

# The Socioeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 on Households in Cambodia

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Results from a High-Frequency Phone Survey of Households  
Round 7

Implemented 25 April–14 May 2022  
(CSES and IDPoor sample)



27 June, 2022

# High-Frequency Phone Survey of Households in Cambodia

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
Survey period	11–26 May 2020 (LSMS+) 11–28 June 2020 (IDPoor)	17 August–7 September 2020	14 October–6 November 2020	17 December 2020–12 January 2021	01–21 March 2021	10 February–23 March 2022	25 April–14 May 2022
Sample size	1,684 respondents 700 (LSMS+) 984 (IDPoor)	1,667 respondents 612 (LSMS+) 1,055 (IDPoor)	1,665 respondents 481 (LSMS+) 1,184 (IDPoor)	1,687 respondents 410 (LSMS+) 1,277 (IDPoor)	1,688 respondents 378 (LSMS+) 1,309 (IDPoor)	2,518 respondents 1,706 (CSES) 812 (IDPoor)	2,499 respondents 1,698 (CSES) 801 (IDPoor)
Coverage	LSMS+: National, Urban and Rural IDPoor: National					CSES: National, Urban and Rural IDPoor: National	
Partnerships	World Bank; MoP, NIS; MoSVY			World Bank; MoP, NIS; MoSVY; National Social Protection Council (NSPC)			

*Note: MoP: Ministry of Planning; NIS: the National Institute of Statistic; MoSVY: Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation*

*CSES sample is nationally representative of all households, and IDPoor sample is drawn from the beneficiary list of the conditional cash transfer for pregnant women and child under the age of 2 and therefore more likely to be poor. IDPoor households comprised about 20 percent of total households.*

## Key Findings (I)

### Access to Food Staples, Health & Education Services

- Nearly all households were able to access basic goods and services (food staples, medicines, and health services) when needed, as markets and the health system continued to meet demand.
- As of April–May 2022, 14 percent of respondents report having had at least one family member who had contracted COVID-19 at some point during the pandemic. 56 percent of infected family members were the main earner of their household.
- Nearly 1 in 14 children aged 6–17 who had ever attended school are currently not in school. School dropout rate is higher among rural and poor households.
  - 20 percent of children aged 15–17 years (upper secondary education) are currently not in school; 1 percent and 7 percent of children aged 6–11 years (primary education) and 12–14 years (lower secondary education).
  - 8 percent of children aged 6–17 in rural areas are out of school while only 5 percent in urban areas are.
  - 10 percent of children from the bottom 20 percent are currently not in school, compared to 3 percent of children from the top 20 percent of households.
- Around 1 in 7 children aged 6–17 missed school last week.
  - Children aged 6-17 years who missed school last week missed 2.5 days on average, primarily due to sickness.

## Key Findings (II)

### Employment and Income

- Employment remained at **pre-pandemic levels** when **82 percent** of respondents were working.
  - By April–May 2022, **83 percent** of main earners in CSES households **worked** in the week preceding the survey.
  - Those who stopped working primarily cite seasonality and illness as the main reason.
- Revenues of **non-farm family businesses** are continuing to **stabilize**. Low consumer demand remains the main driver of revenue losses.
  - In April–May 2022, **61 percent** of CSES households operating a non-farm family business reported having earned “the same revenue” relative to the previous month, compared to **65 percent** in February–March 2022.
  - About **85 percent** of family businesses with reduced or no sales mention having fewer or no customers.
- Income has stabilized for **2 in 3 households** by April–May 2022.
  - In April–May 2022, **67 percent** of CSES households reported having “the same household income” relative to the previous round, compared to **66 percent** in February–March 2022.
  - Households reported that their total household income declined by **10 percent** since the last interview.

## Key Findings (III)

### Social Assistance (SA)

- By April–May 2022, **97 percent** of eligible IDPoor households had **received some SA** and **97 percent** of eligible IDPoor households had **received the COVID-19 relief cash transfers** that the government began to disburse in June 2020.
- Only **3 percent** of eligible IDPoor households had **yet to receive these relief transfers**.
- **Amount and frequency of cash transfers** disbursed to beneficiary households are **as expected**: As of April–May 2022, nearly three-fourths of beneficiaries had received **21 cash installments or more**, averaging to a total of **US\$855** since the launch of the program.
- Beneficiary households perceive the **relief cash transfers** to have been **important** for their **economic well-being**.

### Food Insecurity

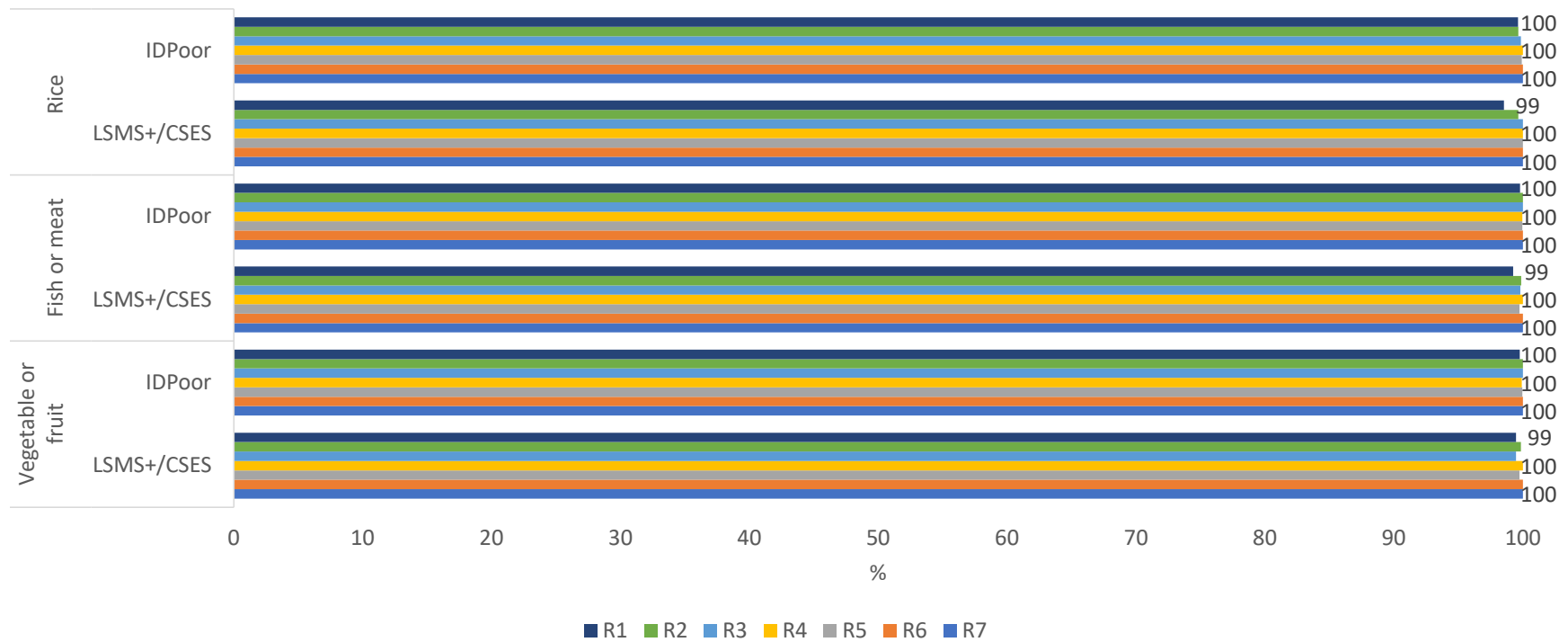
- **Moderate-or-severe food insecurity** and **severe food insecurity** remained almost unchanged between March 2021 and April–May 2022.
- **Moderate-or-severe food insecurity** continues to be much **more elevated among IDPoor households** in April–May 2022.
  - Among CSES households, the prevalence of moderate-or-severe food insecurity was **22 percent** in April–May 2022, **17 percent** in February–March 2022, **21 percent** March 2021, **25 percent** in December 2020, **25 percent** in October 2020, and **49 percent** in August 2020.
  - Among IDPoor households, the prevalence of moderate-or-severe food insecurity was **46 percent** in April–May 2022, **46 percent** in February–March 2022, **42 percent** in March 2021, **44 percent** in December 2020, **49 percent** in October 2020, and **67 percent** in August 2020.

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# **Access to Basic Necessities**

## Access to food staples remained robust as markets continued to function well since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

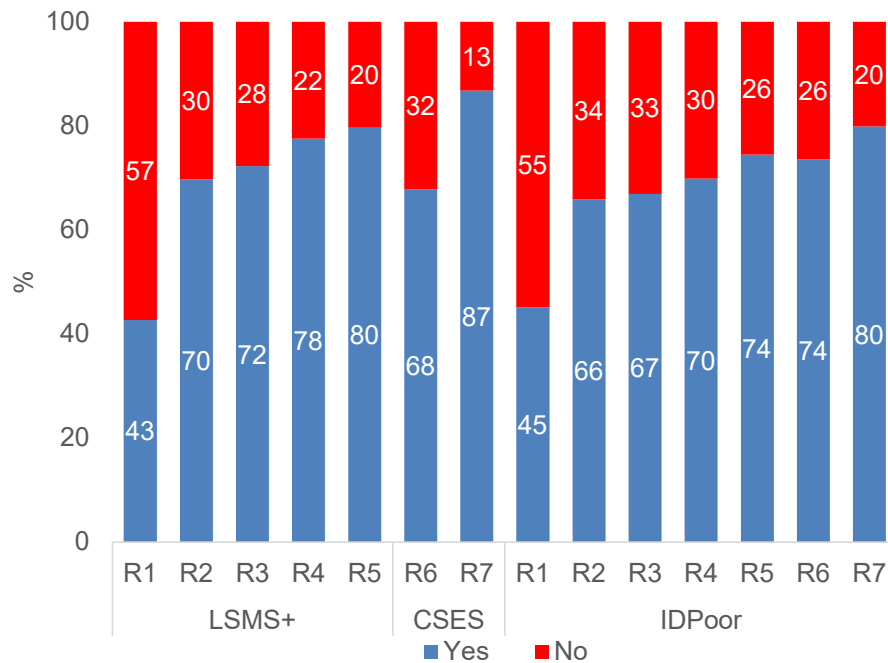
In the last 7 days, was your household able to buy...? (for those who tried to buy [staple food])



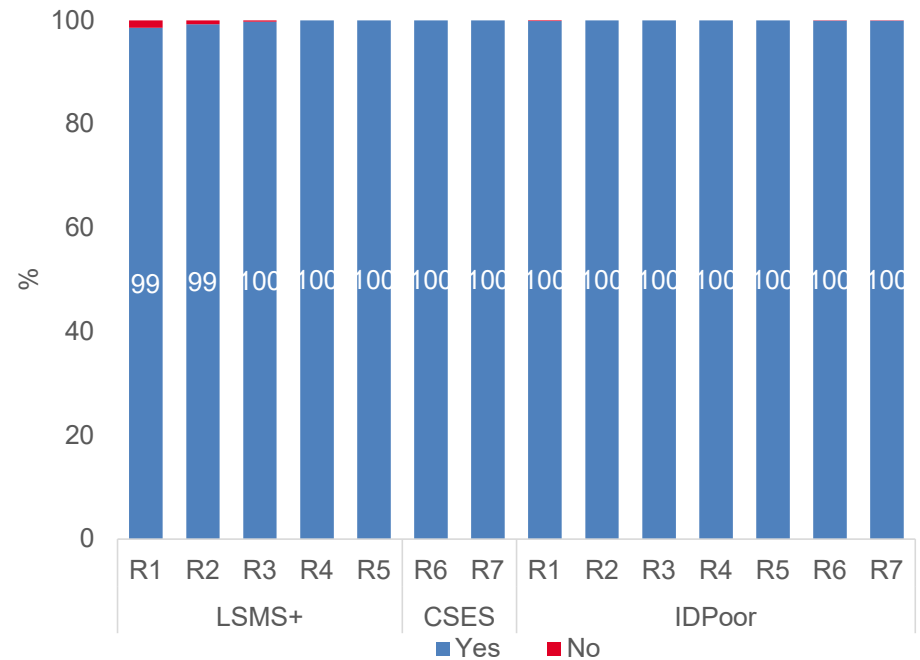
Note: LSMS+ sample for R1–R5, CSES sample for R6–R7.

