# HOUSEHOLD VULNERABILITY SURVEY (HVS)

**Key Findings:** Rapid assessment of the economic impact of COVID-19 restrictions on vulnerable households. December 2020



CENTRAL STATISTICAL ORGANIZATION
REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR



MOPFI
MINISTRY OF PLANNING FINANCE AND INDUSTRY



UN
DP

# HOUSEHOLD VULNERABILITY SURVEY (HVS)

**Key Findings**: Rapid assessment of the economic impact of COVID-19 restrictions on vulnerable households

December 2020

# Foreword from MoPFI

The Household Vulnerability Survey (HVS) is conducted by the Central Statistical Organization of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry and supported by the United Nations Development Programme. The aim of the survey is to quickly respond to the need for data to understand how households are affected by, and coping with, the changes in their economic circumstances due to the restrictions relating to COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic is having major consequences on the Myanmar economy. The government has acted quickly to try and support vulnerable people. The Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017 three years ago reported that 24.8 percent of the population was living below the poverty line and a further 32.9 percent were vulnerable, living close to the poverty line. The HVS shows that almost all households have seen their household incomes fall in 2020, and generally the extent of the fall has been quite dramatic. Households that had been doing quite well have experienced the biggest drop in income. HVS also shows the enormous impact that the COVID-19 restrictions have had on businesses being run by households.

A more positive finding from the survey is that by September/October nearly half of HVS households (49.7 percent) had received at least one cash payment. It is positive to see that disbursements have been generally targeted, with poor households almost twice more likely to receive cash than households with higher incomes.

The HVS findings will inform actions for the forthcoming Myanmar Economic Resilience and Reform Plan (MERRP) that aligns with the long term aims of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP). Myanmar had been making good progress on poverty reduction, and the MERRP will facilitate the process of re-building the economy and supporting households to recover.

I wish to express my appreciation to the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) for their adaptability and willingness to absorb new technology and survey methodologies to undertake the HVS and, I am also grateful for the technical and financial assistance of UNDP.

**His Excellency U Soe Win**
Union Minister
Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

# Foreword from UNDP

As the Household Vulnerability Survey 2020 (HVS) report is released, the world contends with the widespread and multi-faceted impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. For Myanmar, the impact may well significantly reverse its remarkable progress in poverty reduction. The HVS is strongly signalling that poor households are being pushed further below the poverty line, vulnerable households will now be moving even closer to it and previously financially secure households face massive shocks due to the temporary closure of their small businesses. It has been a universal setback for Myanmar's households.

Myanmar, which relies heavily on trade, tourism and remittances from abroad, will have to contend with an economic shock, which is not likely to end quickly. The economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic are expected to be long-lasting and lead to economic scarring through recession. Even before the outbreak, Myanmar was progressing slowly on delivering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - relative to many in the Region - and now the overall prospects for SDG attainment will be challenged further.

Statistics need to take centre stage in the monitoring of the pandemic and rarely has access to timely, high-quality data and analysis been so vital. One key to a resilient recovery will be to use data to create robust, evidence-based policies. The CSO and UNDP have responded rapidly to the need for data in this rapid assessment which monitors the impact of the first six months of the COVID-19 restrictions. There will be further work, firstly, using this data for more detailed analysis and undertaking further interviews in 2021. It will be essential to take a periodic pulse of the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on households in Myanmar.

The HVS was built on a strong bedrock of earlier investment. HVS respondents lived in households that had been interviewed three years previously, by the CSO, for the Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017. I congratulate the CSO on the rapid production of this Key Findings Report which provides data to understand and monitor the differentiated impact of the crisis.

Through the Myanmar Economic Resilience and Recovery Plan (MERRP) and other initiatives in response to COVID-19, the Government and Donor Partners can significantly alleviate the impacts and set the country on a course towards more resilient and sustainable development. Working together, and informed by robust data, we can ensure lasting and equitable prospects for all the people of Myanmar.

**Titon Mitra**
Resident Representative
United Nations Development Programme
Myanmar

# Acknowledgement

The **Household Vulnerability Survey** has two "firsts" for the CSO. It is the first telephone survey using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) where the data is entered directly into a laptop. In addition, it is the CSO's first longitudinal survey where the **same people** are re-interviewed again. For the HVS the sample was some of the people who had been interviewed for the 2017 Myanmar Living Conditions Survey. Both these decisions were made in order to create rapid and relevant statistics, in the face of CSO's staff and potential respondents facing restrictions due to COVID-19.

COVID-19 has presented several challenges for the CSO including working shifts where staff members had to work from home and postponing of surveys that can only take place with face-to-face interviews. Usually telephone surveys suffer from high non-response as it is very easy to put the phone down. However, in the case of the HVS, the CSO had left a good impression with the MLCS respondents in 2017, and this helped to convince people to be interviewed again. As well as being the official source of poverty data in Myanmar, the MLCS provides data for several of the SDGs and NIF indicators.

The HVS contains statistically robust data to compare households living in urban and rural areas. It can also be used to compare how households in the States (as one group) and Regions (another group) are doing. The data also examines differences in relation to the MLCS poverty status of the households.

The great benefit of CATI surveys is that the data can be available quickly. HVS fieldwork took place from September 21 until October 26, 2020 and the report is available two months later. One of the CSO's key missions is *to provide statistical publications for policy makers, planners, researchers and other statistical users.* As the COVID-19 pandemic is an extreme situation that is changing Myanmar's circumstances it is important to quickly understand the impact it is having on society.

HVS is the first CATI survey of CSO and CSO has now greatly built its capacity to undertake CATI interviews. Given the likelihood that COVID-19 will continue to challenge face-to-face interviews in Myanmar in the upcoming months, this has been a valuable experience for CSO.

**Htun Zaw**
Director General
Central Statistical Organization
Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

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# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| **CATI** | Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing |
| **CERP** | COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan |
| **COVID-19** | Corona Virus Disease 2019 |
| **CSO** | Central Statistical Organization |
| **CSPro** | Census and Survey Processing System software |
| **EA** | Enumeration Area |
| **GAD** | General Administration Department |
| **GOM** | Government of Myanmar |
| **IPA** | Innovations for Poverty Action |
| **MERRP** | Myanmar Economic Resilience and Reform Plan |
| **MoEE** | Ministry of Electricity and Energy |
| **MLCS 2017** | Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017 |
| **NIF** | National Indicator Framework |
| **SDG** | Sustainable Development Goal |
| **UNDP** | United Nations Development Programme |

# Summary

The global COVID-19 pandemic is a severe economic blow to Myanmar's households. According to the respondents in the Household Vulnerability Survey, their household income has been cut almost in half since the beginning of the year.

Health-wise Myanmar was relatively unscathed during the early months of the COVID-19 outbreak (the first wave), recording only around 800 infections up to the end of August. From August onwards, cases started increasing rapidly, and on August 16 the Myanmar government issued stay-at-home orders, curfews, bans on public gatherings etc. in order to stem the second wave. At the time of the report writing Myanmar had not seen a significant reduction in the number of daily infections.

Restrictions resulting from COVID-19 have had an almost universal economic impact. The survey results show that previously financially secure households have experienced the biggest drop in their incomes. Poor and vulnerable households, however, who are even less able to afford a loss in income, have also suffered large losses. Households in the Regions have experienced a larger drop than those living in the States. The cities of Yangon and Mandalay, where many small businesses are located, have been hotspots in terms of the number of infections. Households in the Regions running their own business reported a 62 percent drop in their household income.

Myanmar had been making good strides into poverty, but the pandemic has withered this progress. Halting and then reversing the damage is likely to be the top of the agenda for the new government. Up until now the Government has supported households through food and cash payments. By September/October nearly half of HVS households (49.7 percent) had received at least one cash payment. It is positive to see that disbursements have been generally targeted with poor households almost twice more likely to receive cash than households with higher incomes (63.1 and 35.3 percent respectively).

## Building capacity

The Household Vulnerability Survey has been a partnership between the Central Statistical Organization and the UNDP. Cooperation between the two entities has a long history, beginning in 2015 with the Myanmar Business Survey. This was followed with the Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017, the Public Perception Survey of Government Services 2019 and now the HVS 2020. Each time these large scale surveys have supported an important aim, in addition to the data itself, enabling CSO to fulfil its mission statement to build a coherent National Statistical System in Myanmar that produces comprehensive, accurate and high-quality socio-economic statistics. Over the years the surveys have become more complex, keeping up with the latest technology and survey methodologies. Using laptops for data collection and most recently with the HVS doing interviews by phone and entering data directly onto tablets. Every time CSO has successfully absorbed this new knowledge and utilised it in their core activities.

## Methodology

The Household Vulnerability Survey 2020 is a survey conducted by Myanmar's Central Statistical Organization of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry. A total of 2,016 households were interviewed during September and October 2020, by telephone. The survey is representative of the Union, all States combined, all Regions combined and urban and rural areas.

The sample was households who already participated in the Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (MLCS) 2017. For the HVS they were interviewed for a second time to see how their situation had changed with restrictions due to COVID-19. Therefore the design is a longitudinal survey and the aim is to return to same households for a third time next year to examine how COVID-19 is affecting their lives.

Figure 1: Household Vulnerability Survey – a longitudinal survey
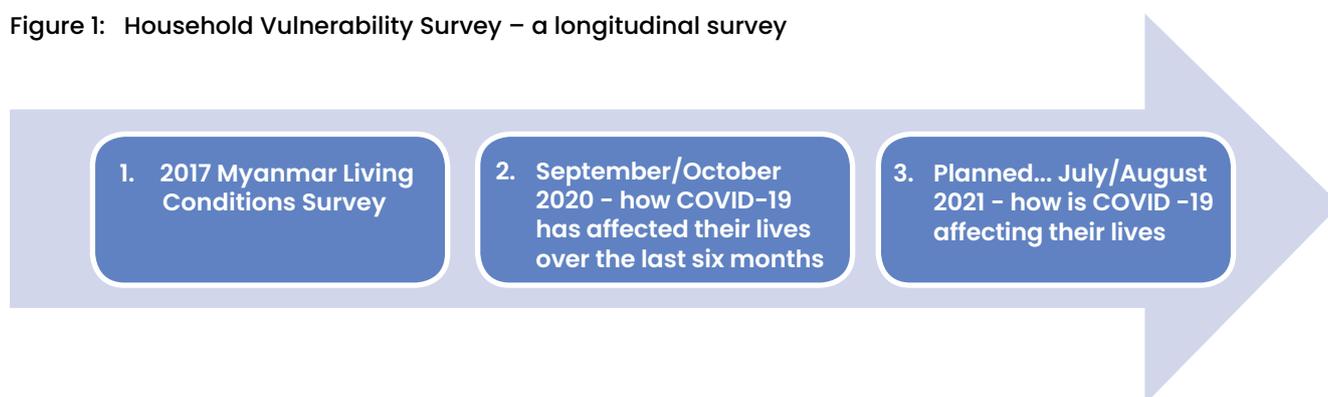


All tables in this report are broken down by the **MLCS 2017 Poverty Status**

- **Poor:** person lived on **less than 1,590 kyat a day in** 2017.

- **Vulnerable:** person lived on **between 1,590 to 2,385 kyat a day** in 2017.

- **Secure:** person lived on **more than 2,385 kyat a day** in 2017.

Based on all the issued households that had a telephone the response rate was 90.3%. This is very high for a telephone interview and was greatly helped by the hard work of the CSO regional coordinators, GAD and CSO Survey Department to find and contact MLCS respondents.

In Enumeration Areas (EAs) where many households did not have their own phone, arrangements were made in which a village leader or similar would allow respondents to use their phone. Enumeration Areas that had no mobile phone coverage and no contact was possible is shown in the Technical Report.

