Poverty and Social Impacts of COVID-19: Results from the Rapid PICES Phone Survey Data

zimref
ZIMBABWE RECONSTRUCTION FUND

ZimStat
Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

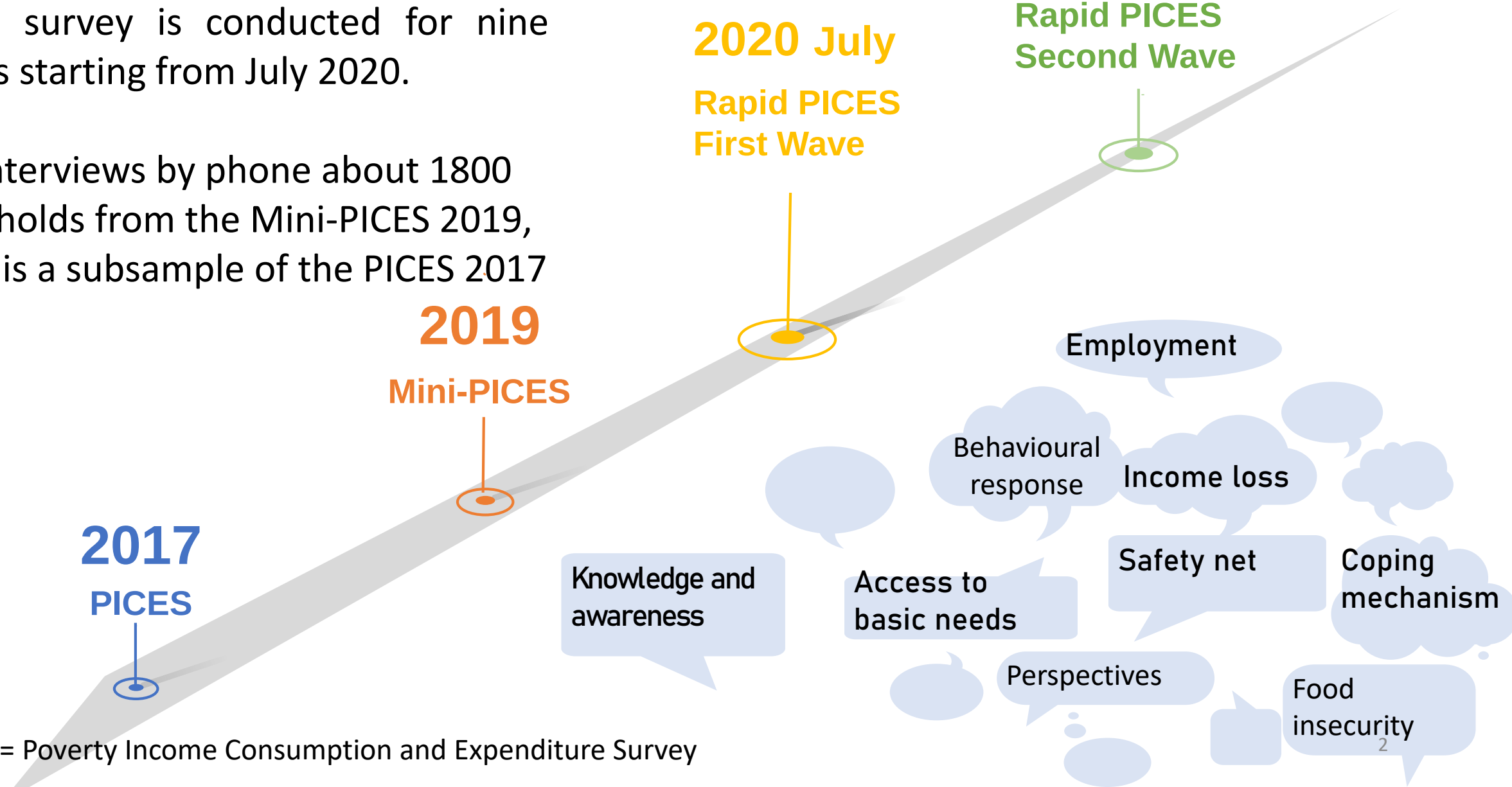
October 8th, 2020

WORLD BANK GROUP

The Rapid PICES

phone survey is conducted for nine rounds starting from July 2020.

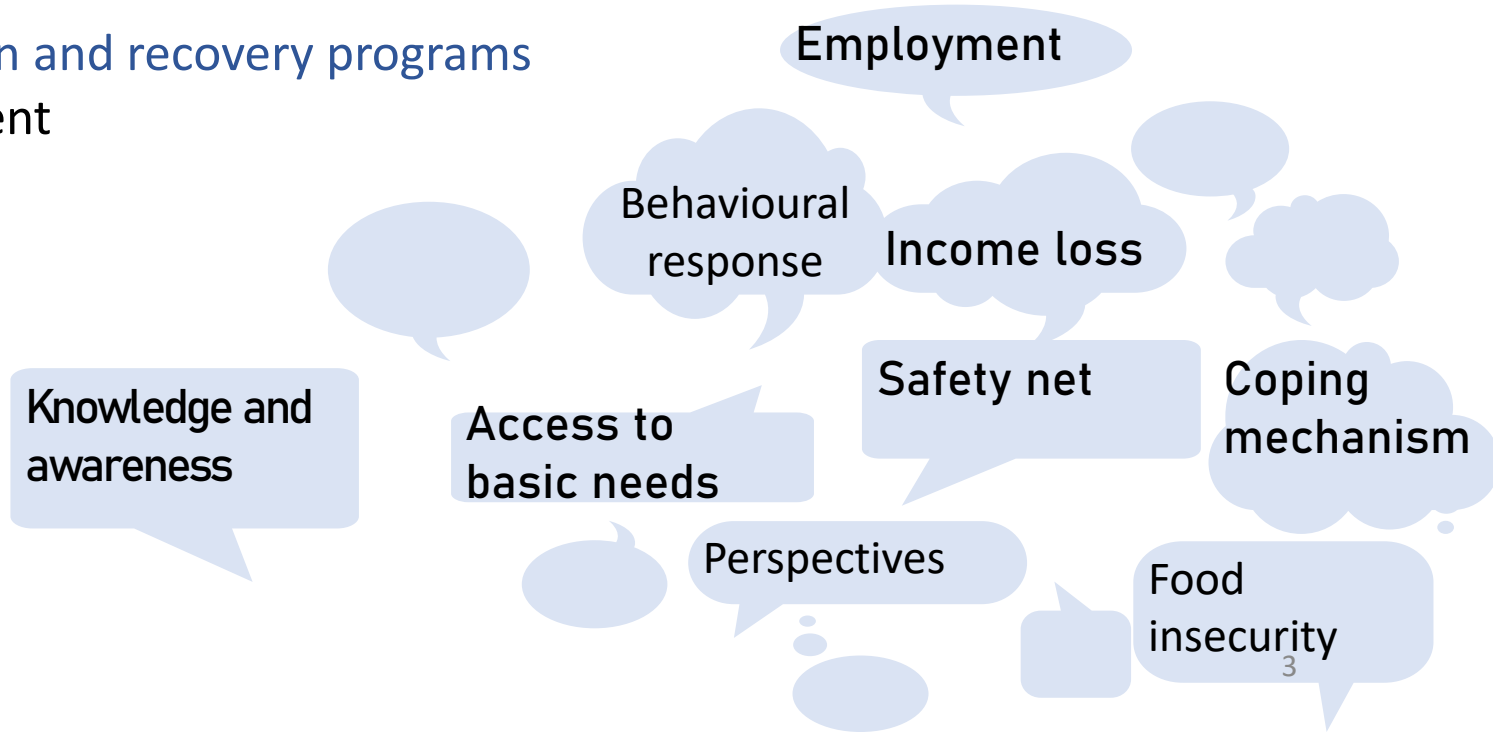
It re-interviews by phone about 1800 households from the Mini-PICES 2019, which is a subsample of the PICES 2017



PICES = Poverty Income Consumption and Expenditure Survey

The Rapid PICES Objectives

- Estimating the economic and social impacts of the crisis
- Monitoring information access and behavioral responses
- Understanding the economic transmission channels
- Assessing the impacts on small business, farming, health, food security, and welfare
- Providing evidence to support mitigation and recovery programs and improving targeting and management



