

Working paper

# Tracking the economic consequences of COVID-19

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## Executive summary

Access to timely information on key socio-economic indicators is essential to help policy makers in Sierra Leone respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. An international consortium of researchers<sup>1</sup> developed a data dashboard that provides real time data on current economic conditions, as well as information on COVID-19 and behaviors. Phone-based survey data are being collected from 195 rural towns and villages across Sierra Leone, and the capital city Freetown. The sample currently does not include district headquarter towns but these locations are likely included in future rounds of the survey.

For the most up-to-date data, and information by district, visit the website:

<https://sl-dashboard.github.io/corona/>

This data brief summarises data from the first five weeks of data collection, spanning 30 April - 6 June 2020. We report national averages and changes over time. In total, 4,515 unique people were called, of which 2,261 unique respondents answered the phone and were willing to participate in the survey (~50%). Data collection continues on a rolling basis, and we will be releasing regular briefs as more data becomes available.

The information covers five different topics: (i) Economic indicators, (ii) Food Security, (iii) COVID-19 knowledge and behaviors, (iv) health seeking behaviors and (v) migration.

## Economic indicators

- After the two 3-day lockdowns during early May 2020, businesses reopened. However, the number of hours per day that business owners and wage employees worked remained lower than before COVID-19 (ie March 2020).
- Despite businesses opening up, 80% of those surveyed in the first week of June still experienced low customer demand.
- Businesses in Freetown reported less difficulties accessing customers and suppliers compared to businesses in rural areas.
- Weekly profits of businesses owners remained around 50% lower than they were before the nation-wide lockdown and did not increase over time.

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## Food security

- Markets remain open and essential staples (rice, Cassava, Palm Oil and fish) are readily available.
- The price of **cassava** bundles almost doubled in the first week of June compared to the first week of May. Prices of staples such as **rice** and **palm oil** are relatively stable.
- Household consumption decreased significantly in recent weeks. The number of days that households went with fewer meals in a day increased in the first week of June compared to the first week in May.

***This confirms the need for support both to businesses and to households.***

## COVID-19 knowledge, social distancing and preventative measures

- In early May, 75% of respondents knew that fever is a symptom of COVID-19, 70% knew that dry cough is a symptom. Only 42% knew that difficulty breathing is a symptom of COVID-19. Knowledge about COVID-19, however, increased over time; by the first week of June, 87% knew that fever is a symptom and 77% knew that dry cough is a symptom. There is no clear positive trend for the share that knows that difficulty in breathing is a symptom.
- Only 41% of respondents know that people can have COVID-19 and show no symptoms.
- There is a gender gap in knowledge: female respondents are seven percentage points less likely to know that fever is a symptom of COVID-19 and ten percentage points less likely to know that dry cough is a symptom of COVID-19. Women are also 10 percentage points less likely to know people can have COVID-19 and show no symptoms.
- People have adopted more preventative measures over time. The percentage of people reporting wearing masks increased during May. People were also 14 percentage points more likely to report avoiding handshakes and 13 percentage points more likely to report washing their hands regularly.
- It appears that people are becoming less observant of social distancing. By the first week of June, more people were coming in and out of their homes for friendly visits compared to the first week of May. They also reported a lower number of days without leaving the house. However, very few people report going to social gatherings of more than 10 people or religious gatherings.

***It is therefore important to consider how to best target information campaigns to reach specific (demographic) groups.***

***It is worth increasing communication efforts on the importance of reducing social interactions in combination with other preventative behaviours like wearing masks and hand washing.***

## Health seeking behaviour

- Between May 16 and May 21, we notice a reduction in the number of visits for women who had a baby in the past 12 months. However, we do not observe a persistent trend in the number of visits to CHCs for women who had a baby in the past 12 months.

- Pregnant women reported a 20% drop in the number of days seeking antenatal care at the community health clinic between May 16 and May 21. However, we do not observe any persistent trend.

## Migration

- About 15% of respondents have migrated in recent weeks.
- For those who do migrate, 80% migrated to a different village in the same district, and only 11% migrated to a different district.

Feedback is very welcome, and the team remains available for clarifications and specific requests for further analysis. Please get in touch via [tracking.corona.sl@gmail.com](mailto:tracking.corona.sl@gmail.com).

In the remainder of the report, we present more detailed information on economic indicators, food security, COVID-19 measures and behaviors, health seeking behaviors and migration

## Economic indicators

The COVID-19 Phone Survey asks various questions to understand how income and hourly work has changed over the past weeks and how this compares pre to the pre-COVID period, ie March 2020 (the first case of COVID-19 was reported in Sierra Leone on 31 March).

During the span of the survey, the Government of Sierra Leone implemented two national lockdowns ( 5-7 April and 3-5 May) and a series of restrictions announced (effective on 11 April) that included restrictions on inter-district movements.

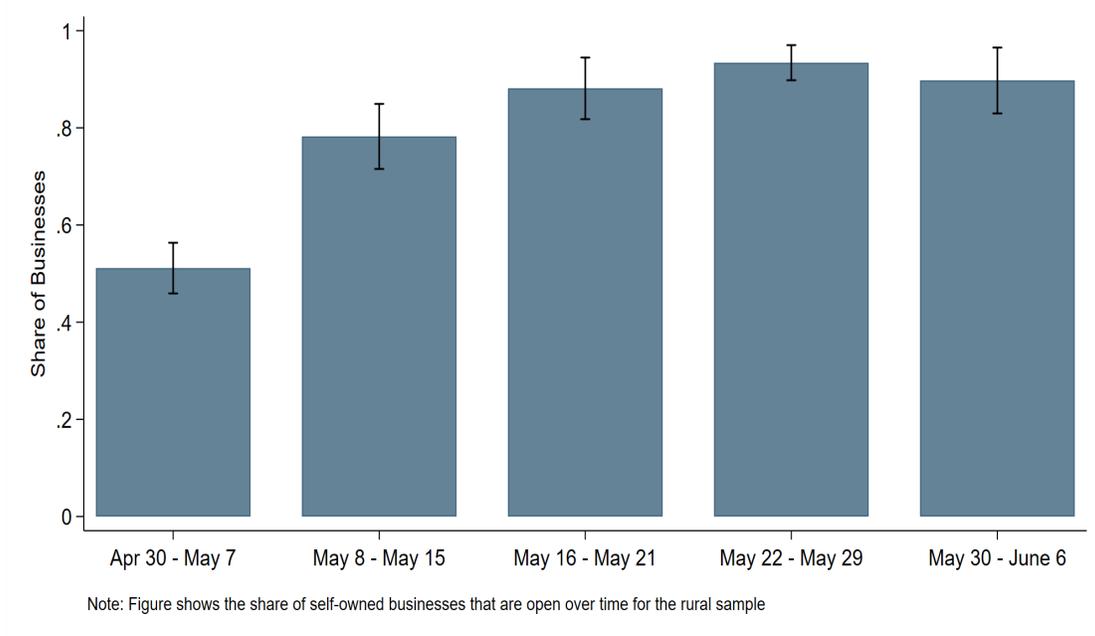
In the rest of this section, we shed light on the changes in income of business owners and wage employees, on difficulties faced due to COVID-19 and changes in agriculture.

### Income for business owners and wage-employees

We ask business owners and wage employees how their income in the past seven days compares to their typical weekly income in March 2020. Income for businesses owners is defined as weekly profits for self-employed businesses or weekly wages/salary for people who work for a business or organisation. The businesses that our respondents own are typically small and informal - 45% are petty traders, and about 15% are processors of agricultural goods. The majority (64%) of wage workers are employed by the government and 14% are employed as construction workers.

**Figure 1** presents the share of businesses that were open and operating in the weeks of May and the first week of June. We see that only about 50% of businesses were open in the first week of May but this increased by 30 percentage points in the second week, which is statistically significant. By the end of May, we see that around 90% of businesses were open. We also see a small dip in the first week of June, but this difference is not statistically significant.

**Figure 1: Share of businesses that remained open**



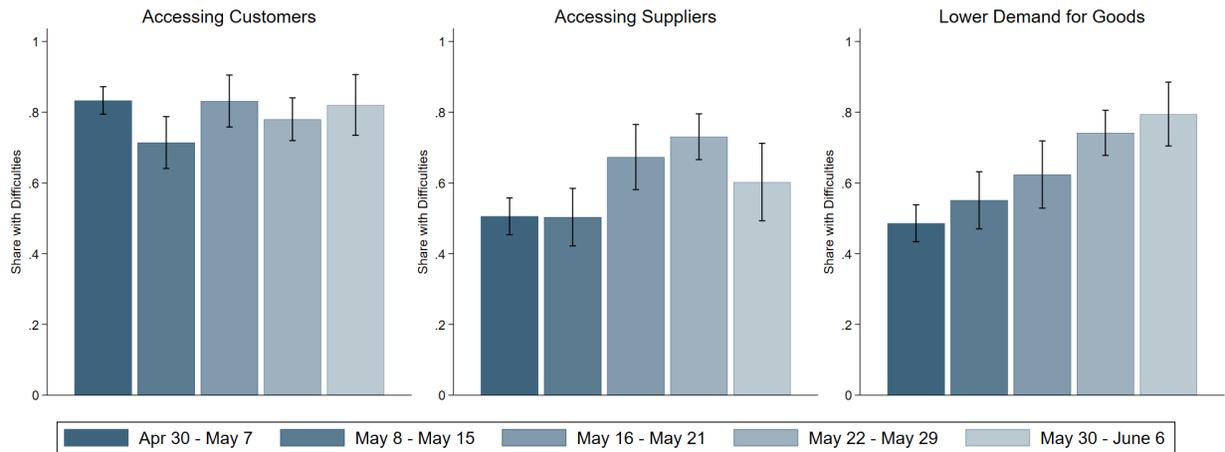
## Difficulties businesses faced due to COVID-19

Travel restrictions and mandatory shelter-in-place ordinances can make it difficult for businesses to access suppliers and customers. Businesses may also face low demand for their goods if people lower their consumption in times of hardship. Learning about these difficulties can provide a better sense of the trade-offs policymakers face when implementing such restrictions. We discuss this first for business owners, and then for wage workers both in the rural areas around Sierra Leone and in the capital Freetown.

**Figure 2** presents three main difficulties that businesses experienced during the weeks of the phone surveys. We see that from the end of April until the beginning of June, around 80% of business owners reported difficulties accessing customers. This is likely due to a combination of the initial three days lockdown at the beginning of May, the implementation of a curfew (9pm to 6am), and restrictions to inter-district travel for businesses and citizens.

The percent of business owners that reported difficulties with lower demand for their products increased over time. In the first week of May, only around 45% of business owners experienced lower demand for their goods, but one month later this increased to around 80%. Businesses also had difficulties accessing suppliers. In the first two week of May, around 50 percent of businesses reported having difficulties accessing suppliers, but this rose to 60-70% in the following weeks.

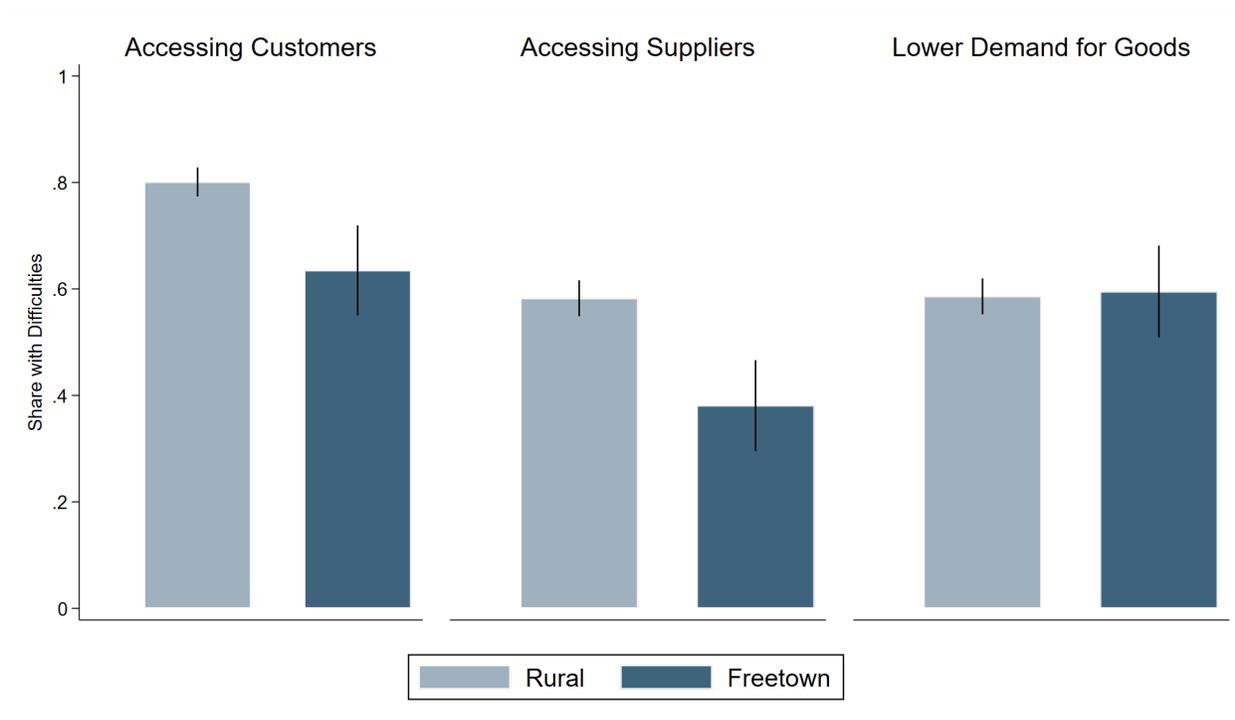
**Figure 2: Share of businesses reporting difficulties**



Note: Figure shows the difficulties that business owners are facing because of nation-wide restrictions. Y-axis is the share of businesses facing the respective difficulty.