Over half of the interviews were conducted with women (52.2 percent compared to 47.8 percent of men). In all questions the respondent was asked about the situation of the household and the respondent acted as a proxy for the whole household. Female headed households account for 11.9 percent of all households.
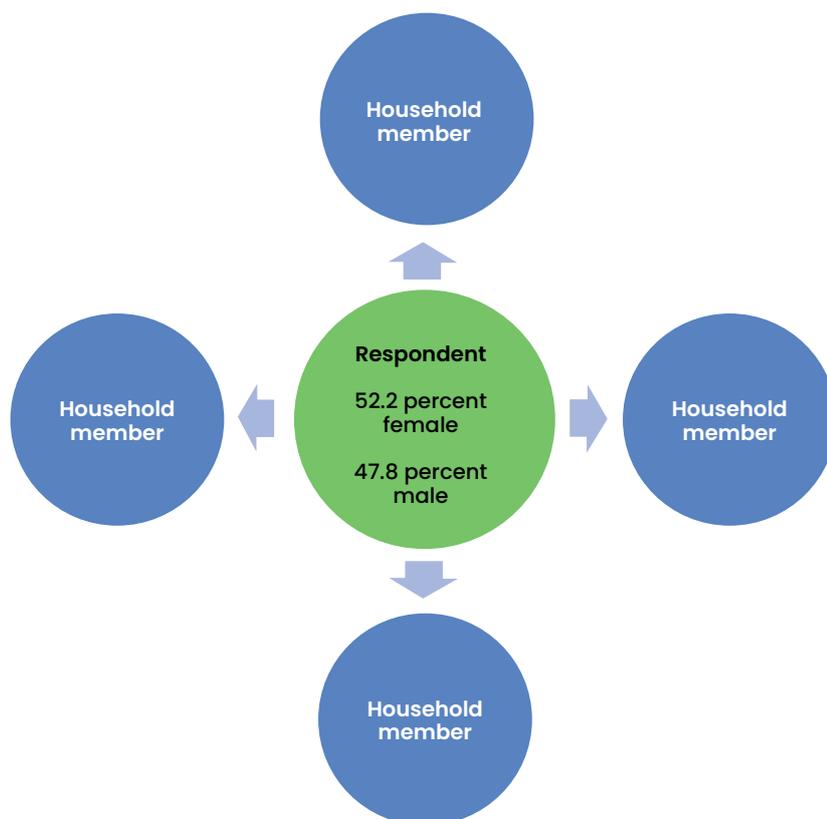


Table 1: Number of interviewed households and weighted households

| Characteristic of household | Number of households in the data | Weighted number of households with access to a telephone | Percentage (weighted) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 2,016 | 10,943,906 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 520 | 2,622,653 | 24.0 [1] |
| Vulnerable | 666 | 3,761,255 | 34.4 |
| Secure | 830 | 4,559,998 | 41.6 |
| | | | |
| State [2] | 898 | 2,931,093 | 26.8 [3] |
| Region | 1,118 | 8,012,813 | 73.2 |
| | | | |
| Urban | 732 | 3,287,710 | 30.0 |
| Rural | 1,284 | 7,656,197 | 70.0 |
| | | | |
| Male headed household | 1,763 | 9,639,630 | 88.1 |
| Female headed household | 253 | 1,304,276 | 11.9 |
| | | | |
| Household no children | 619 | 3,703,176 | 33.8 |
| Household with children (0-17) | 1,397 | 7,240,730 | 66.2 |

1 Poverty status percentages match closely to those MLCS 2017 distribution

2 State = Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan and Region=Sagaing, Tanintharyi, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and (for purposes of statistical analysis) Naypyitaw.

3 State/Region and Urban/Rural percentages match closely to Census 2014 (the original sampling frame)

# Team contributing to the HVS

| Name | Title | Organization |
|---|---|---|
| U Htun Zaw | Director General | CSO |
| U San Myint | Former Director General | CSO |
| U Than Zaw | Deputy Director General | CSO |
| Daw Khin Sett Yi | Deputy Director | CSO |
| Daw War War Myint | Assistant Director | CSO |
| Daw Ohn Mar Myint | Assistant Director | CSO |
| Daw Ohnmar Soe | Staff Officer | CSO |
| Daw Hsu Shwe Sin | Staff Officer | CSO |
| U Win Zaw Oo | Staff Officer | CSO |
| Mr Titon Mitra | Resident Representative | UNDP |
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| Mr. Biplove Choudhary | Head of Unit | UNDP |
| U Sa Si Thu Htike San | Project Analyst | UNDP |
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| Ms Afke Jager | Research Associate | IPA |
| U Thein Zaw Oo | Research Associate | IPA |

# How COVID-19 restrictions have impacted household income

# Key findings from Chapter 1

**How the COVID-19 restrictions have impacted household income**

- Over four-fifths of households in Myanmar have reported a drop in income since the beginning of the year. Rural households and households with children are more likely to report a reduction in income.

- Between 2019 and 2020 households have on average faced a 46.5 percent drop in their household income. Urban households and households in the regions have seen the biggest reduction. Household businesses in the regions have been affected most severely and, their household income has dropped by 61.6 percent between 2019 and 2020.

- Most households state that their change in income is directly due to restrictions around COVID-19. Urban households are more likely to cite COVID-19 as the cause.

- Household businesses that are not a farm, for example, selling at the market, hairdressing, and tailoring etc. have been hit hardest, and the reduction in income is nearly all related to COVID-19 restrictions.

- The sector that has been least affected is the waged workers, especially those classified as "financially secure" in 2017. However, even in this comparatively safe sector, 53.8 percent of them reported a reduction in household income.

- Before March 2020, the average number of people earning income in a household was 1.8. Since March 2020 it has dropped to 1.4. Rural and financially vulnerable households have seen the largest reduction in the number of earners.

- 9.4 percent of poor households had a household member working in another state/region in March 2020 but now the percentage has dropped to 6.8. While 7.1 percent of households had a family member working abroad before March 2020 that has dropped to 5.0 percent since the COVID-19 restrictions were imposed.

- The HVS not only captures the objective measures of income reduction above, but it also gauges how financially vulnerable households feel. A tenth of all households put themselves on the lowest rung of the ladder, reporting that they felt "very financially insecure".

- 13.9 percent of households reported that education related COVID-19 restrictions had negatively impacted their household income

Restrictions and action around COVID-19 mainly started in March 2020 and most of the results below refer to the period from March 2020 to the day of the interview (September or October). There is evidence from other surveys that most households did not feel any economic impact from COVID-19 until March onwards [4].

Over four-fifths (83.3 percent) of households in Myanmar have reported a drop in income since the beginning of the year. Table 1.1 shows similar patterns for all the main groups. Rural households are more likely to report a reduction in income. Households with children aged 0-17 are also more likely to report a drop in income (86.2 percent).

**Table 1.1:   Change in household income in 2020 [5] (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Gone up | Gone down | No change | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 1.8 | 83.3 | 14.9 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 1.4 | 84.5 | 14.0 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 1.9 | 86.4 | 11.7 | 100% |
| Secure | 1.9 | 79.9 | 18.1 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| State | 1.5 | 86.7 | 11.8 | 100% |
| Region | 1.9 | 82.0 | 16.1 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 1.4 | 77.0 | 21.6 | 100% |
| Rural | 2.0 | 86.1 | 12.0 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Male headed household | 1.9 | 84.3 | 13.9 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 1.3 | 76.2 | 22.5 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Household no children | 1.8 | 77.5 | 20.8 | 100% |
| Household with children (0-17) | 1.8 | 86.2 | 12.0 | 100% |

Most households (81.8 percent) state that their loss in income is directly due to restrictions around COVID-19. Urban households are more likely to cite COVID-19 as the cause.

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4   Quantitative and qualitative measures confirm severe and widespread income losses. In January just 16 percent of households reported zero income, mostly in rural areas. With the second wave of COVID-19 infections and accompanying lockdowns 35 percent of respondents in September stated their household earned no income, while 30 percent reported no income in October. Results from the Poverty, food insecurity, and social protection during COVID-19 in Myanmar Combined evidence from a household telephone survey and micro-simulations. November 2020.

5   The question on household income in 2020 asked people to refer to January onwards as it aids recall for respondents to think about a calendar year.

**Figure 1.1: Household income loss is due to COVID-19 or something else (percent)**
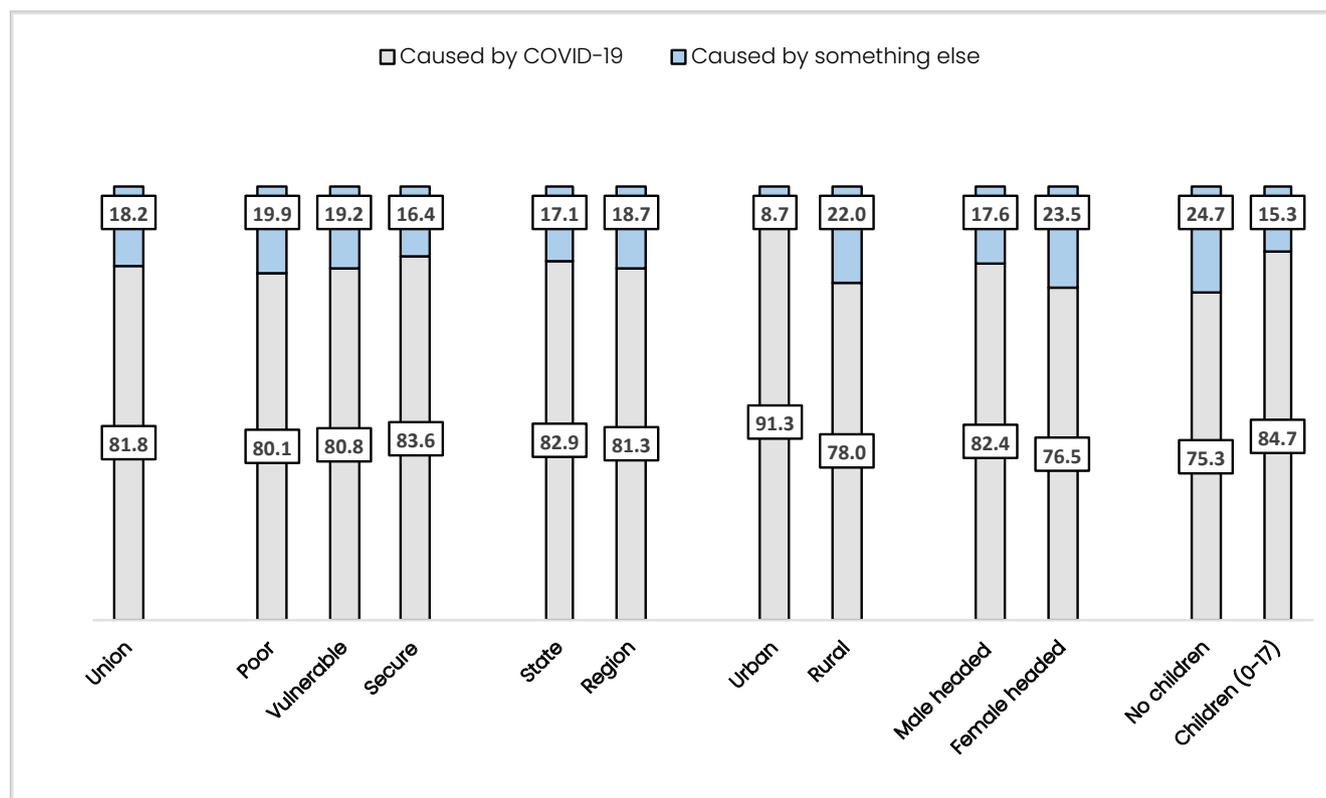


Table 1.2 shows in which activities households have experienced the largest drop in their income. Household businesses that are not a farm, for example selling at the market, hairdressing, tailor etc have been hit hardest and the reduction in income has nearly all been related to COVID-19 restrictions.

