BACKGROUND

In April 2020, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), with support from the World Bank, launched the COVID-19 National Longitudinal Phone Survey (NLPS); a monthly survey of a nationally representative sample of 1,950 households to monitor the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic and other shocks. The first round (baseline) of the survey was conducted in April/May 2020, during which a federally mandated lockdown was in full effect. Although the government lifted restrictions in the summer of 2020, by the time the ninth round was conducted between January 9 and January 25, 2021, some restrictions – including on large gatherings – had been reintroduced to combat rising COVID-19 cases.

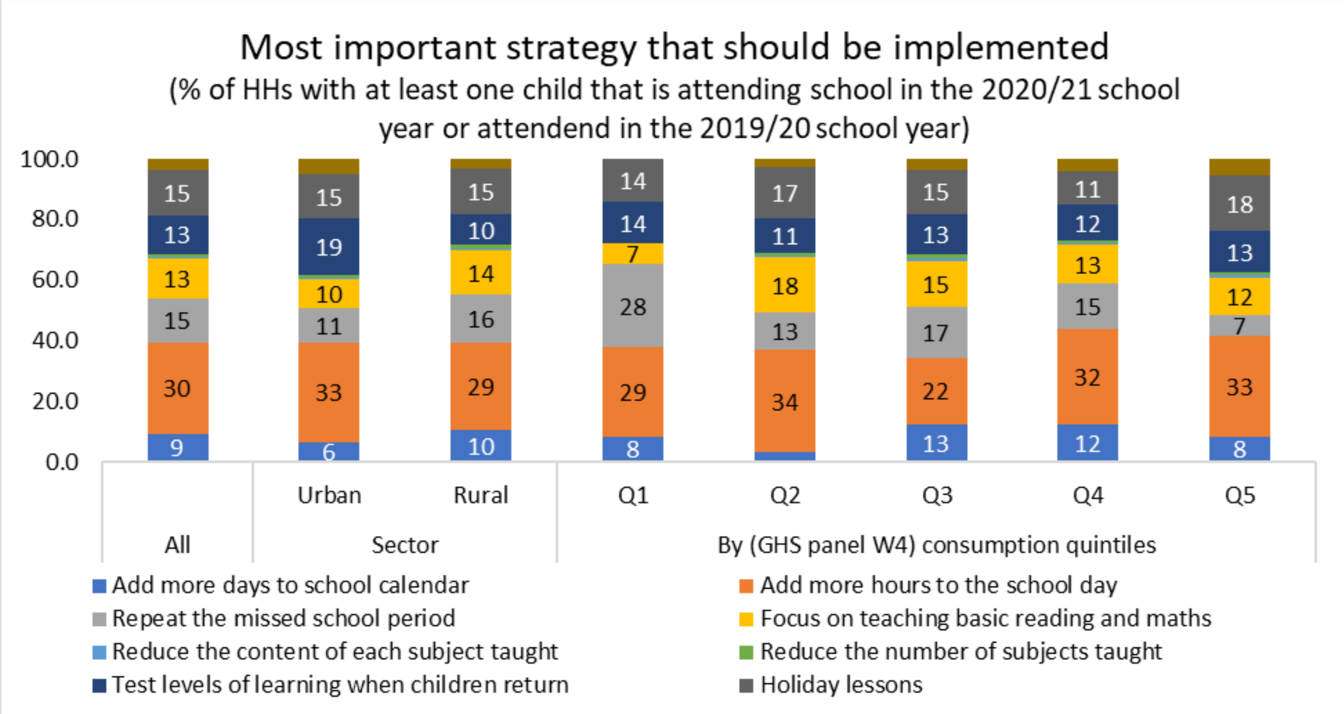
This brief presents the findings from the ninth round of the Nigeria COVID-19 NLPS. The ninth round of the NLPS repeated previous questions on employment, non-farm enterprises, and income sources, so the progress of these indicators over time can be tracked. The ninth round also collected information on early childhood development (ECD), access to health services, and changes in the price of major food items consumed.

