



# COVID-19 IN LAC

## GUYANA

2021 LAC HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEYS: Results Phase II, Wave 1



April 2022

Contrary to global and regional trends, Guyana was one of the fastest-growing economies in 2020. Primarily due to the start of oil production after recent offshore discoveries, GDP grew by 43.5 percent in 2020 and 21.2 percent in 2021. Nevertheless, the negative consequences of containment measures implemented during the pandemic on household welfare, as well as demand and supply disruptions, persisted more than a year after its onset.

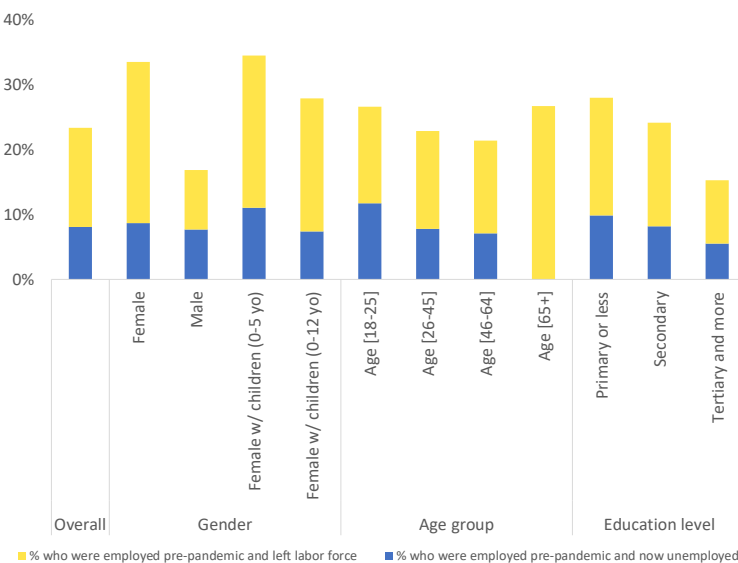
Data from the High-Frequency Phone Surveys (HFPS), conducted in mid-2021, show that more than 1 in 5 Guyanese who had been working before the pandemic were either out of the labor force (15.2 percent) or unemployed (8.0 percent) at the time of the survey. Women, younger workers, and people with lower education levels were more heavily affected. Heavier involvement of women in childcare and unpaid domestic work in the household during the pandemic, compared to men, was likely a factor behind these unequal labor market outcomes. Women were more likely than men to report an increase in the time spent supporting children’s education during the pandemic. Nevertheless, the proportion of men reporting such an increase was considerable (49.8 percent). Job loss in Guyana was countered by the influx of 35.5 percent of the previously inactive population into activity. By mid-2021, the job market entrants made up over one tenth of the employed and almost a fifth of the unemployed. The HFPS shows, however, that jobs became more precarious: 11.1 percent of workers employed in the formal sector before the pandemic had transitioned into informality by mid-2021 and most entrants who managed to secure a job were employed in the informal sector (78.6 percent).

Developments on the labor market are reflected in household income. Nearly half of households (47.3 percent) said their total household income was still below pre-pandemic levels in mid-2021. In 2020, the government introduced an unconditional emergency cash transfer to help households cope with the shocks related to the pandemic. Almost 3 out of every 4 households (74.2 percent) reported receiving this emergency support from the government.

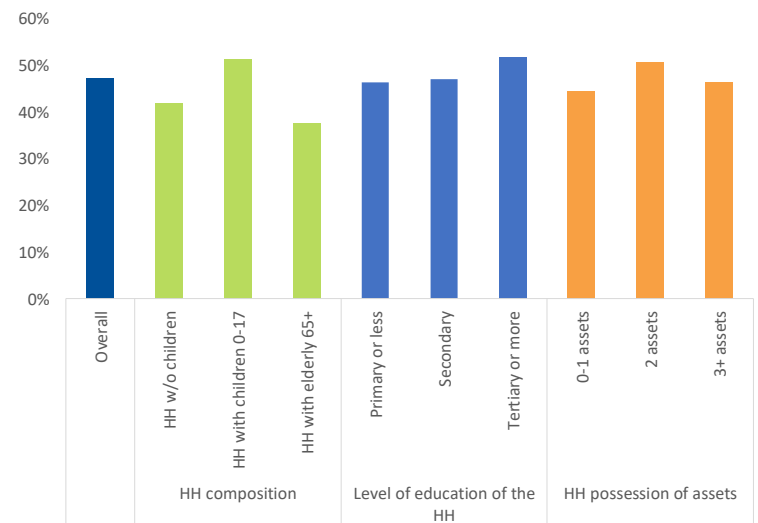
Indicators of food insecurity and engagement in education are concerning, given their substantial long-term impacts on welfare if left unaddressed. About 4 in 10 households (40.7 percent) ran out of food due to lack of money or other resources within the 30 days preceding the survey, compared to 15.8 before the pandemic (based on recall data). At the same time, only 63.7 percent of school-age children attended school (either in person or virtually), and no more than 51.4 percent were engaged in learning activities involving direct interaction with a teacher (online or in-person). Teacher interaction was less common for children from poorer households (proxied by asset ownership). Moreover, while 62.8 percent of households had Internet, the vast majority of these (70.1 percent) had problems with the quality of service.