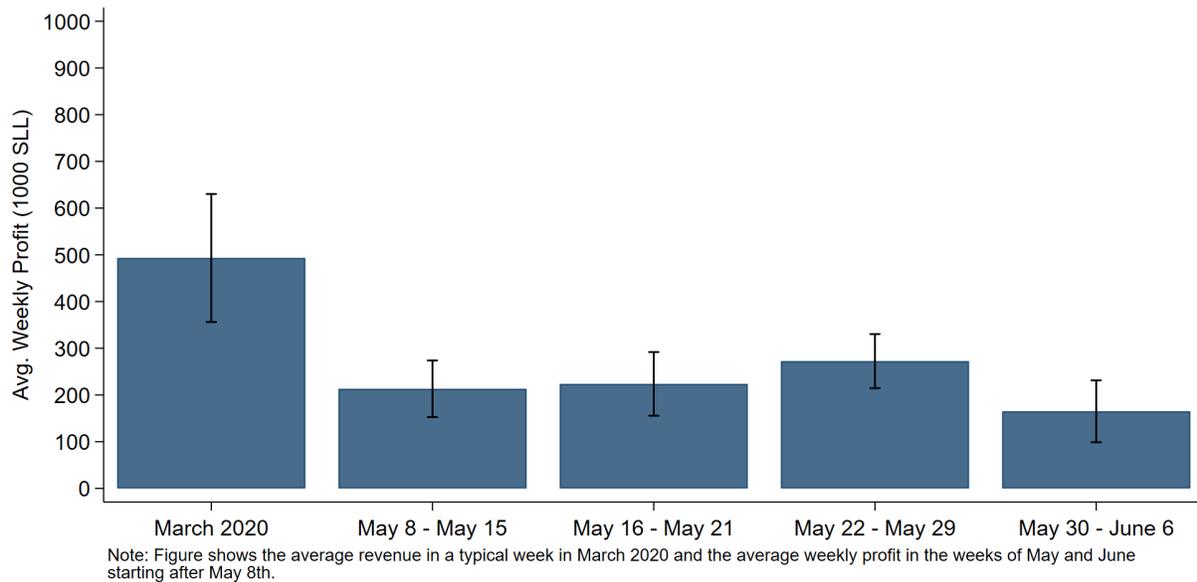
**Figure 3** represents the differences between the capital Freetown and more rural areas of Sierra Leone. We report the averages across the four-week timespan of the phone survey collection which explains why the share of respondents are different percentages from **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**. We observe that business owners in Freetown also experienced difficulties, but relatively less than the rural sample. The majority of businesses in Freetown still have difficulty accessing customers and face lower demand for their goods. Around 40% of businesses also had trouble accessing suppliers. However, Freetown businesses had relatively less difficulty accessing suppliers and customers compared to those businesses in rural areas. This is likely due to the higher number of suppliers and customers having Freetown as their main destination. We see that the demand in the goods is almost the same for both areas, indicating the possibility that household consumption is lower in both regions.

**Figure 3: Share of businesses reporting difficulties - Rural vs Freetown sample**



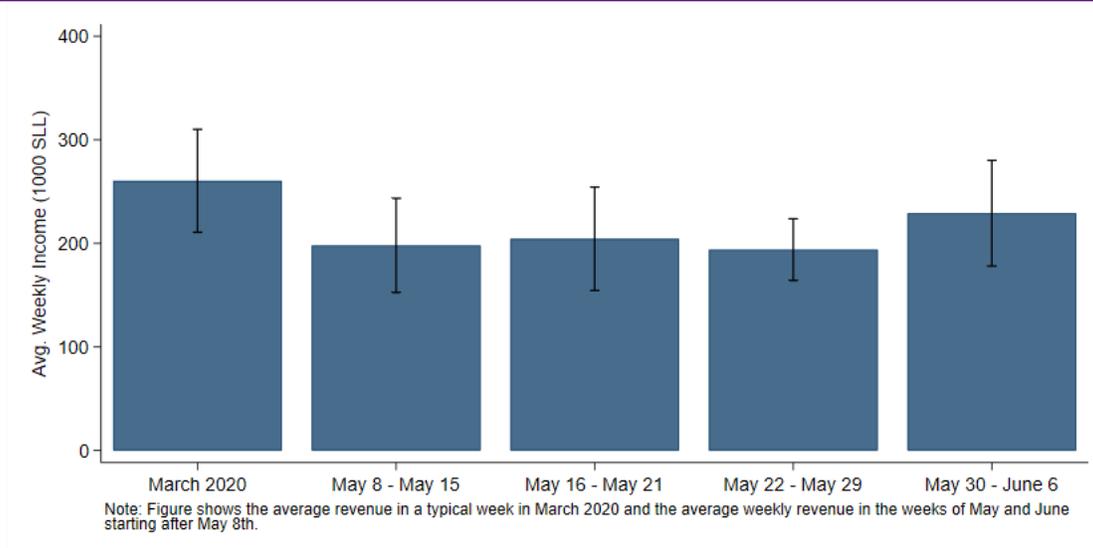
**Figure 4** shows the weekly profits of the self-employed respondents by week, as well as the reported profits before the nationwide lockdown was enacted in April 2020. We observe sizable drops in reported profits (500,000 SLL to 200,000 LL, which is roughly a 30 USD difference) since restrictions started. Although profits increased slightly each week in May, the average is below the pre-lockdown average. We also observe a slight decrease in weekly profits in the first month of June, from 250,000 SLL to around 180,000 SLL. It is possible that the end of Ramadan left many customers without the means to go to businesses and spend, which would explain the sudden drop in profits.

**Figure 4: Average weekly profits for businesses (in 1000 SLL)**



**Figure 5** shows the weekly income of wage-employed workers over the duration of the phone survey, as well as the weekly income in a typical week in March 2020, before the lockdown. The trend is similar as the trend for business owners: weekly income dropped considerably since March 2020, and despite a small positive trend through the month of May, it still has not recovered.

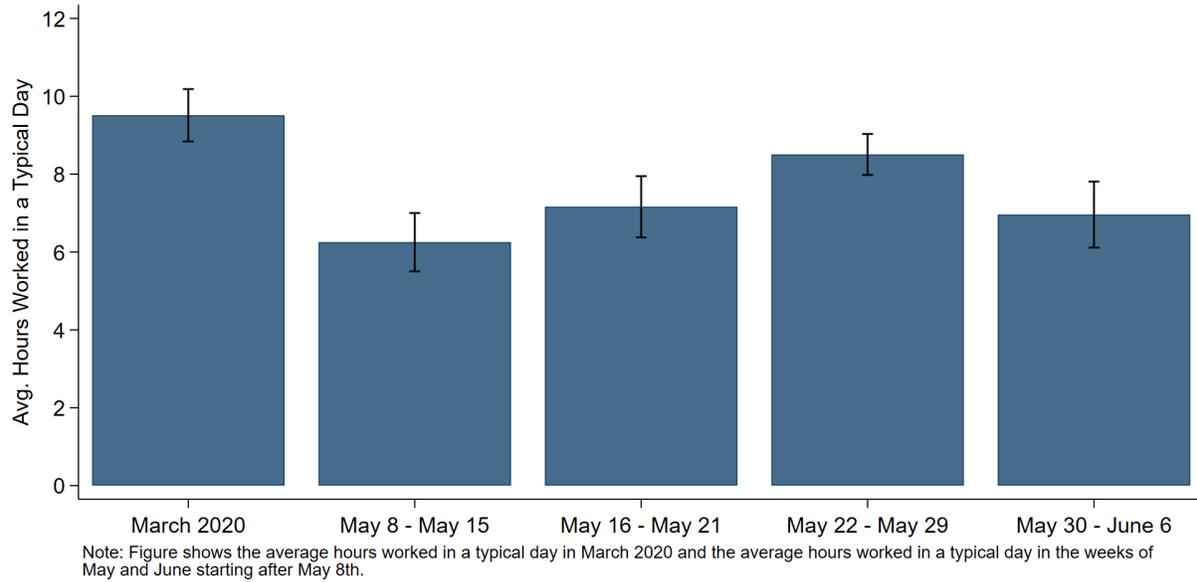
**Figure 5: Average weekly income of wage workers (in 1000 SLL)**



**Figure 6** shows the average daily working hours for business owners. There is a significant drop early May compared to the pre-COVID period (ie March). In March, business owners spent on average between just under 10 hours per day working. This decreased to about 6 hours per day

on average during 8-15 May. There is a positive trend across weeks during May up to about 8 hours during 22-29 May indicating business owners returned to normal work hours, though they seem to fall again during early June.

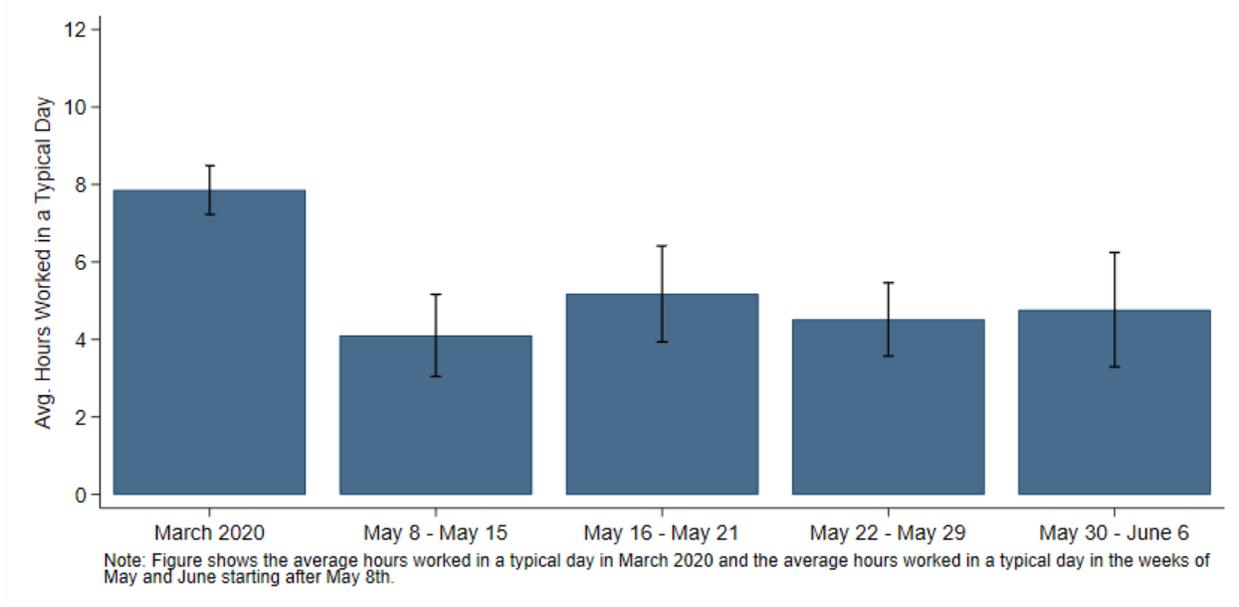
**Figure 6: Hours worked per day over time for self-employed business owners**



**Figure 6: Hours Worked per Day Over Time for Self-Employed Business Owners**

Wage workers experienced a similar drop in working hours. **Figure 7** represents daily hours worked for wage workers in our sample, showing an average working day of 8 hours during March 2020, dropping to 4-6 hours during May and early June.

**Figure 7: Average hours worked per day for wage workers**

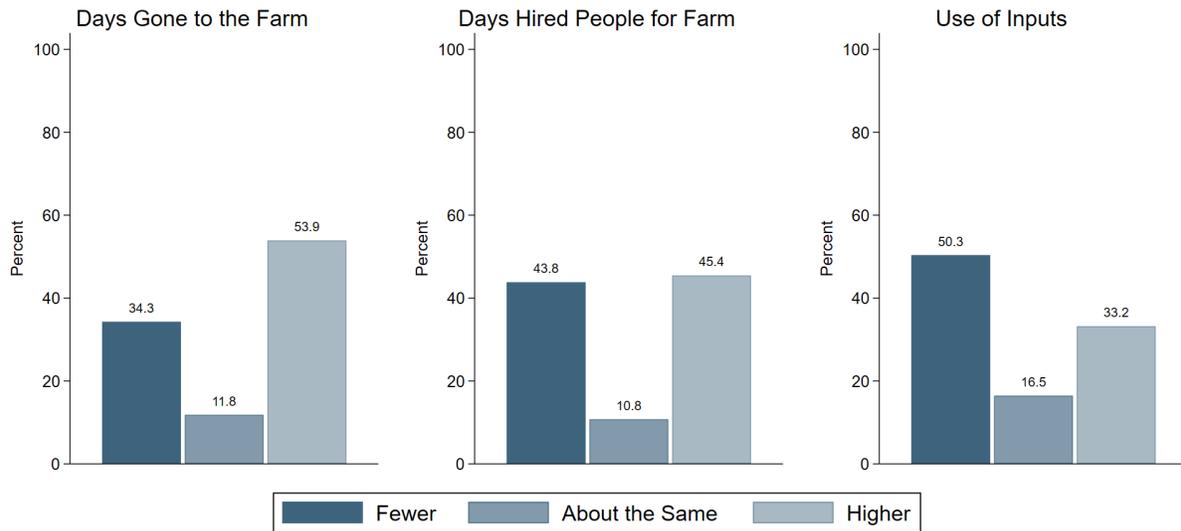


## Agriculture

COVID-19 and the restrictions put in place have changed how farmers use inputs such as labour and investments in chemical fertiliser and seeds. Travel restrictions made it more difficult for farmers to access input markets to buy seeds and fertiliser and made it difficult for labourers to travel to the farm and work. In this section we compare this farmers' current agricultural season to the previous season.

**Figure 8** reports changes in agricultural labour use (both own and hired labour (as well as purchased inputs such as seeds and chemical fertiliser. We ask respondents if, compared to the last agricultural season, they are using fewer, about the same, or more of these inputs. Across just 10-15% of farmers are making the same investments as the previous season. Respondents are reallocating their own labour, with 54% spending more time working on their farm compared to last season, and 34% spending less time. This may suggest that farmers are increasing their work on their farms to substitute for hired labour. About 44% are hiring less labour for their farms. Over 50% of respondents report they are using fewer inputs compared than last year.

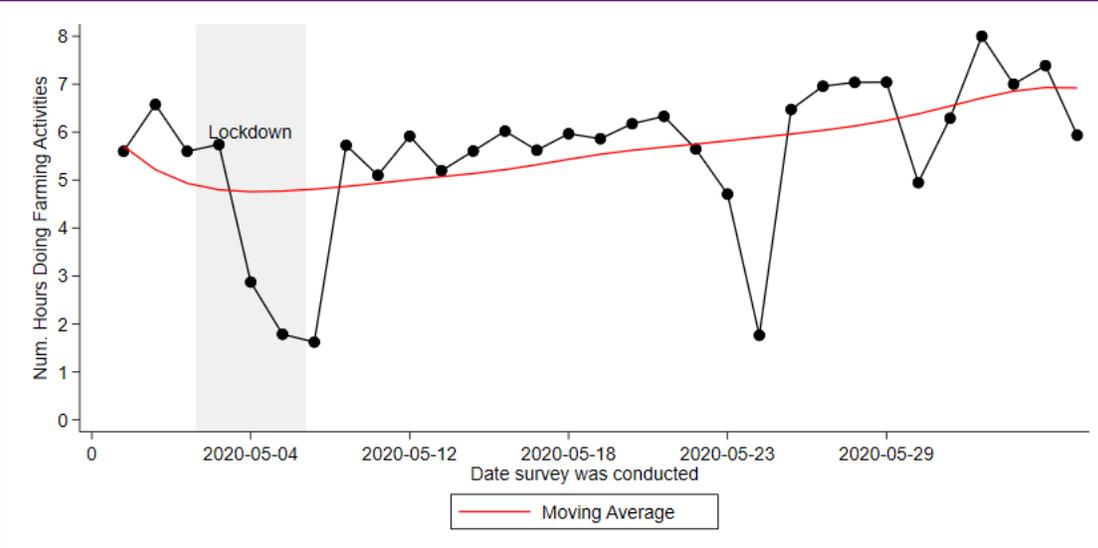
**Figure 8: Agricultural inputs use compared to last season**



Note: Figure shows the percent of farmers who have changed their labor inputs and other inputs such as seeds and chemical fertilizer relative to the same season last year.