**Table 1.2:   Loss in income by activity and MLCS poverty status and whether the household income loss is due to COVID-19 or something else (percent)**

|  | Percentage of households reporting a loss in income | Loss due to COVID-19 | Loss due to something else | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Household farming, fishing** |  |  |  |  |
| Poor | 75.4 | 60.5 | 39.5 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 81.8 | 61.4 | 38.6 | 100% |
| Secure | 80.4 | 64.8 | 35.2 | 100% |
| **Household business -non farm** |  |  |  |  |
| Poor | 81.8 | 91.2 | 8.8 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 92.4 | 91.3 | 8.7 | 100% |
| Secure | 92.4 | 94.7 | 5.3 | 100% |
| **Waged jobs** |  |  |  |  |
| Poor | 84.1 | 76.1 | 23.9 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 83.3 | 80.8 | 19.2 | 100% |
| Secure | 53.8 | 80.3 | 19.7 | 100% |

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6  A similar finding comes from the World Bank: Myanmar COVID-19 Monitoring 09 July 2020 Brief No. 1: "Family-run small businesses were badly hit. They have been particularly exposed, as 60 percent of them are in the retail trade sector. Eight out of 10 reported earning less or no income at all since March 2020".

The sector that has been least affected is waged workers, especially those classified as Secure in MLCS 2017. However even in this comparatively safe sector, 53.8 percent of households reported a reduction in income. It's interesting to see that farming has also been hit by COVID-19 restrictions but a sizable amount of their income reduction is from other factors that can make farming a precarious activity.

The data above shows that the economic impact of COVID-19 has been widespread. The data in Figure 1.2 shows the extent of the reduction in income that households have faced. On average, households have faced a 46.5 percent drop in their household income. That is, if in 2019 their monthly household income was 100,000 kyat in 2020 so far it's been an average of 53,500 kyat a month. Urban households and households in the regions have seen the biggest relative drop. Secure households have seen a larger drop than poor households, but poor households have much less manoeuvrability and, as seen later, two-fifths of them have taken loans from non-family sources since March 2020. Similar results are being noted in other surveys conducted in the second wave .

**Figure 1.2:   Percentage reduction in monthly household income between 2019 and 2020**
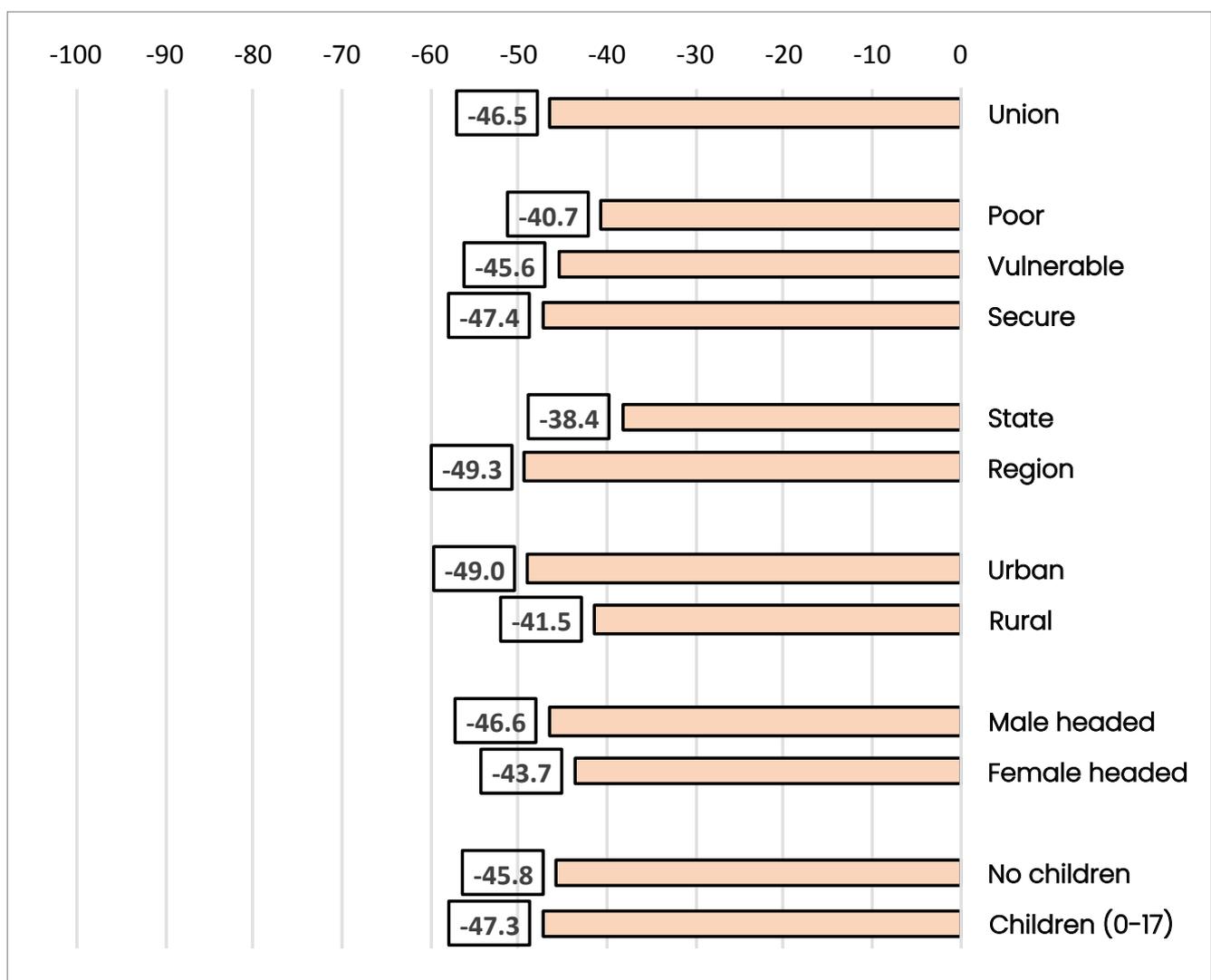
7 "Income-based poverty rose at an alarming rate between August and October 2020. Food insecurity and inadequate maternal dietary diversity are also rising sharply in the urban subsample. The poor continue to cope with declining incomes mainly by resorting to loans or other credit sources, while better off households draw down on their savings". Results from the Poverty, food insecurity, and social protection during COVID-19 in Myanmar Combined evidence from a household telephone survey and micro-simulations. Strategy Support Program Policy Note 35. November 2020

The results in Table 1.3 highlight that activities around having a household business have seen the largest reduction in household income from 2019 to 2020. Household businesses run in the regions have been affected most of all, with incomes dropping by 61.6 percent.

**Table 1.3: Percentage reduction in monthly household income between 2019 and 2020 by activity**

| Characteristic of household | Household owned farm, fishing or aquaculture | Household business (not a farm) | Waged job – agriculture and non-agriculture |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | −49.1 | −54.1 | −37.9 |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | −36.8 | −46.7 | −37.3 |
| Vulnerable | −53.8 | −53.4 | −38.3 |
| Secure | −51.7 | −54.4 | −37.9 |
| | | | |
| State | −49.2 | −37.6 | −28.7 |
| Region | −49.0 | −61.6 | −39.3 |
| | | | |
| Urban | − | −55.6 | −41.6 |
| Rural | − | −46.5 | −31.4 |

Before March 2020 the average number of earners in a household was 1.8. Since March 2020, it has dropped to 1.4. Urban and vulnerable households have seen a largest reduction in the number of earners (31.7 and 29.3 percent respectively).

**Table 1.4: More or fewer earners in the household since March 2020 (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | More earners | Same number of earners | Fewer earners | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 1.4 | 72.5 | 26.0 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 1.9 | 76.0 | 22.2 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 1.2 | 69.6 | 29.3 | 100% |
| Secure | 1.4 | 73.0 | 25.6 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| State | 1.3 | 79.0 | 19.7 | 100% |
| Region | 1.5 | 70.2 | 28.4 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 2.1 | 66.3 | 31.7 | 100% |
| Rural | 1.2 | 75.2 | 23.6 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Male headed household | 1.6 | 71.2 | 27.3 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 0.4 | 82.6 | 16.9 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Household no children | 1.5 | 74.6 | 23.9 | 100% |
| Household with children (0-17) | 1.4 | 71.5 | 27.1 | 100% |

\* Household members were asked how many household members were earning an income this year. If a farmer wasn't actually earning money in March because it was not the season for selling the produce, this is still included as earning an income because the farm has not closed activity.

In order to understand if MLCS households had seen an improvement in their households' financial situation before COVID-19 they were asked to compare it to 2017 (Table 1.5). About four-fifths of households had experienced no change or had been a little worse off. One fifth (20.1 percent) had

seen a small improvement.  Households living in regions had been doing a little better than those living in states.

**Table 1.5:** **Before COVID-19 happened, compared to when interviewed for MLCS 2017, how the household was doing financially (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Much better off | A little better off | No change | A little worse off | Much worse off | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 1.5 | 20.1 | 44.0 | 30.6 | 3.8 | 100% |
| | | | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | | | |
| Poor | 1.0 | 20.3 | 40.5 | 33.2 | 5.0 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 2.3 | 20.2 | 40.2 | 32 | 5.4 | 100% |
| Secure | 1.1 | 19.9 | 49.1 | 28 | 1.9 | 100% |
| | | | | | | |
| State | 0.3 | 16.7 | 43.3 | 34.5 | 5.3 | 100% |
| Region | 1.9 | 21.3 | 44.2 | 29.2 | 3.3 | 100% |
| | | | | | | |
| Urban | 2.3 | 18.8 | 47.0 | 29.1 | 2.8 | 100% |
| Rural | 1.2 | 20.7 | 42.6 | 31.3 | 4.2 | 100% |
| | | | | | | |
| Male headed household | 1.7 | 21.6 | 41.6 | 31.3 | 3.9 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 0.0 | 9.3 | 61.4 | 26.0 | 3.3 | 100% |
| | | | | | | |
| Household no children | 1.1 | 14.7 | 50.3 | 31.3 | 2.6 | 100% |
| Household with children (0-17) | 1.7 | 22.9 | 40.7 | 30.3 | 4.4 | 100% |

A small percentage of households (8.5 percent) reported that a household member had found a job or income earning activity since March 2020. This was slightly more prevalent in urban areas (11.3 percent).

**Figure 1.3:** **Households who have a member who found a job or income earning activity since March 2020 (percent)**
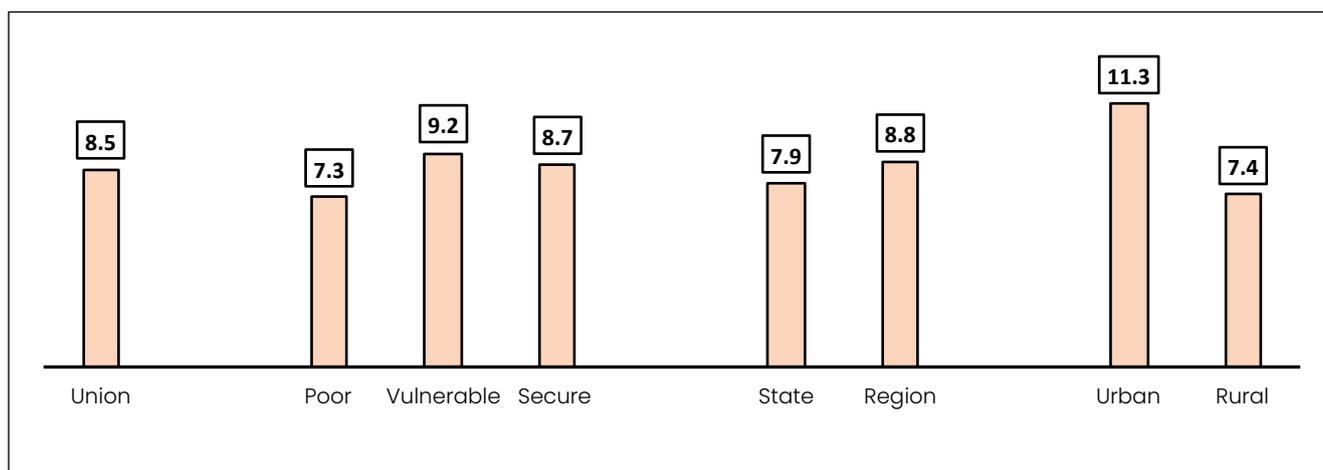


As of November 7th 2020, 371,884 migrant workers had returned home[8] and this movement is visible in the HVS results. The largest drop is in poor households where 9.4 percent of households had a household member working in another state/region in March 2020 but now the percentage has dropped to 6.8 (Table 1.6).