SUMMARY

- About 30% of Nigerian households indicated that adding more hours to the school day was the most important strategy to recover from the learning lost to school closures in 2020; adding more hours to the school day seems to be the preferred strategy for households in both urban and rural areas and across all consumption quintiles.
- About 48% of children located in the lowest quintile households had no access to educational content in the 15 days preceding the interview, compared to 14% in the richest quintile.
- While printed materials seem to be the main channel of learning for children in Nigeria, children in richer households had significantly more access to learning through television, smartphones, or tablets.
- About 79% of households that needed to buy rice indicated that rice prices increased between January 2020 and January 2021; this echoes the acceleration of food price inflation witnessed in Consumer Price Index data.
- With people returning to work, the large negative impact of the COVID-19 crisis on household income may be starting to abate: in the baseline survey – which compared income before the pandemic to income in the earlier stages of the pandemic – some 70% of household experienced income loss, yet the share of households reporting declining income between the period August 2019-January 2020 and the period August 2020-January 2021 was about 38%.

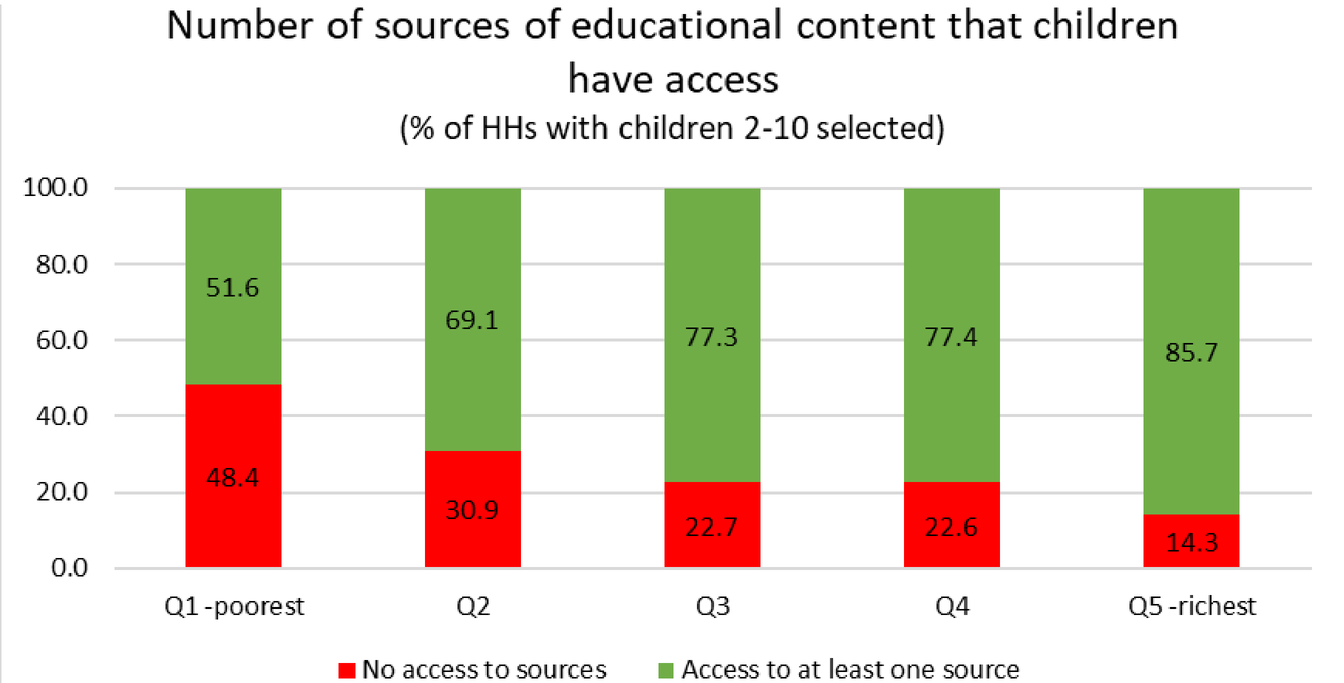
EDUCATION

Schools in Nigeria were closed for the majority of the 2019/20 school year as a way to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given that most schools in the country do not have the infrastructure to conduct online/virtual instruction, these school closures meant that, for most households, children did not have direct access to learning instruction. This begs important policy questions