**Figure 9** shows the number of hours that respondents report to have spent on their farms in the previous 24 hours. We see that during the (second) lockdown (5-7 May), there was a sharp drop of the number of hours spent on the farm. In the time period after the lockdown, there is a slight positive trend, with a drop between May 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup>, which was the end of Ramadan and a national public holiday in Sierra Leone.

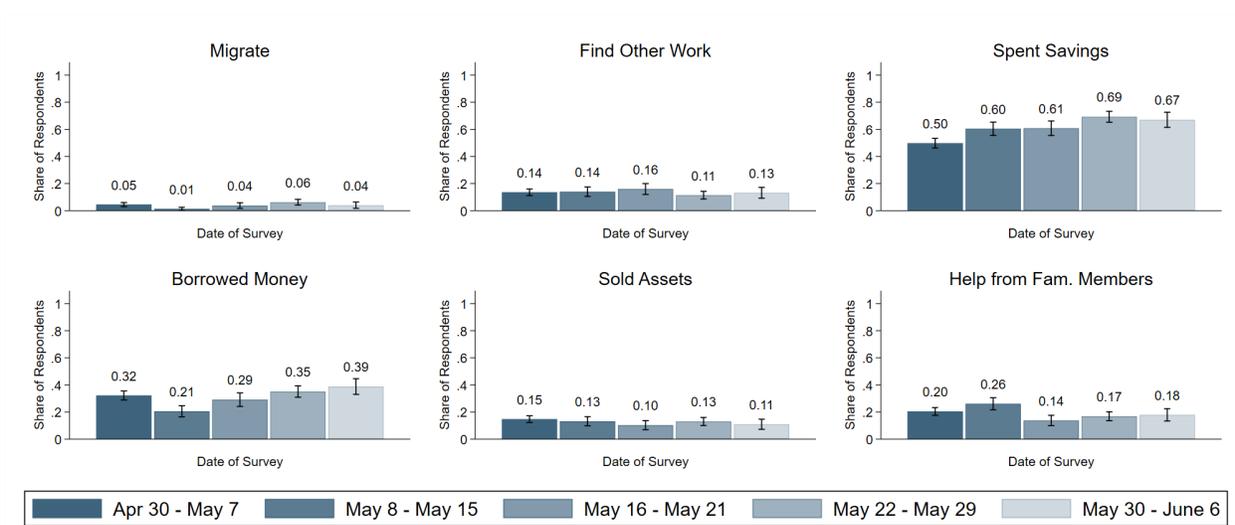
**Figure 9: Hours spent working on farm during previous 24 Hours**



**Figure 10** shows how farmers coped in order to pay for expenses such as food and healthcare. We see that during the first week of May, 50% of farmers relied on savings to pay for expenses

and this increased to 67% by the first week of June. The share of farmers that borrowed money to pay for expenses increased from 32% to 39% over the same period.

**Figure 10: Share of farmers that report having to take involuntary actions to pay for food, healthcare, or other expenses**



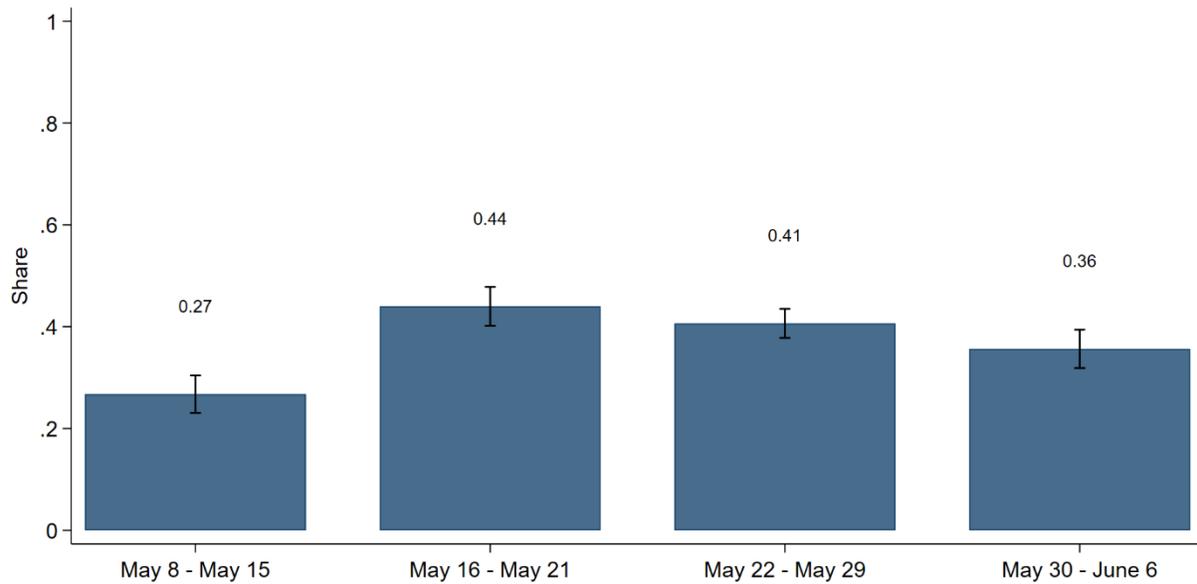
Note: Figure shows the share of farmers who were forced to take the respective action in the past month to pay for food, healthcare or other expenses.

## Debt

We ask our respondents if they have had to take out any debt in the previous month due to COVID-19, and if they are able to be able to pay this debt back.

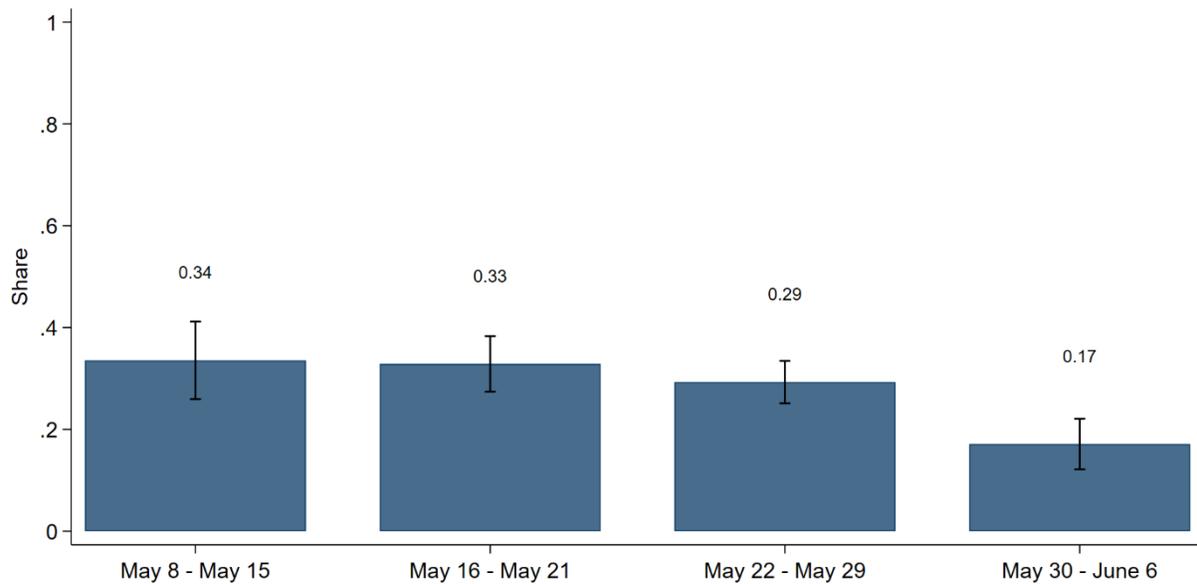
**Figure 11** displays the share of respondents who took out debt during the prior month. During the first half of May there was an increase in the number of individuals that took on debt; increasing from 27 percent to 44% of respondents. One reason can be that Ramadan was nearing, and households were beginning to make preparations for the holiday. Since then, there has been a gradual decrease in the share of respondents that take out debt.

**Figure 11: Debt taken out during prior month**



**Figure 12** shows whether those that have taken out debt in the last month, are able to pay it back. The share of respondents that report that they can repay the debt is small. Furthermore, there is a decline over time, dropping from 34% to 17%, indicating that over time respondents expect they are less likely to be able to repay their debt.

**Figure 12: Share of respondents who feel they are able to repay their debt**



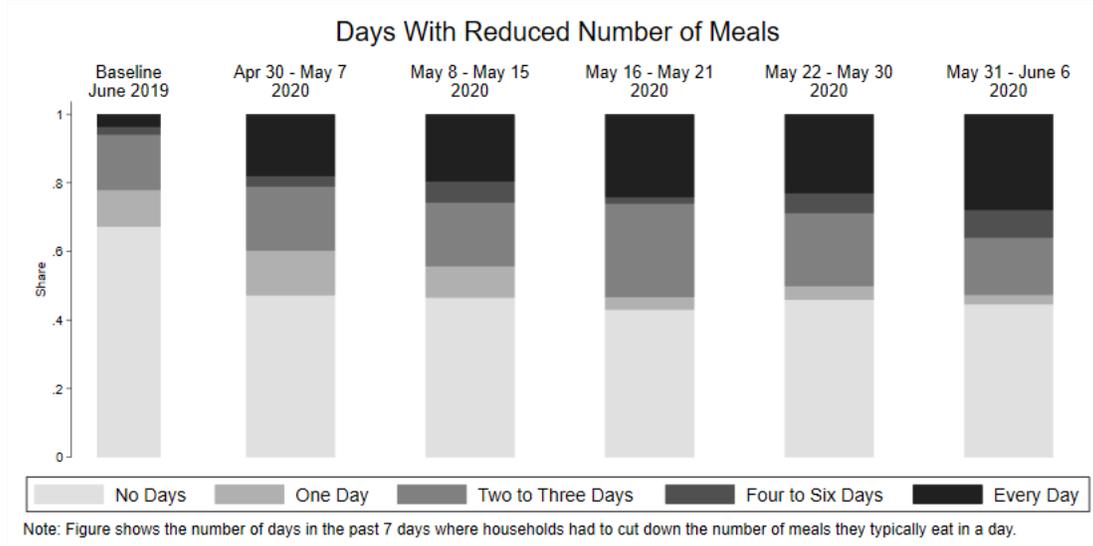
## Food security

One threat posed by the COVID-19 crisis is a reduction in food security. Lower income, difficulties in moving food stuff across districts and possibly rising food prices can push people to reduce food consumption, which can negatively impact health. In the survey we ask about food consumption and here compare consumption patterns of households at different time intervals. We explore multiple points in time: we have information from June 2019 (collected during an earlier survey), March 2020 when COVID-19 had first been reported in Sierra Leone, and the subsequent weeks until now. The phone survey records the price and availability of essential goods such as rice, cassava, and palm oil.

## Food consumption

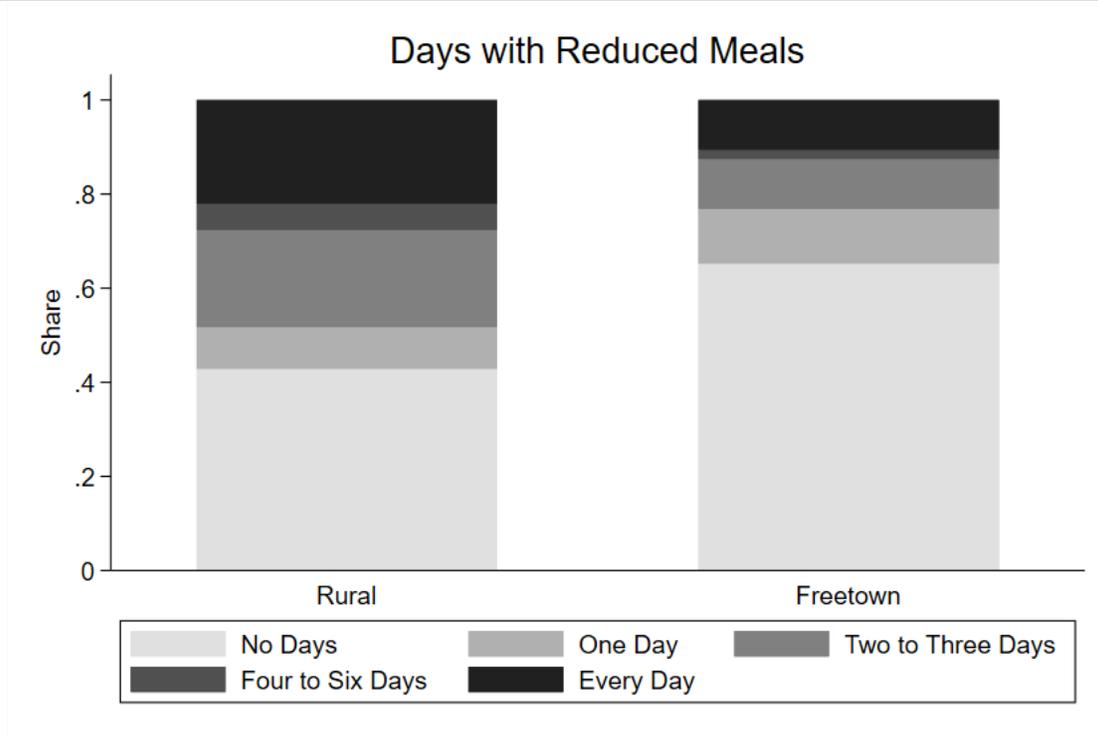
**Figure 13** displays loss of food intake for households in June 2019 and during the phone survey period. The share of respondents that report they were able to eat full meals every day of the past week, dropped by about 20 percentage points. In contrast, the share of households report reducing meals every day increased significantly to about 30% of the sample. This pattern suggests that households are cutting back food consumption as the result of the COVID-19 crisis.

