



COVID-19 IN LAC

SURINAME

2022 HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEY

In Suriname, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic coincided with a severe fiscal and balance of payment crisis. Amid a strong depreciation of the exchange rate, households were simultaneously confronted with lockdowns and surging consumer prices. Phone survey data collected in June of 2022 provide insights into the situation of households two-and-a-half years after the beginning of this double crisis. The data paint a mixed picture.

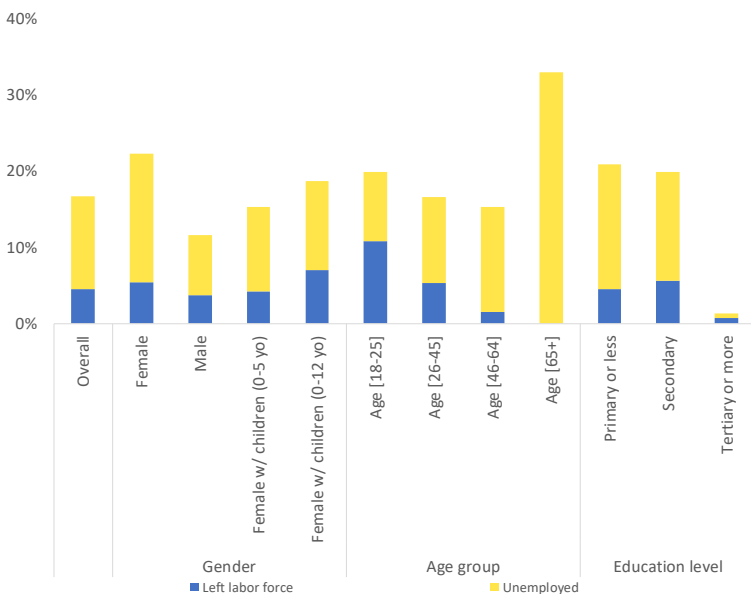
In June 2022, labor force participation was about as high as it was before the start of the crisis. Other labor market outcomes, however, still had not returned to their pre-pandemic levels. Unemployment rates remained elevated by about 3.0 percentage points on average, and more so for women and less-educated workers. Of the women and workers with primary education who had been employed before the Covid-19 pandemic, over 20 percent had lost their pre-pandemic jobs. Rates of informal employment were still elevated compared to before the pandemic across virtually all demographic and socioeconomic groups: women, men, youth, elderly, lower and higher educated workers. The situation, however, was more favorable for workers with tertiary education. Their labor force participation had increased, while they were at lower risk of losing pre-pandemic employment and becoming unemployed.

Accordingly, the evolution of household income differed by households' socio-demographic background. Overall, 37.1 percent of households reported a decline in household income compared to before the pandemic, while 33.1 percent reported an increase. The share of households reporting a decline in income was 40.0 percent or higher among households with children, households with a less-educated head, and households with limited wealth (as proxied by a number of certain assets). Reductions in income from family businesses, agricultural activities, and remittances appear to have played an important role in declining household income. In contrast, nearly half of all households with a highly educated head reported an increase in household income.

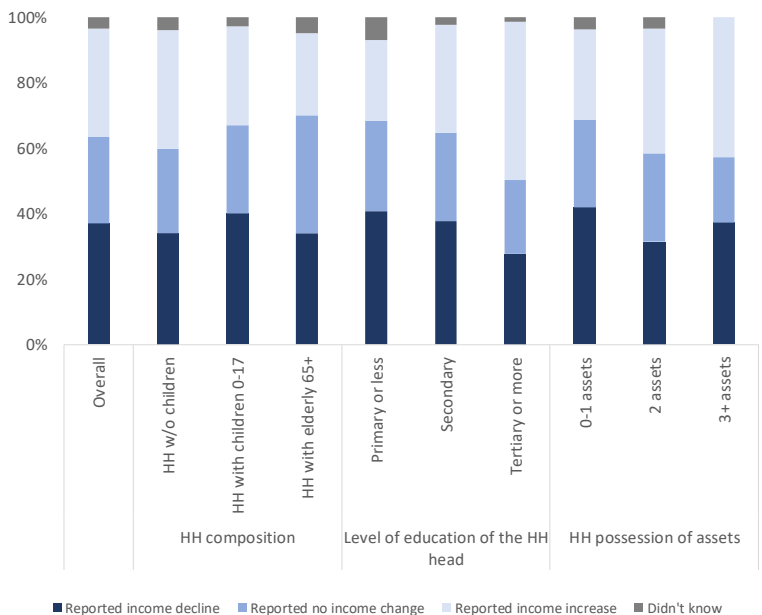
Trends in household income were reflected in indicators of economic duress and food insecurity. They point to important levels of economic insecurity. Overall, 58.2 percent of households indicated that they did not have enough resources to cover their basic needs and 25.3 percent of all households indicated that they had run out of food due to lack of resources (up from 13.7 percent pre-pandemic). These percentages were markedly higher for households with children, a less-educated head, or limited wealth. But even among households with a highly educated head, 40.8 percent indicated having insufficient resources to meet basic needs and 7.3 percent reported to be food insecure.