The Rapid PICES

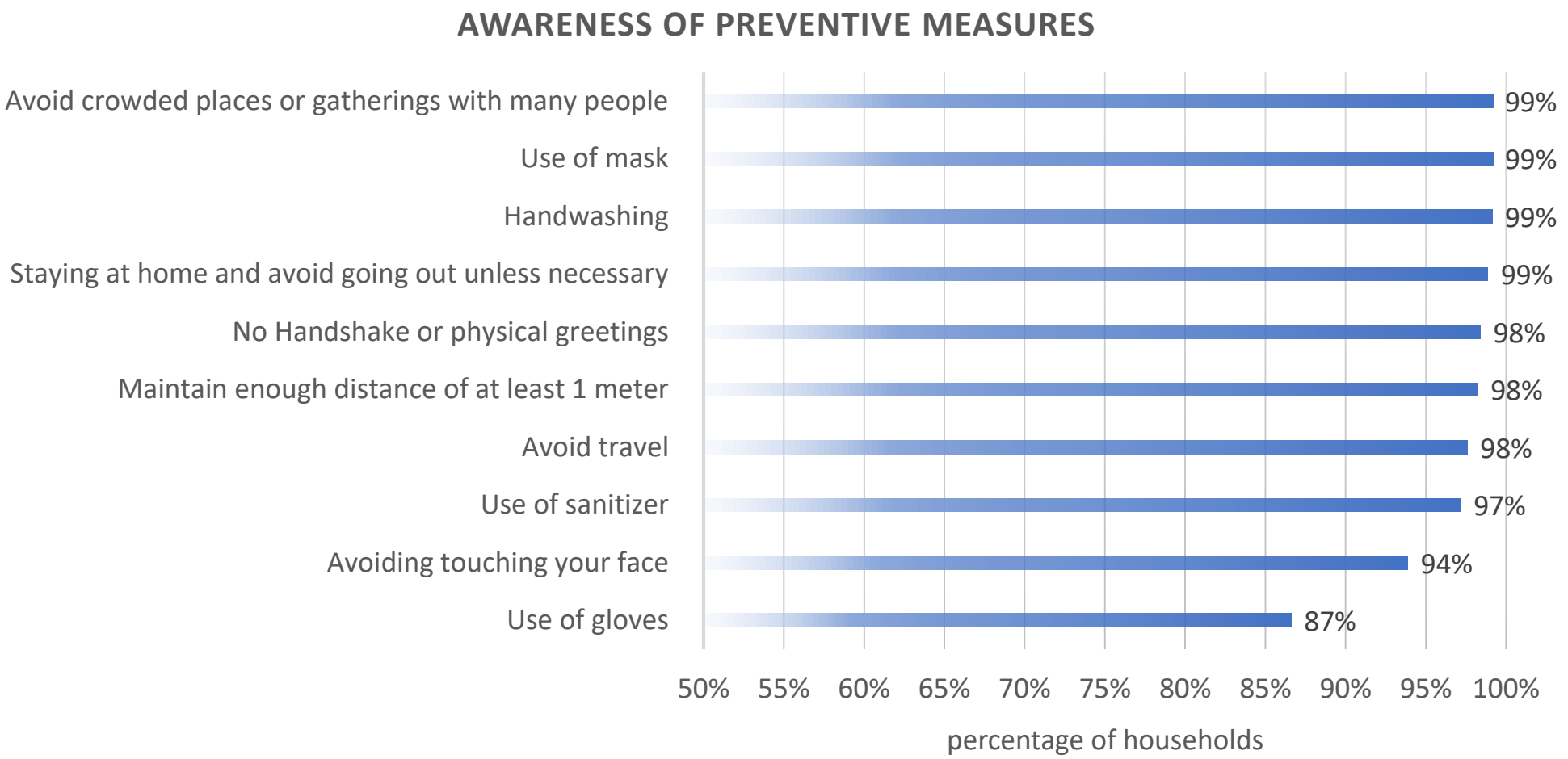
-- First Wave

- 1,747 households
- 209 Enumeration areas
- Representative of urban and rural areas
- Covering all 10 provinces
- **Data collection: July 6th – 24th 2020**

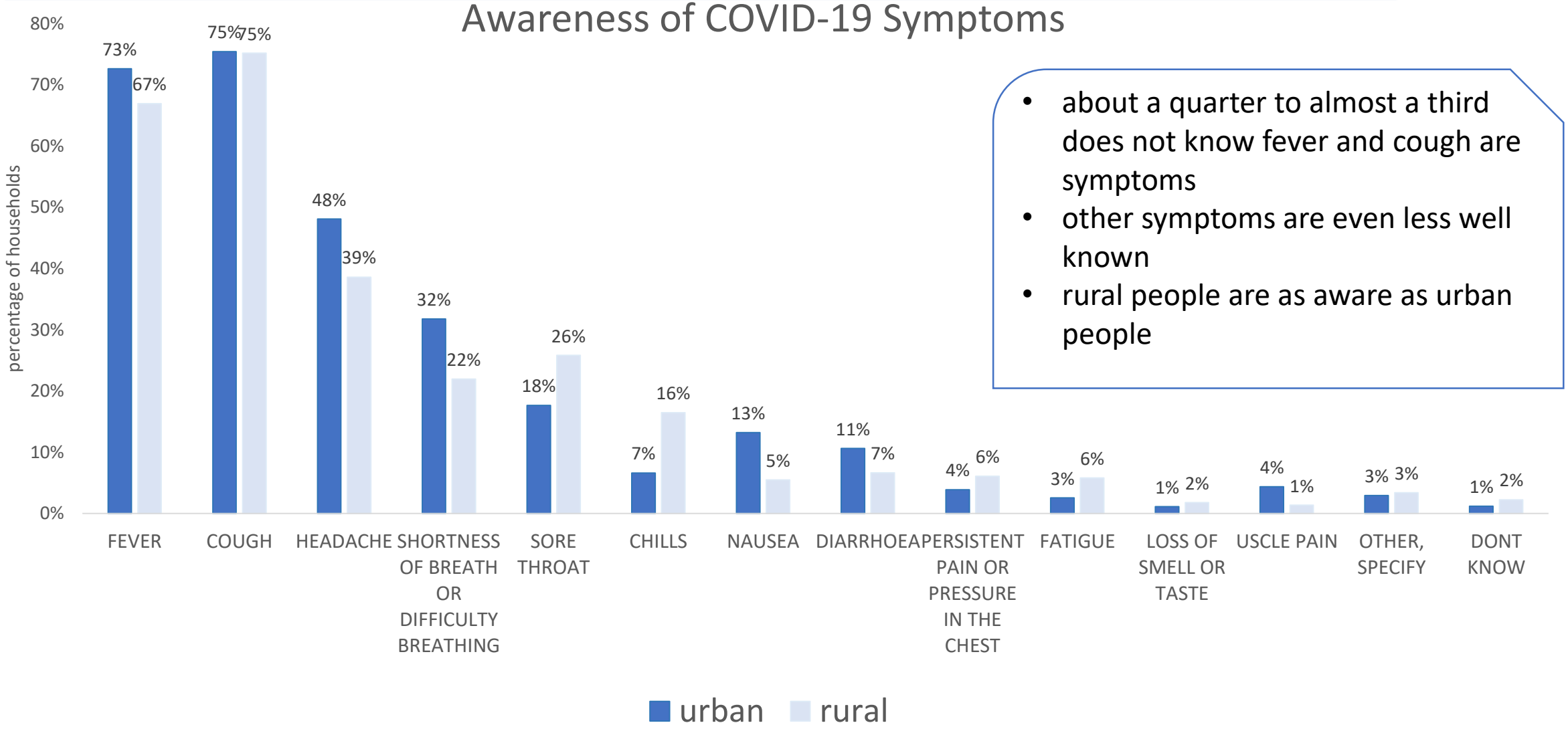
First reported COVID-19 case: March 21st

- Nearly everyone is aware of COVID-19 and how to prevent it, but some symptoms are less well-known
- Urban areas are most affected by water shortage, rural areas are limited by soap access
- Capability to buy food and get medical treatment is low
- Only 40% of children continue engaging in education after schools closed
- Wage workers in urban areas are affected, but family businesses got hit the hardest
- Coverage of food aid and other government programs is low

Awareness of prevention: Nearly everyone has heard about COVID-19 and knows the preventive measures



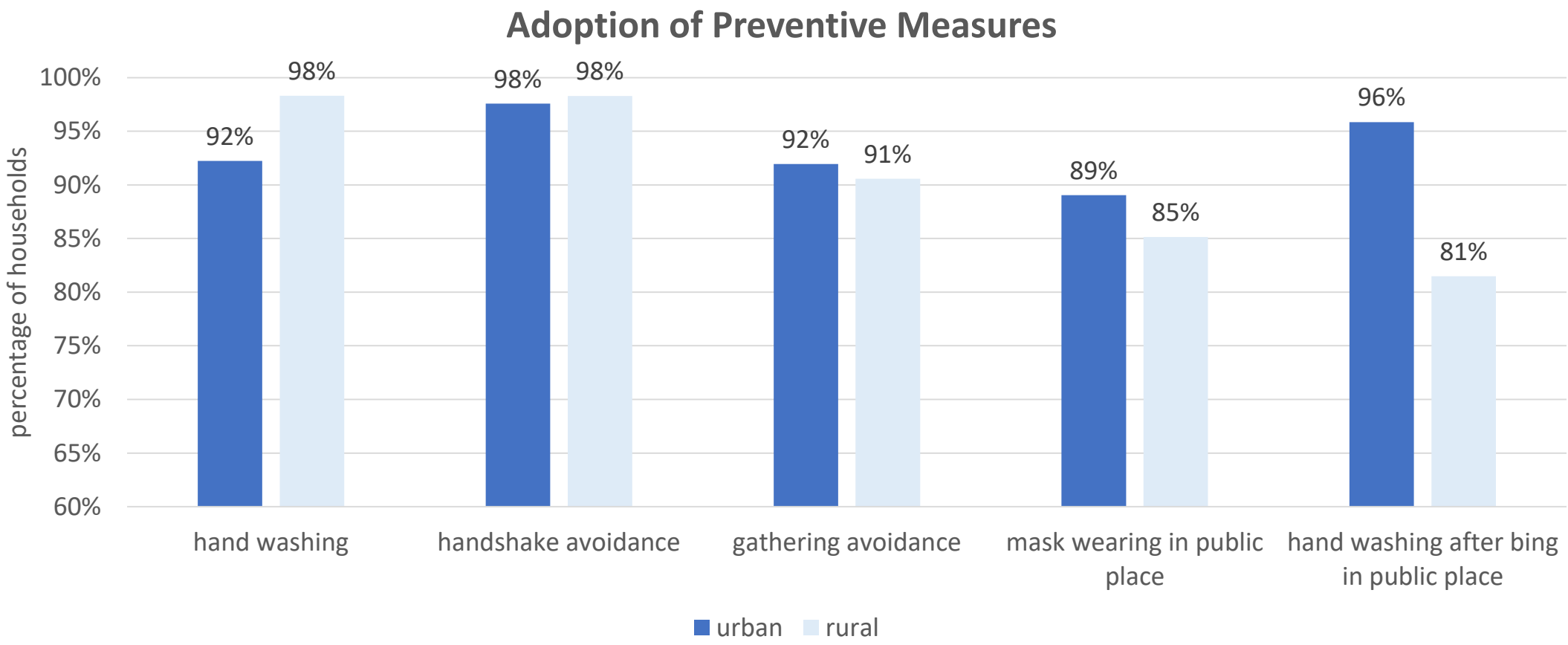
Awareness of Symptoms: some are less well-known