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8  Mimeo, data gathered by GAD and CSO

**Table 1.6:  Working in another state/region or abroad, during March 2020 and now (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Working in another state/region | | Working abroad | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | March 2020 | Now | March 2020 | Now |
| Union | 8.1 | 6.8 | 7.1 | 5.0 |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 9.4 | 6.8 | 5.2 | 4.1 |
| Vulnerable | 7.3 | 7.2 | 6.7 | 5.2 |
| Secure | 8.0 | 6.6 | 8.5 | 5.3 |
| | | | | |
| State | 7.4 | 7.4 | 11.8 | 7.1 |
| Region | 8.3 | 6.6 | 5.4 | 4.2 |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 5.2 | 4.8 | 8.2 | 5.5 |
| Rural | 9.3 | 7.7 | 6.6 | 4.8 |
| | | | | |
| Male headed household | 7.4 | 6.5 | 7.3 | 4.9 |
| Female headed household | 13.1 | 9.2 | 5.6 | 5.4 |
| | | | | |
| Household no children | 9.3 | 7.8 | 8.0 | 5.1 |
| Household with children (0-17) | 7.5 | 6.4 | 6.7 | 4.9 |

Some household members have returned from abroad, particularly for households in the states (which often border other countries). While 7.1 percent of households had a family member working abroad before March 2020 but that has dropped to 5.0 percent since the imposition of COVID-19 restrictions. Secure households have also seen quite a reduction from 8.5 percent to 5.3 percent.

Only 4.2 percent of households reported a family member who had permanently left the household but has since returned due to COVID-19.

Households living in the states have been particularly affected by losing household income due to children not being at school or university [9]. Over a fifth (21.2 percent) of households reported that education related COVID-19 restrictions had negatively impacted their household income (Table 1.7). This could be due to lost income from parents who had to reduce work to care for children and additional costs involved in online teaching.

**Table 1.7:    Whether children not being at school/university due to Covid-19 restrictions has negatively affected household income (percent)**

| Characteristic of household* | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 13.9 | 86.1 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 15.8 | 84.2 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 14.8 | 85.2 | 100% |
| Secure | 11.5 | 88.5 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 21.2 | 78.8 | 100% |
| Region | 11.1 | 88.9 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 15.8 | 84.2 | 100% |
| Rural | 13.1 | 86.9 | 100% |

* Includes only households with children

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9   Of the 7,173 basic education high schools only 4,675 opened temporarily for high school students for three weeks in August 2020, and all government schools are still closed. (Statement from the Ministry of Education).

Generally people are feeling financially vulnerable. Households were asked *"On a ten point scale with ten that you feel very financially secure and one that you feel very vulnerable about your financial situation, what number would you give your household currently"* On average, households reported 4 regardless of poverty status, urban rural or state/region [10]. Around a tenth of households (12.2 percent) put themselves on the lowest rung of the ladder reporting that they felt very financially insecure.

**Figure 1.4: Ten point scale of financial vulnerability (percent)**



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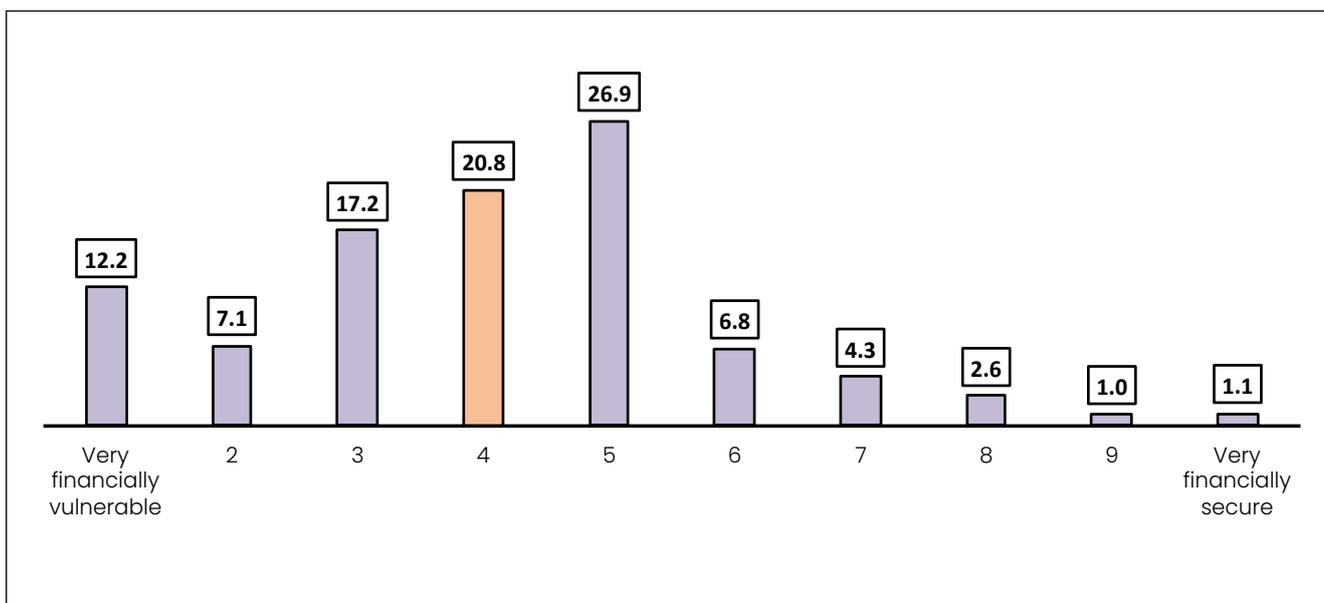
10   Using the median instead of the mean gives the same results.

# Chapter 2

# Government support

# Key findings on government support

- Nearly half of households had received cash from the government in relation to the COVID-19 situation. Payments had generally been targeted with poor households almost twice more likely to receive cash than secure households. The majority of poor households have received one or more support packages.

- Households in regions, rural households and households with children were more likely to receive cash from the Government.

- In terms of receiving food from the government, the distribution has reached fewer households (35.1 percent) but the targeting was better.

- Almost a tenth of rural households had received a Government provided special relief loan to farmers to relieve the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- At the beginning of COVID-19 the MoEE introduced a policy to cut electricity tariffs. Virtually all households (89.3 percent) felt that the price cut had a positive effect on their household income.

- The highest awareness of the government seed production scheme was amongst farming households who owned a tractor or tiller (33.4 percent) and paddy farmers.

Respondents were asked whether they had received a series of government packages since March 2020. Nearly half of households (49.7 percent) had received cash in relation to the COVID-19 situation (this is a similar result to another survey conducted at around the same time [11] ). It is positive to see that payments have generally been targeted with poor households almost twice more likely to receive cash than secure households (63.1 and 35.3 percent respectively).

**Table 2.1:** **Financial support from the Government from March 2020 until Sept/Oct 2020 (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Cash for household | | Food supply for household | | Loan for Farmer | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Union | 49.7 | 50.3 | 35.1 | 64.9 | 6.8 | 93.2 |
| | | | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | | | |
| Poor | 63.1 | 36.9 | 48.0 | 52.0 | 6.5 | 93.5 |
| Vulnerable | 57.7 | 42.3 | 42.5 | 57.5 | 7.3 | 92.7 |
| Secure | 35.3 | 64.7 | 21.6 | 78.4 | 6.6 | 93.4 |
| | | | | | | |
| State | 33.2 | 66.8 | 20.7 | 79.3 | 3.3 | 96.7 |
| Region | 55.7 | 44.3 | 40.3 | 59.7 | 8.1 | 91.9 |
| | | | | | | |
| Urban | 37.1 | 62.9 | 30.2 | 69.8 | 1.2 | 98.8 |
| Rural | 55.1 | 44.9 | 37.2 | 62.8 | 9.2 | 90.8 |
| | | | | | | |
| Male headed household | 49.6 | 50.4 | 34.5 | 65.5 | 7.2 | 92.8 |
| Female headed household | 50.1 | 49.9 | 39.5 | 60.5 | 4.4 | 95.6 |
| | | | | | | |
| Household no children | 45.1 | 54.9 | 31.2 | 68.8 | 5.5 | 94.5 |
| Household with children (0-17) | 52.0 | 48.0 | 37.1 | 62.9 | 7.5 | 92.5 |

Households in regions, rural households and households with children were more likely to receive cash.

In terms of receiving food, the distribution has reached fewer households (35.1 percent) but the targeting has been better with 48.0 percent of poor receiving food compared to 21.6 percent of secure households. It must be noted that secure households were secure in 2017 due to running small businesses. This section of society that has been greatly affected and currently receiving low or zero income because their activity has closed.

Almost a tenth of rural households (9.2 percent) had received one of the Government provided special relief loan to farmers to relieve the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the agricultural sector [12].

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11  "Over half of the survey households received government cash assistance of 20,000 Myanmar Kyat in September. Yet, accurate targeting of these transfers remains a problem". Results from the Poverty, food insecurity, and social protection during COVID-19 in Myanmar Combined evidence from a household telephone survey and micro-simulations. Strategy Support Program Policy Note 35. November 2020.

12  Local farmers were provided with 50,000 kyats (35.7 U.S. dollars) loans per acre at 5 percent annual interest rate.

Other Government initiatives focussed on smaller specific groups. The small numbers in the data for these cases means there is no statistically significant differences by urban/rural and state/region etc. The Union level results are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Cash for elderly people** | **2.7 percent** |
| **No interest loans for civil servant** | **1.9 percent** |
| **Loan for SME** | **1.3 percent** |
| **Cash for work** | **1.2 percent** |
| **Cash for pregnant women** | **1.0 percent** |
| **Cash for disabled people** | **0.9 percent** |

The majority of poor households have received one or more support packages (70.6 percent). When two or more packages are received it is usually a combination of cash and food. Rural households in the regions are most likely to receive some kind of support.

**Table 2.2:** **Number of Government support packages received per household from March 2020 until Sept/Oct 2020 (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | None | One | Two or more | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 39.6 | 24.2 | 36.3 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 29.4 | 20.4 | 50.2 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 33.8 | 21.6 | 44.5 | 100% |
| Secure | 49.9 | 28.4 | 21.7 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| State | 53.4 | 28.3 | 18.4 | 100% |
| Region | 34.6 | 22.7 | 42.7 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 49.5 | 21.9 | 28.7 | 100% |
| Rural | 35.2 | 25.2 | 39.6 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Male headed household | 39.4 | 24.9 | 35.6 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 40.6 | 18.5 | 40.9 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Household no children | 42.6 | 24.8 | 32.6 | 100% |
| Household with children (0-17) | 38.0 | 23.8 | 38.1 | 100% |

At the beginning of COVID-19 the MoEE introduced a policy to cut electricity tariffs [14]. Virtually all households (89.3 percent) felt that the price cut had a positive effect on their household income.

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13 Maternal and Child Cash Transfer scheme (240,000 beneficiaries' pre-COVID-19) is active in Chin, Kayah, Kayin and Rakhine States.

14 CERP Item 4.1.1. Electricity Tariff Exemptions for all households (excluding embassies and international organizations) up to 150 units per month (MoEE)

**Table 2.3:** Whether electricity price cuts had a positive effect on household income (percent)

| Characteristic of household* | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 89.3 | 10.7 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 91.7 | 8.3 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 84.8 | 15.2 | 100% |
| Secure | 91.3 | 8.7 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 92.8 | 7.2 | 100% |
| Region | 88.1 | 11.9 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 86.3 | 13.7 | 100% |
| Rural | 92.1 | 7.9 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Male headed household | 88.6 | 11.4 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 94.1 | 5.9 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Household no children | 91.0 | 9.0 | 100% |
| Household with children (0–17) | 88.2 | 11.8 | 100% |

Another government initiative, focusing particularly on agricultural activities, was a contract farming project for seed production in response to COVID-19 [15]. Agricultural households were asked whether they had heard of this initiative (whether used or not). Less than a fifth (16.7 percent) had heard of the scheme. The highest awareness was amongst farming households who owned a tractor or tiller (33.4 percent) [16] and those farmers where their most important crop economically is paddy (21.3 percent).