**Figure 13: Share of respondent that report 0, 1, 2-3, 4-6 or 7 days they reduced meals**



**Figure 14** compares food security between respondents in rural areas and those in the capital Freetown. Freetown residents are 20 percentage points more likely to go zero days without reduced meals, compared to the respondents in rural areas. This difference may be explained by the fact that respondents in Freetown are on average more wealthy than respondents in rural parts of Sierra Leone.

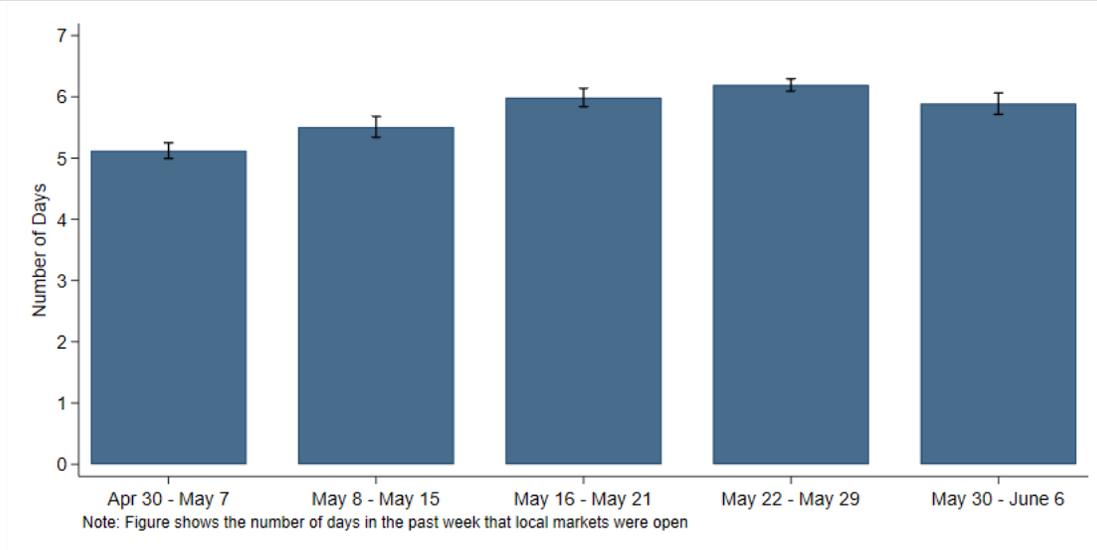
Figure 14: Number of days with reduced meals: Rural vs Freetown during past week



### Availability and price of essential goods

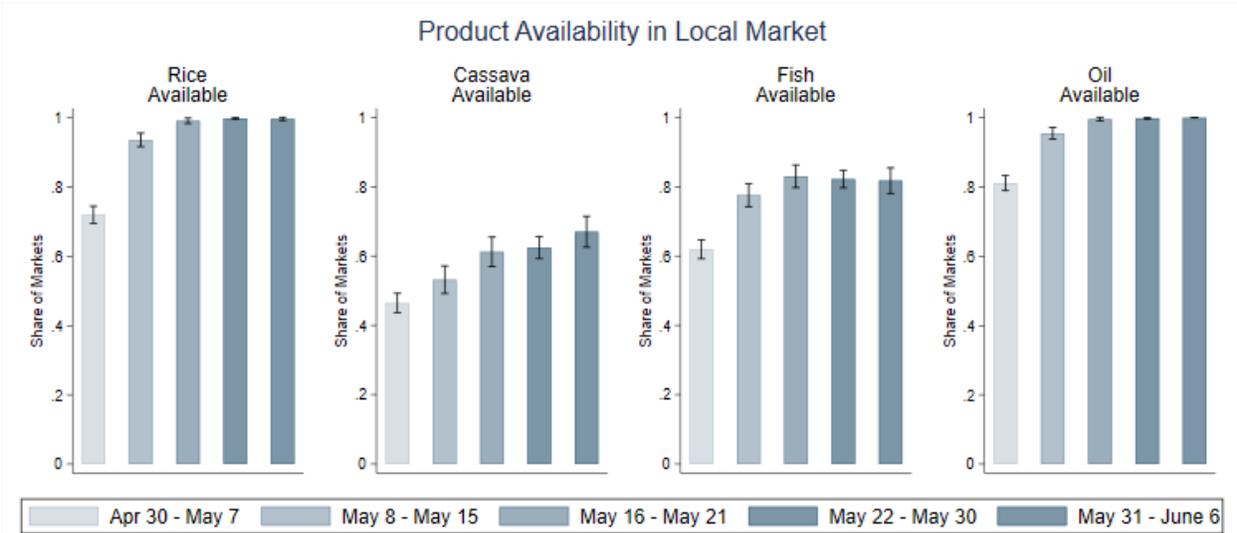
We also monitor the availability and price of essential goods. **Figure 15** presents the number of days that local markets are open by week. During early May, local markets were open on average five days per week, during May this increased to 6 days.

**Figure 15: Number of days the markets were open in prior week during past week**



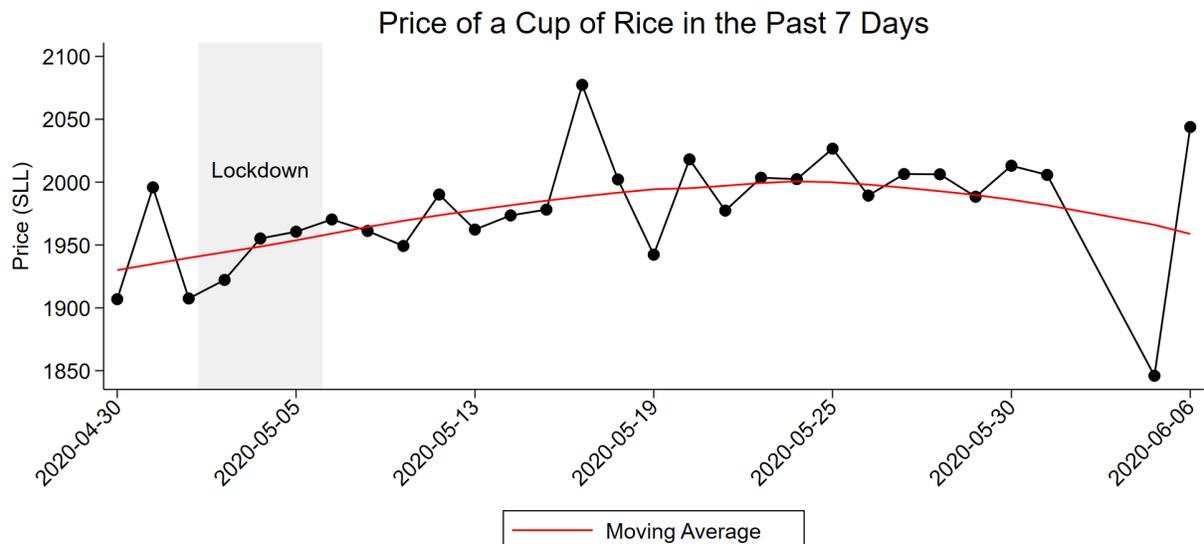
**Figure 16** presents the share of respondents that report essential commodities are available in markets. The essential commodity that seems least available is cassava (likely due to the season) and bonga fish. Rice and palm oil are reported as available by all respondents across Sierra Leone. This implies that the limitations in inter-district mobility is not hurting the availability of essential commodities.

**Figure 16: Product availability**



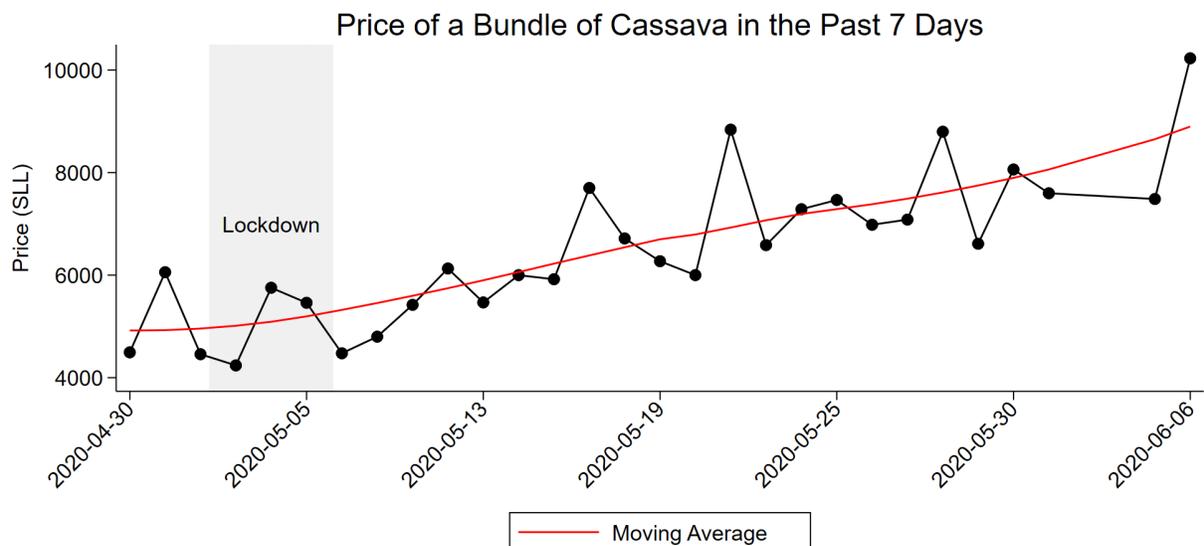
**Figure 17-19** plot the moving average price of a cup of rice, bundle of Cassava and pint of Palm Oil in the prior 7 days. The grey area indicates the dates of the second nationwide lockdown (3-5 May). Rice prices were relatively stable during May, ranging 1900-1950 SLL during early May to on average 2000 SLL later that month. Cassava prices increased over time from about 5000 SLL to 8000 SLL by the end of May (**Figure 18**). Palm Oil prices remained on average 2750 SLL, albeit with considerable variance across weeks (**Figure 19**).

**Figure 17: Price of a cup of rice**



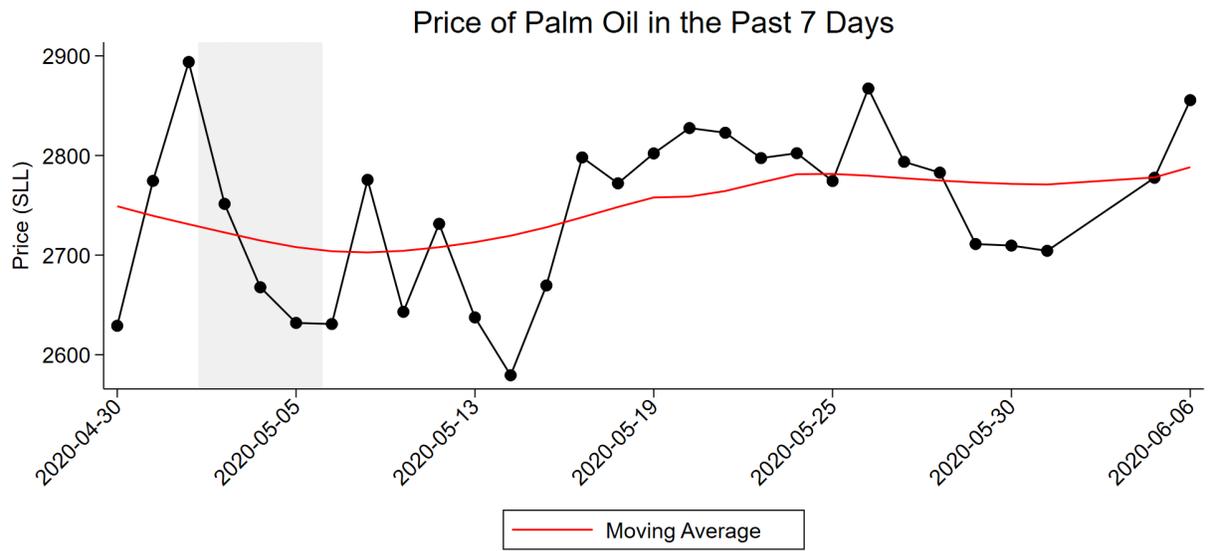
Note: Figure shows the price of a cup of rice at the local markets if the local market is open and rice is available.

**Figure 18: Price of a bundle of cassava**



Note: Figure shows the price of a bundle of cassava (~5 tubers) at the local market if the market is open and cassava is available.

**Figure 19: Price of a pint of palm oil**



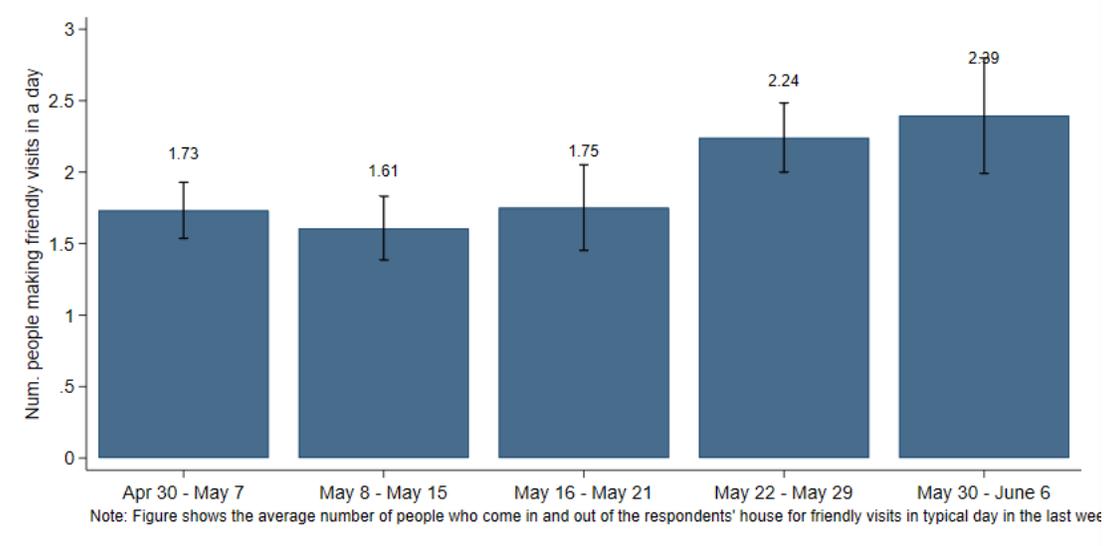
Note: Figure shows the price of palm oil at the local market if the market is open and palm oil is available.