Recovery will partly depend on effective vaccination. In Guyana, 18.2 percent of the population was not planning to get vaccinated against COVID-19 or was unsure about it in mid-2021.

### JOB LOSS (% OF PRE-PANDEMIC WORKERS)



### HOUSEHOLDS (%) WITH REDUCED INCOME



Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 1.

## KEY INDICATORS: INDIVIDUALS (18+ years old)

Distribution among groups	Labor		Childcare responsibilities	Health	Finance	
	% of employed population (pre-pandemic) who lost their pre-pandemic job	% of inactive population (pre-pandemic) who became active (employed or unemployed)	% of formal workers (pre-pandemic) who became informal	% of population who spent more time accompanying children's education	% of population who is not planning to get vaccinated or unsure (vaccination hesitancy)	% of population using mobile wallets
Overall	23.3%	35.5%	11.1%	54.7%	18.2%	10.9%
Females	33.4%	33.1%	9.5%	58.0%	17.9%	9.2%
Males	16.8%	42.9%	12.0%	49.8%	18.5%	12.7%
18 to 25 years old	26.5%	63.9%	5.0%	50.1%	21.0%	12.4%
26 to 45 years old	22.8%	39.6%	11.3%	62.1%	18.2%	12.3%
46 to 64 years old	21.3%	25.0%	9.4%	43.8%	16.9%	10.5%
65 and older	26.6%	7.3%	64.0%	21.7%	14.6%	0.0%
Primary or less	27.9%	24.3%	9.2%	39.0%	15.3%	9.6%
Secondary	24.1%	40.8%	12.3%	58.1%	19.2%	9.1%
Tertiary and more	15.2%	31.3%	9.9%	67.2%	18.5%	20.3%

Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 1.

## KEY INDICATORS: HOUSEHOLDS AND CHILDREN

Distribution among groups	Income	Food Insecurity	Education (6-17 yo)	Connectivity		
	% HH that report a reduction in total income (current v. pre-pandemic)	% HH that received Emergency Government Transfers during the pandemic	% HHs that ran out of food (last 30 days)	% of children in school age who attended school (in person or virtually)	% of children in school age who interacted with teacher (in-person or online classes)	% HHs that had problems with internet service due to poor access quality / speed
Overall	47.3%	74.2%	40.7%	63.7%	51.4%	70.1%
HH w/o children (0-17)	41.8%	72.6%	32.5%	-	-	72.1%
HH with children (0-17)	51.3%	75.3%	46.7%	63.7%	51.4%	68.7%
HH with elderly (65+)	37.6%	75.9%	38.2%	58.6%	56.3%	63.5%
0-1 assets	44.6%	73.4%	54.7%	49.5%	26.8%	68.0%
2 assets	50.7%	74.7%	43.7%	64.2%	54.6%	71.5%
3+ assets	46.4%	74.3%	28.9%	73.9%	67.4%	69.8%
HH education - Primary or less	46.3%	77.4%	41.4%	58.1%	44.7%	65.1%
HH education - Secondary	46.9%	76.1%	42.0%	65.0%	53.9%	71.7%
HH education - Tertiary or more	51.6%	60.0%	35.4%	71.2%	54.5%	71.2%

Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 1.

### 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. 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 96 harmonized indicators across 50 countries in Latin America and the world. For further information, see [World Bank and UNDP \(2021\)](#).

Produced by the World Bank Group and UNDP.

Contacts for additional information:

Anna Luisa Paffhausen, World Bank Group (apaffhausen@worldbank.org)

Jairo Valverde, UNDP (Jairo.valverde@undp.org; policyresponse.lac@undp.org)