## Nearly all households have been able to access medicine when needed throughout the pandemic.

In the last week, has your household tried to buy medicine?

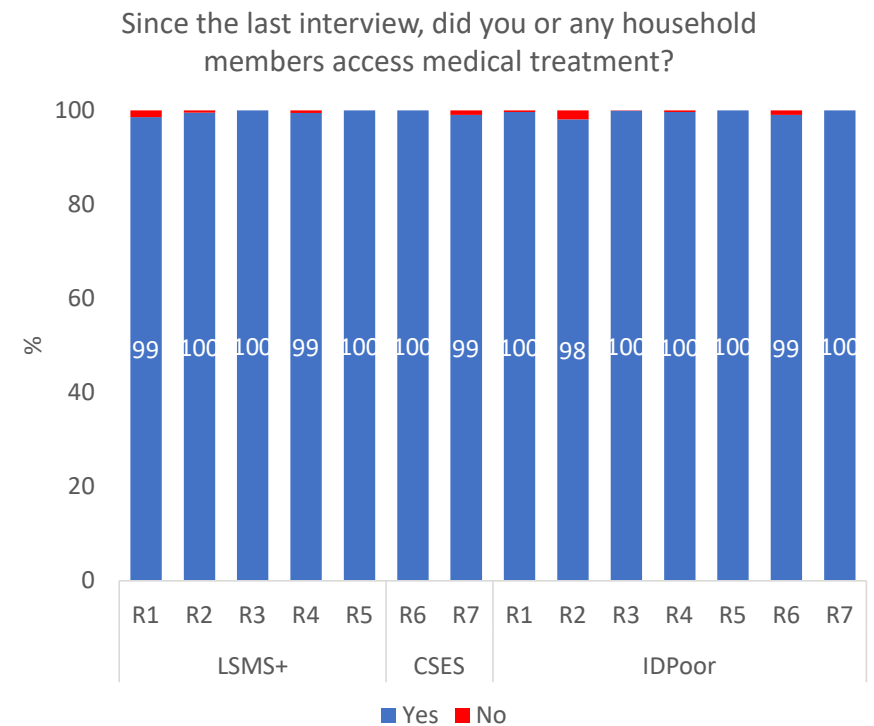
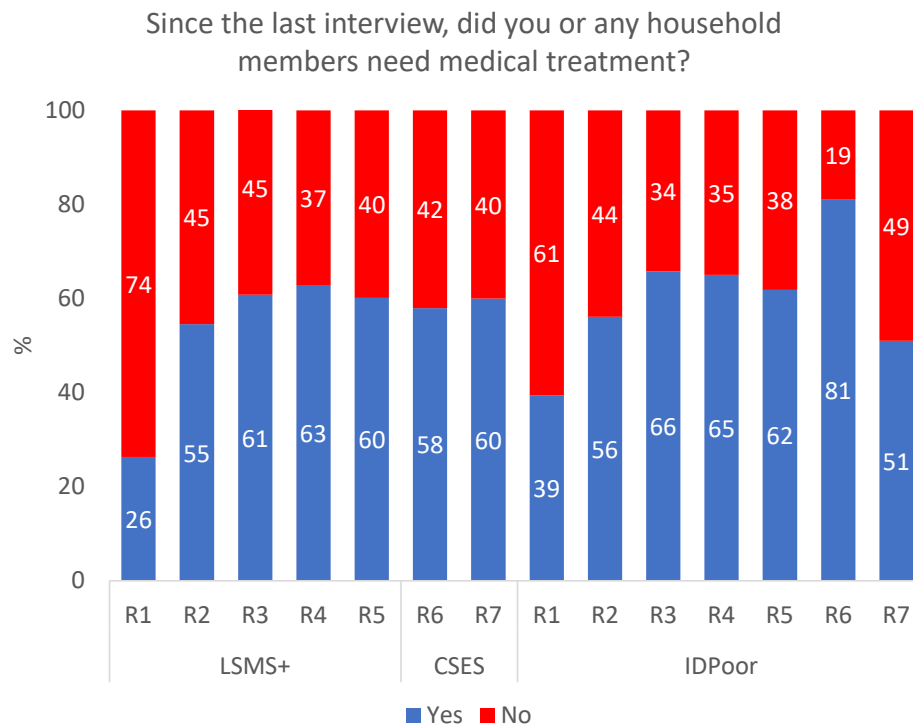


In the last week, has your household been able to buy medicine? (for those who tried to buy)

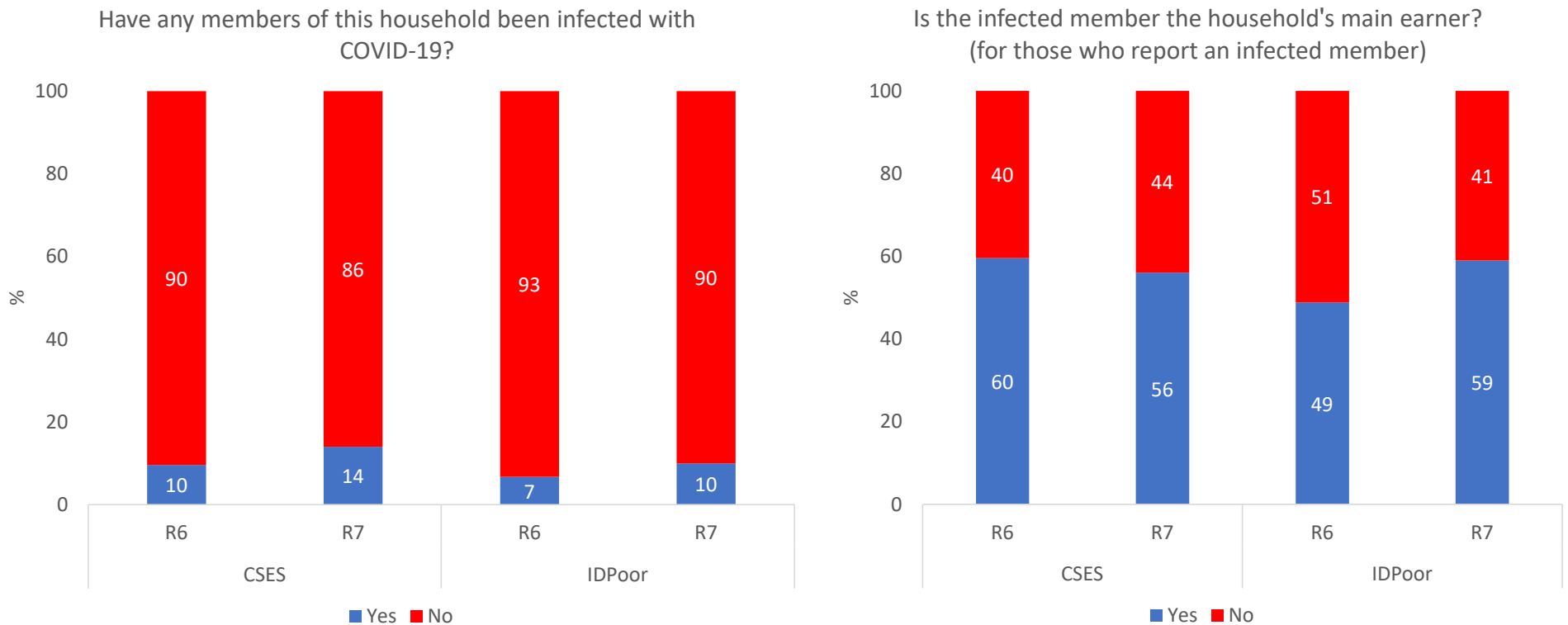




## Nearly all households have been able to access health services when needed throughout the pandemic.

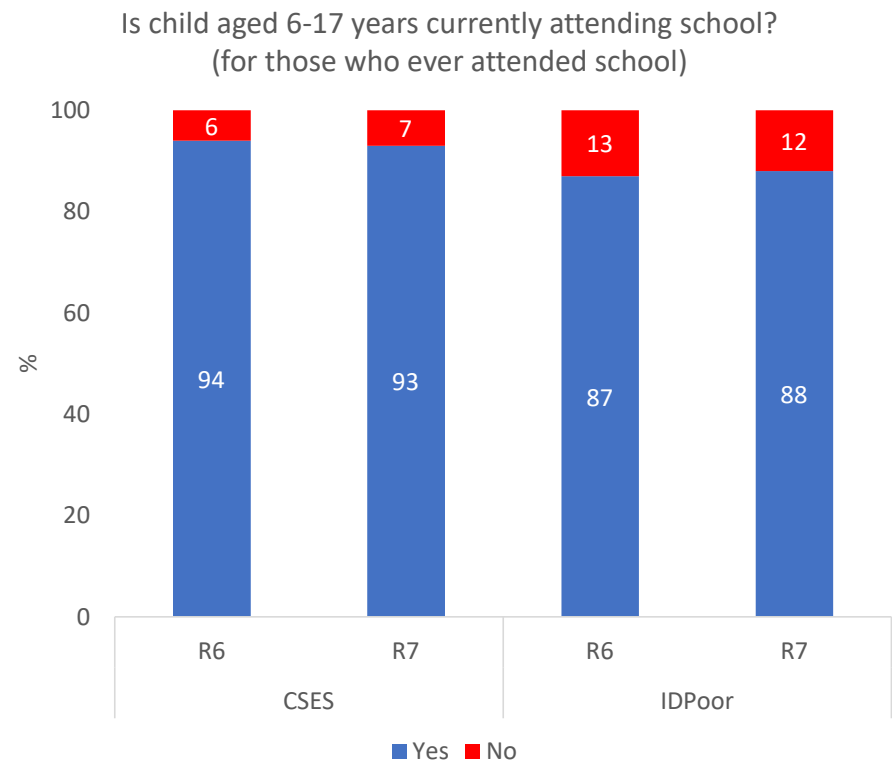
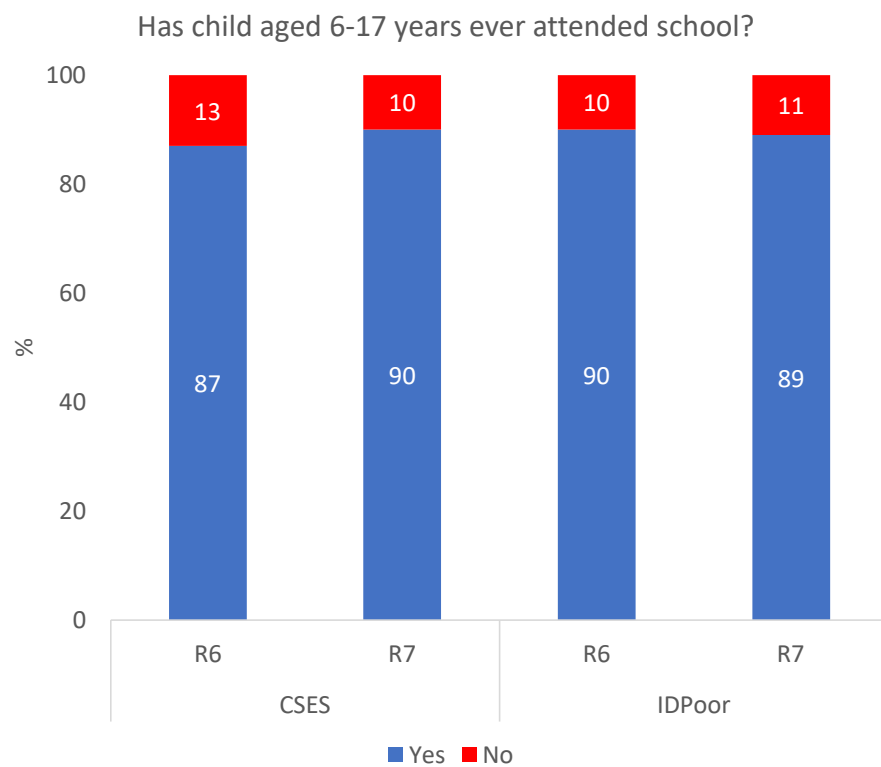


In more than 1 in 10 households at least one member had ever contracted COVID-19. More than half of them were their household's main earner.