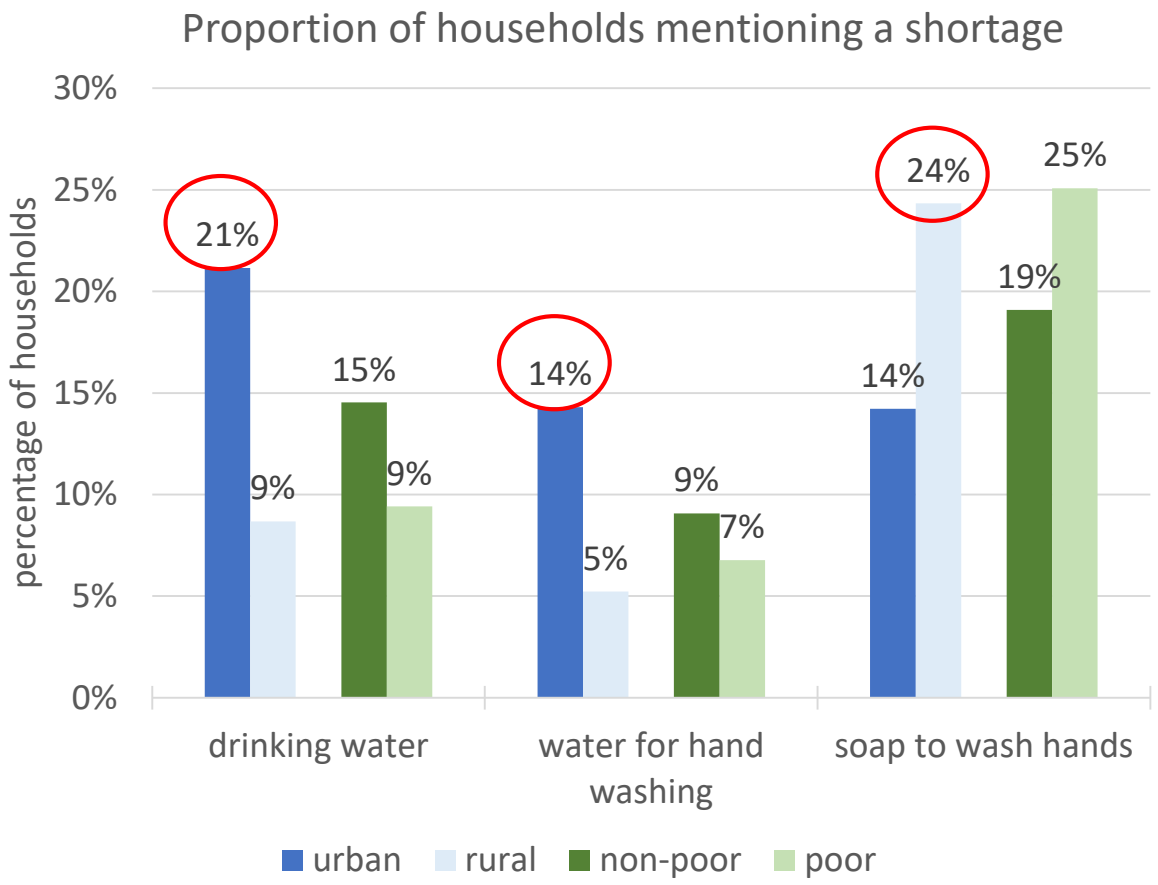
- about a quarter to almost a third does not know fever and cough are symptoms
- other symptoms are even less well known
- rural people are as aware as urban people

Prevention: Frequency of hand washing, hand shaking, and avoiding gathering was high during the survey reference week

Mask wearing and hand washing *after being in public* is somewhat less common in rural areas



Access to Water and Soap: Urban water shortages affect ability to wash hands (14%) and drink (21%). A quarter of rural people lack soap for hand washing



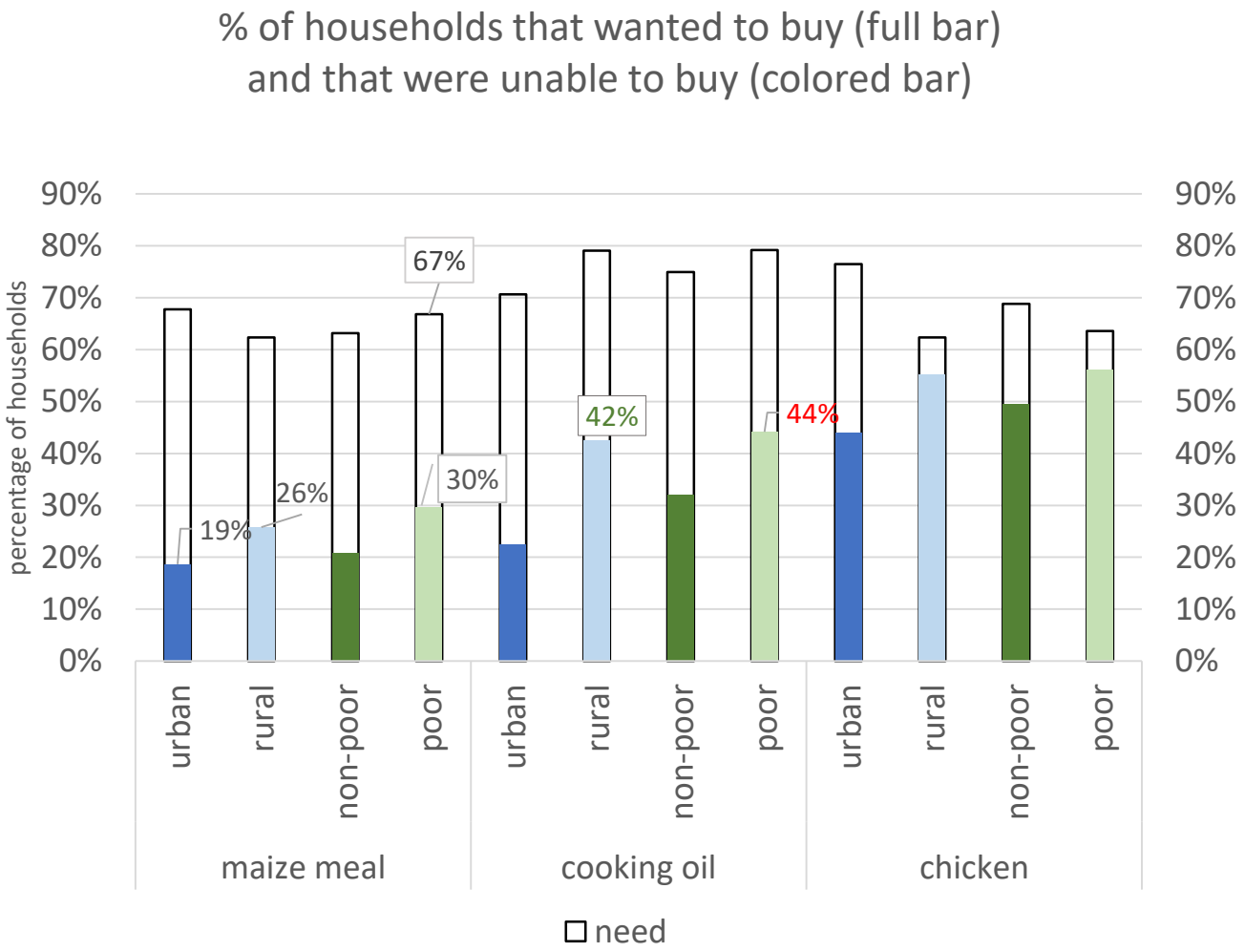
70% of households with a water shortage said reduction in water supply was the main problem.

In urban areas one quarter of those experiencing a shortage of drinking water said that drinking water supply is no longer available.

Access to soap is an issue, particularly in rural areas where 24% report not having sufficient access to soap (14% in urban areas)

*"Poor" refers to the extreme poor, i.e. those under the food poverty line of US$ 29.8 per month per person in 2019

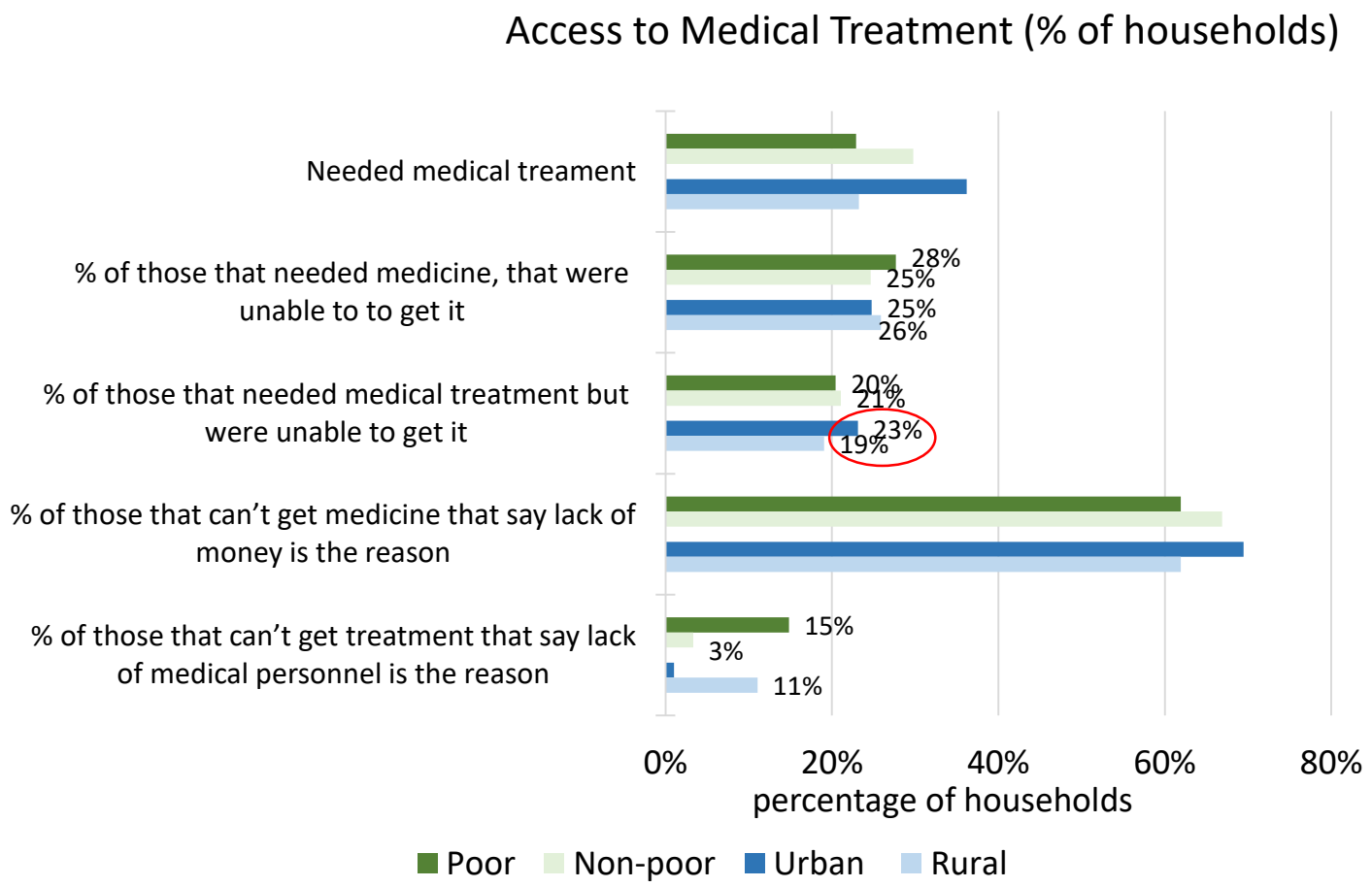
Access to Basic Food Stuffs : Capability to buy food is low, especially for rural and for extremely poor households



- 67% of the extreme poor wanted to buy maize meal, but 30% of the extreme poor were unable to buy maize meal.
- 26% of all rural households and 19% of all urban households were unable to buy maize meal.
  - Reason is mostly because they cannot afford it
- 42% of rural households were unable to buy cooking oil
- More than half of the extreme poor who want to buy cooking oil cannot, this accounts for 44% of all extreme poor.

