



# COVID-19 IN LAC

## HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEYS

### RESULTS FIRST WAVE\*

May – June 2020

#### **Alarming increase in food insecurity in Latin America.**

This implies not only skipping meals but also running out of food. In Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru and Dominican Republic, 40 percent or more of their households report to have run out of food since the lockdown. Prolonged deterioration in nutrition has both short but also long term health and economic effects.

#### **Unemployment is rising quickly and affected households are losing their main source of incomes.**

In Colombia, Peru and St Lucia, more than 25 percent of occupied workers (aged 18 or older) report losing their jobs since the lockdown. In countries like Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala, that loss is close to 20 percent. For most of all countries monitored around 70 percent of households report decreasing household incomes. The resulting increases in poverty are likely to take the region several years back in terms of its fight against poverty and inequality.

#### **There is an obvious need for speeding up public intervention in the areas of virtual learning and access to medical attention and medicines across most vulnerable households.**

In Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru some 30 percent or more of their households reporting to need medical attention during the lockdown did not receive it. With respect to education, most countries report virtual learning at home. A few, however, such as Bolivia and Guatemala, report over 10 percent of school age children not engaging in any remote learning activity.

#### **Reducing food consumption is the main mechanism to cope with the crisis for most households across the region.**

For most countries, around 20 percent of

households report to reduce consumption as the main coping mechanism. This is not a sustainable solution for a protracted pandemic.

#### **Most countries lack comprehensive social assistance programs in place to combat the pandemic.**

Therefore, there is ample room to extend public transfers-in cash and/or food-to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. Countries report coverage of transfers between 12 and 53 percent of the population (St Lucia and El Salvador, respectively). The coverage of these transfers fall in between those shares in the rest of countries (although in some of them only new transfers were asked). Social assistance needs to continue to be strengthened given the significant increase in vulnerable populations.

#### **Despite a large rate of approval for governments' interventions, lack of financial support to population, lack of enforcement or late response are the key area of public dissatisfaction.**

Costa Rica, Guatemala and Paraguay are the countries with the highest levels of satisfaction (close to 90 percent). Yet, it seems that governments in the region need to do a better job explaining their responses to the population.

#### **Unsurprisingly, there is a wide variation in abidance with lock-down measures mandated across countries.**

In countries like Bolivia, El Salvador, Honduras and Peru over 90 percent of the population report to respect and follow the lockdown. In other countries like Chile, Costa Rica and Paraguay, that share is much lower (50 to 70 percent). Because of the high epidemiological risks of not following the quarantine, these levels of noncompliance are really troublesome.

More detailed analyses will follow this note.

\*This brief was prepared by Paola Ballon, Jose Cuesta, Sergio Olivieri and Ana Rivadeneira, under the guidance of Ximena del Carpio, with the financial support from the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Vice Presidency.

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Country	Food security		Access to health services	Access to education	Employment	Income loss
	% households where adults had to skip a meal because there was not enough money or other resources (last 30 days)	% households that ran out of food because of a lack of money or other resources (last 30 days)	HH member needed but was NOT able to access medical treatment	HH children have NOT been engaged in any education or learning activities since the schools closed	% people who lost their employment during C-19 quarantine (18 years and over)	% households that report a reduction of total income during quarantine
Bolivia	31.4%	43.2%	37.4%	15.3%	17.4%	70.0%
Chile	13.2%	17.8%	21.3%	4.1%	6.5%	53.9%
Colombia	41.6%	43.8%	28.8%	3.3%	26.6%	71.7%
Costa Rica	19.5%	29.7%	9.6%	3.1%	16.4%	63.1%
Dominican Republic	38.2%	43.6%	27.2%	6.1%	15.7%	59.2%
Ecuador	42.7%	50.2%	48.3%	2.6%	17.5%	73.8%
El Salvador	31.6%	39.5%	25.8%	1.9%	16.2%	68.8%
Guatemala	35.9%	46.3%	19.3%	9.8%	18.6%	69.9%
Honduras	43.5%	52.5%	21.1%	7.8%	16.0%	68.1%
Mexico	19.7%	23.3%	10.9%	2.1%	12.1%	60.0%
Paraguay	23.2%	27.3%	28.7%	2.2%	13.8%	63.7%
Peru	40.0%	47.1%	41.5%	2.8%	28.0%	81.4%
St. Lucia	n.a.	31.9% <sup>1</sup>	22.1% <sup>2</sup>	8.5% <sup>2</sup>	28.0% <sup>2</sup>	71.2%
Notes		1. Weighted average for poor and nonpoor. n.a.: non available.	2. Weighted average for poor and nonpoor. n.a.: non available.	2. Weighted average for poor and nonpoor. n.a.: non available.	2. Weighted average for poor and nonpoor.	

Country	Coping mechanisms		Quarantine compliance	Concerns	Satisfaction with government policies	
	Reduced food consumption	Did NOT receive direct in-kind or cash transfers	NOT all household members are quarantined	% of people concerned about getting COVID-19 or about household economy	NOT SATISFIED with the government's response to the coronavirus crisis (%)	Reasons for dissatisfaction: limited financial assistance OR does not enforce restrictions OR late response by government
Bolivia	20.2%	56.5%	9.6%	95.3%	28.6%	14.0%
Chile	24.0%	80.5%	34.8%	96.1%	45.2%	56.2%
Colombia	19.2%	74.4%	28.0%	94.2%	18.5%	46.2%
Costa Rica	20.1%	61.7%	42.6%	93.5%	9.8%	55.4%
Dominican Republic	17.9%	55.7%	32.1%	91.7%	25.5%	26.1%
Ecuador	22.4%	81.8%	18.9%	92.3%	39.2%	30.8%
El Salvador	20.7%	47.2%	12.2%	91.9%	10.0%	28.0%
Guatemala	17.4%	80.8%	24.4%	87.3%	10.7%	19.0%
Honduras	19.5%	65.4%	10.3%	88.8%	25.5%	24.9%
Mexico	22.7%	86.9%	31.4%	86.9%	29.1%	27.7%
Paraguay	16.8%	54.4%	38.4%	86.4%	9.6%	25.1%
Peru	23.3%	76.1%	12.0%	96.4%	20.1%	47.2%
St Lucia	n.a.	88.0% <sup>3</sup>	37.7% <sup>4</sup>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Notes	n.a.: non available.	3. At least one social program, total.	4. Report curfew or lockdown.	n.a.: non available.	n.a.: non available.	n.a.: non available.

Top tercile Intermediate tercile Bottom tercile Information not available or comparable

Source: World Bank, High Frequency Phone Surveys 1<sup>st</sup> Wave, Washington DC.

\* Countries have been divided into 3 groups according to the values of each indicator. Darker shade indicates the 4 countries with highest values, lighter shade is for the 4 countries with the lowest values and medium shade is for countries with values in between. St. Lucia is not included in this classification because its indicators are not strictly comparable.

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