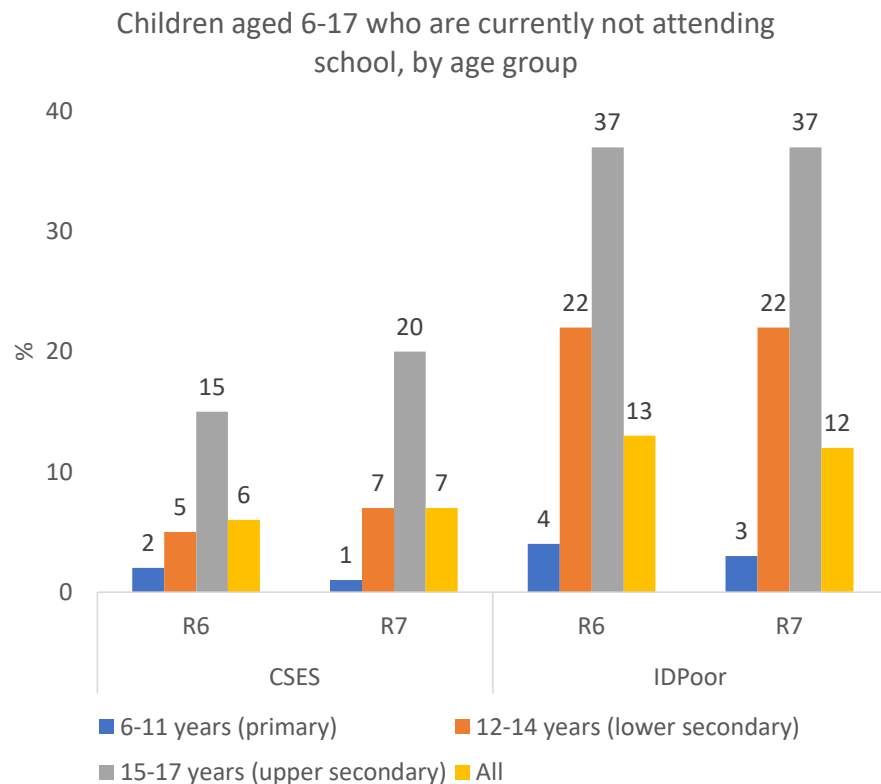
Note: Round 6 and 7.

Nearly 1 in 10 children aged 6–17 years were currently not in school.  
School dropouts were higher among children from IDPoor households.

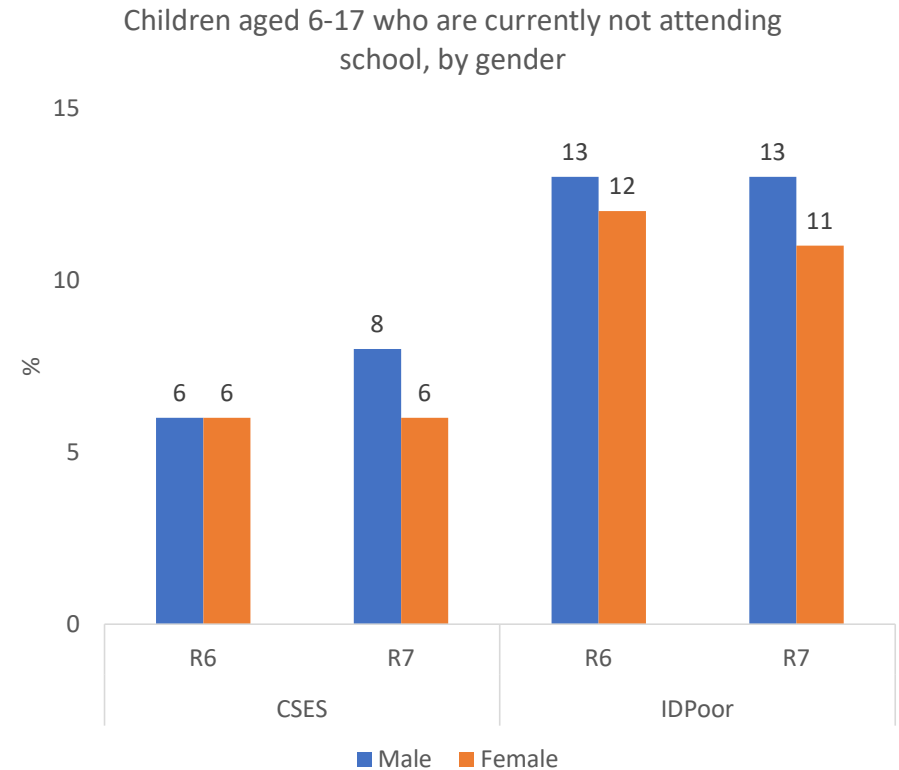


*Note: All schools have resumed in-person instruction with strict measures in place on November 1, 2021.*

## Children aged 15–17 years were more likely to drop out of school than children of primary and lower secondary age.



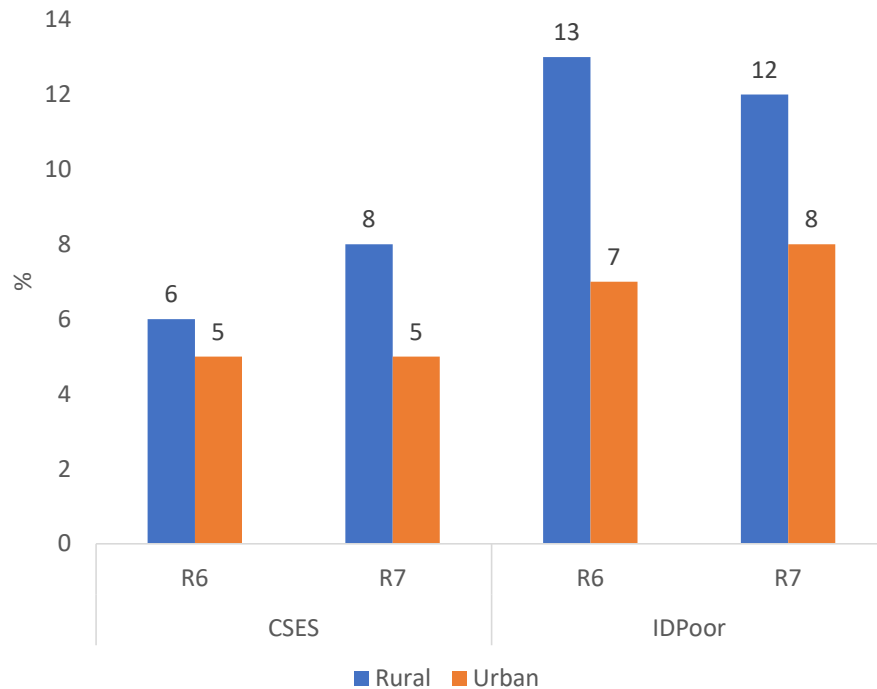
Note: Condition on children who ever attended school.



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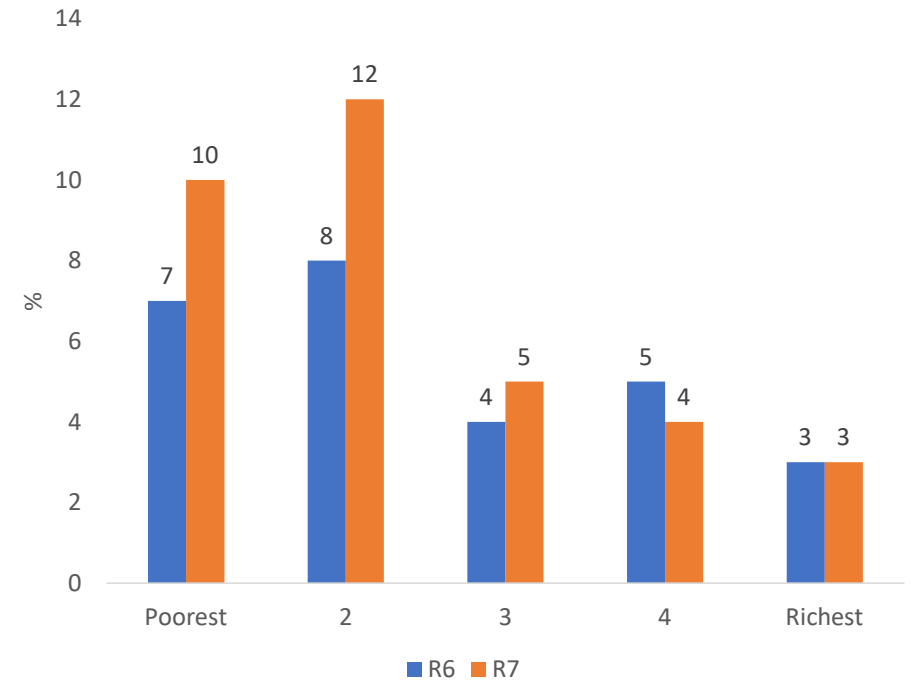
## School dropouts were higher in rural than in urban areas, and higher for children from poorer households than for children from richer households.

