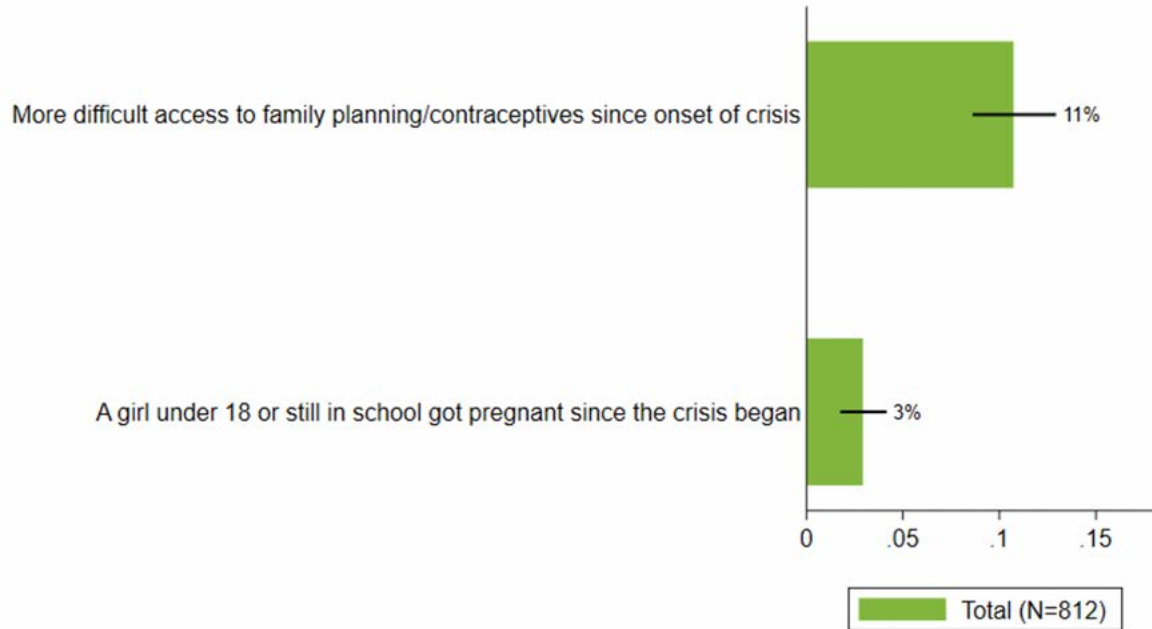


# 5 Family Planning

**30%** of respondents indicate that they are currently using any contraceptive method, and **48%** of respondents indicate that they intend to use contraceptive methods in the future.



**11%** of respondents indicate that it has been more difficult to access family planning since the onset of the crisis, and **3%** of respondents indicate that girls under 18 in the household that have gotten pregnant since the onset of the crisis.



# Policy takeaways

- **Mobile money:** Research shows that growing reliance on mobile money has already [reduced poverty rates](#) and [strengthened women's agency](#) under ordinary circumstances.
- **Cash transfers:** Delivery and targeting? Governments consider [big data](#) to identify recipients. Safe targeting during a pandemic through [self-enrollment](#), [geographic targeting](#), or [building on existing administrative data](#).
- [Food ration programs](#) focused on families with young children or the reinstatement of school feeding programs could help mitigate potential adverse impacts.
- **Vaccination uptake** intentions are high, but as new information on safety and effectiveness is available, health workers should be engaged in communication.

# Policy Discussion and Q&A



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## 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](mailto:contact@poverty-action.org)

# Thank you



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