**Figure 2.1:** Heard about the government contract farming project for seed production in response to COVID-19 (percent)



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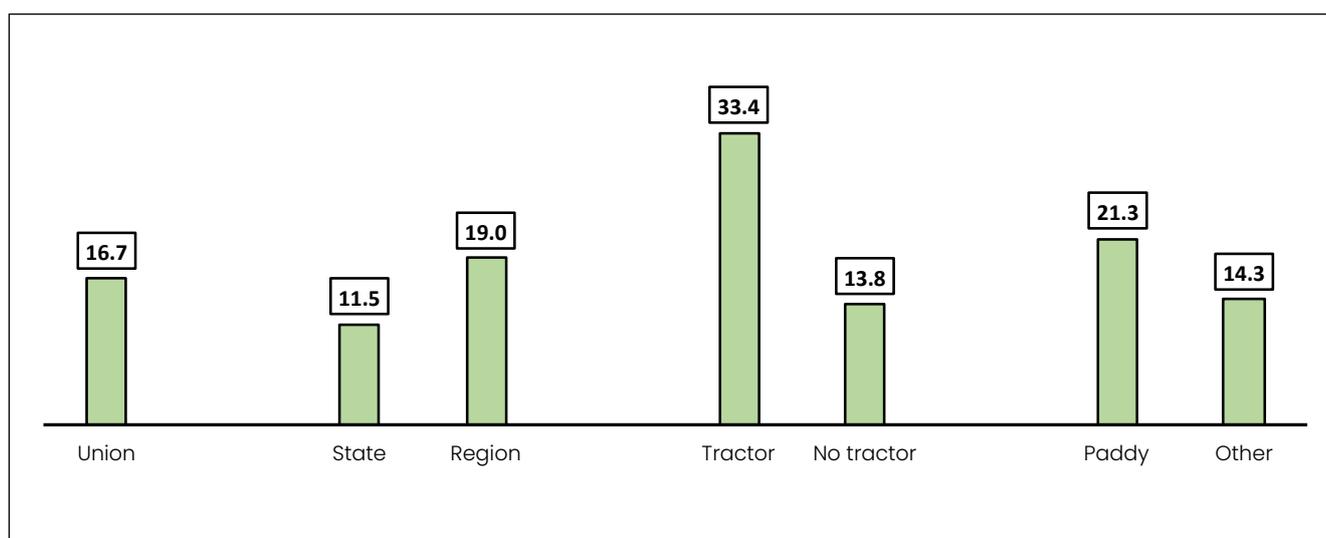
15  As part of CERP the Dept of Agriculture led in implementing a 100,000 acres of paddy seed production project. K14,91 billion will be used in 287 townships until end of September.

16  In MLCS 2017 ownership of a tractor/tiller was a factor for a household not to be poor, i.e. these are larger farms.

In terms of government support in relation to non-farming business, only 1.1 percent of households were receiving government support to help their business. When asked why they hadn't applied for government support the responses in Table 2.4 were given.

**Table 2.4: Reasons did not apply for Government support for the non-farm business (percent)**

|  | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not aware of any such programs | 61.1 | 38.9 | 100% |
| Don't need government support | 45.3 | 54.7 | 100% |
| Would not fit the criteria | 58.2 | 41.8 | 100% |
| I'd have to pay a bribe | 0.4 | 99.6 | 100% |

The number of COVID-19 cases began to grow quite quickly during the period of data collection (September and October) and respondents were asked their opinion (whether used or not) on accessing government health services in the last month. Half of households (51.4 percent) reported that they thought there had been no change. A quarter (26.9 percent) thought it had become more difficult and this view was more prevalent in rural areas. A fifth (21.7 percent) thought that access was easier than before. Urban respondents and people living in the regions were more likely to have this view.

**Figure 2.2: Accessing Government Health Services in the last one month has been easier or more difficult than before (percent)**
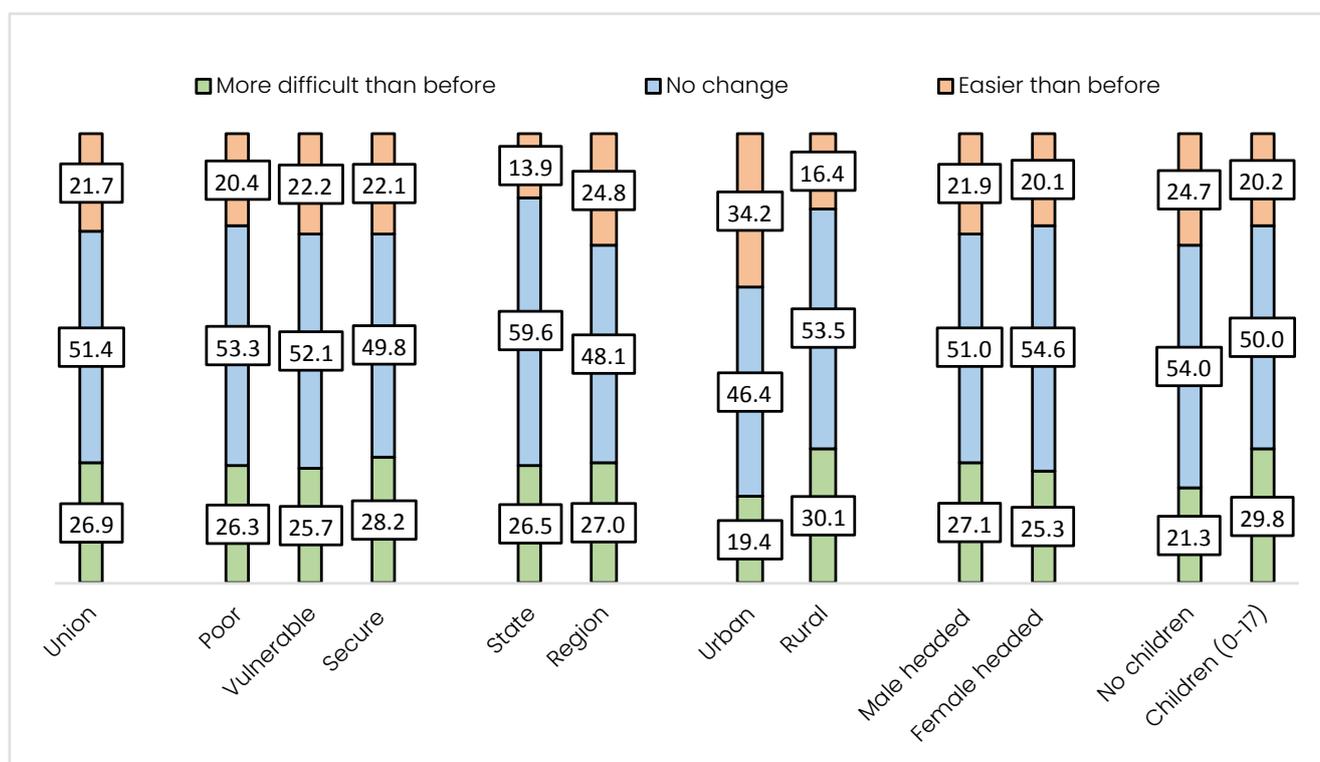
# Chapter 3

# Sources of information about COVID-19

## Key findings

- Most households (69.5 percent) get information about COVID-19 from a variety of government sources.  A further third get it specifically from Facebook pages posted by the Government.

- If a household is using only government sources of information 97.0 percent of them trust the information provided.  A high proportion of poor households are reliant on information from friends or family (40.8 percent), demonstrating their reduced access to online information.

Households were asked about all the sources they use to get information about COVID-19. Most households (69.5 percent) get information about COVID-19 from a variety of government sources. A further third (30.4 percent) get it specifically from Facebook pages posted by the Government.

**Figure 3.1:   Sources of information about COVID-19 (percent)**
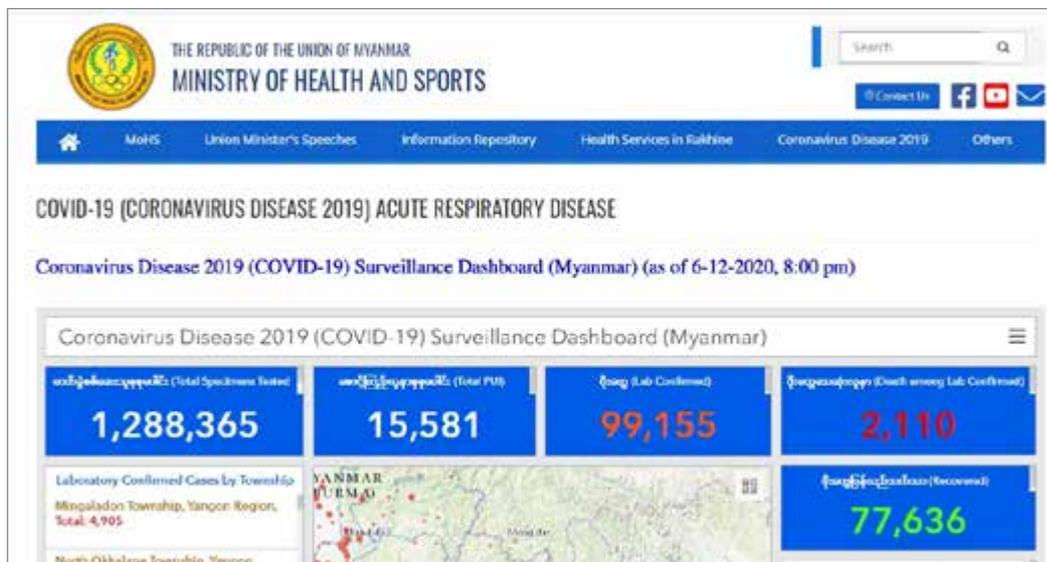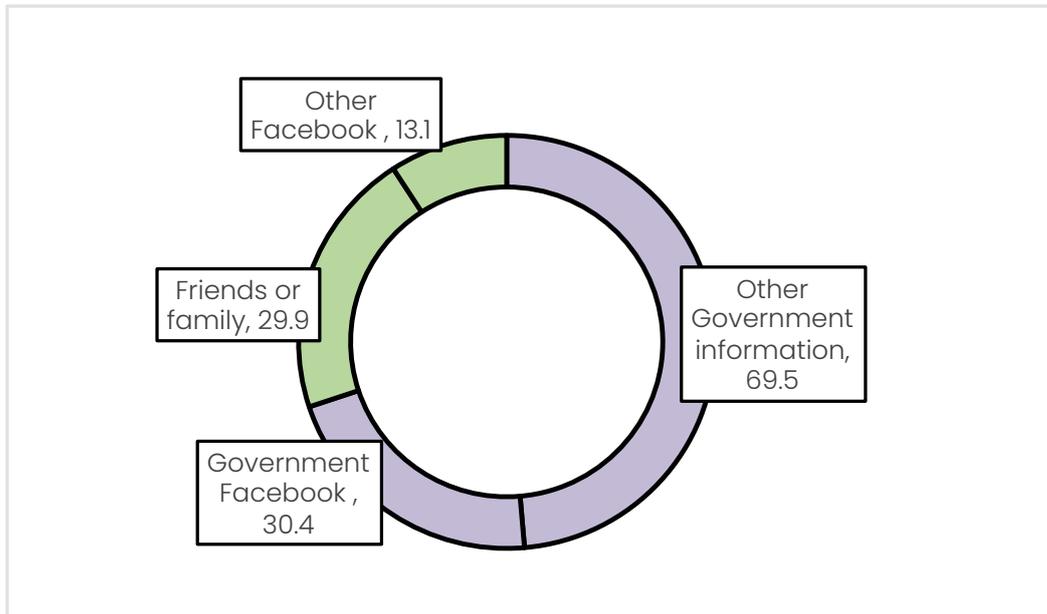




If a household is using only government sources of information 97.0 percent of them trust the information provided.  If the household is using only non-government sources of information the level of trust drops slightly to 91.3 percent. Generally the trust in COVID-19 related information is very high.