Children aged 6-17 are currently not attending school, by urban and rural



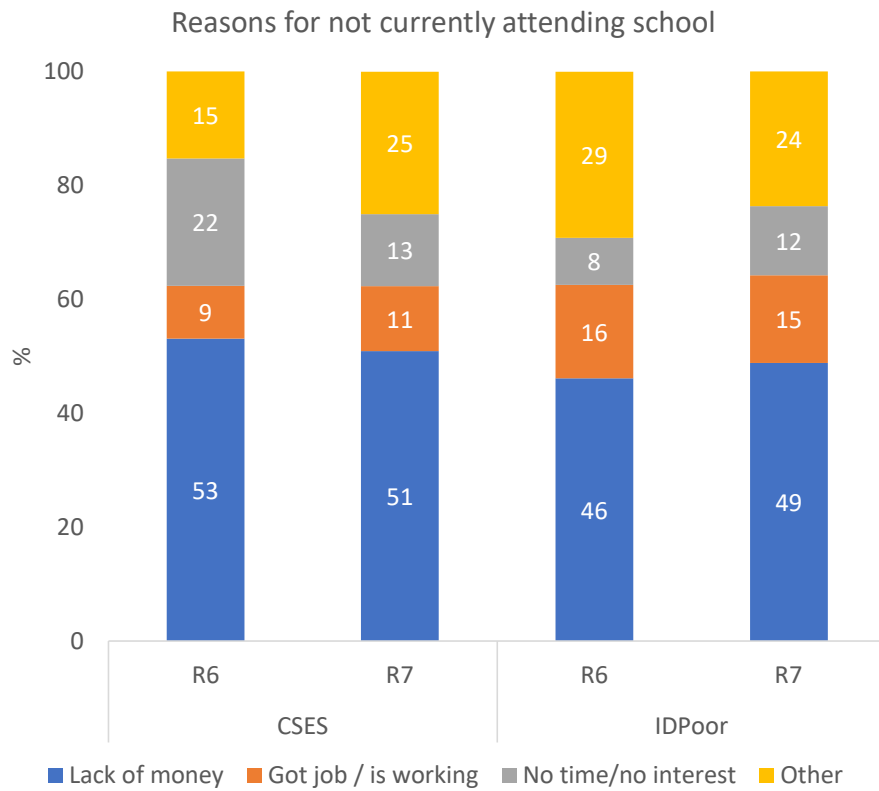
Note: Condition on children who ever attended school.

Children aged 6-17 are currently not attending school, by quintile

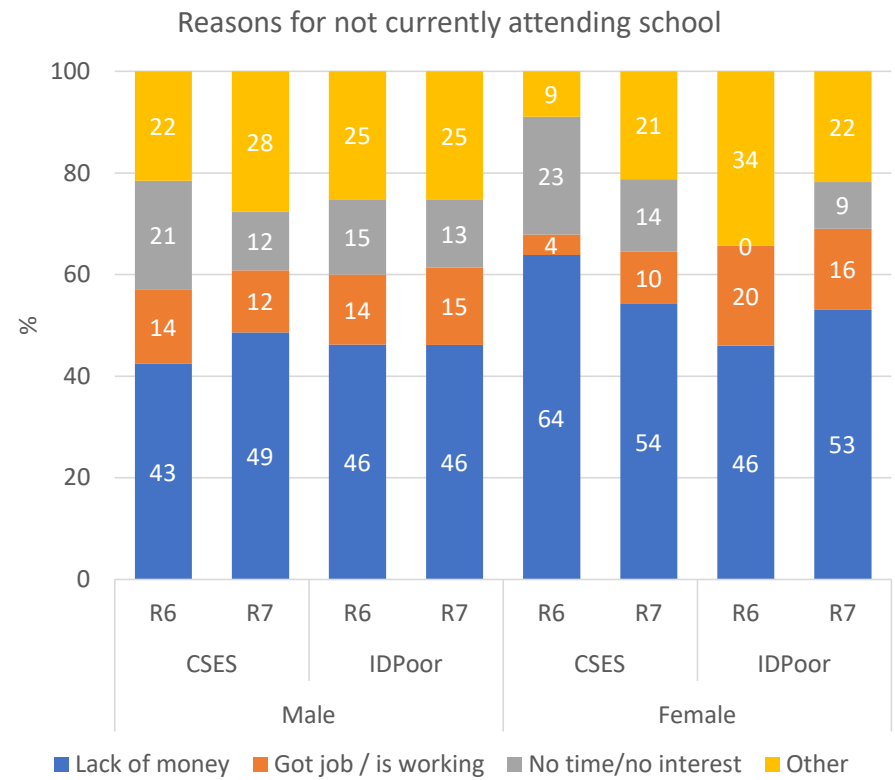


Note: Condition on children who ever attended school.

# Every second child who is out of school is due to lack of money.

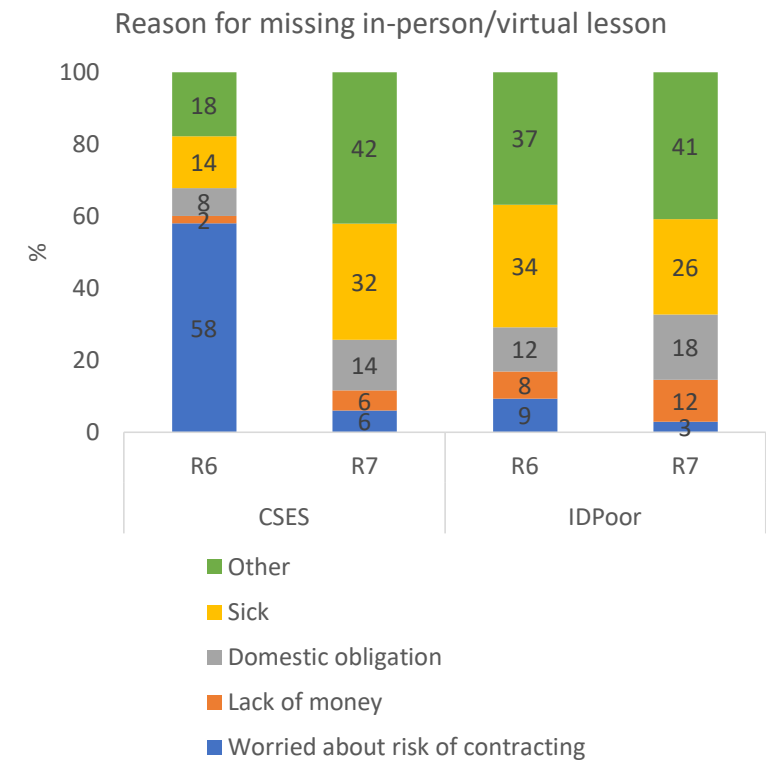
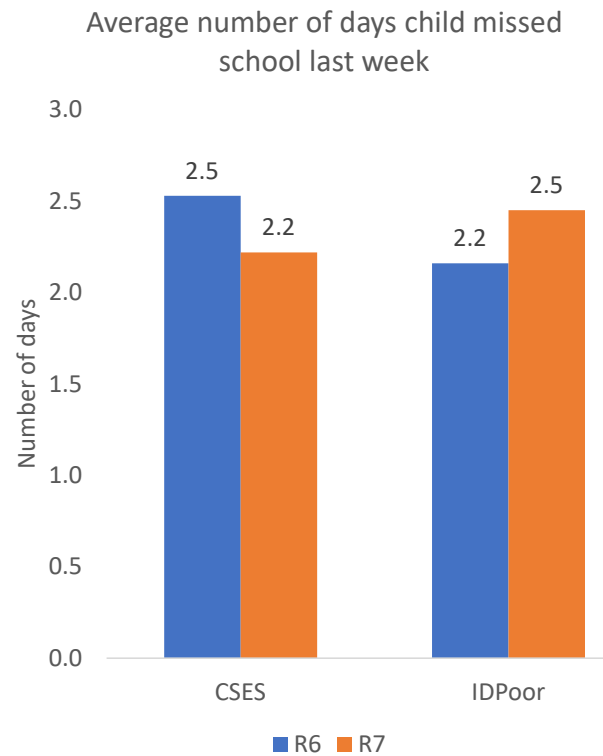
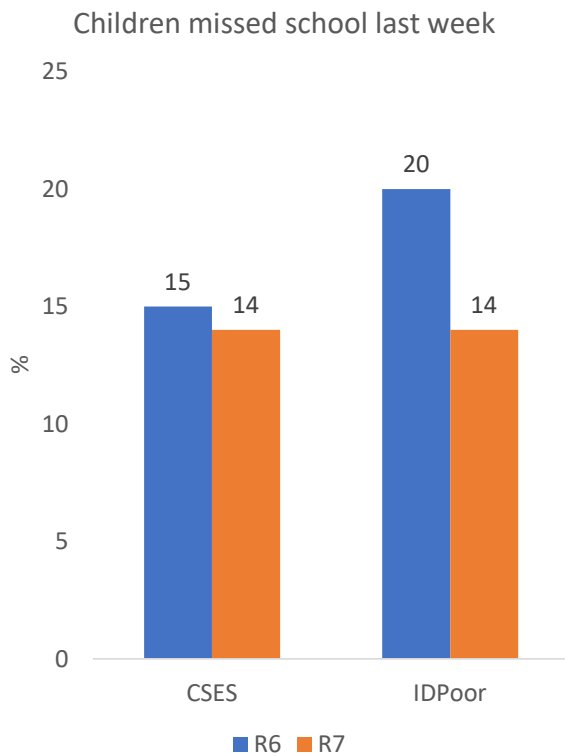


Note: Condition on children who are currently not attending school.



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Of children aged 6–17 still attending school, around 1 in 7 missed school last week. They missed 2.5 days on average, primarily due to sickness.



Note: Condition on children who are currently attending school.

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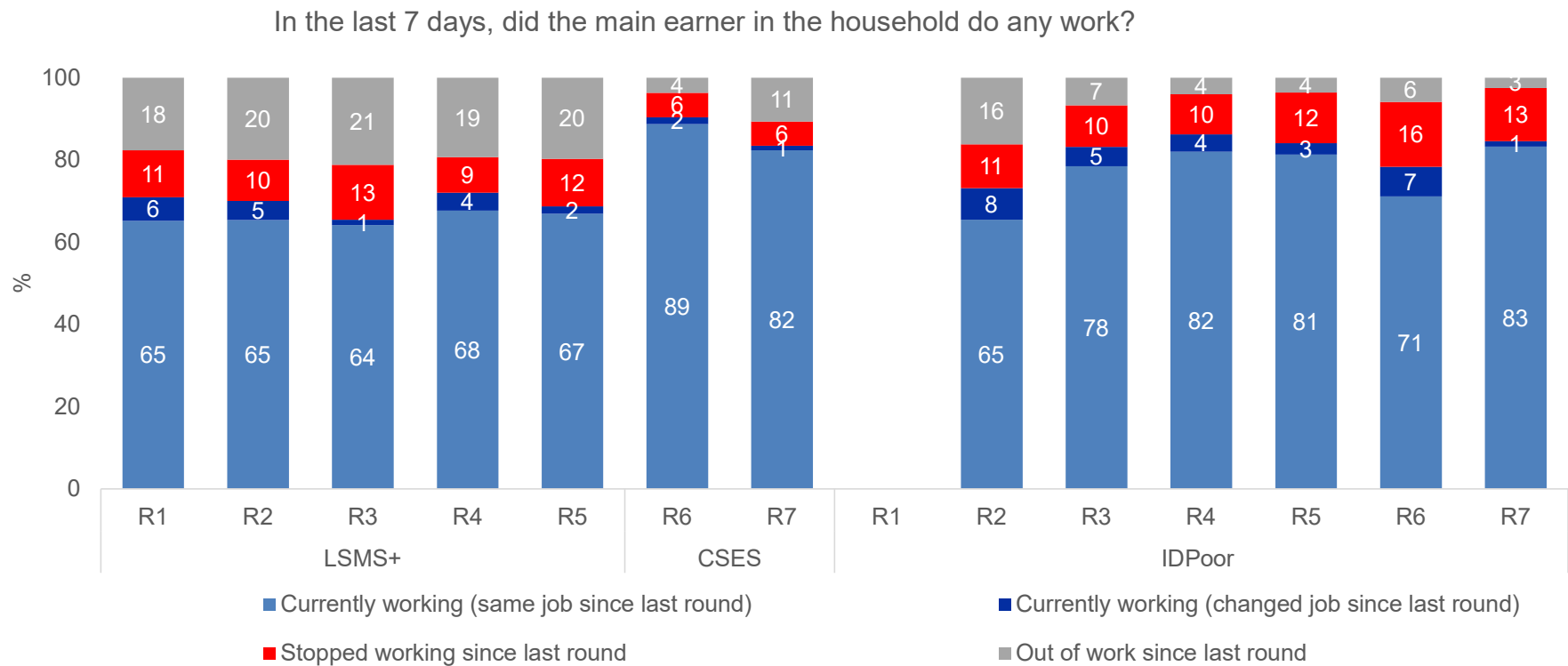
Note: Condition on children who are currently attending school.