*"Poor" refers to the extreme poor

Access to Healthcare: 19% of rural households and 23% of urban ones were unable to access medical treatment when needed

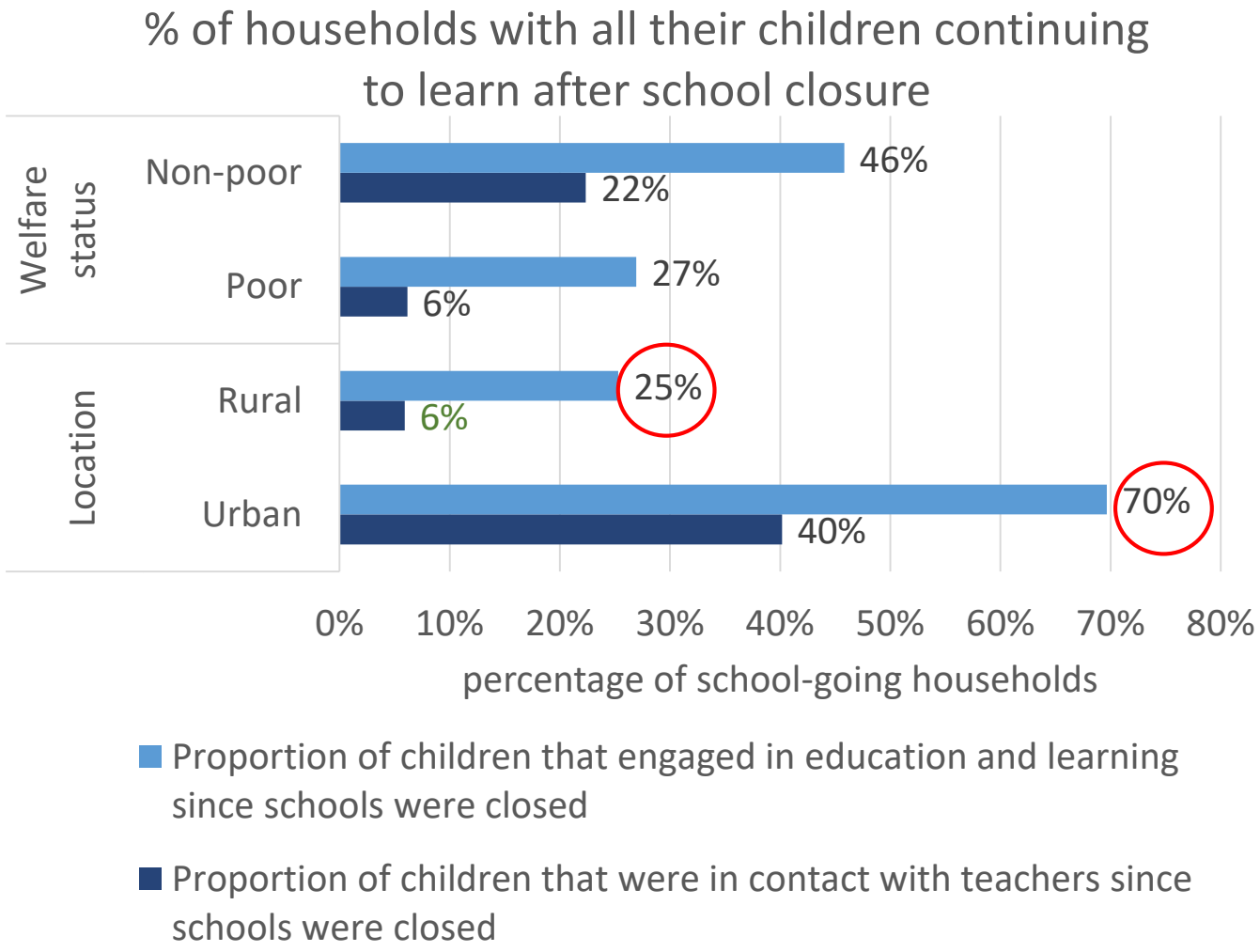


Differences between urban and rural are small,
The main reasons for being unable to access medical treatment are:

- Cannot afford (67%)
- Medical personnel/facility unavailable (6%)
- Turned away because facility was full (5%)

But lack of medical personnel prevents the extreme poor (15%) and rural households (11%) more than others in getting access to treatment.

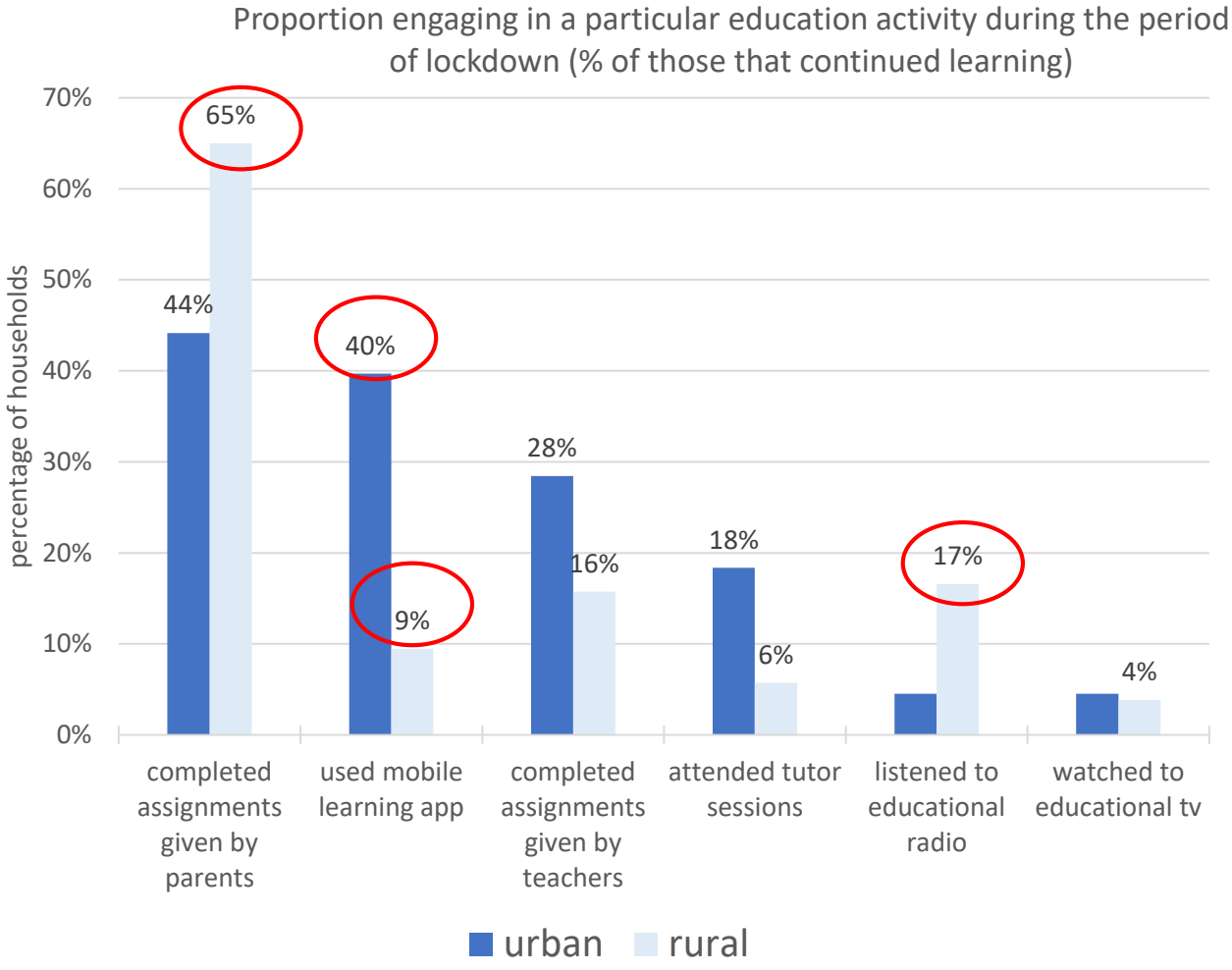
Access to Education: Only 25% of rural school-going children continued learning after schools were closed, compared to 70% urban school-going children



School closure has:

- Affected rural children more than urban ones, only 25% have all their children engaged in education after the lockdown
- Barely any rural households are communicating with teachers (only 6%)