around what the learning impact on children could be, and what measures might be needed to recover from this loss of learning. To help answer these policy questions, households were asked what should be done for children who missed school during the 2019/20 school year in order for them to catch up for the lost time/classes when schools reopened. About 30% of Nigerian households indicated that adding more hours to the school day was the most important strategy; adding more hours to the school day seems to be the preferred strategy for households in both urban and rural areas and across all consumption quintiles. Additionally, around 15% of households reported that repeating the missed school period was the most important strategy and a further 9% reported that adding more days to the school calendar was the most important strategy. A sizable proportion of households also want school authorities to focus on teaching basic reading and math.

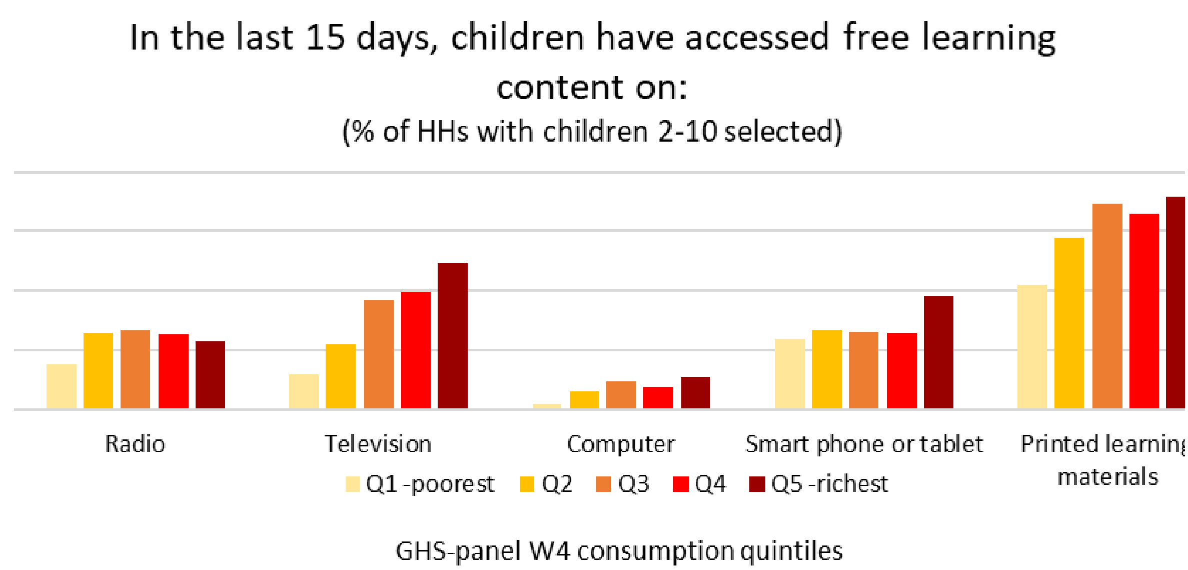


EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)

One important component of the ninth round was to examine ECD and, in particular, the channels through which learning (educational content) could be accessed for children between 2 and 10 years old. In each household with children in this age cohort, one child was randomly selected, and a series of questions (including about channels for accessing learning) were asked to the main respondent about that child. Children from households in the lower consumption quintiles are less likely to have access to any educational learning contents, compared to their counterparts in the higher consumption quintiles. Specifically, about 48% of children located in the lowest quintile households had no access to educational content in the 15 days preceding the interview, compared to 14% in the richest quintile.