**Table 3.1:    Sources of information about COVID-19 (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Facebook information provided by government | Other type of Government information | Friends or family | Non-government Facebook information | None of these |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 30.4 | 69.5 | 29.9 | 13.1 | 1.5 |
| | | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | | |
| Poor | 18.8 | 64.1 | 40.8 | 10.2 | 3.2 |
| Vulnerable | 23.8 | 71.0 | 30.9 | 12.6 | 2.1 |
| Secure | 42.4 | 71.3 | 22.8 | 15.1 | 0.2 |
| | | | | | |
| State | 23.8 | 51.3 | 34.9 | 17.9 | 4.0 |
| Region | 32.8 | 76.1 | 28.0 | 11.3 | 0.7 |
| | | | | | |
| Urban | 50.6 | 71.0 | 19.0 | 15.1 | 0.6 |
| Rural | 21.7 | 68.8 | 34.5 | 12.2 | 2.0 |
| | | | | | |
| Male headed household | 32.1 | 71.2 | 28.1 | 13.9 | 1.4 |
| Female headed household | 17.3 | 56.4 | 42.8 | 7.2 | 2.5 |
| | | | | | |
| Household no children | 36.2 | 70.8 | 26.9 | 9.8 | 1.8 |
| Household with children (0-17) | 27.4 | 68.8 | 31.4 | 14.8 | 1.4 |

Multiple response question

A high proportion of poor households are reliant on information from friends or family (40.8 percent). This demonstrates their reduced access to online information.  Only 18.8 percent of poor households are viewing Government COVID-19 information provided on Facebook.

# Chapter 4

# How are households and their community coping?

## Key findings

- Since March 2020 nearly half of households have borrowed money. Borrowing is most prevalent in the regions and in rural households. The most common strategy is to borrow money from non-family sources such as banks, money lenders and pawn brokers. Over a third of households had done this, and it was most frequent among vulnerable households.

- In addition to asking how households were coping individually, households were asked about the situation in their community. Overall, three-fifths of households reported no change in this period. Poor households were the most likely to report that the community is supporting each other more now.

Households were asked about the various coping strategies they have used to help cover living expenses during the COVID-19 restrictions.  Since March 2020 nearly half of households (49.6 percent) have borrowed money (Figure 4.1).  Borrowing is most prevalent in the regions and in rural households.

**Figure 4.1:   Borrowed money from any source since March 2020 (percent)**
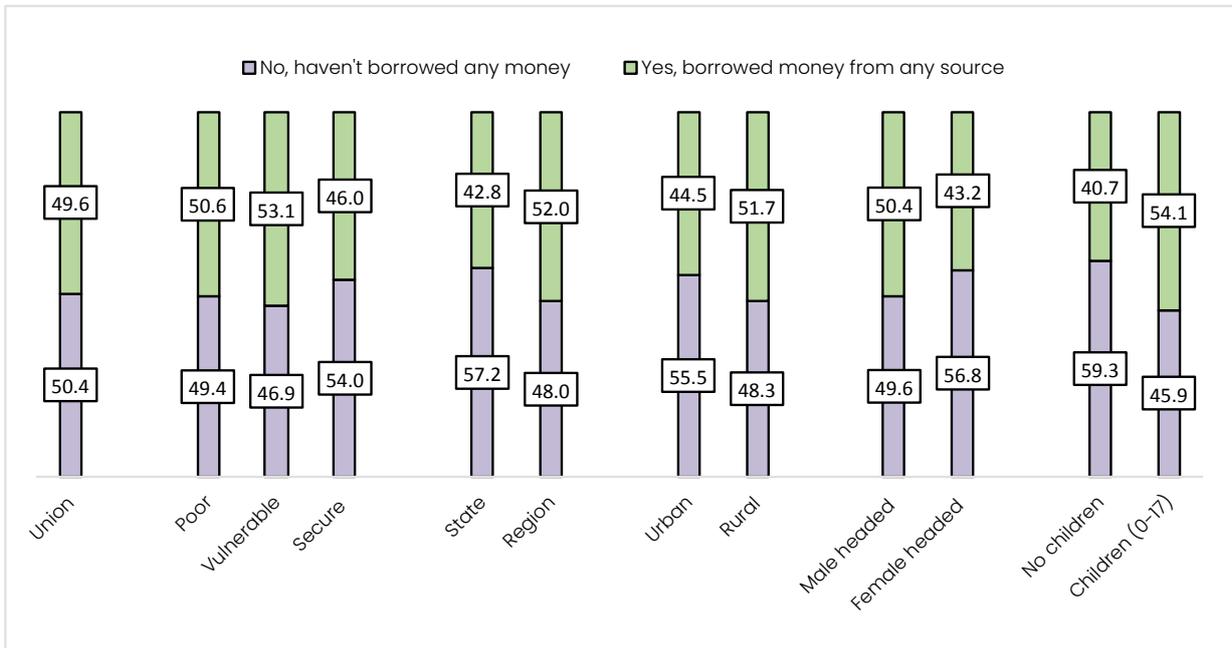


The most common strategy was to borrow money from non-family sources such as banks, money lenders and pawn brokers (Table 4.1).  Over a third (37.6 percent) of households had taken on a formal debt. It was most frequent among households with children (43.6 percent) and vulnerable households (42.1 percent).

**Table 4.1:   Household borrowing, formal or non formal, March 2020 until Sept/Oct (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Formal: Borrowed money from non-family sources | | Informal: Relied on help of extended family to cover living expenses | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Union | 37.6 | 62.4 | 21.3 | 78.7 |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 41.9 | 58.1 | 17.1 | 82.9 |
| Vulnerable | 42.1 | 57.9 | 20.8 | 79.2 |
| Secure | 31.4 | 68.6 | 24.1 | 75.9 |
| | | | | |
| State | 28.6 | 71.4 | 21.4 | 78.6 |
| Region | 40.9 | 59.1 | 21.3 | 78.7 |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 30.6 | 69.4 | 23.3 | 76.7 |
| Rural | 40.6 | 59.4 | 20.4 | 79.6 |
| | | | | |
| Male headed household | 39.4 | 60.6 | 20.6 | 79.4 |
| Female headed household | 24.4 | 75.6 | 26.2 | 73.8 |
| | | | | |
| Household no children | 25.9 | 74.1 | 18.8 | 81.2 |
| Household with children (0-17) | 43.6 | 56.4 | 22.6 | 77.4 |

A fifth of households (21.3 percent) had relied on the help of extended family members to cover living expenses (Table 4.1). The percentages were highest among the financially secure households (24.1 percent) and urban households (23.3 percent).

In addition to asking how households were coping individually, households were asked about the situation in their community (Figure 4.2). Overall three-fifths (58.4 percent) of households report no change in this period.  Poor households are the most likely to report that the community is supporting each other more now (24.7 percent).  In contrast, vulnerable (24.0 percent), urban (29.0 percent) and households in the regions (23.8 percent) are more likely to feel that social cohesion has got worse.

**Figure 4.2:    Social cohesion during COVID -19 (percent)**

# Chapter 5

# Access to food from March to October

## Key findings

- Overall, 44.0 percent of farming households had eaten most of their crop production and this rose to 59.4 percent in farming households without a tractor or tiller (smaller farms).  Eating the majority of own production was particularly widespread in households relying on paddy as the main source of agricultural income.

- Almost a half of the households living in the states reported eating less than usual since March 2020.

- Almost two-fifths of households had purchased food on credit or borrowed food from shops or neighbours since March 2020.  The situation was worse for poor households where more than half of households had resorted to this.

Households growing crops were asked if since March 2020 household members had eaten the majority of their own crop production. Overall, 44.0 percent had eaten most of their crop production and this rose to 59.4 percent in farming households without a tractor or tiller (smaller farms). Eating the majority of own production was particularly widespread in households relying on paddy as their main source of agricultural income (66.0 percent).

**Table 5.1:   Household consumption of own production (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 44.0 | 56.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 46.2 | 53.8 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 45.9 | 54.1 | 100% |
| Secure | 41.1 | 58.9 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 56.2 | 43.8 | 100% |
| Region | 39.0 | 61.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Farmer has tractor/tiller | 48.6 | 51.4 | 100% |
| Farmer no tractor/tiller | 59.4 | 40.6 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *Main crop* | | | |
| Paddy | 66.0 | 34.0 | 100% |
| Other | 51.7 | 48.3 | 100% |

*Includes only households with agricultural activities

Almost two-fifths of households (39.0 percent) had purchased food on credit or borrowed food from shops or neighbours since March 2020.  The situation was worse in poor households where more than half of the households (52.8 percent) had resorted to this (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2:   Purchased food on credit or borrowed from neighbours (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 39.0 | 61.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 52.8 | 47.2 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 43.7 | 56.3 | 100% |
| Secure | 27.2 | 72.8 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 41.6 | 58.4 | 100% |
| Region | 38.0 | 62.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 25.7 | 74.3 | 100% |
| Rural | 44.7 | 55.3 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Male headed household | 40.6 | 59.4 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 26.7 | 73.3 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Household no children | 30.3 | 69.7 | 100% |
| Household with children (0-17) | 43.4 | 56.6 | 100% |

A similar scenario is seen in terms of household members eating less due to a lack of money (Table 5.3). Almost a half (49.2 percent) of households living in the states reported eating less than usual since March 2020.

**Table 5.3: Consumed less food due to a lack of money or other resources (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 37.5 | 62.5 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 46.7 | 53.3 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 38.2 | 61.8 | 100% |
| Secure | 31.7 | 68.3 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 49.2 | 50.8 | 100% |
| Region | 33.3 | 66.7 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 30.7 | 69.3 | 100% |
| Rural | 40.5 | 59.5 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Male headed household | 38.4 | 61.6 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 31.2 | 68.8 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Household no children | 31.8 | 68.2 | 100% |
| Household with children (0-17) | 40.5 | 59.5 | 100% |

In some parts of Myanmar certain food items have become cheaper due to COVID-19 restrictions limiting the export of some products. A fifth of HVS respondents noticed some items being cheaper. This was slightly more prevalent in households living in the states (Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4: Noticed food being less expensive (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 21.0 | 79.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 21.8 | 78.2 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 18.2 | 81.8 | 100% |
| Secure | 22.8 | 77.2 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 24.1 | 75.9 | 100% |
| Region | 19.9 | 80.1 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 22.3 | 77.7 | 100% |
| Rural | 20.4 | 79.6 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Male headed household | 21.2 | 78.8 | 100% |
| Female headed household | 19.1 | 80.9 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Household no children | 20.1 | 79.9 | 100% |
| Household with children (0-17) | 21.4 | 78.6 | 100% |

# Chapter 6

## The impact of COVID-19 on farming, fishing and aquaculture activities

### Key findings

- Three quarters of farmers said they would be able to sell their crop in the usual location.

- A quarter of farmers reported having difficulties getting inputs.

- 3.7 percent of farmers had changed the crops grown on their farm because of COVID-19.

- 8.4 percent of farmers had left the farm fallow because of COVID-19.

Nearly half (45.1 percent) of households were earning money from a family farm (includes growing crops, forestry, raising livestock, fishing and aquaculture). Nearly four-fifths (79.4 percent) reported losing income from this activity since March 2020. Larger farms where the household owned a tractor or tiller were a little more cushioned, but still over two thirds (67.0 percent) had been impacted.