## Social distancing and preventive measures

To limit the spread of COVID-19, the Government in Sierra Leone implemented regulations around social distancing. In this section, we present information about such behaviors surrounding the number of visits received by respondents, how frequently respondents report to have left the house, and, if they had been gathering with large groups and various other social interactions.

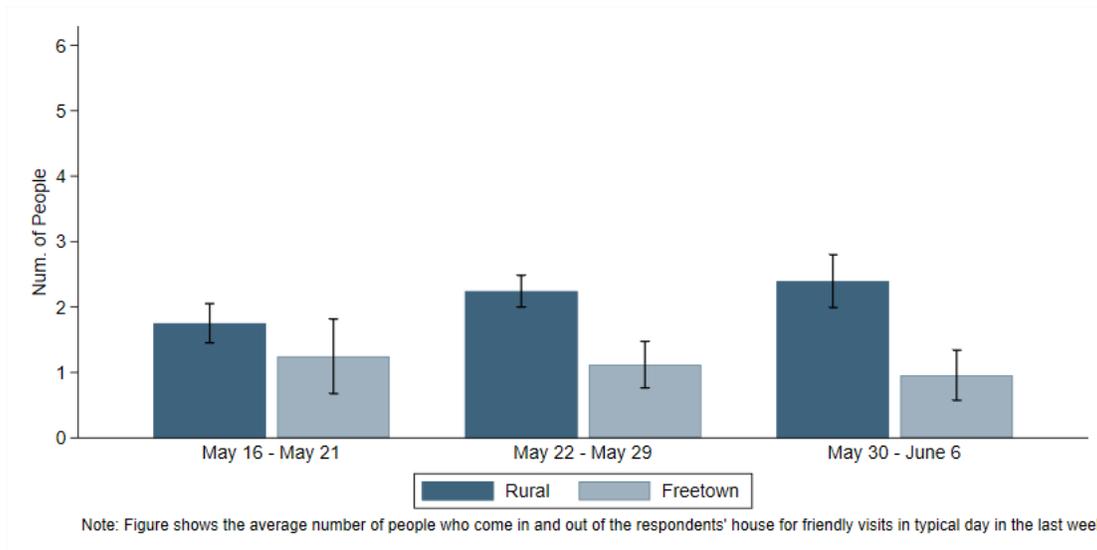
**Figure 20** shows the average number of people that visited the respondent’s homes per day in the previous seven days. During May, the number of visitors increased slightly.

**Figure 20: Number of people coming in and out of household for friendly visits**



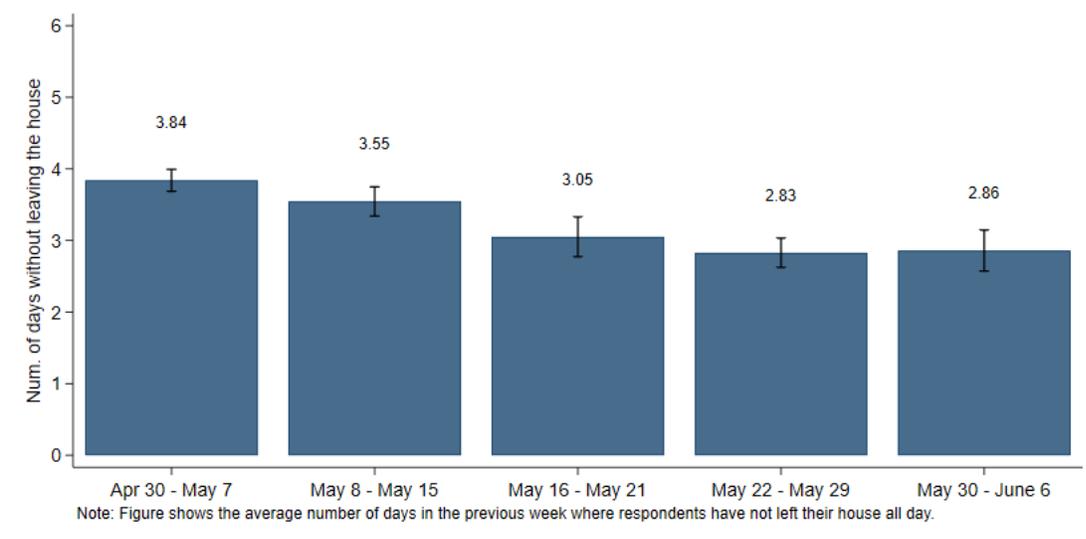
**Figure 21** compares the average number of people that visited the respondents’ home per day during the previous seven days, for rural areas and Freetown. We see that respondents in Freetown have less people coming in and out of respondent’s homes compared to those in rural areas. This may suggest that people in Freetown are being more cautious about COVID-19.

**Figure 21: Number of people coming in and out of household for friendly visits - Rural vs Freetown**



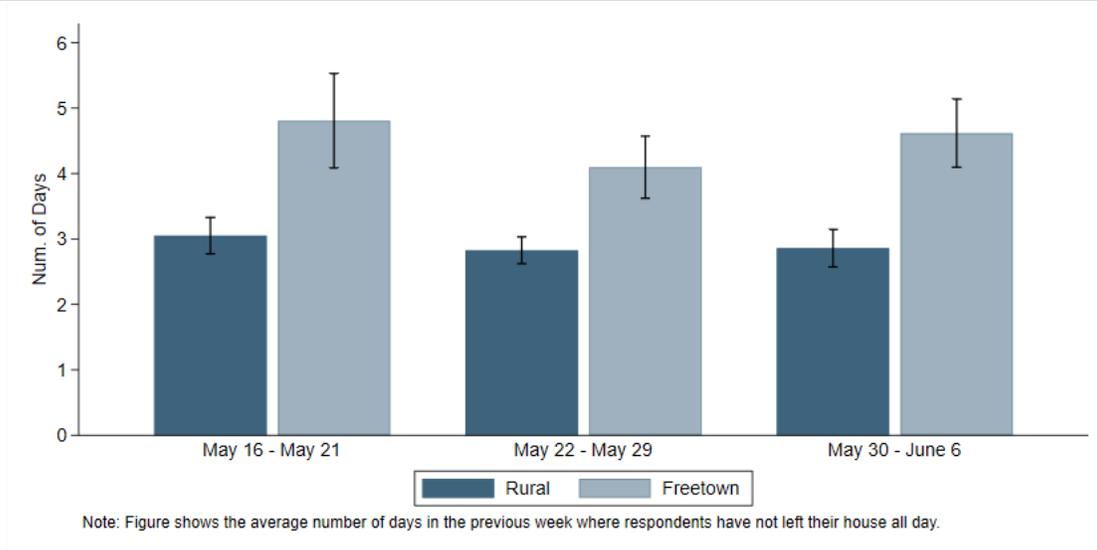
**Figure 22** shows the number of days that respondents do *not* leave their house. During the first week of May, respondents spent on average 3.8 days per week at home, this decreases to 2.9 days by the early June.

**Figure 22: Number of days without leaving the house**



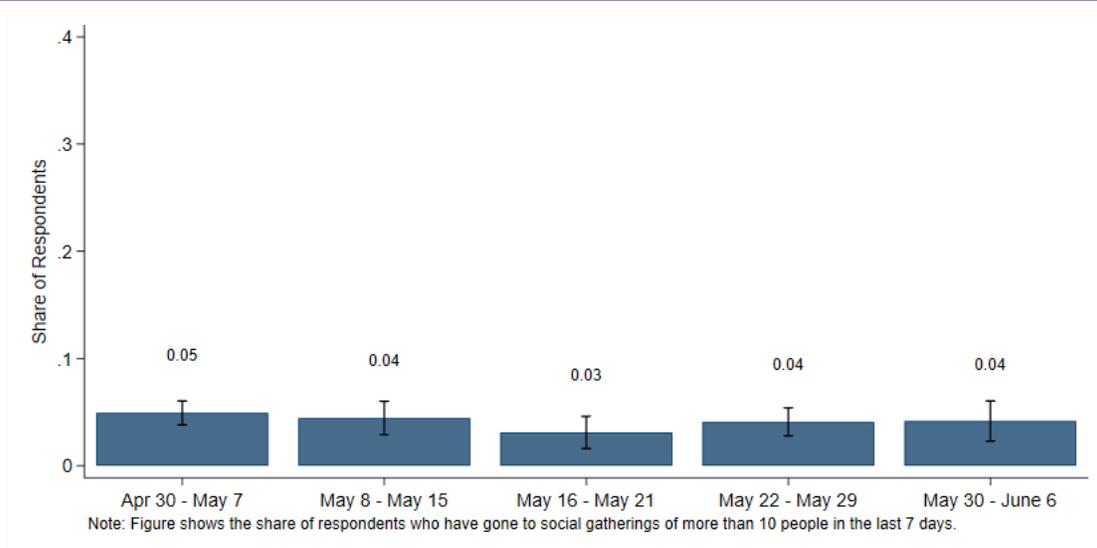
**Figure 23** compares the number of days without leaving the house between the rural and Freetown sample. On average, those in Freetown spent more days at home without leaving the house compared to those in rural areas, suggesting a tighter adherence to stay-at-home orders in the capital.

**Figure 23: Number of days without leaving the house - Rural vs Freetown**



**Figure 24** displays the share of respondents who went to social gatherings of more than 10 people in the previous week. We see that a small share of respondents went to social gatherings and this share remains largely the same over time. It is possible that such low figures are attributable to the governments bans on large gatherings. However, we caution over interpretation here as it is possible that respondents are under reporting public gatherings to demonstrate adherence to government ordinances. Comparing these findings with **Figure 23** and **Figure 22** suggest that although people left the house more, and had more visitors than before, it does not mean that they are not social distancing.

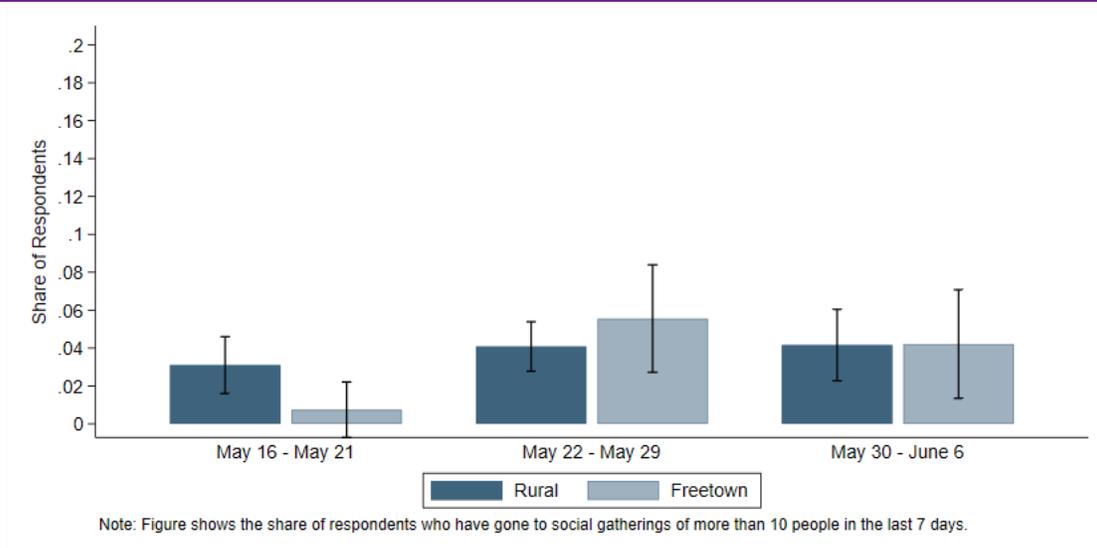
**Figure 24: Social gatherings of more than 10 people in the past week**



**Figure 25** compares the share of respondents that went to social gatherings of above 10 people in the rural setting vs the urban setting. Consistent with **Figure 24**, we see that few respondents

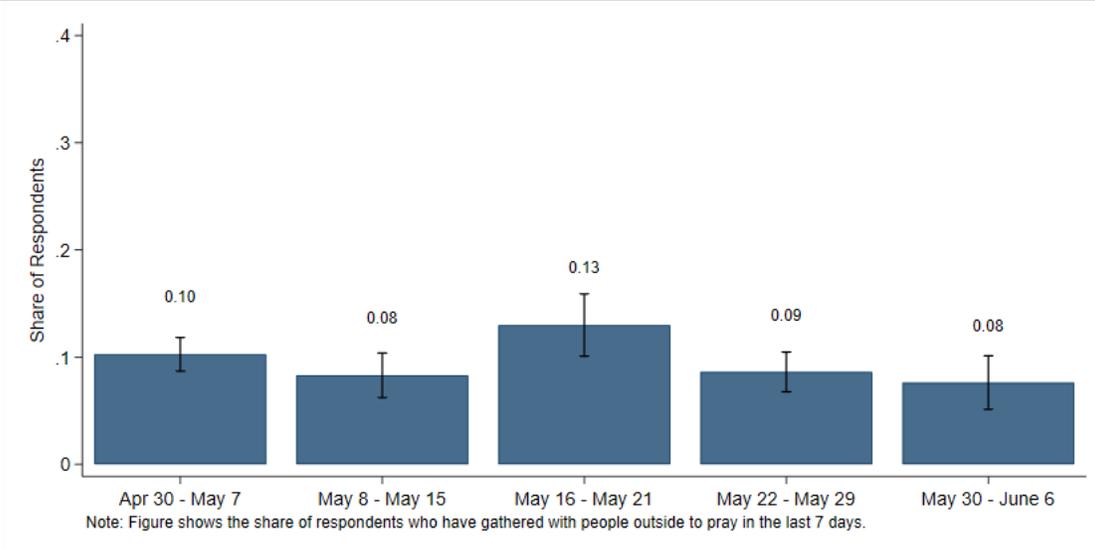
went to social gatherings and the differences over time between rural and Freetown are not statistically significant. This may again be attributable to the government's restrictions on large gatherings.