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# **Employment Patterns and Household Income**

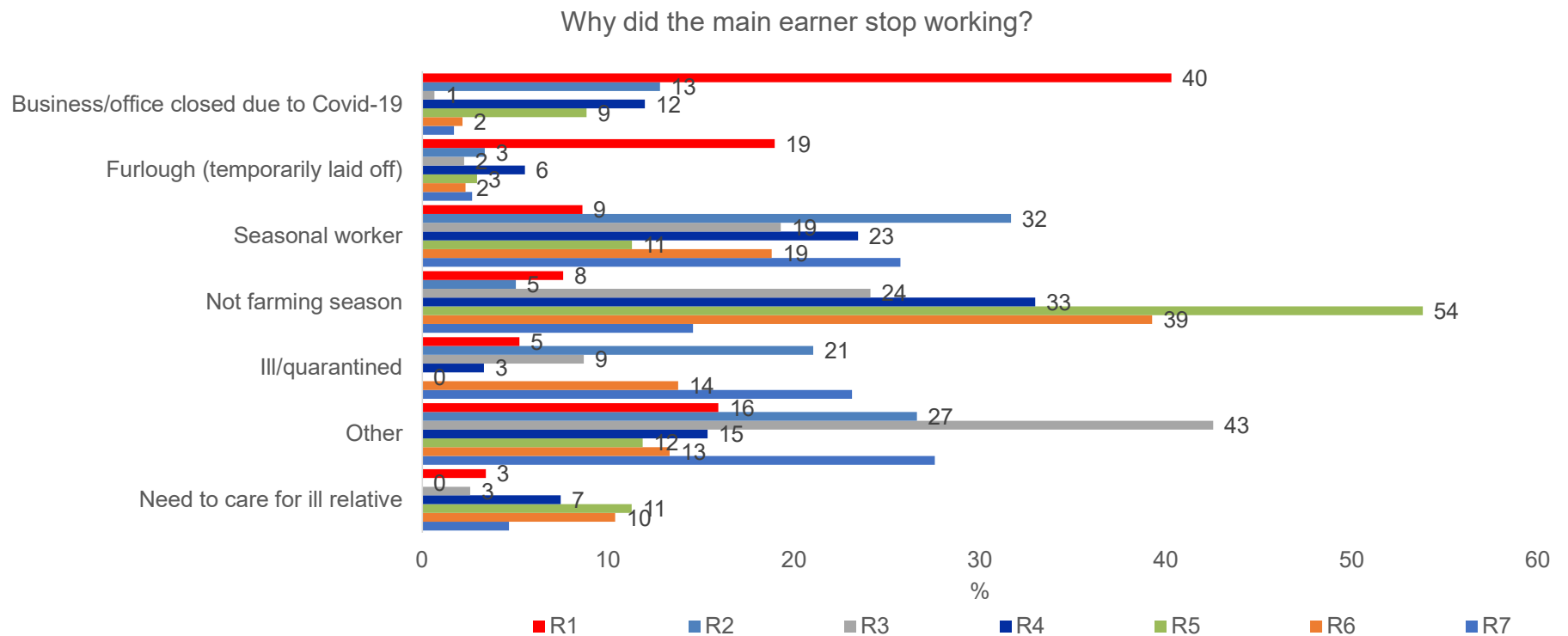


Employment remained at the pre-pandemic levels when 8 in 10 respondents were working.



"Before the COVID-19 outbreak" is the reference period in round 1. Respondent for LSMS+ households and main earner for CSES and IDPoor households.

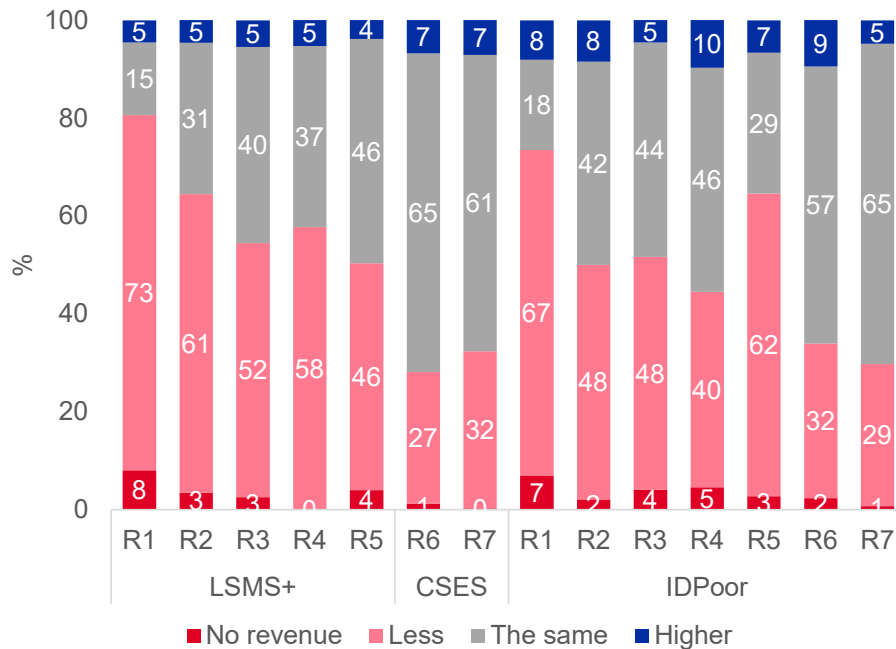
## Seasonality and illness are the primary reasons for not working.



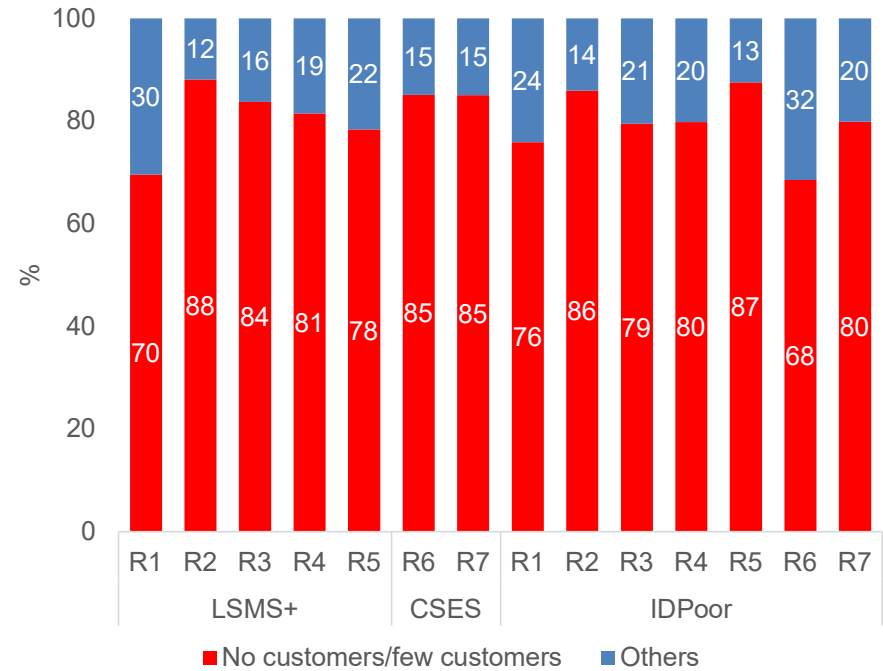
Source: LSMS+ sample for R1-R5, CSES sample for R6 and R7. "Other" reasons in round 3 are mostly related to flooding.

# Revenues of non-farm family businesses are stabilizing. Low consumer demand remains the main driver of revenue losses.

Compared to last month, revenue from business sales ...?

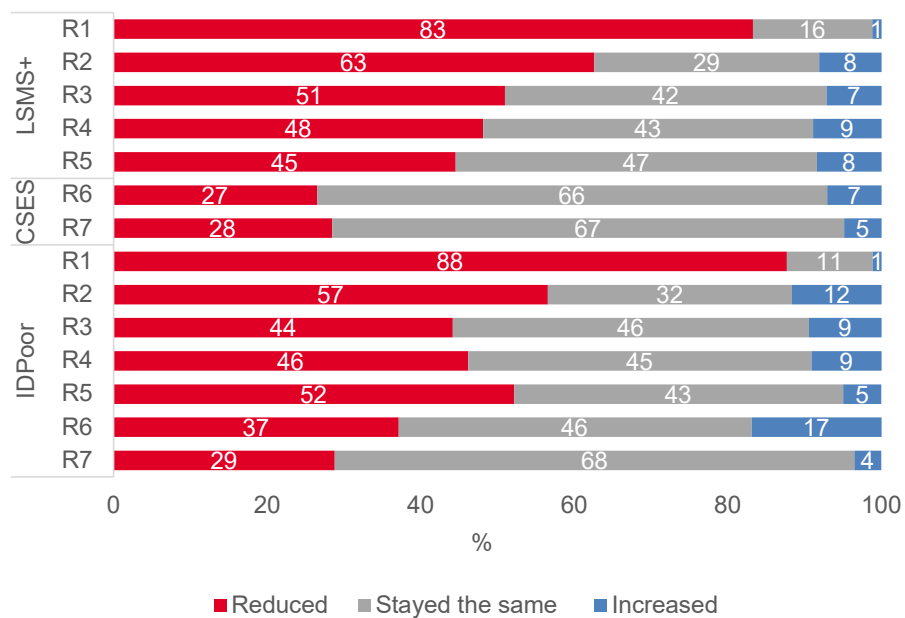


Reasons for having less or no revenue?