**Table 6.1:** **Household has lost or gained money from farming/fishing/aquaculture activities (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Lost | Gained | The same | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 79.4 | 5.5 | 15.1 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 75.4 | 5.1 | 19.5 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 81.8 | 3.9 | 14. | 100% |
| Secure | 80.4 | 7.7 | 11.9 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| State | 82.6 | 3.7 | 13.8 | 100% |
| Region | 77.8 | 6.4 | 15.8 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 75.9 | 7.4 | 16.7 | 100% |
| Rural | 79.7 | 5.3 | 14.9 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Farmer has tractor/tiller | 67.0 | 10.2 | 22.8 | 100% |
| Farmer no tractor/tiller | 81.4 | 4.6 | 14.0 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *Main crop* | | | | |
| Paddy | 79.1 | 3.6 | 17.3 | 100% |
| Other | 81.3 | 5.4 | 13.3 | 100% |

**Table 6.2:** **Loss in agriculture income is due to COVID-19 or something else (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | COVID-19 | Something else | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 62.3 | 37.7 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 60.5 | 39.5 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 61.4 | 38.6 | 100% |
| Secure | 64.8 | 35.2 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 64.3 | 35.7 | 100% |
| Region | 61.2 | 38.8 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 65.7 | 34.3 | 100% |
| Rural | 62.0 | 38.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Farmer has tractor/tiller | 68.1 | 31.9 | 100% |
| Farmer no tractor/tiller | 61.9 | 38.1 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *Main crop* | | | |
| Paddy | 51.4 | 48.6 | 100% |
| Other | 67.5 | 32.5 | 100% |

Farming respondents were asked whether more or fewer days worked on the farm were paid compared to the same season in 2019 (Table 6.3). Overall, two thirds (67.7 percent) paid the same number of days and 15.6 percent paid more. Farmers with larger farms (with tractor/tiller) and those growing paddy were more likely to be paying for more days in 2020 (28.1 percent and 22.3 percent respectively).

**Table 6.3:  More or fewer days paid for work on the farm compared to the same season in 2019 (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Fewer | The same | More | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 16.7 | 67.7 | 15.6 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 15.3 | 69.8 | 14.8 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 18.6 | 65.6 | 15.9 | 100% |
| Secure | 16.1 | 67.8 | 16.1 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| State | 15.2 | 75.9 | 8.9 | 100% |
| Region | 17.3 | 64.6 | 18.2 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 15.7 | 74.5 | 9.9 | 100% |
| Rural | 16.8 | 67.2 | 16.0 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Farmer has tractor/tiller | 12.5 | 59.4 | 28.1 | 100% |
| Farmer no tractor/tiller | 17.5 | 69.2 | 13.3 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *Main crop* | | | | |
| Paddy | 16.0 | 61.7 | 22.3 | 100% |
| Other | 17.1 | 68.5 | 14.5 | 100% |

With COVID-19 restrictions relating to travelling and meetings of large groups there was concern whether farmers would be able to sell their products in the markets they usually use. Three quarters (75.9 percent) of farmers said they would be able to sell their crop in the usual location. Poor households were the most likely to report using the same location, perhaps as this was near to their farming activity.

**Table 6.4:  Household expects to be able to sell crop in the locations where usually sold (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Yes | No, but I expect to find other channels | No, I'm likely not be able to sell all my crop | No, I'm likely not be able to sell any of my crop | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 75.9 | 12.2 | 4.8 | 7.2 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | | |
| Poor | 83.0 | 6.0 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 71.5 | 13.8 | 5.2 | 9.5 | 100% |
| Secure | 74.3 | 15.8 | 3.7 | 6.2 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| State | 79.9 | 11.1 | 6.6 | 2.3 | 100% |
| Region | 74.1 | 12.6 | 4.0 | 9.3 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| Urban | 64.4 | 23.5 | 3.1 | 9.0 | 100% |
| Rural | 76.8 | 11.2 | 4.9 | 7.0 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| Farmer has tractor/tiller | 73.2 | 21.5 | 1.6 | 3.7 | 100% |
| Farmer no tractor/tiller | 76.3 | 10.5 | 5.5 | 7.7 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| *Main crop* | | | | | |
| Paddy | 76.2 | 10.3 | 7.3 | 6.2 | 100% |
| Other | 78.1 | 11.4 | 3.8 | 6.7 | 100% |

For the remaining 24.1 percent of farmers who thought they would have to find another solution for their crops, 12.2 percent thought they would find other channels to sell all their crop, 4.2 percent stated they would only be able to partially sell their crop and 7.2 percent reported that they wouldn't be able to sell any of it. Unfortunately, the feeling of not being able to sell any of it rose to 9.5 percent for vulnerable households. There were no real differences between farmers growing paddy or farmers growing other crops.

Again, due to travel restrictions and other difficulties caused by Covid-19 constraints, there were concerns that farmers might not be able to get the inputs they need for their activities. Overall a quarter (26.1 percent) of farmers reported having difficulties getting inputs. This rose to 30.5 percent in poor households and might have been related to access to finance. It was also a little more challenging in states compared to the regions (30.6 percent and 24.0 percent respectively).

**Figure 6.1:** **Since March had difficulties getting inputs such as seeds and fertilizer because of issues related to COVID-19 (percent)**
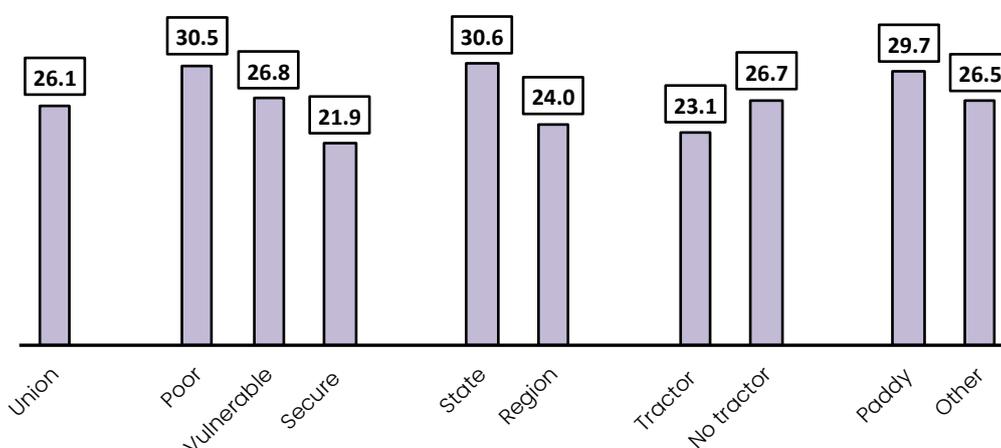


Only 8.4 percent of farmers had left the farm fallow because of COVID-19 (Table 6.5). Farmers were also asked whether or not in the last 60 days they had changed the crops grown on the farm because of COVID-19. Only 3.7% percent of farmers reported that this was the case.

**Table 6.5:** **In the last 60 days left the farm fallow because of COVID-19 (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Yes | No | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 8.6 | 91.4 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 9.1 | 90.9 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 10.6 | 89.4 | 100% |
| Secure | 6.0 | 94.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 11.1 | 88.9 | 100% |
| Region | 7.3 | 92.7 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Farmer has tractor/tiller | 4.9 | 95.1 | 100% |
| Farmer no tractor/tiller | 9.4 | 90.6 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *Main crop* | | | |
| Paddy | 9.7 | 90.3 | 100% |
| Other | 8.1 | 91.9 | 100% |

# Chapter 7

# Household businesses

## Key findings

- Household businesses related to buying and selling have been massively impacted by COVID-19 restrictions with 94.4 percent of respondents reporting a loss of income in this activity.

- Before COVID-19 the average number of paid employees was four. During COVID-19 an average of two people had been laid off temporarily and one person had faced a reduction in earnings. No respondents reported laying off employees permanently.

- Some households reported that they could only keep the business going for another 4 weeks. This was particularly prevalent in manufacturing businesses (12.4 percent). There is polarization in the manufacturing businesses with some prospering and others on the verge of closure due to COVID-19 issues.

Almost two-fifths (37.8 percent) of households have a non-farm business where at least one person is receiving any income from that business. As seen earlier, activities around running a business that is not a farm have been extremely affected by restrictions related to COVID-19.

Household businesses related to buying and selling have been massively impacted by COVID-19 restrictions with 94.4 percent of respondents a reporting a loss of income in this activity.

**Table 7.1:   Household has lost or gained money from any non-farm businesses run by the household (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Lost | Gained | The same | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 90.9 | 3.4 | 5.7 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 81.8 | 4.7 | 13.5 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 92.4 | 4.4 | 3.3 | 100% |
| Secure | 92.4 | 2.6 | 5 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| State | 89.7 | 4.2 | 6.2 | 100% |
| Region | 91.3 | 3.2 | 5.5 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 91.5 | 1.9 | 6.6 | 100% |
| Rural | 90.4 | 4.7 | 5 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *Sector of main business* | | | | |
| Manufacturing | 80.6 | 8.9 | 10.5 | 100% |
| Buying and selling | 94.4 | 2 | 3.5 | 100% |
| Personal services | 92.3 | 1.8 | 5.9 | 100% |
| Other | 85.1 | 6 | 8.9 | 100% |

**Table 7.2:   Loss in the non-farm business income is due to COVID-19 or something else (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | COVID-19 | Something else | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 93.2 | 6.8 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 91.2 | 8.8 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 91.3 | 8.7 | 100% |
| Secure | 94.7 | 5.3 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 91.3 | 8.7 | 100% |
| Region | 93.8 | 6.2 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 95.8 | 4.2 | 100% |
| Rural | 91.0 | 9.0 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *Sector of main business* | | | |
| Manufacturing | 93.8 | 6.2 | 100% |
| Buying and selling | 95.4 | 4.6 | 100% |
| Personal services | 89.1 | 10.9 | 100% |
| Other | 90.0 | 10.0 | 100% |

Over four-fifths (83.1 percent) of these businesses do not employ people outside the household, they are a family business or a "one-man show". Households who did pay employees were asked if any employees had been laid off because of COVID-19 related issues. Before COVID-19 the average number of paid employees was 4. During COVID-19 times an average of 2 had been laid off temporarily and 1 had faced a reduction in earnings. No respondents reported laying off employees permanently.

**Figure 7.1: Average number of paid employees in household businesses**
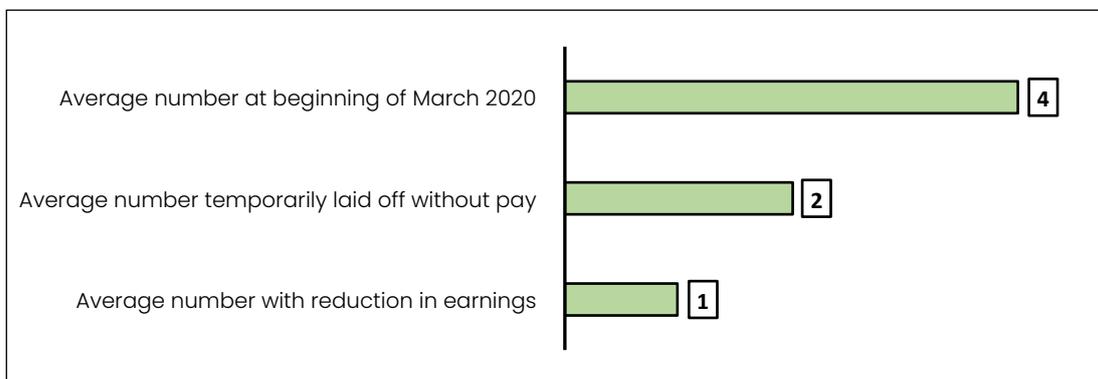


Business owning households were asked how long they could keep their business running under the current conditions. Over half (52.4 percent) said they had "no idea" and households in the states were most likely to give this response (73.7 percent).

Some households reported that they could only keep the business going for another 4 weeks. This was particularly prevalent in manufacturing businesses (12.4 percent). Over a third of households (34.8 percent) think that they can keep their business open for more than six months. Two-fifths (40.5 percent) of manufacturing businesses mention keeping the business open for more than six months. There seems to be polarization in the manufacturing sector with some prospering and other suffering due to COVID-19 issues.