**Figure 25: Social gatherings of more than 10 people in the past week - Rural vs Freetown**



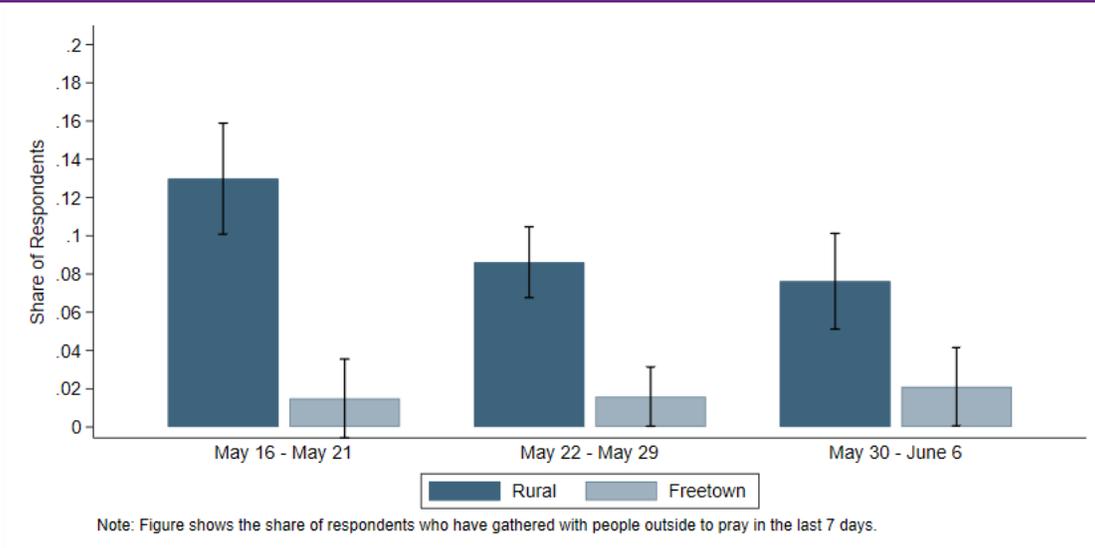
**Figure 26** reports the share of respondents who congregated with others outside of their household to pray. We separate out social gatherings and religious congregations because of the government restrictions and ordinances referring to both separately. There is an initial drop after the government declared that the churches and mosques in Sierra Leone stop congregating, but as this was the holy month of Ramadan it may have been more difficult for our sample to understand the gravity of not being around many people to pray. This could be why we see a fluctuation of the share of respondents who report coming together with others to pray. The last week of May, which is the end of Ramadan, there is another drop in congregations. One explanation for this could be that many of the respondents remembered the government restrictions and chose to under report religious congregations to demonstrate adherence.

**Figure 26: Congregating to pray in the past week**



**Figure 27** compares the share of respondents from rural settings to urban settings who are congregating to pray. We see again that those in Freetown seem to adhere more strictly to social distancing guidelines. There could be many reasons as to why this is the case. For example, a higher population density may lead to more worries about the coronavirus spreading. It could also be due to misinformation moving around the country, lack of information, and the rural setting not seeing the impacts of what the virus does.

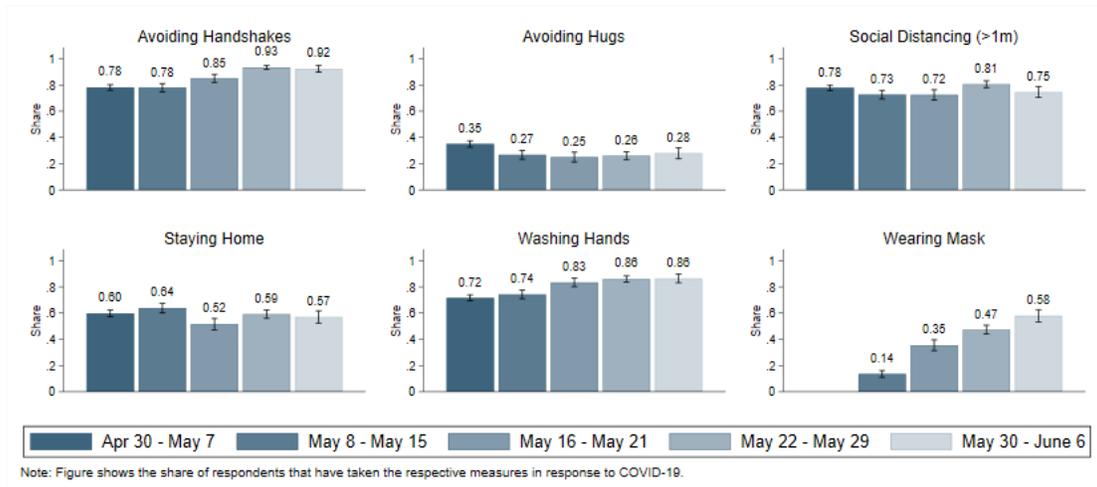
**Figure 27: Congregating to pray in the past week - Rural vs Urban**



**Figure 28** reports information about preventative measures. The share of respondents doing preventative measures such as avoiding handshakes, washing hands, and wearing masks increased over time. For instance, the share of people wearing masks increased 42 percentage points between the second week of March when we began asking this question, and the first week

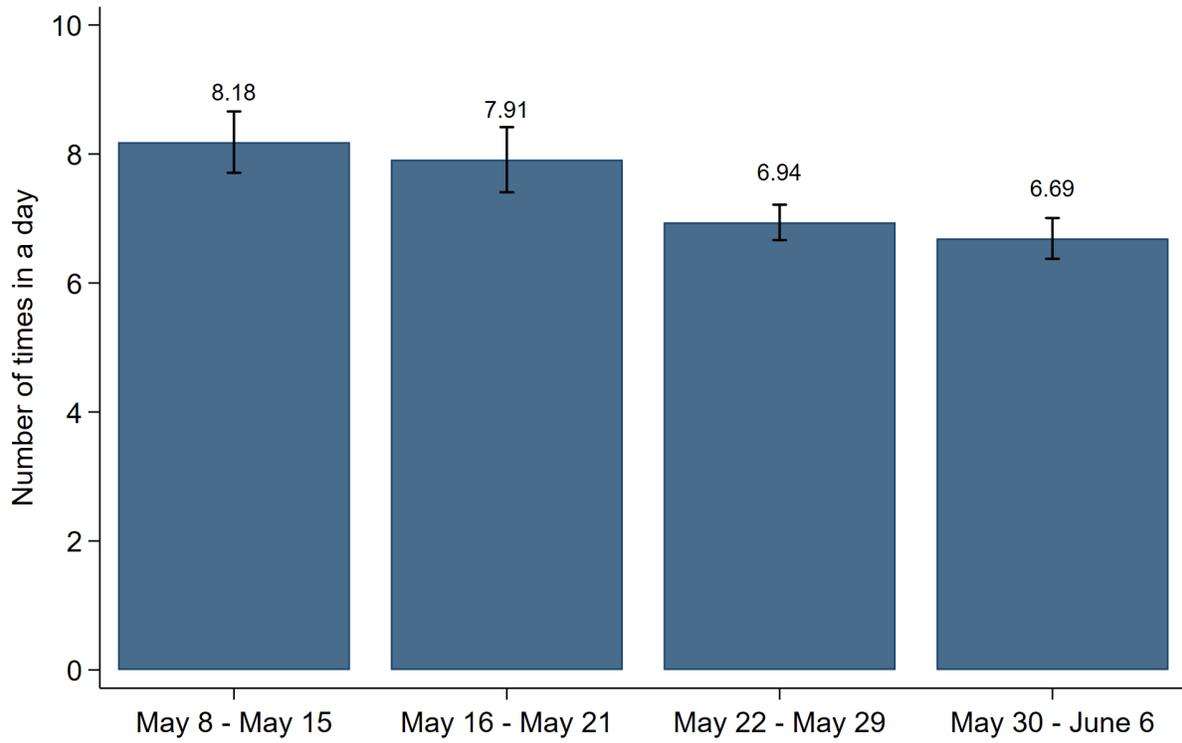
of June. Similarly, the share of people avoiding handshakes increased 14 percentage points between the first week of May and the first week of June, and the share that reported washing hands also increased by 14 percentage points over that time period. Also, 78% of people reported social distancing over one meter, and this has fallen slightly between the first week of May and the first week of June.

**Figure 28: Measures taken in response to COVID-19**



**Figure 29** displays the number of times respondents self-reported to be washing their hands over the duration of the phone survey. Although we see that the percent of respondents who reported washing their hands increased over time, the number of times in a day that they washed their hands decreased over time.

Figure 29: Number of times respondents washed their hands in the past day



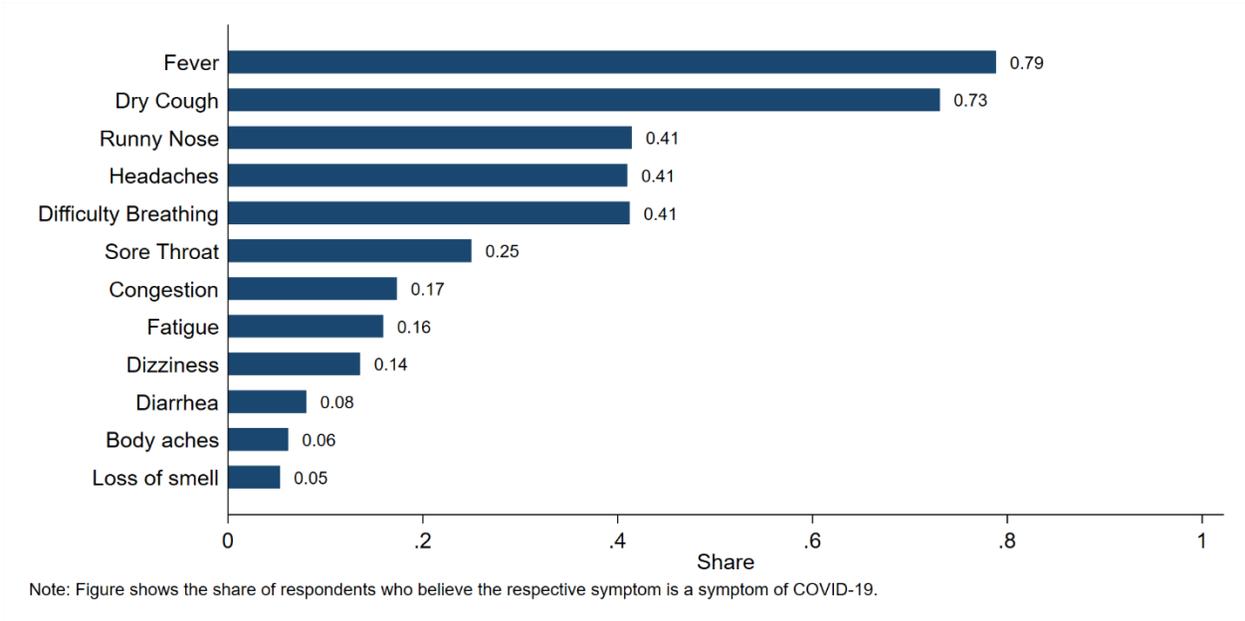
Note: Figure shows the number of times the respondent washes his hands in the previous day.

# COVID-19 knowledge

In this section we present respondents knowledge of COVID-19 symptoms and how they evolved over time. We also disaggregate knowledge by age, education level and gender.

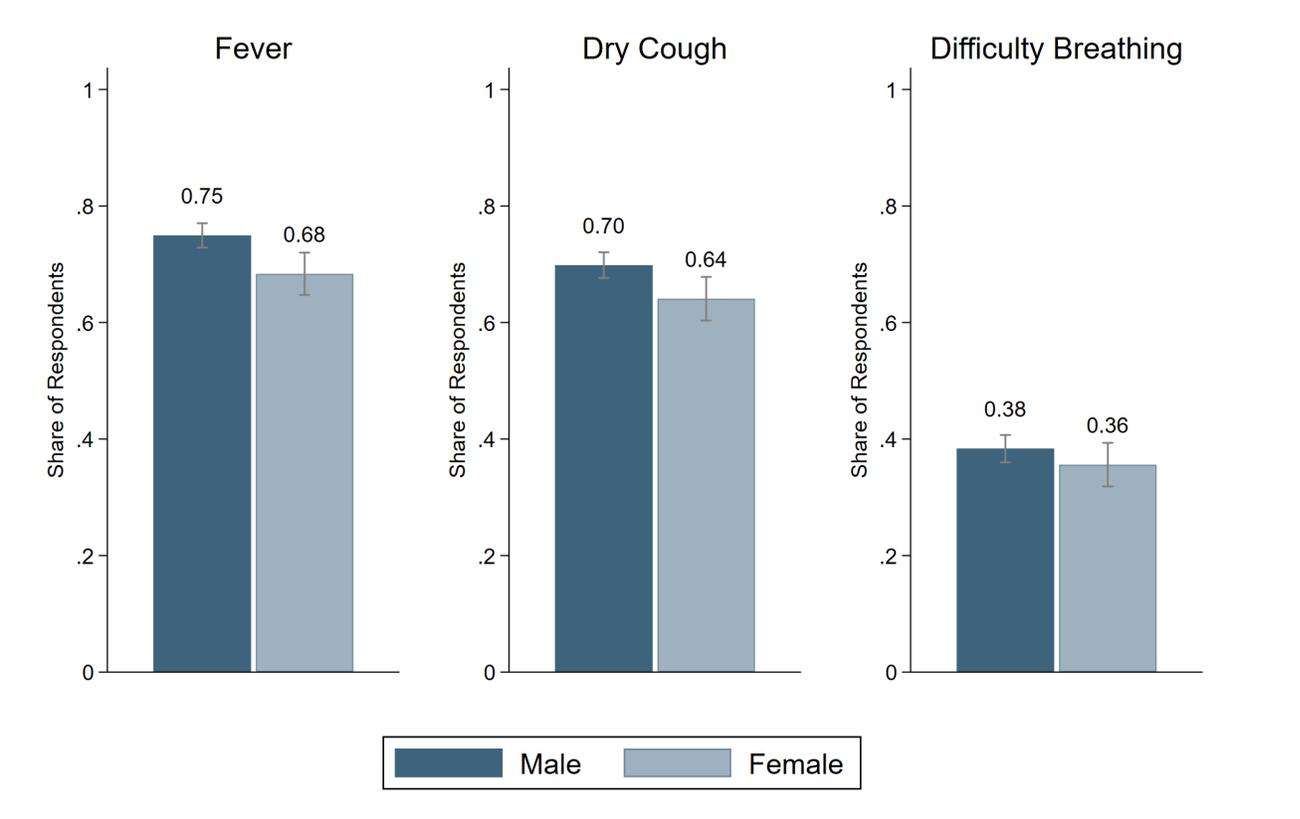
**Figure 30**, shows the breakdown of what respondents think are the key symptoms of COVID-19. 21% of respondents do not know that fever is a symptom of COVID, and 27% of respondents do not know that dry cough is a symptom.