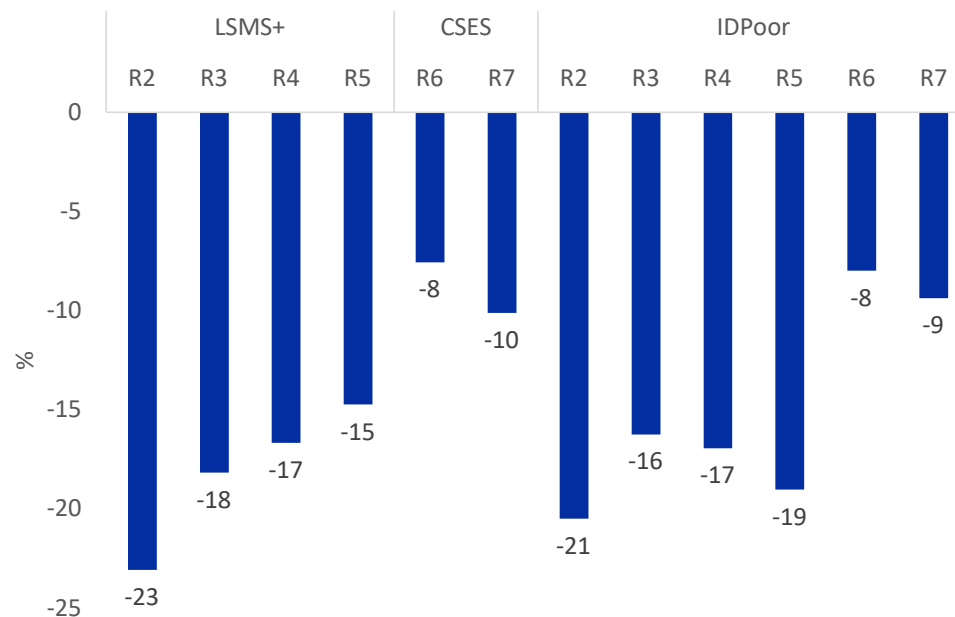


## Income has stabilized for 2 in 3 households by April–May 2022.

Changes in total household income since the last interview



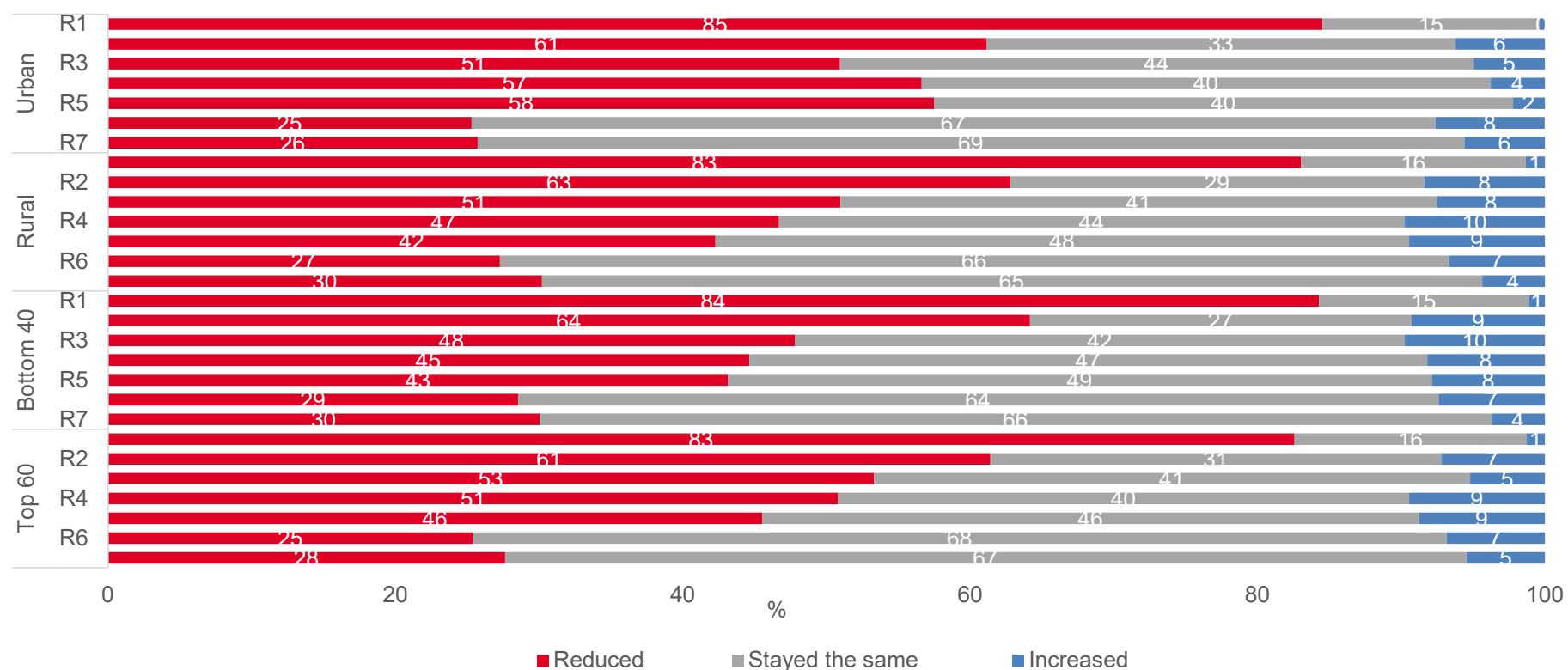
How much did total household income change (in %) since the last interview?



“Before the COVID-19 outbreak” is the reference period for R1.

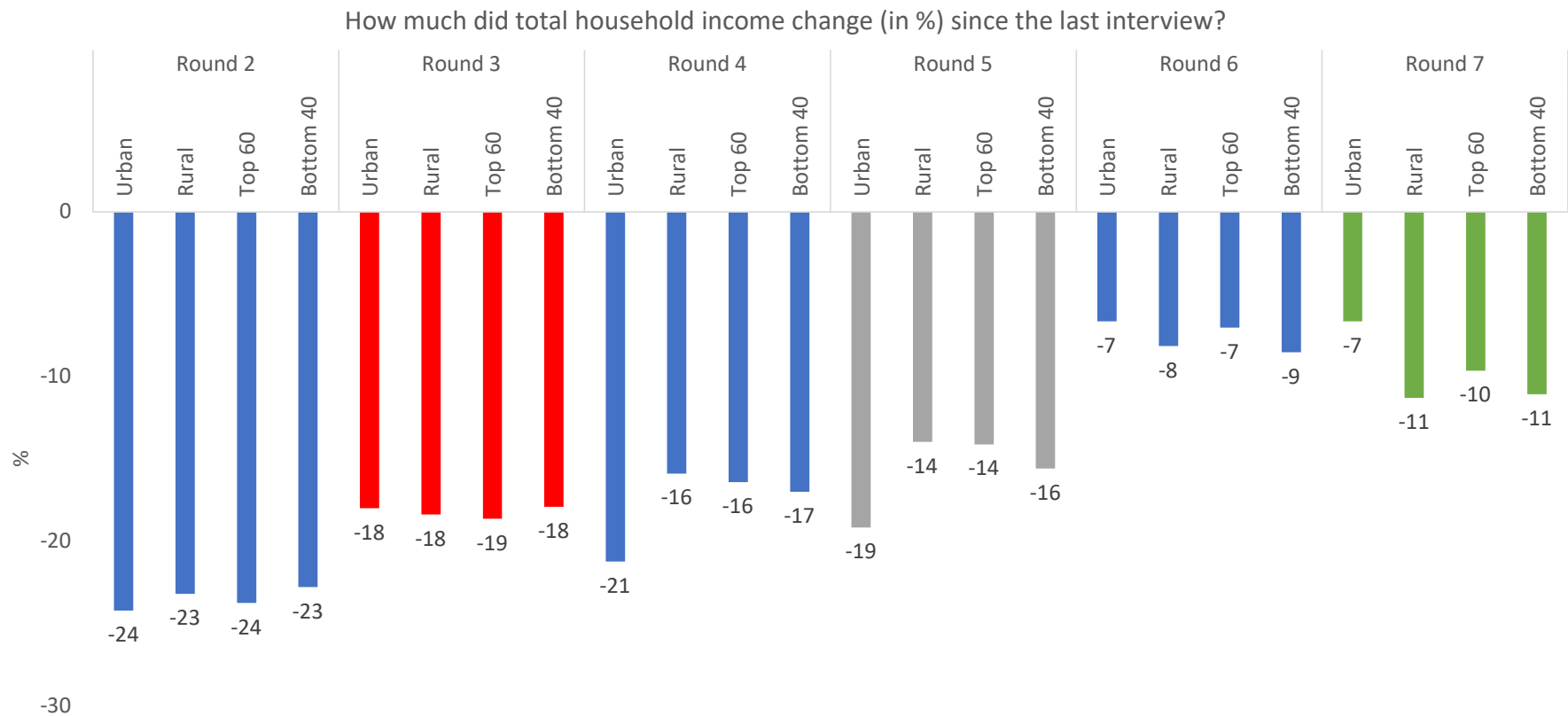
## Household income has stabilized in both urban and rural areas and across the income distribution.

Changes in total household income since the last interview



Source: LSMS+ sample for R1-R5, CSES sample for R6-R7.

## Total household income declined by 7 to 11 percent since the last interview.

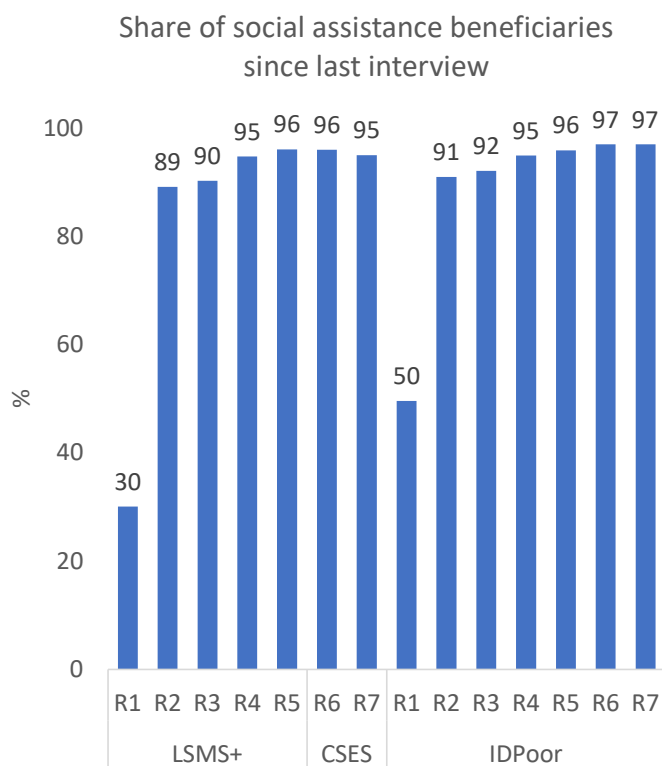


Source: LSMS+ sample for R1-R5, CSES sample for R6-R7.

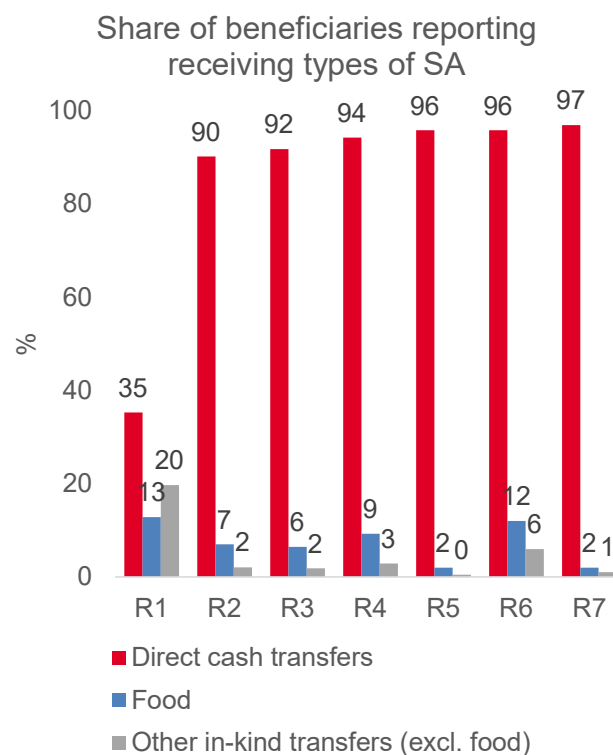
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# **Social Assistance**

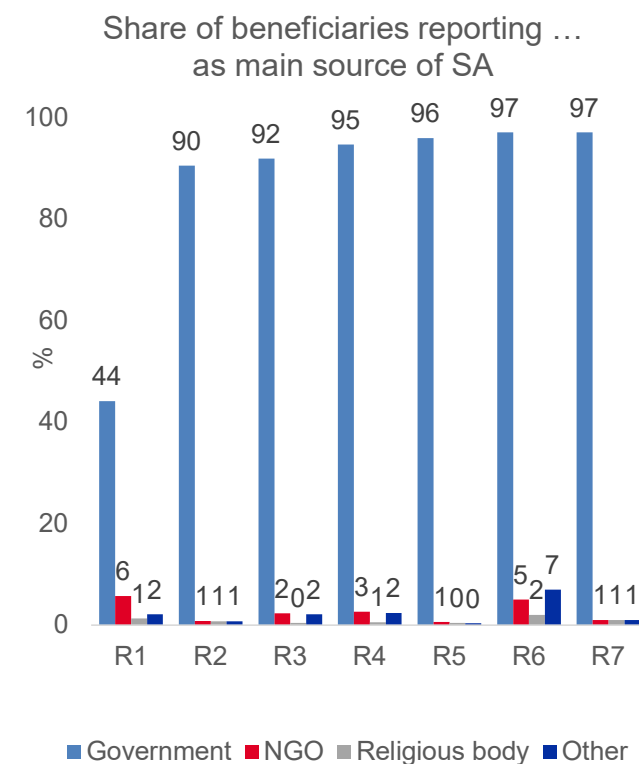
## High social assistance (SA) coverage among eligible IDPoor since the launch of the government's COVID-19 relief cash transfer program in June 2020.