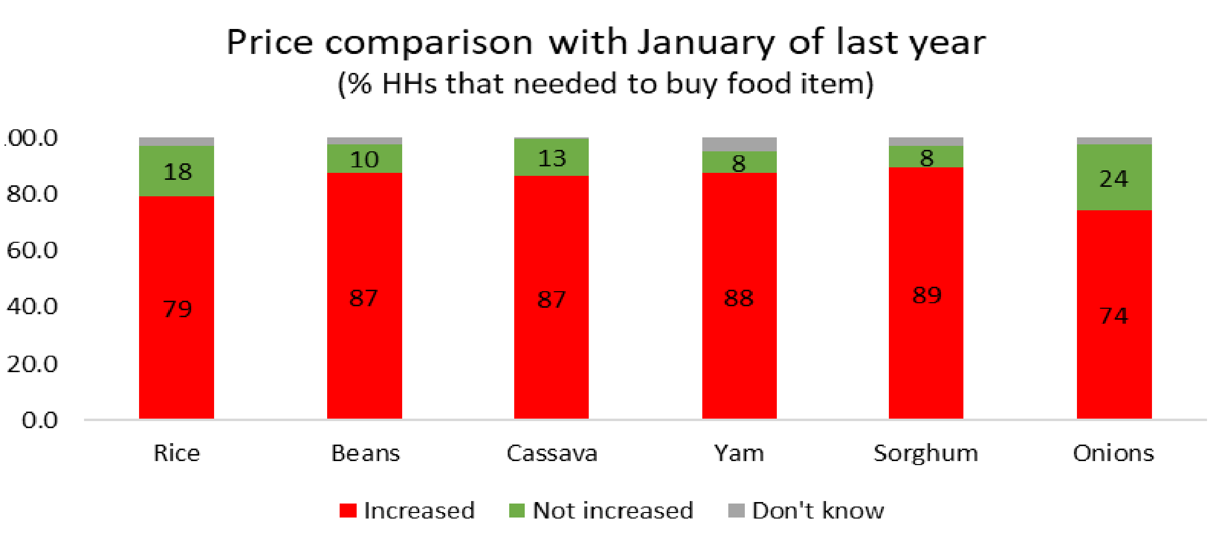


Printed learning materials seem to be the most important source of learning information across all consumption quintiles, probably because school authorities usually provide students with textbooks, some of which can be taken home. Conversely, access to free learning through computers or smart phones is far lower, making it harder for teachers to provide online instruction to children where necessary. There are also some key differences looking across consumption quintiles: for example, children in richer households had significantly more access to learning through television.

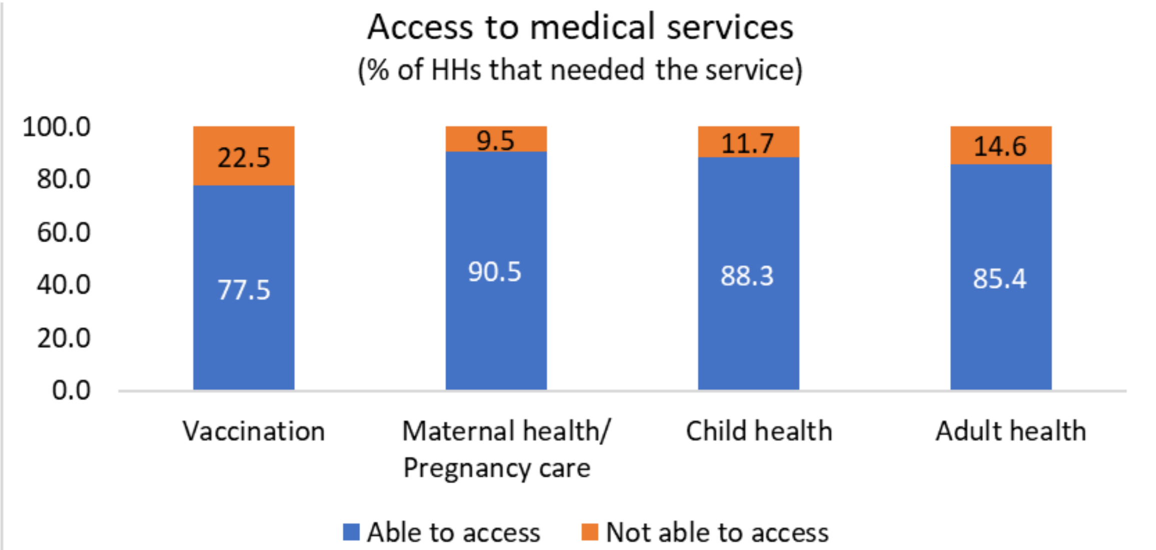


ACCESS

Households were asked if the prices of the major food items that they consumed had increased compared with one year ago (between January 2020 and January 2021). Broadly, households that needed to buy given food items reported that the prices of those food items increased between January 2020 and January 2021. About 79% of households that needed to buy rice indicated that rice prices increased between January 2020 and January 2021. Moreover, 87% and 88% of households that needed to buy beans and yams respectively also reported rising prices during the previous year. These findings are consistent with the acceleration of food price inflation witnessed in NBS' Consumer Price Index data. While rising food prices could benefit net producers, many households may be experiencing a loss of purchasing power, as they have to purchase food items too.