**Figure 30: Respondent’s beliefs about symptoms of COVID-19**



**Figure 31** shows knowledge of symptoms disaggregated by gender. There are notable gender gaps in knowledge: fever, dry cough, and difficulty breathing. Specifically, females were 7 percentage points less likely to know that fever is a main symptom of COVID-19 and this difference is statistically significant. Females were also 6 percentage points less likely to know that dry cough is a main symptom of COVID-19 again statistically significant). For difficulty breathing as a symptom, there is a 2 percentage point difference between males and females (also statistically significant).

**Figure 31: Knowledge of symptoms by gender**



**Figure 32** shows knowledge about symptoms by education levels. Across each of the symptoms, it is clear that more educated respondents, those who have gone through secondary school or higher, are more likely to know the symptoms. Specifically, those that completed secondary school or above were 14 percentage points more likely to know that fever is a symptom of COVID-19, 16 percentage points more likely to know that dry coughing is a symptom, and 19 percentage points more likely to know that difficulty breathing is a symptom. Each of these differences is statistically significant.

Figure 32: Knowledge of symptoms by respondent education level

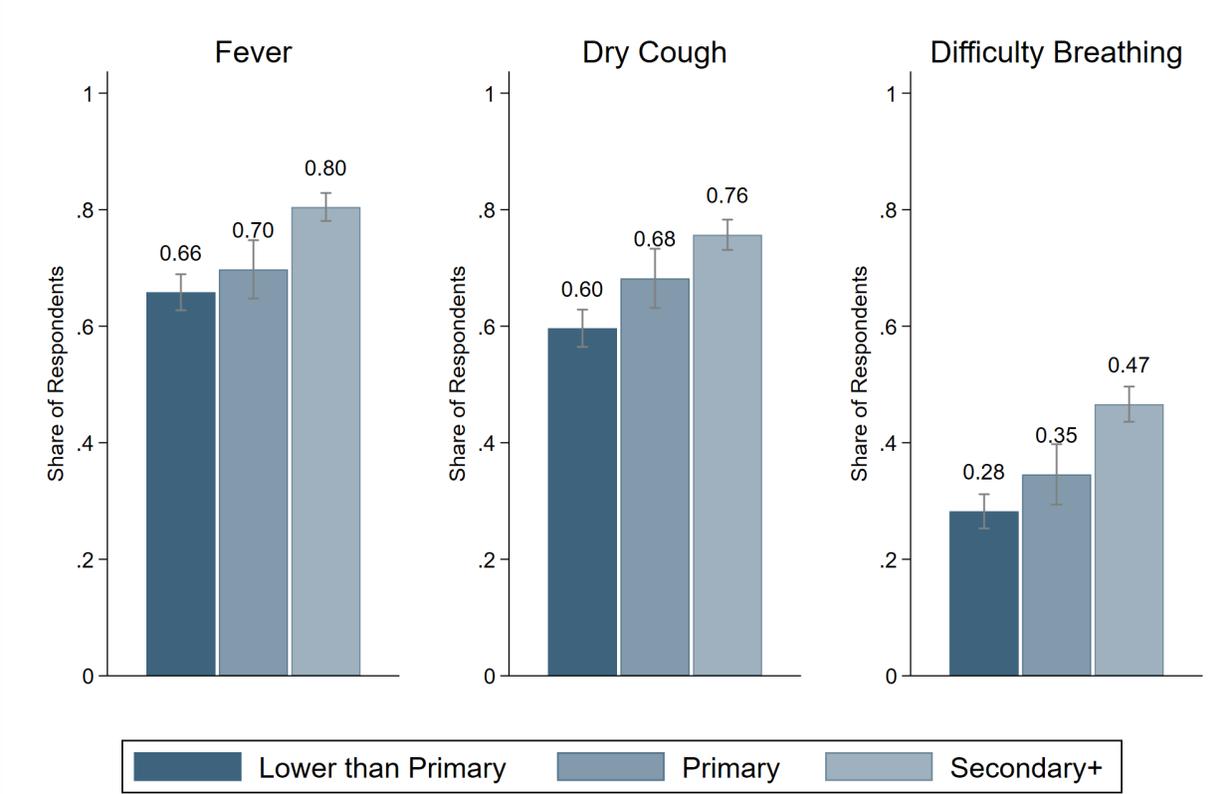
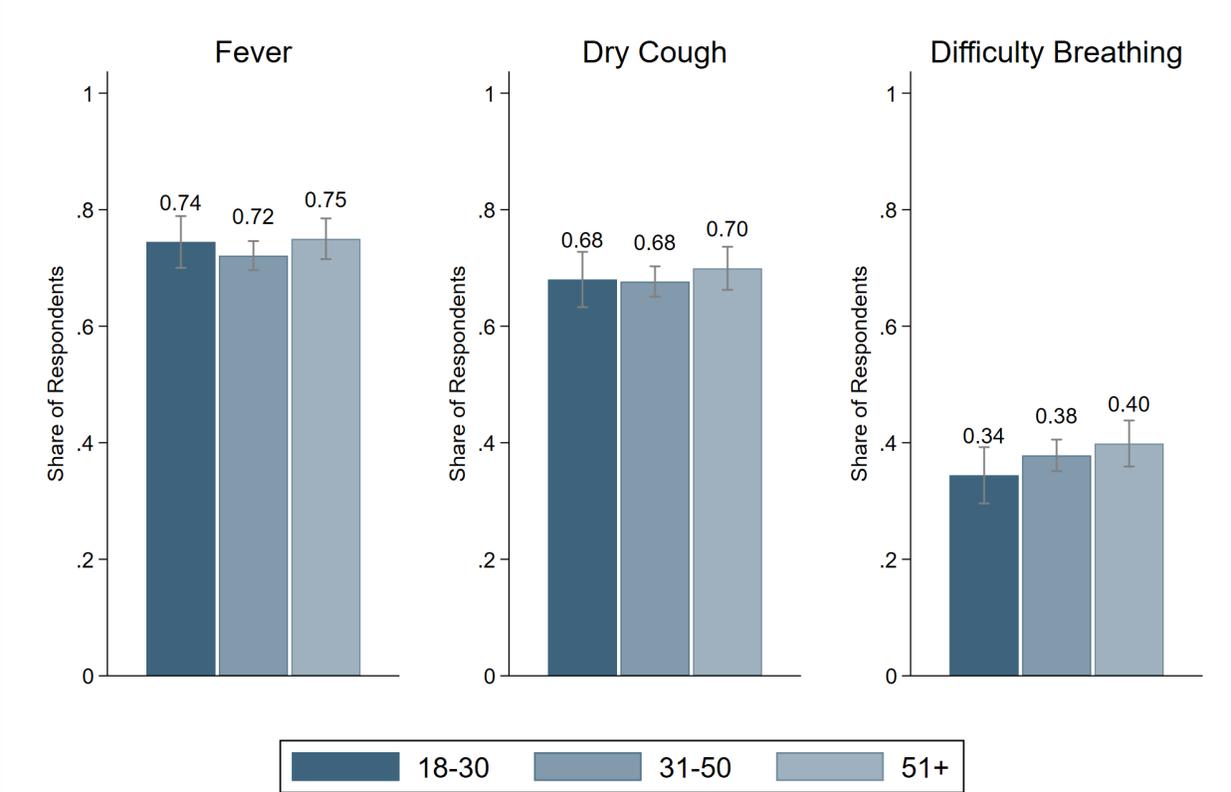


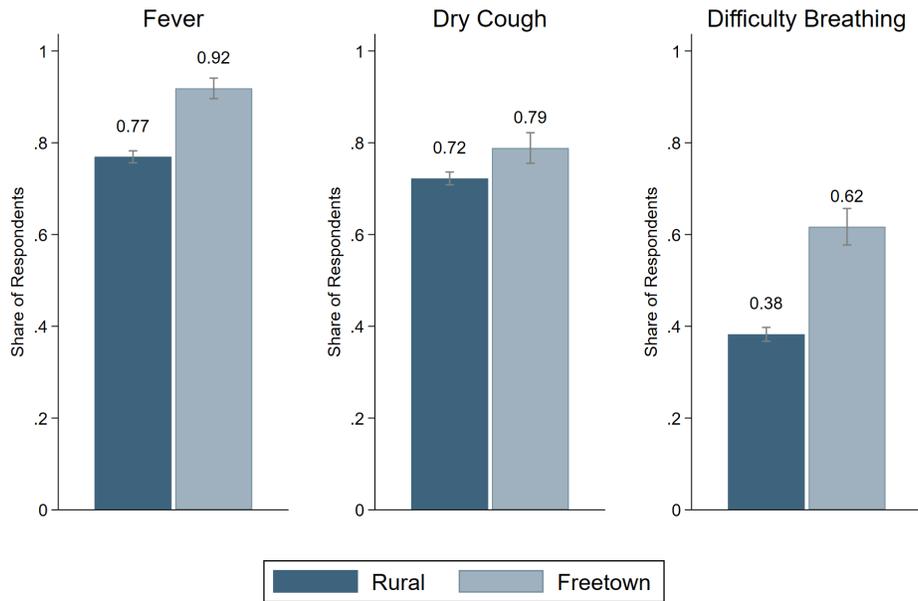
Figure 33 disaggregates knowledge about symptoms by the age brackets: 18-30 years old, 31-50 years old and 51 and above years old. Differences in knowledge across age groups are negligible, though it seems that the older age bracket seems to know the symptoms slightly better than the others.

Figure 33: Knowledge of symptoms by age



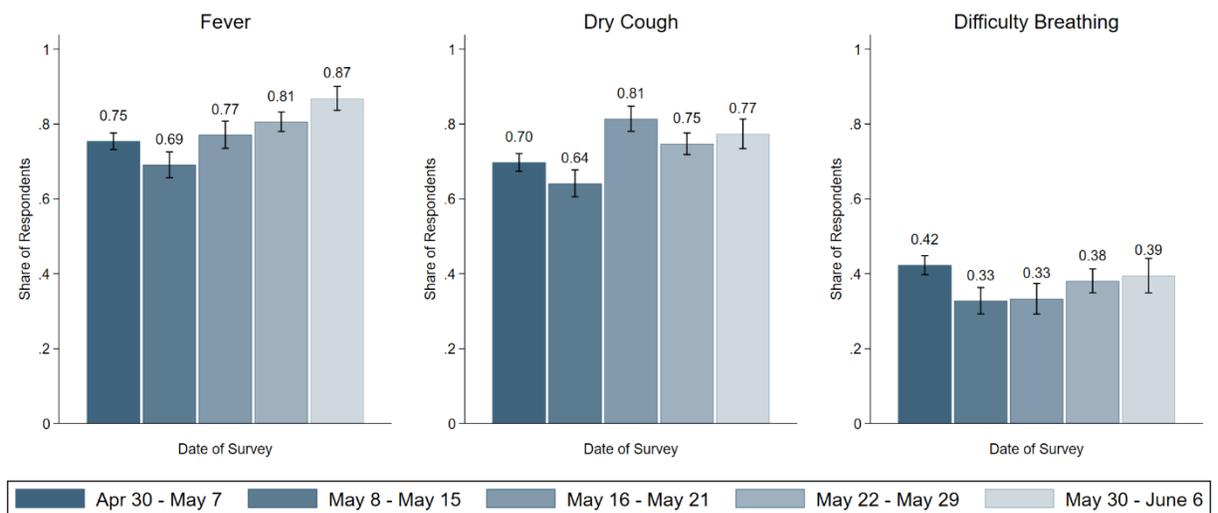
**Figure 34** disaggregates knowledge of symptoms by rural and Freetown respondents. For each of the common symptoms, respondents in Freetown are significantly more aware compared to respondents residing in rural areas. We see that 92 percent of capital residents know that fever is a main symptom of COVID-19, which is 15 percentage points higher than rural respondents. The Freetown sample is also seven percentage points more likely to know that dry cough is a symptom, and 24 percentage points more likely to know that difficulty breathing is a symptom of COVID-19 compared to the rural sample.

**Figure 34: Knowledge of symptoms - Rural vs Freetown**



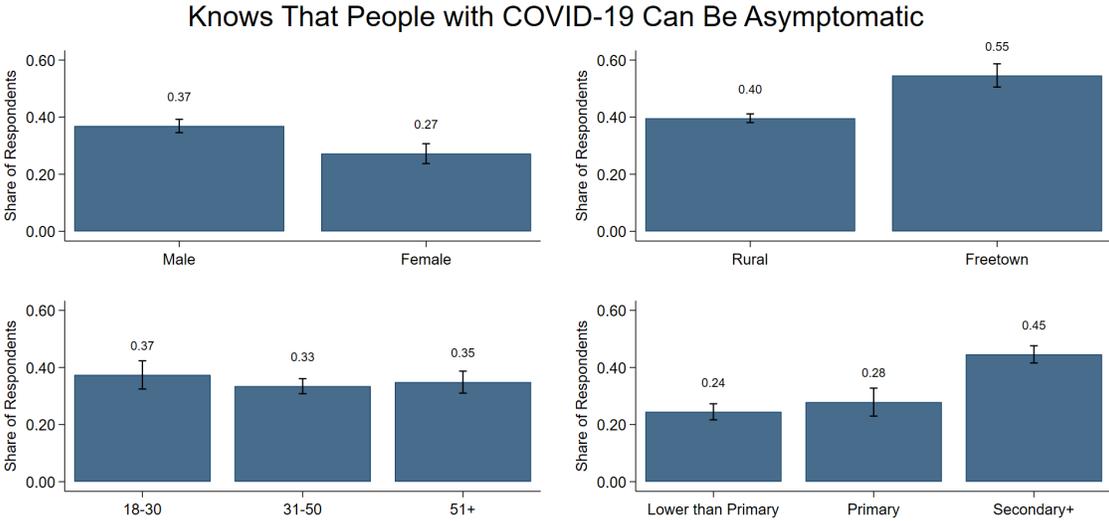
**Figure 35** shows knowledge of symptoms tracked by week throughout the phone survey duration. There is a positive trend in knowing that fever is a main symptom of COVID-19 with the share of respondents knowing that fever is a symptom 12 percentage points higher in the first week of June compared to the first week of May. There is some variation among knowledge across time but no clear trend among any of the symptoms. Also, the percentage of people who know that dry cough is a symptom also increased over that same time with people seven percentage points more likely to know that dry cough is a symptom.

**Figure 35: Knowledge of symptoms**



Respondents were also asked whether they know that people not showing any symptoms can have COVID-19. Overall in the sample, 41 percent know that people with COVID-19 can be asymptomatic. **Figure 36** disaggregates this asymptomatic knowledge by gender, rural vs urban, age and education demographics. Men are 10 percentage points more likely to know that COVID-19 can be asymptomatic compared to females. There are large differences between respondents in rural (40 percent) and urban areas (55 percent). There are also large differences by education level, where we see that those who have secondary education or higher are 21 percentage points more likely to know that people with COVID-19 can be asymptomatic. There are no differences among the age groups.