Education indicators appeared to have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels. The percentage of children who attended school in mid-2022 was 95.8 percent, close to the pre-pandemic rate of 97.4 percent. The vast majority of children (93.1 percent) interacted with their teacher in person.

JOB LOSS (% OF PRE-PANDEMIC WORKERS)



CHANGES IN TOTAL INCOME (%HH) SINCE FEB-2020



Source: World Bank and UNDP High Frequency Phone Surveys.

KEY INDICATORS: INDIVIDUALS (18+ years old)

Distribution among groups	Labor				Childcare responsibilities	Health
	% of employed population (pre-pandemic) who lost their pre-pandemic job	% of inactive population (pre-pandemic) who became active (employed or unemployed)	% of employed population who is in informal employment		% of population who spent more time accompanying children's education than pre-pandemic	% of population who reported mental health problems
			Pre-pandemic	Mid-2022		
Overall	16.7%	44.9%	33.3%	43.3%	26.9%	54.5%
Females	22.2%	41.5%	31.0%	41.5%	26.9%	58.9%
Males	11.6%	53.5%	35.4%	45.0%	26.9%	49.4%
18 to 25 years old	19.9%	59.7%	48.3%	64.4%	21.2%	60.6%
26 to 45 years old	16.5%	60.3%	35.2%	43.1%	28.4%	54.8%
46 to 64 years old	15.3%	28.3%	24.8%	34.5%	24.4%	52.4%
65 and older	33.0%	13.7%	50.5%	55.0%	50.9%	45.0%
Education: Primary or less	20.8%	36.3%	56.5%	62.5%	19.8%	57.8%
Education: Secondary	19.8%	45.8%	33.0%	46.6%	27.5%	54.1%
Education: Tertiary or more	1.3%	61.0%	11.5%	17.3%	36.7%	52.1%

Source: World Bank and UNDP High Frequency Phone Surveys.

Note: National level results are compared against the regional LAC average: **Green** indicates that the country performs better than the LAC average in terms of preferred outcome, e.g. less informality, while **red** indicates that the country performs worse than the LAC average.

KEY INDICATORS: HOUSEHOLDS AND CHILDREN

Distribution among groups	Income & Coping		Food Insecurity		Education (6-17 yo)		
	% HH without enough resources to cover basic needs (self-reported)	% HH that resorted to at least one coping mechanism	% HHs that ran out of food		% of children in school age who attended school (in person or virtually)		% of children in school age who interacted with teacher in person (incl. hybrid teaching modes)
			Pre-pandemic	Mid-2022 (Last 30 days)	Pre-pandemic	Mid-2022	
Overall	58.2%	67.8%	13.7%	25.3%	97.4%	95.8%	93.1%
HH w/o children (0-17)	53.1%	63.5%	12.2%	21.1%	-	-	-
HH with children (0-17)	62.8%	71.8%	15.0%	29.1%	97.4%	95.8%	93.1%
HH with elderly (65+)	51.4%	64.5%	12.5%	23.1%	97.2%	93.0%	89.2%
0-1 assets	67.6%	69.0%	18.8%	35.7%	96.6%	96.5%	94.4%
2 assets	47.9%	67.1%	9.0%	14.6%	98.0%	94.8%	91.0%
3+ assets	55.7%	61.1%	4.3%	15.0%	100.0%	97.6%	97.6%
HH Head Education: Primary or less	63.1%	69.0%	20.0%	32.5%	98.9%	91.5%	88.4%
HH Head Education: Secondary	60.4%	68.1%	13.9%	26.5%	96.1%	97.5%	94.6%
HH Head Education: Tertiary or more	40.8%	64.3%	1.3%	7.3%	100.0%	100.0%	99.4%

Source: World Bank and UNDP High Frequency Phone Surveys.

Note: National level results are compared against the regional LAC average: **Green** indicates that the country performs better than the LAC average in terms of preferred outcome, e.g. fewer households running out of food, while **red** indicates that the country performs worse than the LAC average.

HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEY

The World Bank and UNDP conducted a multi-wave High-Frequency Phone Survey (HFPS) in 2021 to assess the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the welfare of Latin American and Caribbean households. The first wave was collected between May and July 2021, and the data is nationally representative for 24 countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia and Uruguay. The data for Brazil was collected between July 26 and October 1. Data for the second wave was collected between October 2021 and January 2022 and included all countries except for Antigua & Barbuda and Brazil. A single wave was collected for Suriname in June 2022. The HFPS provides information on the welfare impacts that households experienced with respect to food insecurity, changes in employment, income changes, access to health and education services, and coping mechanisms. Key indicators on socioeconomic effects are available at the [COVID-19 monitoring global dashboard](#), which provides harmonized indicators across all world regions. Further information on the LAC HFPS II can be found [here](#).