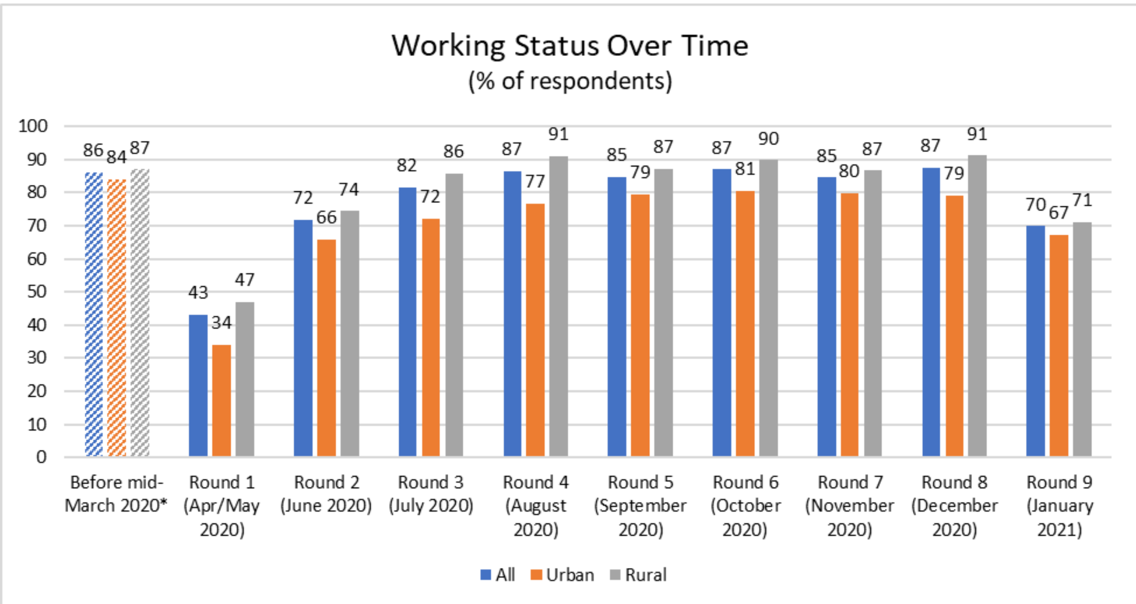


In Round 9, households were asked about their need for specific medical services and their ability to access those services. About 85% of households who needed adult health services reported being able to access treatment, while 88% of those who needed child health services were able to access them. Similarly, about 77% of households who needed vaccinations in the last 4 weeks were about to access them.