Source: Eligible sample (IDPoor households with a valid equity card).



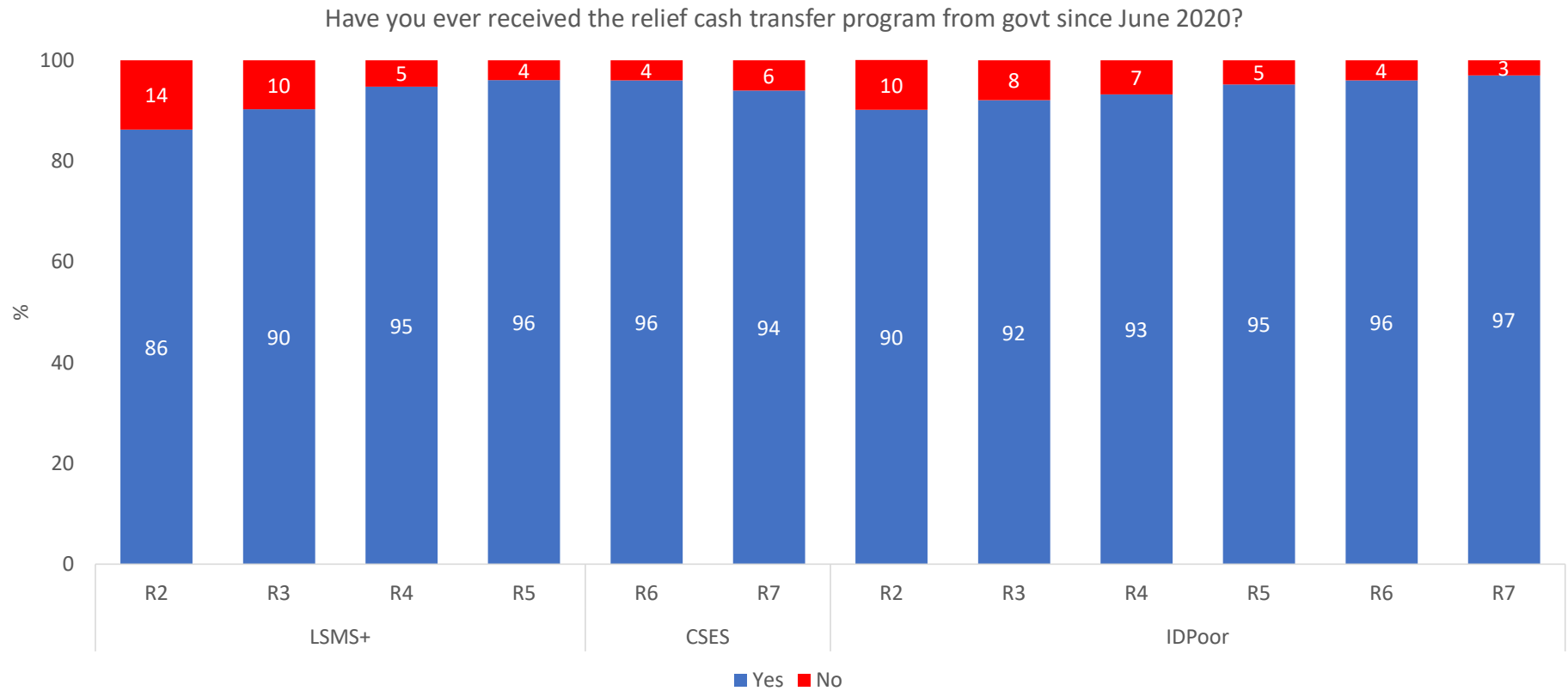
Source: Eligible IDPoor sample.



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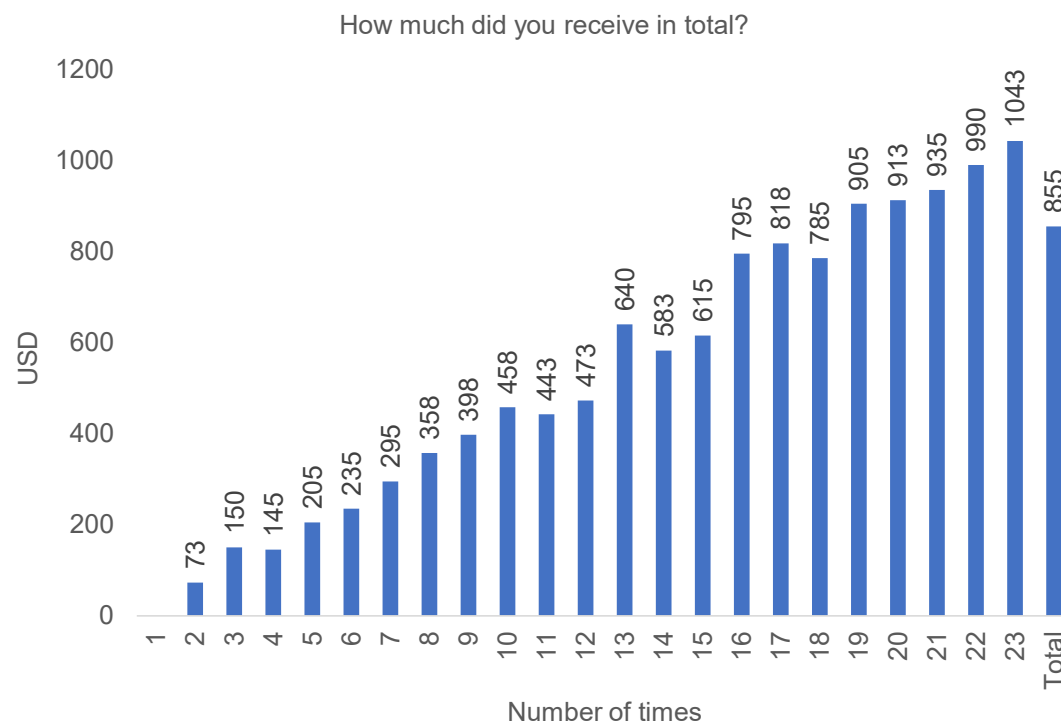
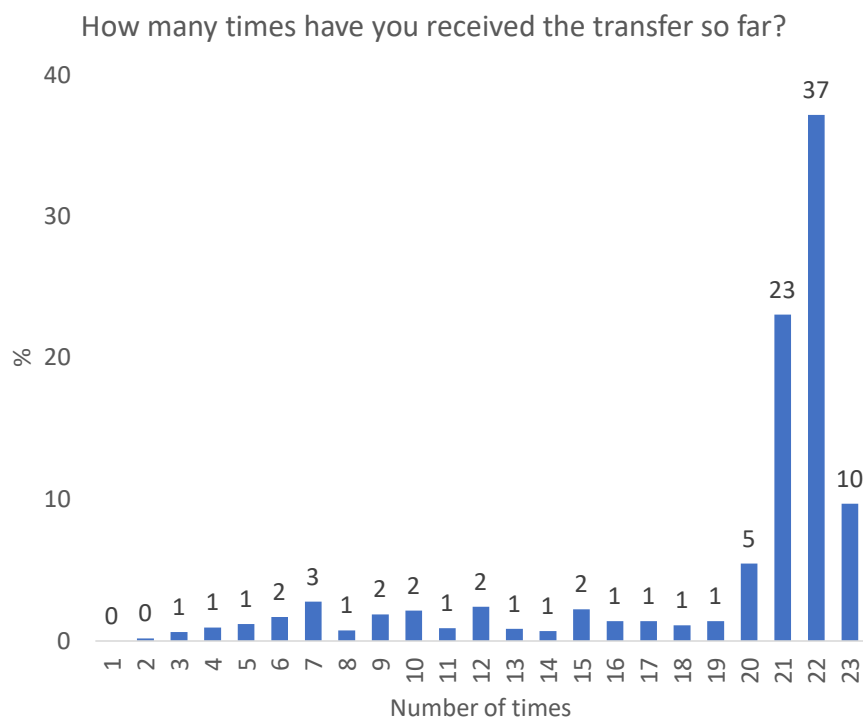


## Almost all eligible IDPoor have received the relief cash transfers.



Source: Eligible sample (IDPoor households with a valid equity card).

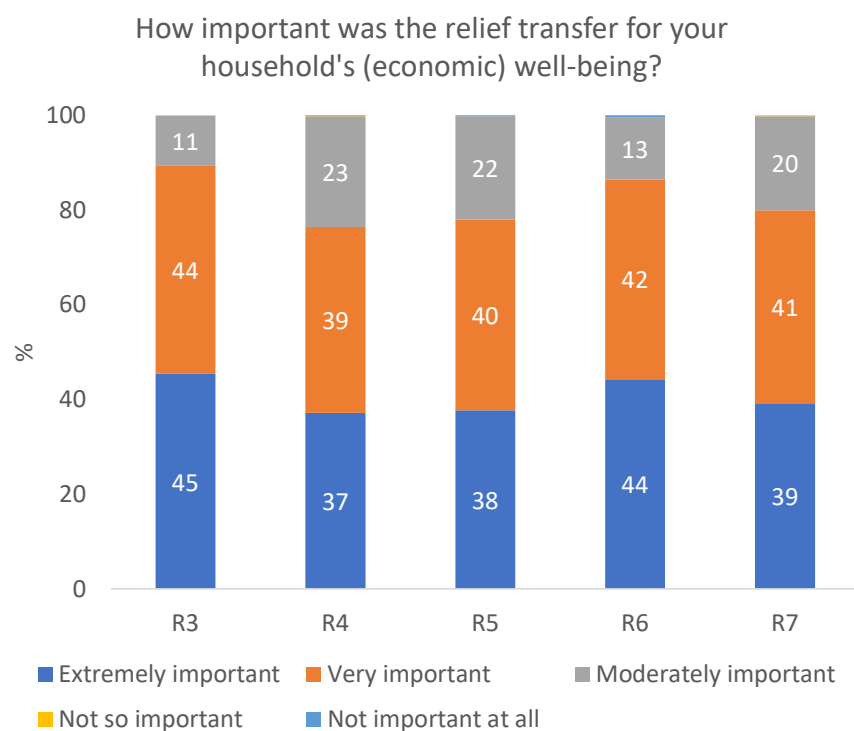
Frequency and amounts of cash transfers received are as expected: 7 in 10 beneficiaries had received 21 cash payments or more by April–May 2022, averaging to US\$855 in total.