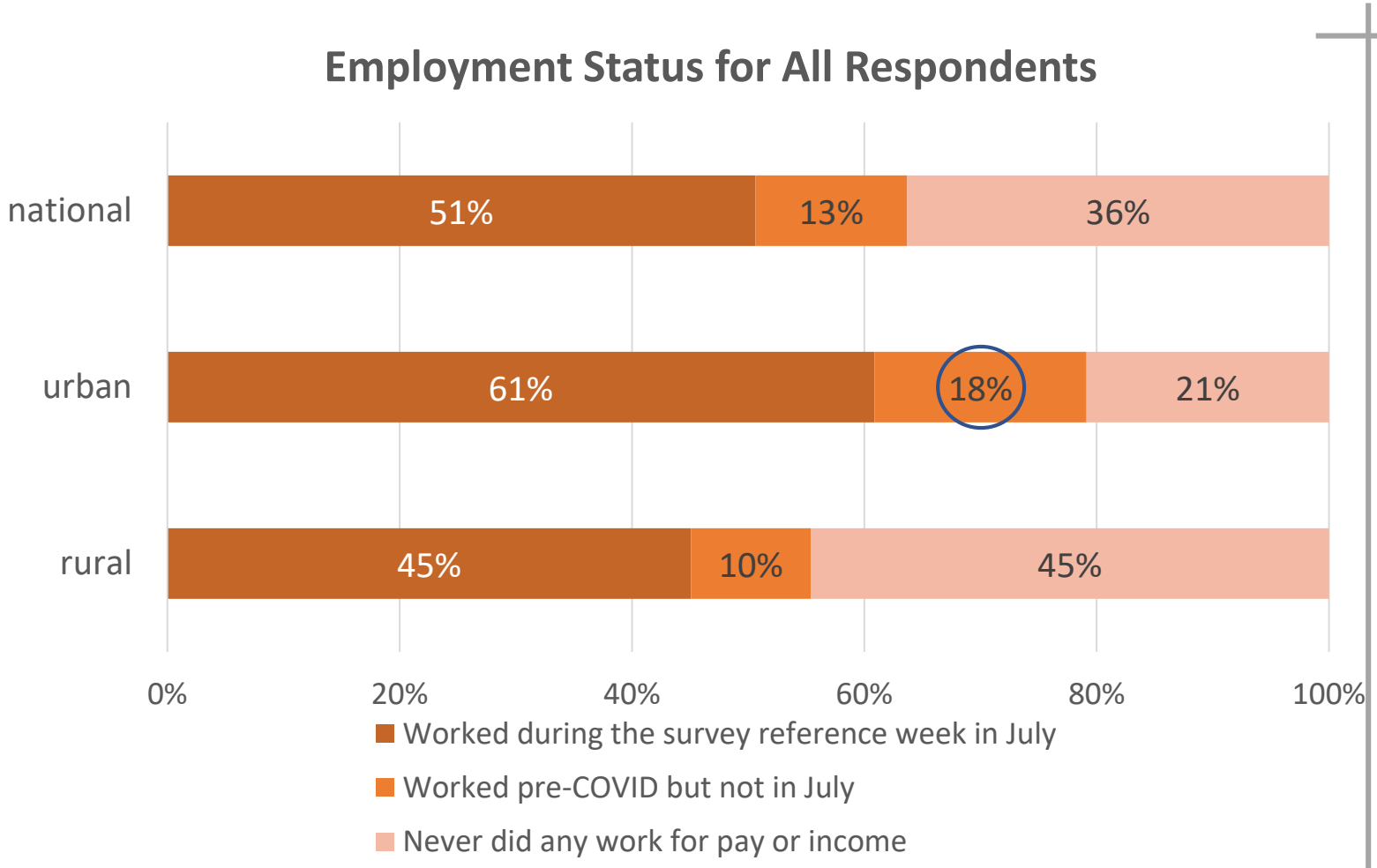
Access to Education: Urban school-going children that continued learning relied much more on mobile learning apps and teacher assignments than rural children that continued learning, who relied mostly on parents assignments phones and the radio



Out of those who continued learning, 40% of children in urban areas are learning through mobile phones; this number is 9 % in rural areas

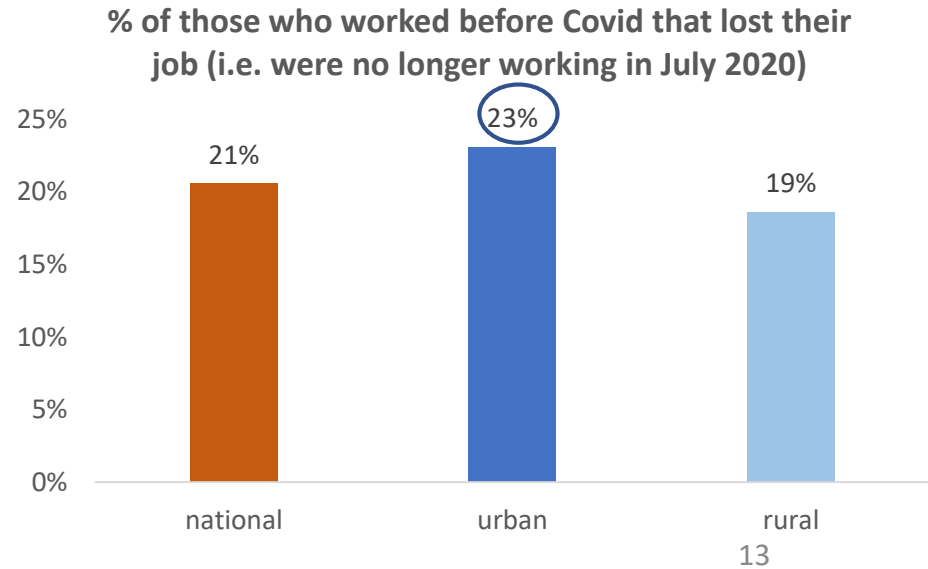
Rural children depend more on parents' assignment (65%) and educational radio (17%).

Employment: 21% of those who were working pre-COVID no longer worked in July. Urban people were most affected



18% of *all* urban respondents were working before covid but no longer did in July 2020.

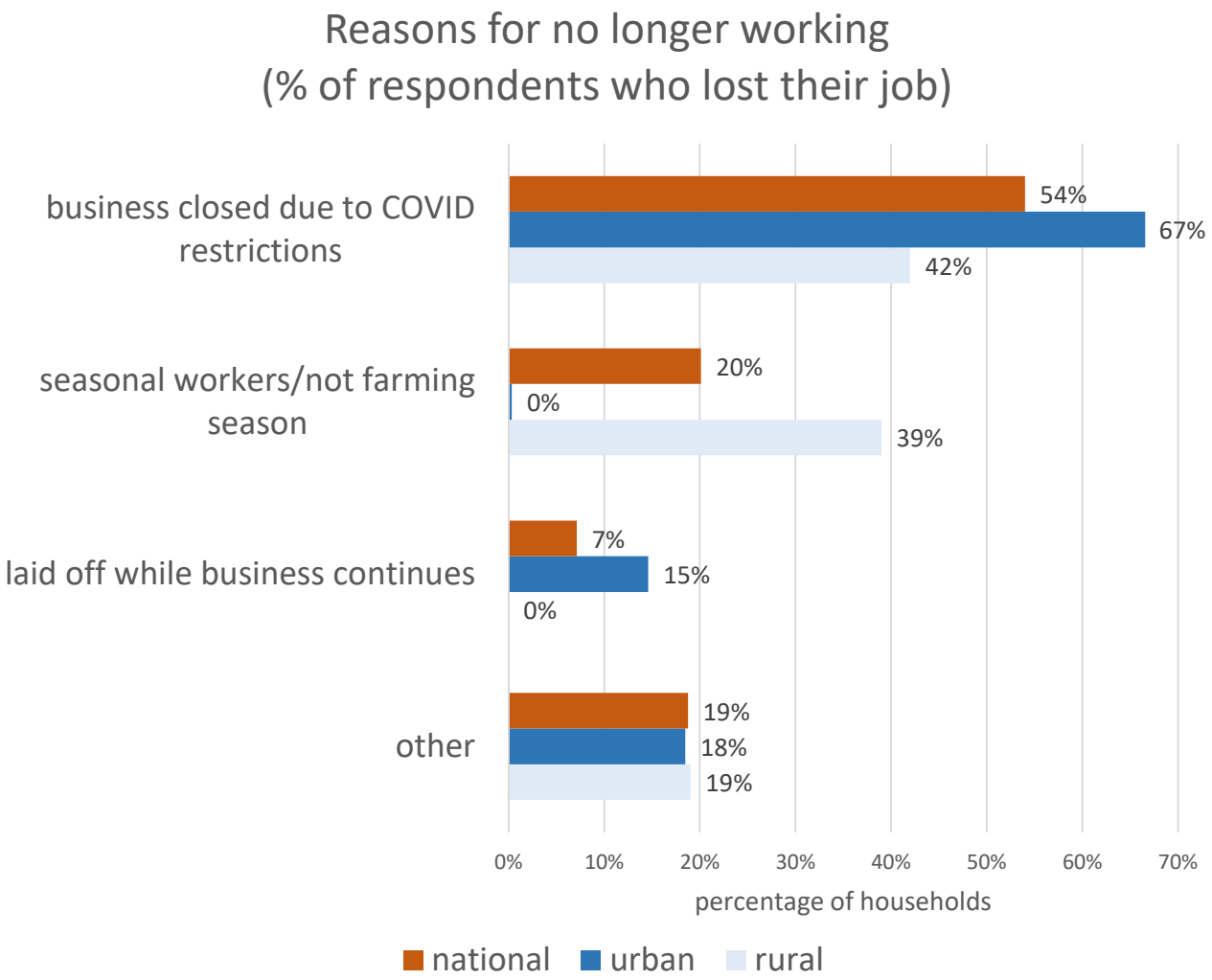
Out of all urban respondents *who worked* pre-covid, 23% no longer worked in July 2020. The number is 19% in rural areas.



'Worked' is defined as doing any work for pay or to generate income

*Urban-rural difference is significant at 95% confidence interval

Reasons for no longer working: The main reason for loss of work is business closure



The most common reason for working pre-covid but not in July:

- business closure due to the lockdown
  - 67% in urban areas, 42% in rural areas
- seasonal effect
  - 39% in rural areas, 0% in urban
- and being laid off while business continued
  - 15% in urban areas (0% in rural)

Urban areas are more impacted by COVID-19 direct economic shocks.

Income shocks (wage workers): 40% of urban wage workers that kept working saw their pay reduced; in rural areas this impact is lower as there are fewer wage workers

58%

58% off all urban people working in July 2020, worked for a wage

81%

81% of all urban people working for a wage in July 2020, were working as usual (including at home)

40%

40% of urban people work for a wage were paid less than before covid

Of those in urban areas that kept working, 58 percent were wage workers

Urban people still working as wage workers faced income loss,

- Those who cannot work as usual, 40% saw their pay reduced

Of those in rural areas that kept working, 38 percent were wage workers

90% of rural wage workers were able to work as usual.

For those that could not work as usual,

- 28% saw their pay reduced

Income shocks (non-farm household businesses): In urban areas non-farm family business were particularly affected

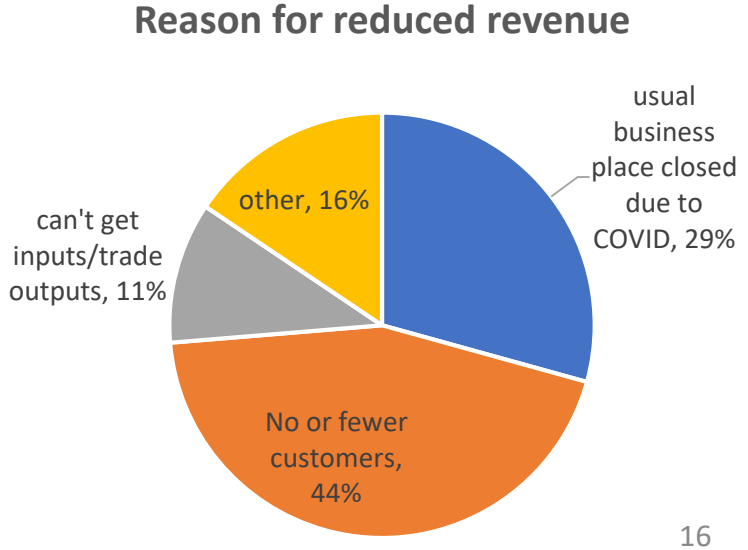
31%

31% of all respondents in urban areas operated a non-farm family business sometime during the past 12 months. (This was 9% in rural areas.)