EMPLOYMENT

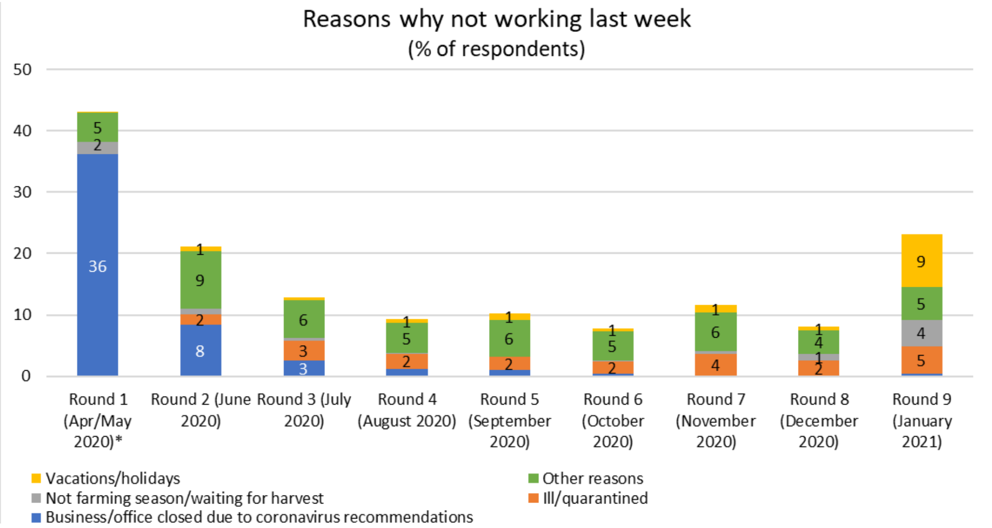
The rebound in the share of respondents working observed from June to December 2020 appears to have partially reversed. The overall share of respondents working was 70% in January 2021. This value is similar to the share of respondents working reported in June 2020. Moreover, the share of respondents that were absent or stopped working in Round 9 (23%) is the second highest of all the rounds; indeed, the only time that the share of respondents that were absent or stopped working was higher was in the first round (43%), just after the pandemic hit.



*As reported in Round 1

This figure includes only 1346 observations that represent HHs with information for all rounds and that they did not change respondents along the way. Temporary absences were not incorporated.

There are three potential reasons for this reduction in the share of respondents working. First, it is important to note that Round 9 data collection occurred just after New Years' holidays, so some respondents may have been on vacation. While in previous rounds the share of respondents that are absent or stopped working due to vacations/holidays was always lower than 1%, this share was 9% in January 2021. Second, in Round 9, 5% of respondents reported that they were not working because they were ill or quarantined, compared to just 2% of respondents in Round 8. The increase in the share of respondents who were ill or quarantined could be related to the surge of COVID-19 cases in Nigeria which started in December 2020. Third, many work activities are seasonal in nature: in January 2021, 4% of respondents reported that they were not working because the farming season has ended.



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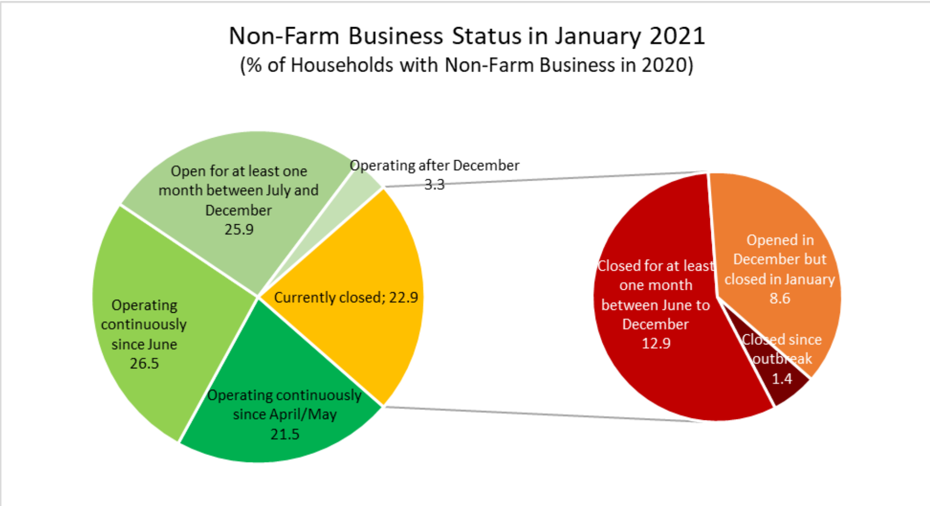
NON-FARM ENTREPRISE

In line with the drop in the overall share of respondents working, a higher share of households who had non-farm family businesses were not operating their business in January 2021 (23%), compared to December 2020 (17%). Of these, 56% (13% of all households with non-farm businesses) had also been closed for at least one month between June and December 2020. Moreover, just 22% of households with non-farm businesses in 2020 operated them continuously since the peak of restrictions in April/May 2020.