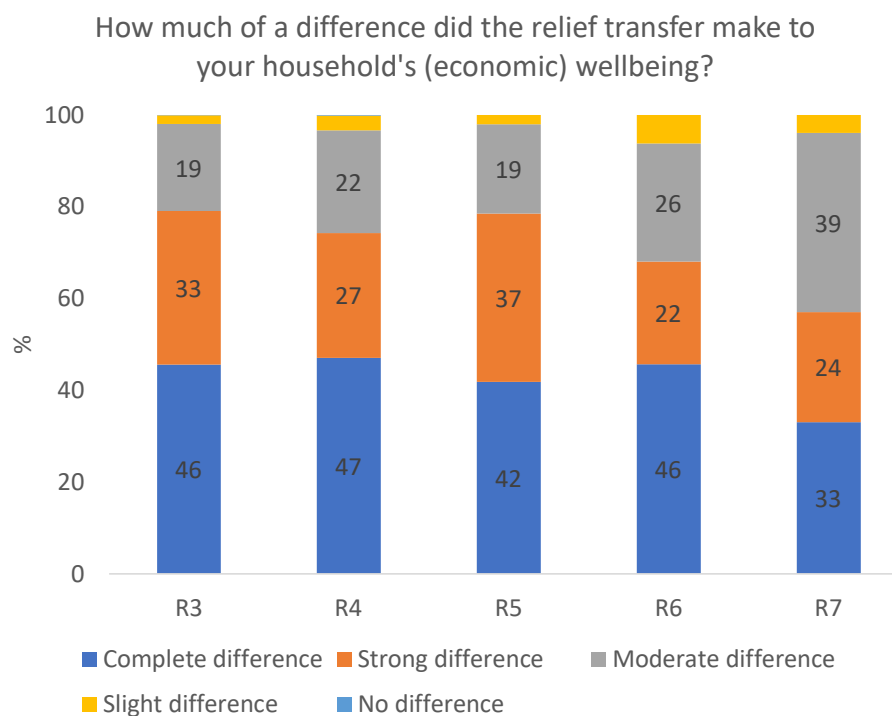
Source: IDPoor sample that have ever received the relief cash transfer program from the government since June 2020.

Note: Total amount of relief cash transfers received from the government by the number of transfers received so far.

## Beneficiary households perceive the relief cash transfers to have been important for and to have improved their economic well-being.

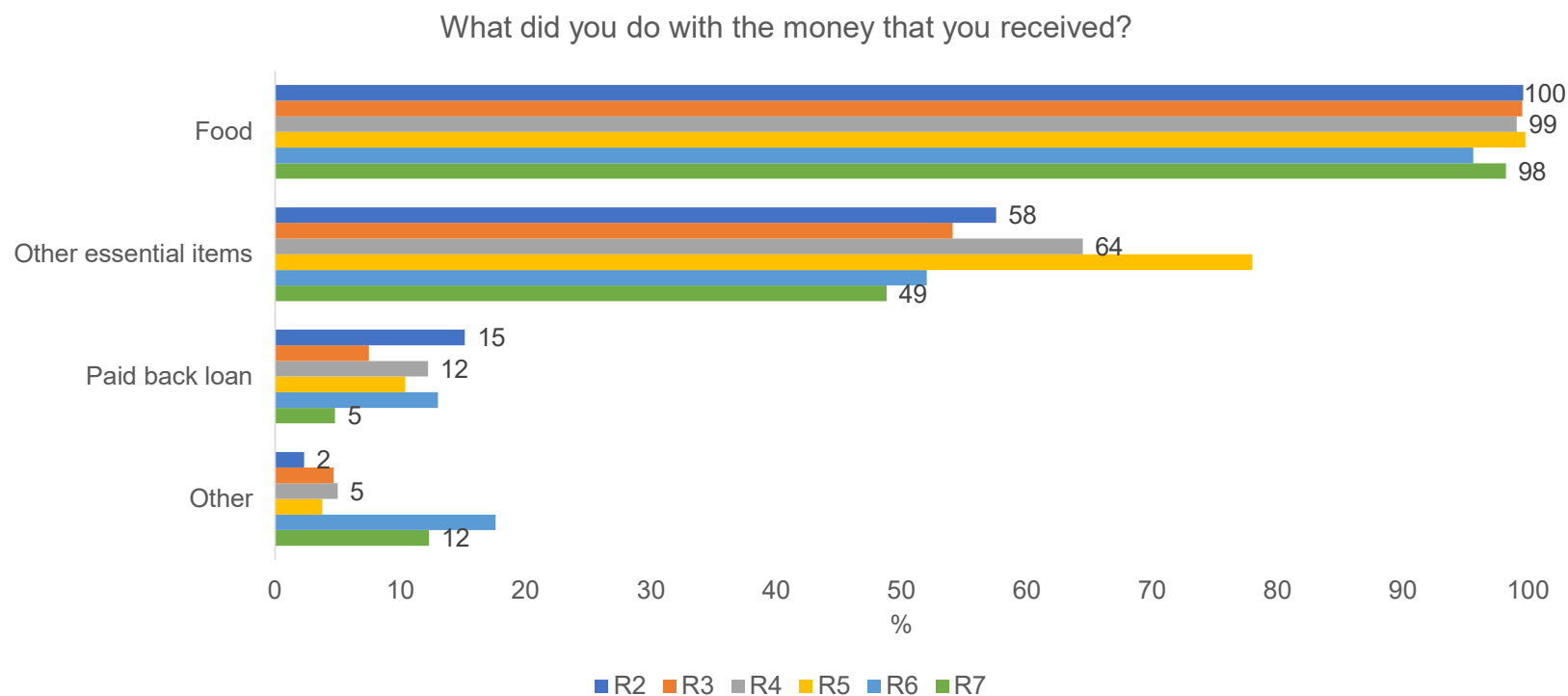


Source: IDPoor sample with valid equity card who ever received relief cash transfer program.



Source: IDPoor sample with valid equity card who ever received relief cash transfer program.

Nearly all beneficiary households continue to spend their relief cash transfers on food. 1 in 2 beneficiaries also use them to buy other essential items.

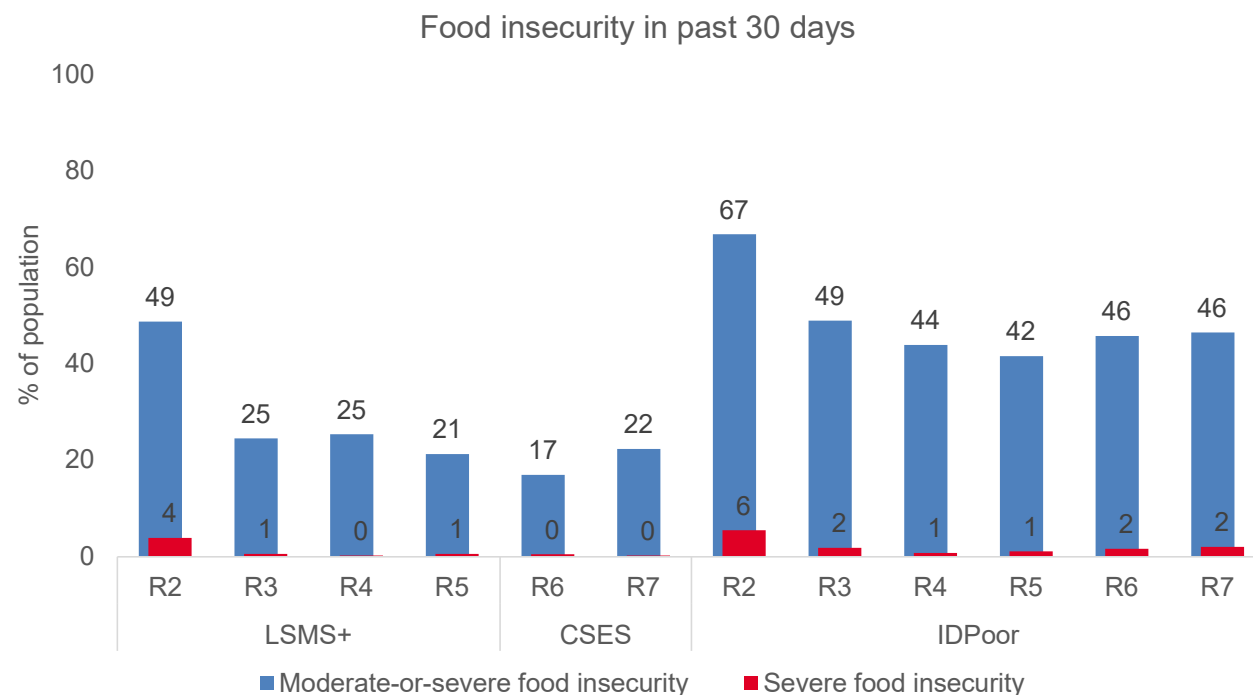


Source: IDPoor sample with valid equity card who ever received the relief cash transfer program from the government since June 2020. "Other essential items" reasons in round 6 are mostly related to education and health expenses. This is based on multiple choice answer.

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# Food Insecurity

## Moderate-or-severe food insecurity and severe food insecurity remained unchanged, and more elevated for IDPoor.



*“In the last 30 days” is the reference period.*

*People experiencing moderate levels of food insecurity will typically eat low quality diets and might have been forced, at times during the year, to also reduce the quantity of food they would normally eat, while those experiencing severe levels would have gone for entire days without eating, due to lack of money or other resources to obtain food.*

*Prevalence of food insecurity, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), was estimated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.*

*Note: Moderate-or-severe food insecurity index for CSES sample in round 7 was 5 percentage points higher than in round 6, but it was not statistically significant at the 10 percent level.*

## Concluding remarks

- The pandemic led to a sharp slowdown and Cambodia's first economic contraction in 25 years. After the country began working toward reopening at the end of 2021, economic activity started to [recover](#) and [gain momentum](#). The [economic growth projection for 2022](#) was [revised upwards](#) to 5.1 percent in March 2022, from a projected real GDP growth of 4.5 percent in October 2021. However, recent increases in energy and food prices are posing headwinds and threaten the welfare of poor and vulnerable households.
- The pandemic's [negative impacts on employment and household incomes have subsided](#). [Employment reached pre-pandemic levels](#) in February–March 2022 and as many Cambodians continued to work in April–May 2022. [Income](#) has [stabilized](#) for nearly three-fourths of households.
- The government continued to disburse [COVID-19 relief cash transfers](#), which provided [poor and vulnerable families](#) with a [much-needed safety net](#) during the pandemic.
- However, only [15-20 percent](#) of households have been covered under the government's current assistance program (much less than households that were negatively affected by COVID-19)—posing a risk to increased poverty if economic recovery isn't sustained.
- For households to recover, a broad set of measures will be needed to [support jobs](#) and provide more [broad-based assistance](#) including financial support for children who are yet to return to school.

# Thank you

Wendy Karamba and Kimsun Tong led the Cambodia High-Frequency Phone Survey (HFPS) team comprised of Isabelle Salcher and Abla Safir. Nuppun Research Consulting implemented the survey with technical and financial support from the World Bank. Financial contributions for the HFPS were received from the Global Tax Program (GTP). The team is grateful to the National Institute of Statistics of the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation for their collaboration, as well as the Food and Agriculture Organization for their analytical support on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).

**Website:** [Monitoring the Impact of COVID-19 on Households in Cambodia](#)

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