88%

88% of all those that operated a non-farm family business experienced decline in revenue. (This was 90% in rural areas.)

- 31% of all respondents in urban areas operated a family business in 2020.
- 88% of those with a non-farm household business saw their revenue decline
- The main reasons are
  - No or fewer customer
  - Usual business closed due to COVID
  - Could not get inputs or trade outputs



Income shocks (agriculture): Most rural households were able to continue their normal farming activities

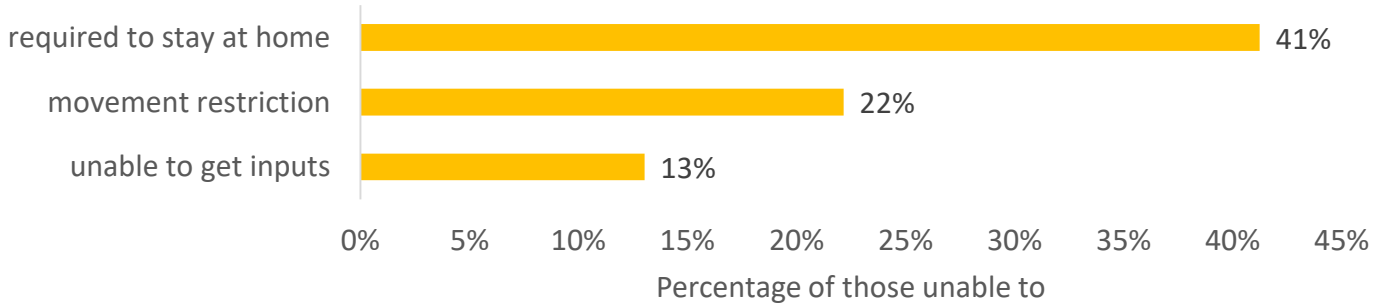
77%

77% of all rural household relied on farming for their main income

86%

86% of all rural farming households in rural areas performed normal farm activities

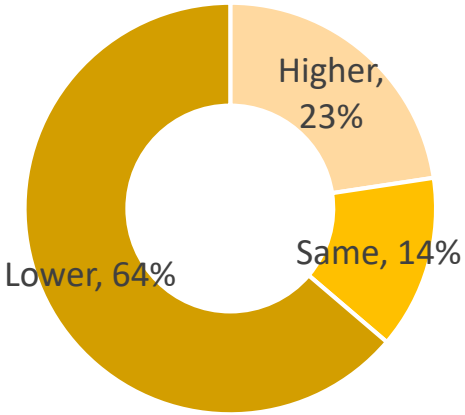
Reason for being unable to conduct farm activities (% of those unable to)



Of all rural respondents, farming was the main activity for 77% of them. 86% of these farmers were able to conduct their normal farm activities

64% of farmers claimed prices of farm outputs had dropped*

Price change of farming outputs compared to before Covid-19 (% of households)



* Could be partly driven by a seasonal effect

Income shocks (all): households relying on a non-farm household business most often saw the largest income reduction

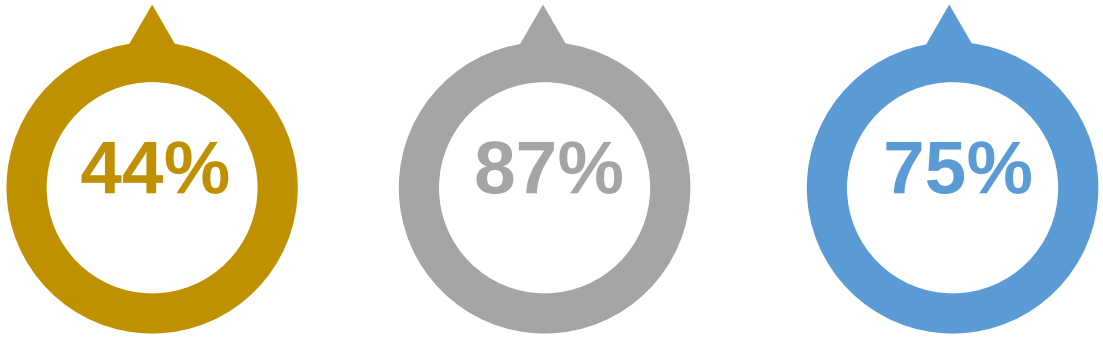
Three main income sources* (rural and urban combined):

For 31% of households, wage employment was a source of income

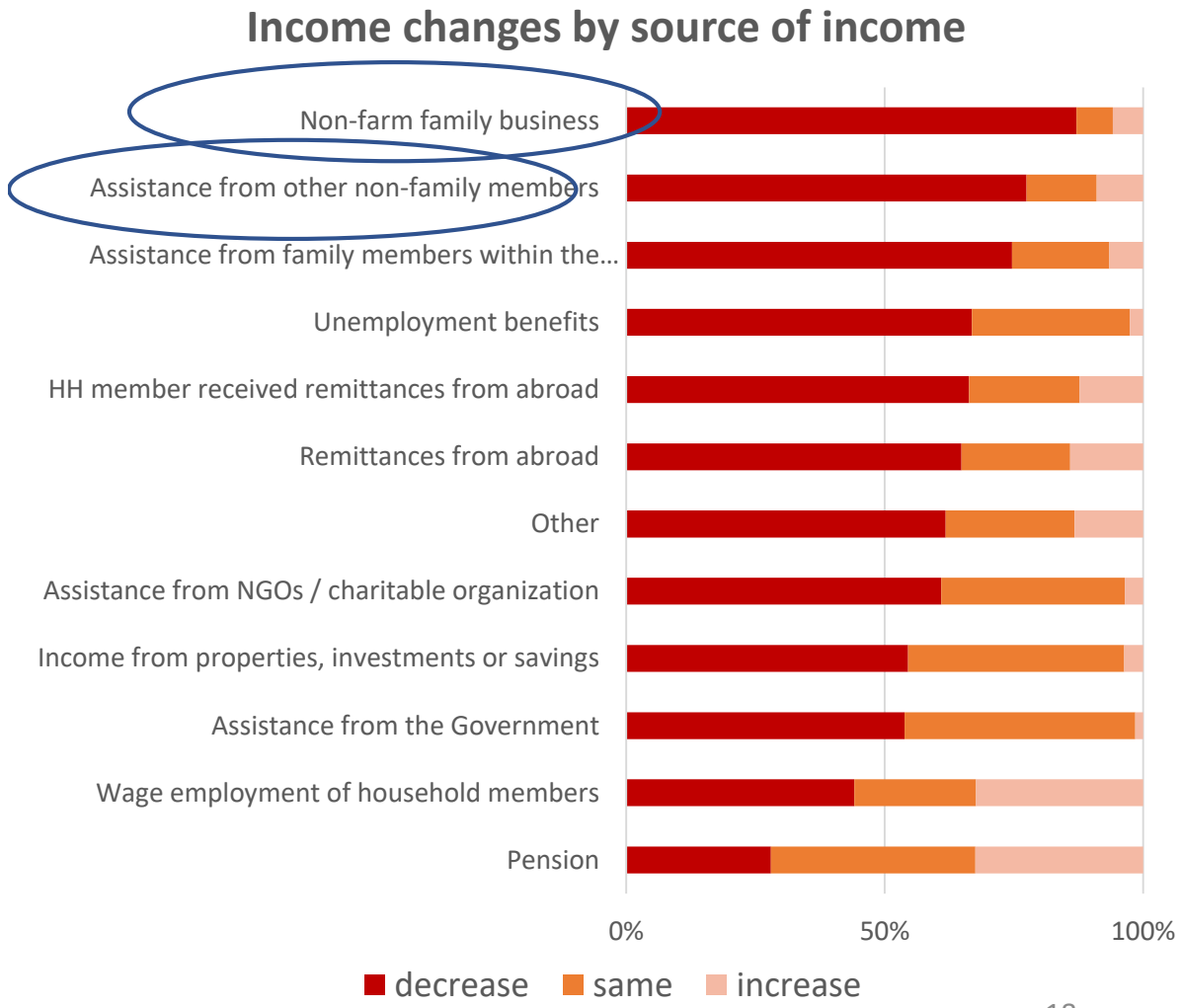
For 19% of households, revenue from non-farm family business was a source of income

For 18% of households, assistance from other family members within the country was a source of income

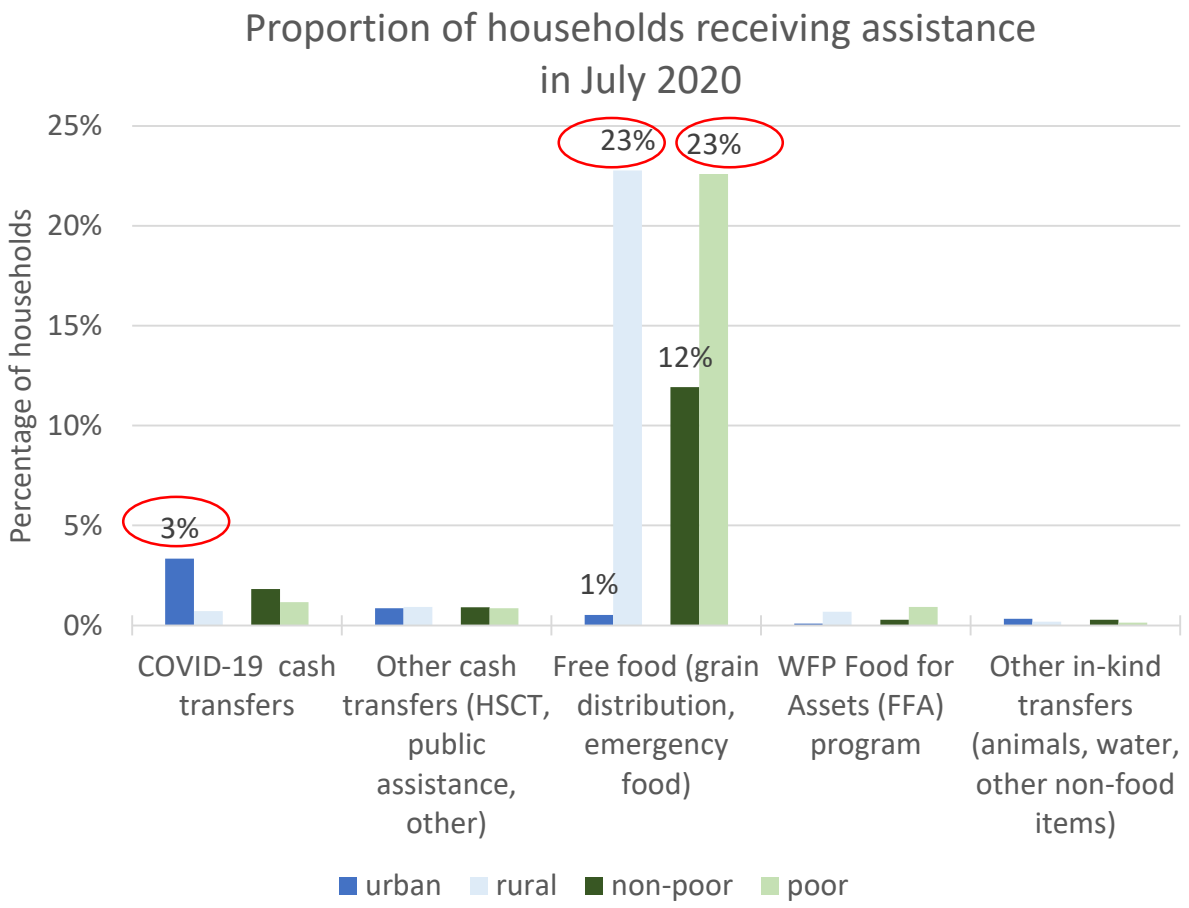
received less or no payment/ revenue/ transfer:



* Excluding farming



Social assistance coverage: 23% of the extremely poor and 23% of rural households received food assistance; only 1% of people in urban areas did



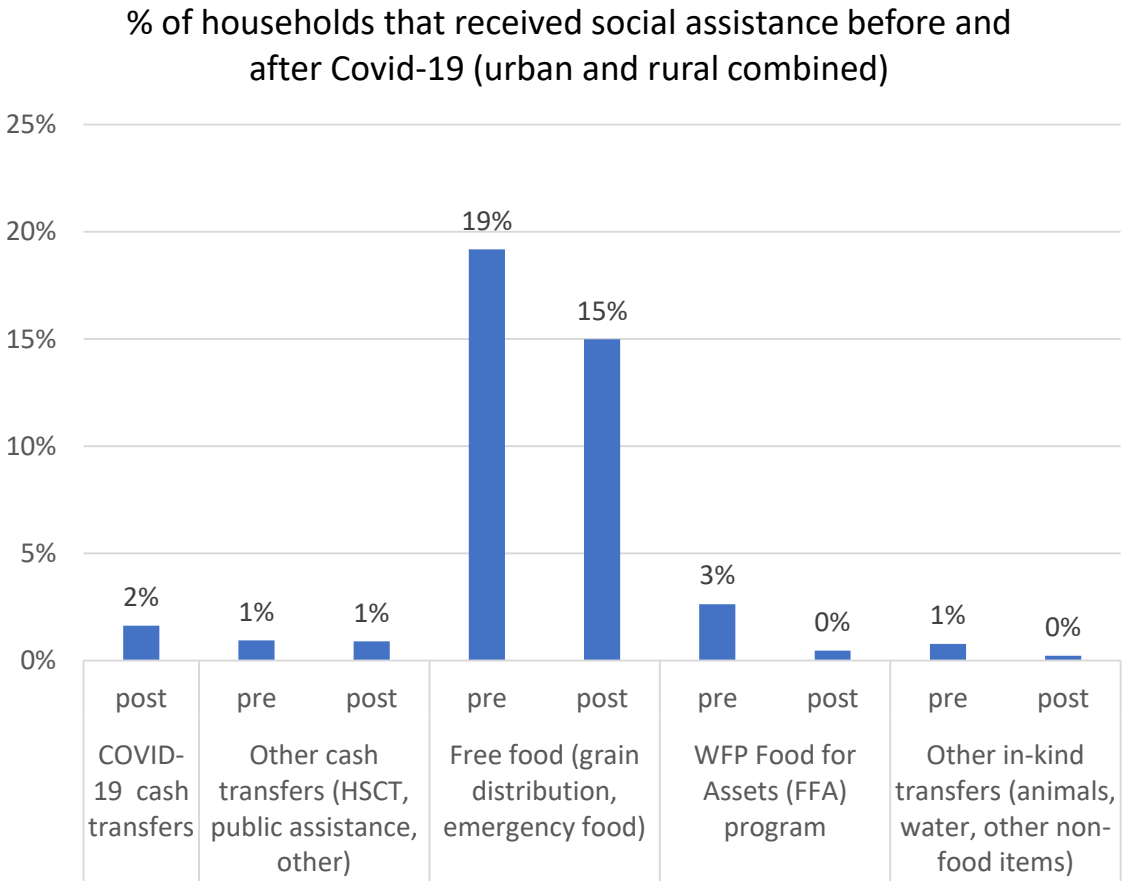
Coverage of social assistance programs of the extreme poor was low

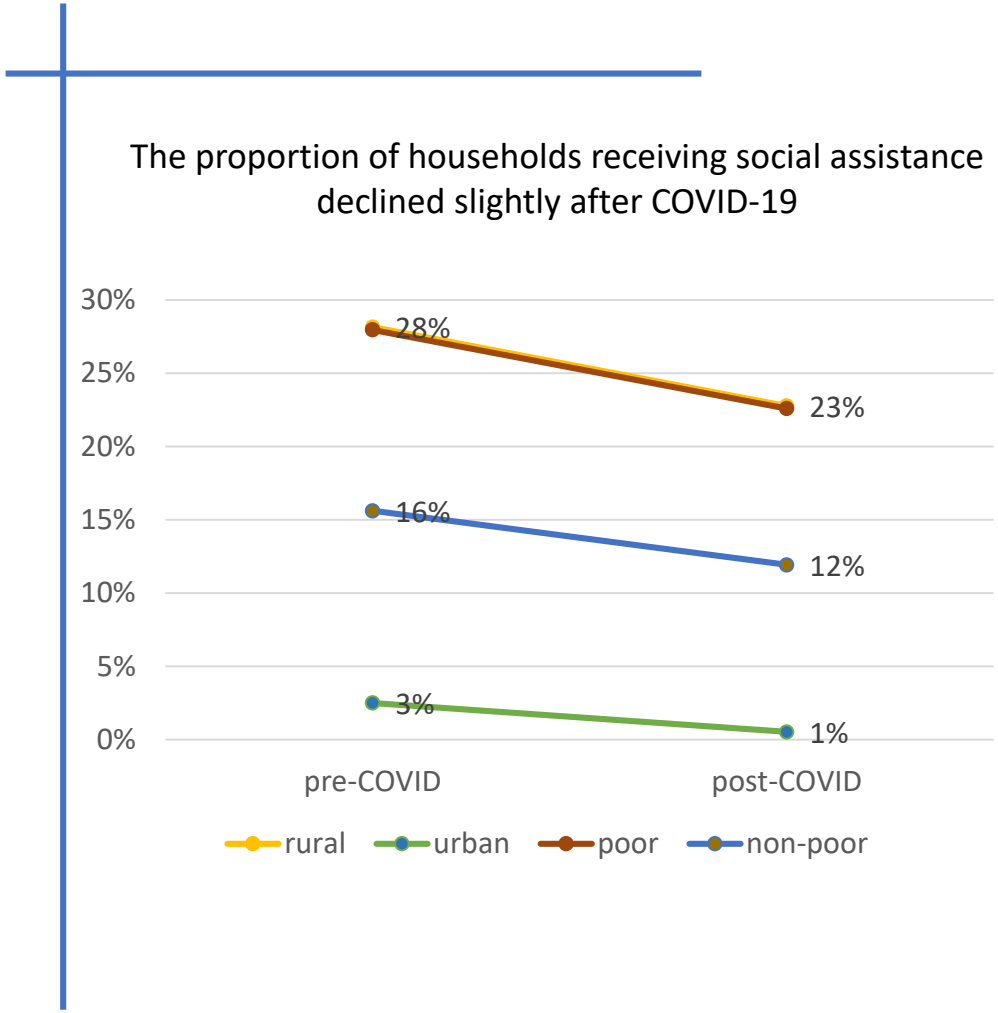
Less than a quarter of extreme poor households received food assistance in July 2020.

Only 3% of urban households reported receiving any COVID-19 cash transfer in the month before the July interview

*'Poor' refers to the extreme poor

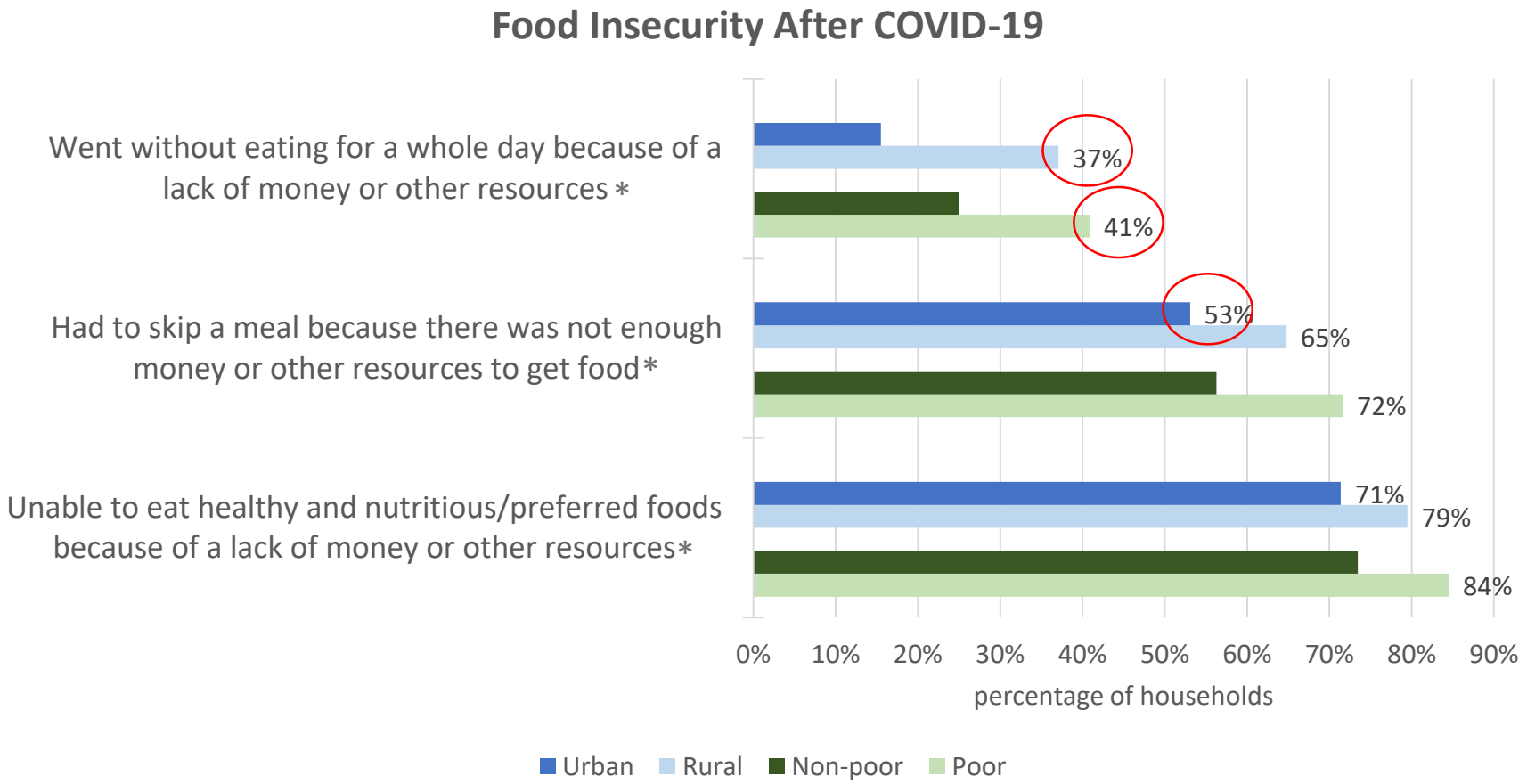
Social assistance coverage: Post-COVID coverage of social assistance is lower than pre-COVID