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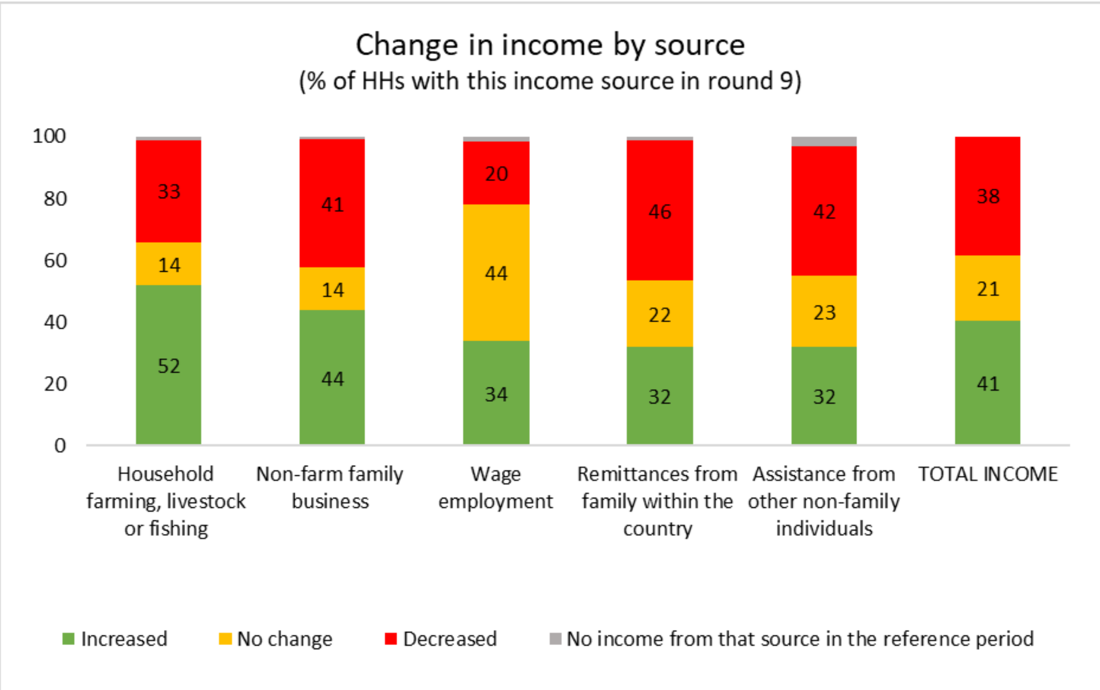
INCOME CHANGES

In Round 9, households were asked to indicate their income sources between August 2020 and January 2021, and how the income they received from each applicable source compared to the same period a year ago (August 2019 to January 2020). The data shows that 38% of the households reported income loss (decrease) between the period of August 2019 to January 2020 and the period of August 2020 to January 2021. Looking across different income sources, income losses were most widespread for remittances from family members within the country (46% of households that had such income); followed by assistance from non-relatives within the country (42%) and non-farm family business (41%). Nevertheless, assessing these new findings against the baseline survey (which compared income before the pandemic to the earlier stages of the pandemic), there seems to be some improvement in household income since the start of the pandemic: more than 70% of households experienced income loss at the start of the crisis.



Comparison periods for Round 9 (R9): From August 2020 to January 2021, compared to August 2019 and January 2020

Data Notes: The Nigeria COVID-19 National Longitudinal Phone Survey (COVID-19 NLPS) 2020 Ninth Round was implemented by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in January 2021. These surveys are part of a World Bank global effort to support countries in their data collection efforts to monitor the impacts of COVID-19. World Bank teams from the Development Data Group and the Poverty and Equity Global Practice provided technical support. This survey is the ninth of a planned 12 rounds of the COVID-19 NLPS of households in Nigeria. 1,839 households from the baseline were contacted and 1,706 households, fully interviewed in the ninth round. These same households will be contacted in subsequent rounds of the COVID-19 NLPS. The data are representative at the national level and survey weights were calculated to adjust for non-response and under coverage.

For further details on the data, visit http://www.worldbank.org/lsms-covid19 and https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/brief/monitoring-covid-19-impact-on-nigerian-households For further details on COVID-19 in Nigeria, visit https://nigeria-coronavirus-response-data-hub-nbs-nigeria.hub.arcgis.com/

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