**Table 7.3: Under current conditions how long the main business will stay operational (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Less than 2 weeks | 2–4 weeks | 1–2 months | 2–6 months | More than 6 months | No idea | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 5.4 | 1.6 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 34.8 | 52.4 | 100% |
| | | | | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | | | | |
| Poor | 5.1 | 1.5 | 5.3 | 6.0 | 37 | 45.1 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 7.8 | 3.1 | 0.5 | 4.5 | 29 | 55.1 | 100% |
| Secure | 4.2 | 0.9 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 37.3 | 52.7 | 100% |
| | | | | | | | |
| State | 2.6 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 2.8 | 19.1 | 73.7 | 100% |
| Region | 6.3 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 4.1 | 39.9 | 45.4 | 100% |
| | | | | | | | |
| Urban | 3.3 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 1.9 | 33.3 | 58.1 | 100% |
| Rural | 7.1 | 1.3 | 2.5 | 5.3 | 36.0 | 47.9 | 100% |
| | | | | | | | |
| *Sector of main business* | | | | | | | |
| Manufacturing | 10.9 | 12.4 | 2.7 | 4.1 | 40.5 | 29.4 | 100% |
| Buying and selling | 4.9 | 0.3 | 1.9 | 4.4 | 36.6 | 51.9 | 100% |
| Personal services | 2.0 | 0.5 | 1.7 | 0.4 | 37.4 | 57.9 | 100% |
| Other | 7.1 | 0.8 | 1.8 | 4.8 | 25.7 | 59.8 | 100% |

# Chapter 8

# Wage paying jobs (non-agricultural and agricultural)

## Key findings

- Nearly three quarters of households have lost money from waged jobs. Having a professional occupation provides protection and stability as 39.2 percent of professional workers have lost income compared to 85.3 percent working in elementary jobs.

- In 35.8 percent of cases, the worker was working as usual. However, over a third were temporarily not working because of COVID-19 restrictions. Professionals, permanent job holders and urban households were most likely to be temporarily not working. Overall 4.9 percent of the waged workers had lost their job because of COVID-19 issues.

- 57.6 percent of wage earners were working in the same location. Around a quarter were working in a different location (probably home) all the time and 21.7 percent for some shifts. Professionals and other occupations and permanent positions are the most likely to have the flexibility to work in other locations.

Households were asked about household members who worked for wages. Over a quarter of households (27.5 percent) had a household member receiving wages from working on other people's farms and 38.0 percent of a household member working in a non-family, non-farm job.

Nearly three quarters (72.9 percent) have lost money from waged jobs. Having a professional occupation provides much more protection and stability as 39.2 percent of professional workers have lost income compared to 85.3 percent working in elementary jobs.

**Table 8.1: Household has lost or gained money from all waged jobs in the household (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Lost | Gained | The same | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 72.9 | 2.9 | 24.2 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | |
| Poor | 84.1 | 2.8 | 13.1 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 83.3 | 2.8 | 13.9 | 100% |
| Secure | 53.8 | 2.9 | 43.2 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| State | 74.2 | 5.2 | 20.6 | 100% |
| Region | 72.5 | 2.2 | 25.3 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Urban | 57.7 | 2.5 | 39.8 | 100% |
| Rural | 79.6 | 3.0 | 17.4 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| *Occupation* | | | | |
| Agriculture | 81.2 | 1.4 | 17.4 | 100% |
| Elementary occupation [17] | 85.3 | 2.5 | 12.3 | 100% |
| Professional | 39.2 | 3.2 | 57.6 | 100% |
| Other | 56.3 | 4.6 | 39.1 | 100% |
| | | | | |
| Permanent job | 62.6 | 2.3 | 35.0 | 100% |
| Temporary job | 86.3 | 3.6 | 10.1 | 100% |

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17 Elementary occupations include: selling goods in streets and public places, providing various street services; cleaning, washing, taking care of hotels, offices and other buildings; washing windows and other glass surfaces of buildings; delivering messages or goods; carrying luggage; simple tasks connected with mining, construction and manufacturing including product-sorting and simple hand-assembling of components; packing by hand; freight handling; pedalling or hand-guiding vehicles to transport passengers and goods.

**Table 8.2: Loss in waged job income is due to COVID-19 or something else (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | COVID-19 | Something else | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 79.2 | 20.8 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 76.1 | 23.9 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 80.8 | 19.2 | 100% |
| Secure | 80.3 | 19.7 | 100% |
| | | | |
| State | 77.9 | 22.1 | 100% |
| Region | 79.6 | 20.4 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Urban | 91.8 | 8.2 | 100% |
| Rural | 75.2 | 24.8 | 100% |
| | | | |
| *Occupation* | | | |
| Agriculture | 72.6 | 27.4 | 100% |
| Elementary occupation | 77.7 | 22.3 | 100% |
| Professional | 75.9 | 24.1 | 100% |
| Other | 92.5 | 7.5 | 100% |
| | | | |
| Permanent job | 87.2 | 12.8 | 100% |
| Temporary job | 71.5 | 28.5 | 100% |

In relation to the wage-paying job that brought the most income into the household, in 35.8 percent of cases the worker was working as usual (Table 8.3). However, over a third (33.6 percent) were temporarily not working because of COVID-19 restrictions. Professionals (43.8 percent), permanent job holders (41.6 percent) and urban households (40.8 percent) were most likely to be temporarily not working. Overall 4.9 percent of these waged workers had lost their job because of COVID-19 issues.

**Table 8.3: Impact of COVID-19 on the status of the main job bringing the most money into the household (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Temporarily not working because of COVID-19 related issues | Job lost because of COVID-19 related issues | Working as usual | Not currently working, but not because of COVID-19 | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 33.6 | 4.9 | 35.8 | 25.6 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | | | |
| Poor | 29.9 | 4.7 | 33.4 | 32.0 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 34.0 | 5.6 | 29.9 | 30.5 | 100% |
| Secure | 35.9 | 4.5 | 43.7 | 15.9 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| State | 19.1 | 5.6 | 42.4 | 32.9 | 100% |
| Region | 37.7 | 4.7 | 34.0 | 23.6 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| Urban | 40.8 | 4.1 | 47.0 | 8.0 | 100% |
| Rural | 30.4 | 5.3 | 30.9 | 33.4 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| *Occupation* | | | | | |
| Agriculture | 26.0 | 3.6 | 19.7 | 50.7 | 100% |
| Elementary occupation | 32.6 | 4.4 | 33.7 | 29.3 | 100% |
| Professional | 43.8 | 2.8 | 38.7 | 14.7 | 100% |
| Other | 34.0 | 8.7 | 49.1 | 8.3 | 100% |
| | | | | | |
| Permanent job | 41.6 | 4.4 | 45.8 | 8.2 | 100% |
| Temporary job | 23.1 | 5.6 | 22.7 | 48.5 | 100% |

Households were also asked whether or not any of the wage earners in the household were now working in a different location to that in which they worked before COVID-19. Overall 57.6 percent of wage earners were working in the same location (Table 8.4). Around a quarter (23.8 percent) were working in a different location (probably home) all the time and 21.7 percent for some shifts. Professionals and other occupations and permanent positions are by far the most likely to have the flexibility to work in other locations.

**Table 8.4:** **Wage earners in the household are working in a different location since COVID-19 (percent)**

| Characteristic of household | Yes, all the time | Yes, some shifts | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 23.8 | 21.7 | 57.6 |
| | | | |
| *MLCS Poverty status* | | | |
| Poor | 20.3 | 14.3 | 65.4 |
| Vulnerable | 16.5 | 18.5 | 66.3 |
| Secure | 30.7 | 28.1 | 47.2 |
| | | | |
| State | 12.1 | 13.0 | 76.5 |
| Region | 27.8 | 24.8 | 51.0 |
| | | | |
| Urban | 33.3 | 38.4 | 35.0 |
| Rural | 17.3 | 10.5 | 72.8 |
| | | | |
| *Occupation* | | | |
| Agriculture | 35.3 | 12.3 | 52.4 |
| Elementary occupation | 17.3 | 12.2 | 71.3 |
| Professional | 36.6 | 46.0 | 36.1 |
| Other | 26.5 | 29.0 | 44.5 |
| | | | |
| Permanent job | 29.6 | 26.0 | 48.7 |
| Temporary job | 8.0 | 10.3 | 81.7 |

Multiple response question

# Annex 1:  Additional tables

**Table A1.1:    Main reason for being financially worse off since interviewed for MLCS 2017 (percent).**

| Characteristic of household | Lost job/scarcity of jobs/ number of earners in the household decreased | Revenue from own business or farm fell | Other | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 56.4 | 22.4 | 21.2 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| *MLCS Poverty status* |  |  |  |  |
| Poor | 61.5 | 19.2 | 19.3 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 56.7 | 18.9 | 24.4 | 100% |
| Secure | 52.4 | 28.4 | 19.2 | 100% |

**Table A1.2:    Main reason for being financially better off since interviewed for MLCS 2017 (percent).**

| Characteristic of household | Access to better jobs/ increased income earners | Revenue from own business or farm went up | Other | Total % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Union | 67.2 | 28.0 | 4.8 | 100% |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| *MLCS Poverty status* |  |  |  |  |
| Poor | 65.4 | 28.5 | 6.0 | 100% |
| Vulnerable | 68.5 | 24.8 | 6.6 | 100% |
| Secure | 67.0 | 30.5 | 2.5 | 100% |

# Annex 2:  States and Regions of Myanmar

States include **Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan**.

Regions include **Sagaing, Tanintharyi, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon, Ayeyarwady** and (for the purposes of statistical analysis) **Naypyitaw**.



States

Regions
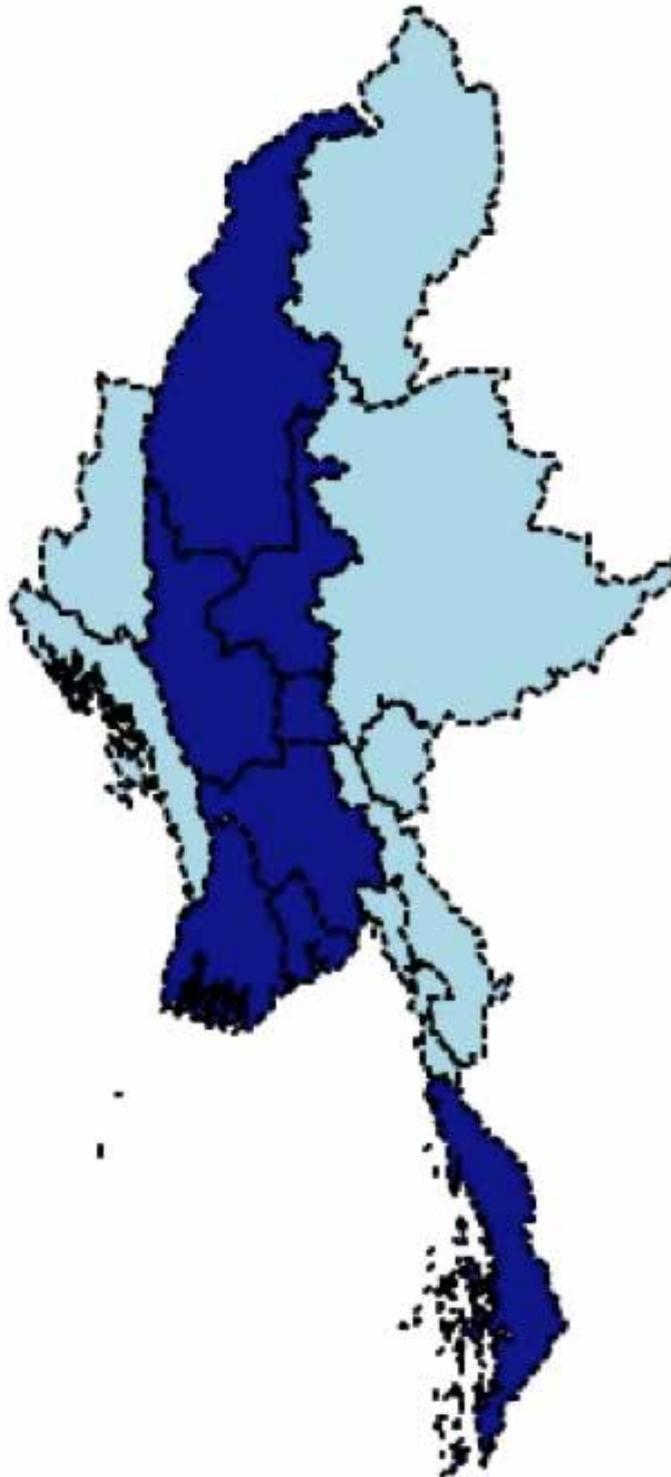
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