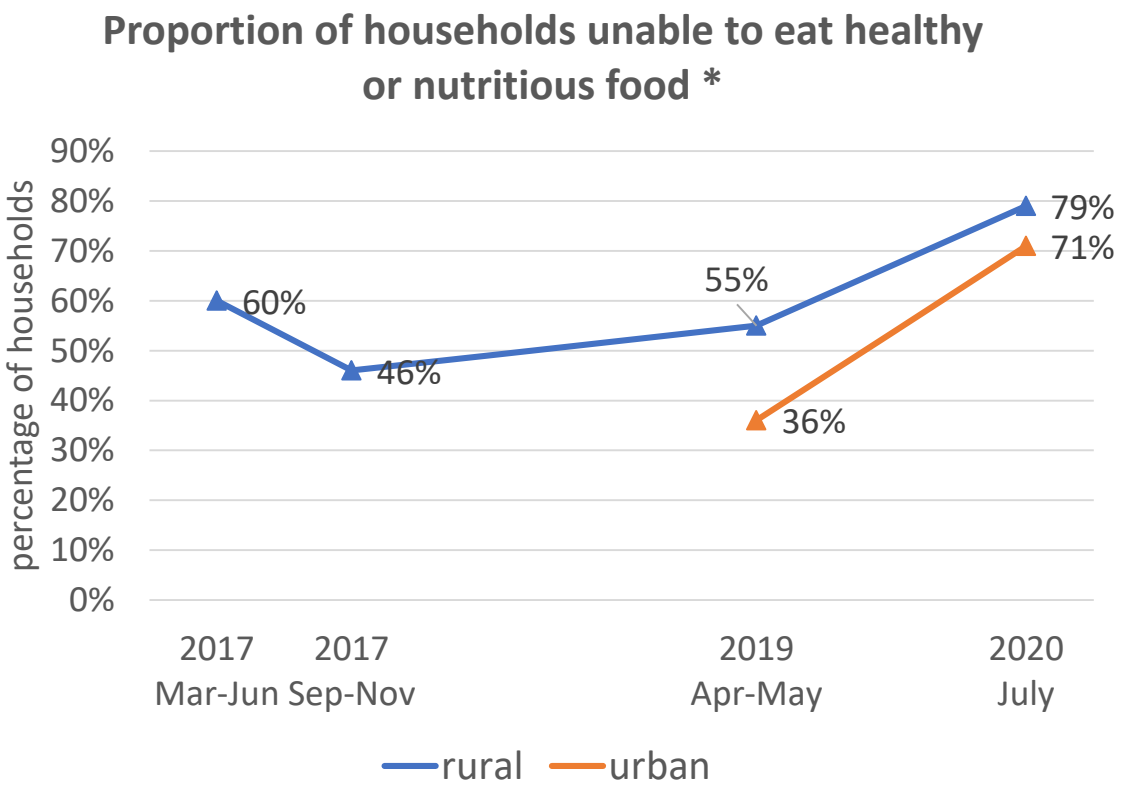
Seasonal effect could partly explain the difference

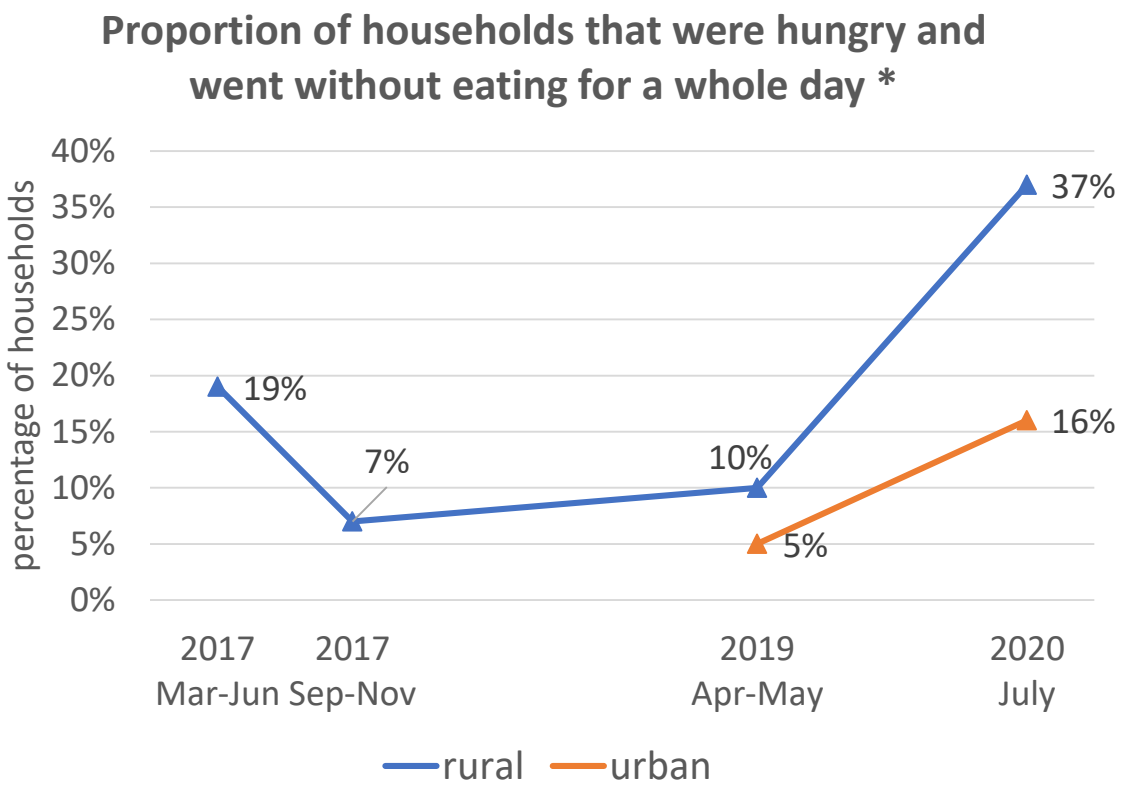
Food insecurity: 37% of rural households went without eating for a whole day, this figure is 41 % of the extreme poor. More than half of urban households has had to skip a meal at least once during the past 4 weeks



*Any time in the past 30 days

Food insecurity trend: the proportion of households experiencing food insecurity has gone up rapidly, in both rural and urban areas.





Source: PICES/ APM survey 2017, Mini-PICES 2019, Rapid PICES Telephone survey (1st round) July 2020

*Any time in the past 30 days

Key take-aways

Nearly everyone is aware of COVID-19 and how to prevent it, but some symptoms are less well-known

- Mask wearing and hand washing *after being in public* was less common in rural areas

Urban areas are most affected by water shortage, rural areas are limited by soap access

- In urban areas 21% did not have enough water to drink
- In rural areas 24% did not have access to soap

Capability to buy food and medical to health treatment is low

- 30% of the extreme poor were unable to buy maize meal. This is 26% for rural households and 19% for urban households
- 19% of rural households and 23% of urban ones were unable to access medical treatment when needed

Only 40% children continue engaging in education after schools closed

- 25% of rural households continued learning vs 70% of urban households

Wage workers in urban areas are affected, but family businesses got hit the hardest

- Urban areas were more impacted by COVID-19 direct economic shocks
- Rural areas were less affected as there are fewer wage workers and fewer non-farm family business

Coverage of food aid and other government programs is low

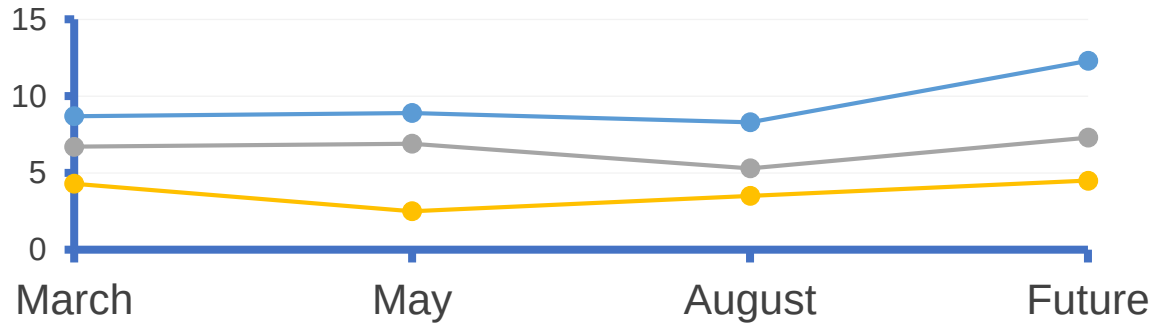
- Coverage of social assistance declined after COVID
- Food insecurity has increased sharply in both rural and urban areas

Thank You!

Second round
- 1664 households; 10 districts
- Data collection: Aug 24th – Sep 4th

Third round
- October 2020

Planned: results dashboard on ZIMSTAT website



Rapid PICES trend demo