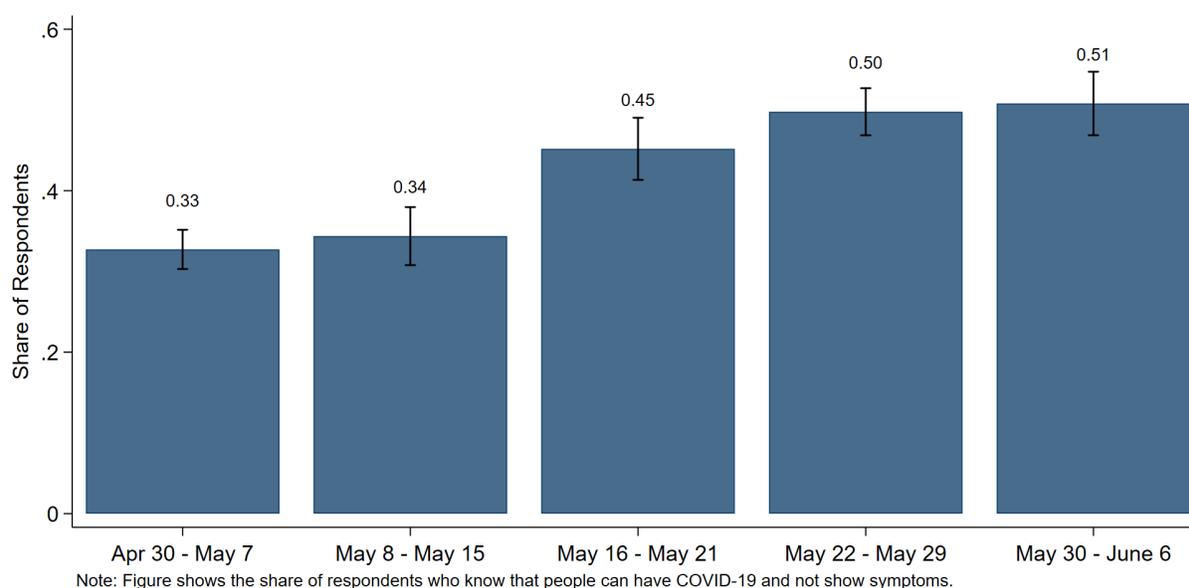
**Figure 36: Knowledge of asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 across demographics**



Note: Figure shows the share of respondents who know that someone can have COVID-19 and not show symptoms. This is broken down by sub-groups.

**Figure 37** shows information about respondents knowing whether people can be asymptomatic with COVID-19. We see a positive trend. At the beginning of the phone survey, only 33 percent of our respondents were aware of the asymptomatic qualities of the virus. We see gradually more respondents are acquiring the knowledge of asymptomatic possibilities. By the first week of June, 51 percent know about asymptomatic qualities, an eighteen percentage point increase from the first week of May that is statistically significant.

**Figure 37: Share of respondents knowing asymptomatic spread of COVID-19**



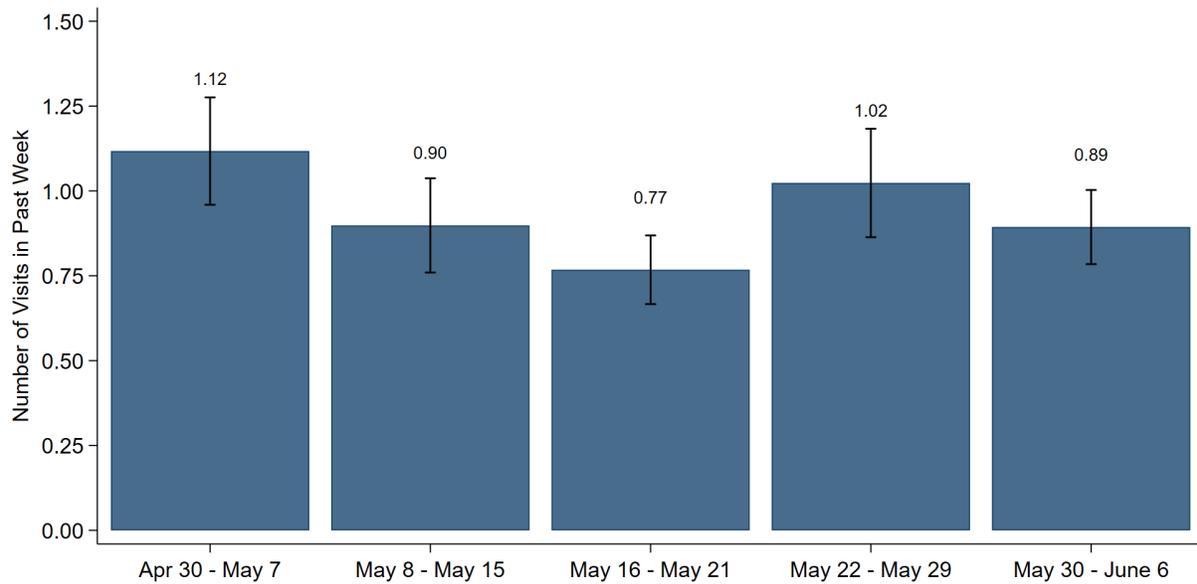
## Health seeking behaviour

Due to COVID-19, people may forego visits to the Community Health Center (CHC) for general treatment because they fear that they will catch the coronavirus when at the facility. The implications could mean a decrease in health conditions even if respondents do not directly catch the coronavirus. This could affect newborns requiring timely medical attention for e.g. vaccines.

The government of Sierra Leone has advised mothers to continue seeking antenatal care and vaccines, but it is uncertain whether mothers are doing so. In addition, national lockdowns may make it difficult for women to travel to the CHC to seek care according to schedule. We intend to capture whether the national lockdowns and the COVID-19 crisis in general has affected health seeking behavior.

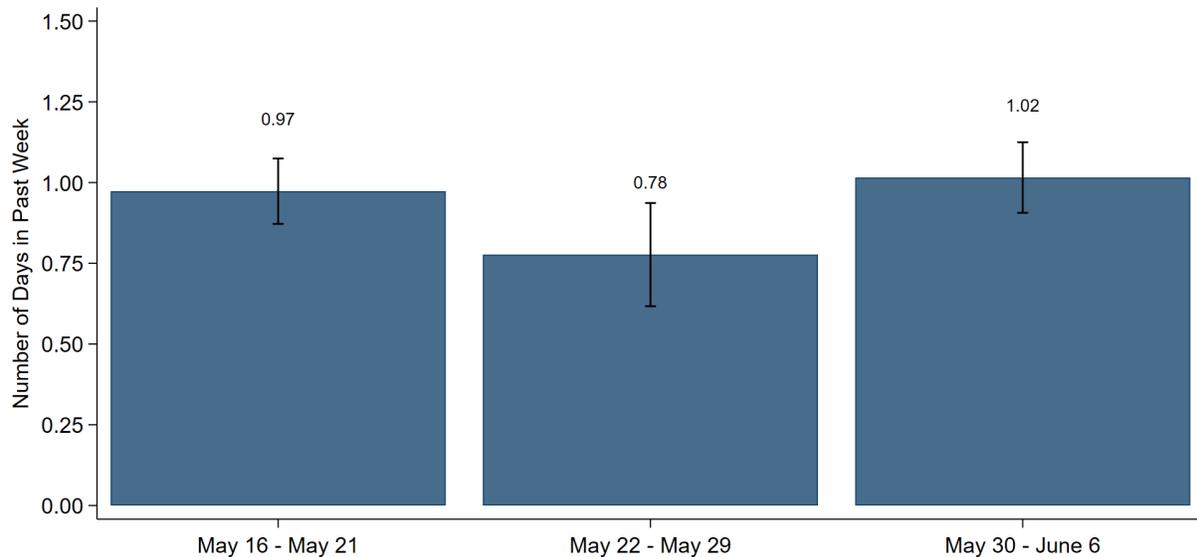
**Figure 38** shows the average number of visits in the past week from mothers who gave birth in the past 12 months and sought post-natal care and/or vaccines at CHCs for their newborn children. During the recent weeks, the women sought care has remained relatively stable over time, with people visiting about 1 day per week.

**Figure 38: Number of visits to CHC for post-natal care and vaccines during past week**



**Figure 39** displays the averages for the number of visits in the past week from pregnant women seeking antenatal care from the CHC. We see that the average number of days decreased between the third and fourth week of May when we first began asking this question, but increased by 30 percent between the fourth week of May and the first week of June.

**Figure 39: Number of visits to the CHC for antenatal care during past week**



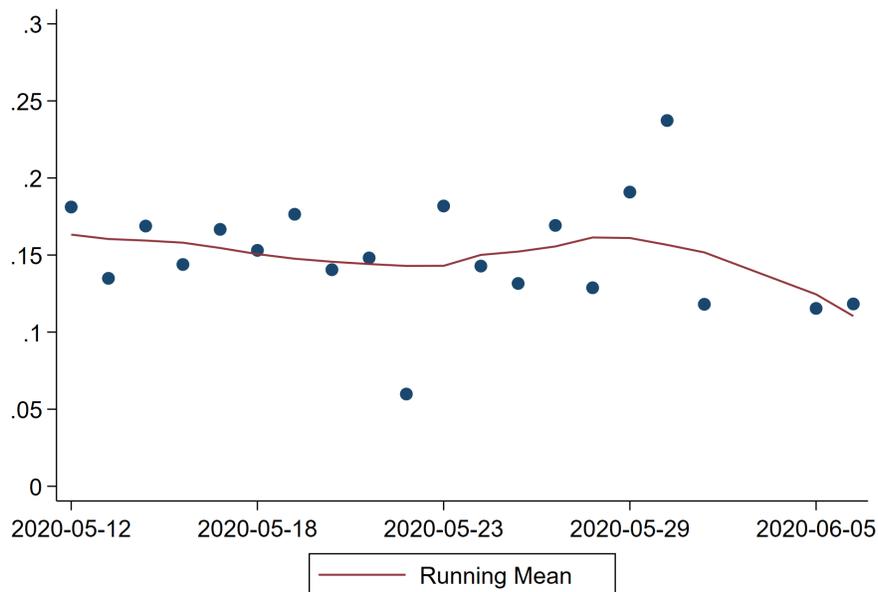
Note: Figure shows the number of days that pregnant woman have visited the community health clinics in the past 7 days for antenatal care.

## Migration

Inter-district travel across Sierra Leone is at the moment restricted. We asked our respondents whether they have migrated in the last month to another community inside their district, or to a different district in Sierra Leone to see how people are moving around and if the government restrictions are being observed.

**Figure 40** reports the running average of our respondents who state they have migrated in the previous month, on average 15% report they have.

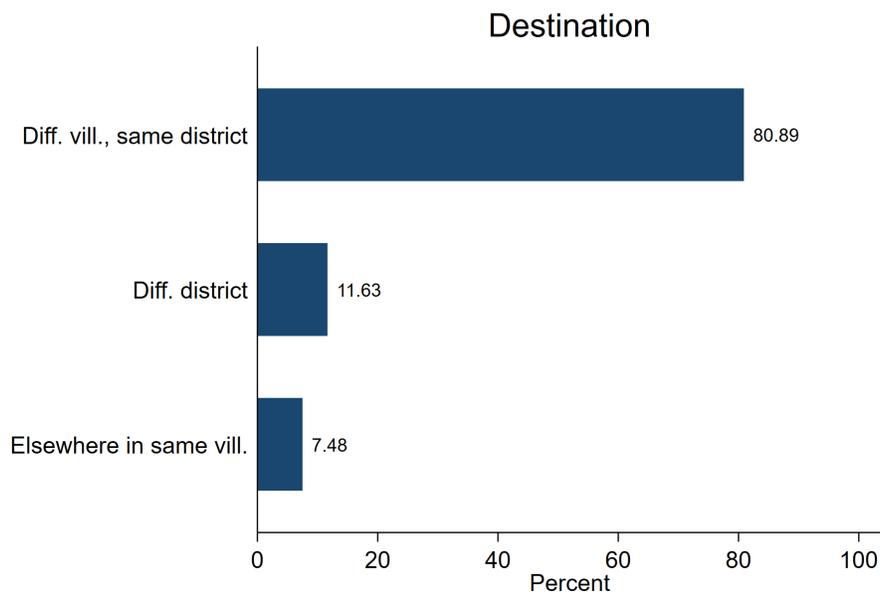
**Figure 40: Share of respondents by day that report migrating**



Note: Figure shows the share of respondents who have migrated in the past month.

**Figure 41** displays the destinations of those that have migrated in the past month of being surveyed. We see that most (81%) of migrants moved within the same district to different villages. We also see that only 11.5% of migrants migrated to a different district, despite the inter-district travel ban.

**Figure 41: Share of migration reporting destination in the previous month**



Note: Figure shows the destination of migrants as a share of total migrants.

## Conclusions

In this report, we present the second set of data collected using phones from 195 communities throughout Sierra Leone between 30 April and 6 June 2020. We observe that the situation is dynamic and therefore it is important to frequently monitor the evolution of key indicators and their trends over time to avoid drawing wrong conclusions.

Importantly, we observe that businesses are working shorter hours and experiencing difficulties accessing customers and suppliers. This is affecting their profits. People are reporting using their savings or asking support from family and friends to cope with the situation.

Essential commodities are available (rice, cassava, palm oil, bonga fish) and their price is relatively stable - with the exception of cassava, where we observe an increasing price. However, more respondents are reporting skipping meals and we observe a decrease in food security.

*Altogether, this highlights the need for support both to businesses and to households.*

People seem to be better informed about the main symptoms of COVID-19, but women appear to be less informed. A relatively low number of respondents (40%) is aware that asymptomatic people can have COVID-19 and be infectious, and female respondents are less likely to be aware about this.

*It is therefore important to consider how to best target information campaigns to reach specific (demographic) groups.*

Respondents report an increase in the adoption of practices meant to prevent COVID-19, like wearing masks and avoid handshakes. The number of respondents reporting washing hands as a measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19 has increased, but the number or time people

report washing their hands in a day is decreasing. We observe no clear trend in "keeping 1 meter distance".

People appear to be spending less time without leaving the house and report a higher number of visitors. This suggests that people might start feeling more relaxed about COVID-19 and the need for avoiding social interaction, or that they might get a sense of protection from the increased adoption of preventative measures (e.g. wearing masks and handwashing).

*It is worth increasing communication efforts on the importance of reducing social interactions in combination with other preventative behaviours like wearing masks and hand washing.*

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