
Azim Premji University COVID-19 Livelihoods Survey



Bihar (Rural)

Azim Premji University along with Aga Khan Rural Support Programme conducted a detailed phone survey of 173 respondents¹ to gauge the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on employment, livelihoods, and access to government relief schemes.

The respondents were selected through a purposive sampling method to ensure diversity in location and type of work done. The sample is not representative of the state.

Respondents across 10 districts in the state were interviewed. The data presented here was collected between 17th April, 2020 and 12th May, 2020. This brief is part of a series of state-level briefs prepared based on the survey findings. A dashboard with detailed information is available at cse.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in

¹ We interviewed a small number of urban households in Bihar which are not part of this analysis.



Key Findings

46%

reported that they had **lost their employment**.

8 in 10

casual workers **lost their employment**.

37%

did not have enough money to buy even a **week's worth** of essentials.

69%

households reported **consuming less food** than before.

79%

of vulnerable households **received ration**.

4 in 10

vulnerable households received **no cash transfer**.

Relief measures announced

Relief measure information was sent out to survey respondents via text messages.

Central Level

- * Between April to June 2020, each PHH and AAY family to get free of cost 5 kg food grains per person per month and 1 kg of dal per family per month. This is in addition to regular ration which they will continue to get.
- * Women Jan Dhan account holders to get Rs 500 per month between April to June, 2020. First instalment of PM-KISAN (Rs 2000) to be paid during 1st week of April.

State Level

- * All card holding families to get Rs 1000 and free ration in April.
- * Bihar foundation to provide food, shelter and medical aid for migrants from Bihar in other states.
- * Pensioners to receive advance payment of pension for three months.
- * Student scholarship to be sent to bank accounts by March 31.
- * Health care workers and doctors engaged in COVID-19 treatment will get monetary incentive.
- * Compensation of Rs 4 lakh to families of victims of Corona disease.

Source : covid19socialsecurity.wordpress.com/relief-measures



Recommendations

- * **Universalise PDS** to expand its reach and provide the promised expanded rations for **at least the next six months**.
- * Give **cash transfers equal to at least Rs 7000 per month** for two months.
- * Use **information from MCNREGA, PM Ujjwala, PDS and local registrations** to expand the reach of cash transfers.
- * Urgent need to focus on **programmes for the urban poor**.
- * Over the medium term, proactive steps like **expansion of MGNREGA, introduction of urban employment guarantee, and investment in universal basic services** are needed.



Impact on livelihoods

This section deals with the impact that the lockdown has had on work and earnings. We measured levels of employment and income since the lockdown was imposed, and compared them to the situation prevailing in February.

Figure 1: Workers who lost employment by activity status reported in February (%)



46% reported that they had **lost their employment** during the lockdown.

51% from **vulnerable households** lost their employment.

58% of **SC/ST workers** lost their employment compared to OBC (35%).

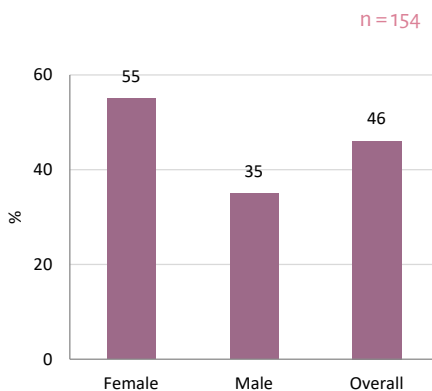
Casual workers were the worst hit with **82%** losing their jobs.

More women lost their jobs relative to men.

"The government should provide us with work opportunities so that we are able to earn and make a living. I have a MGNREGA card and have worked under the programme earlier. The government should restart MGNREGA activities during this crisis. This would be of great help to me."

(Female, 46, Casual Worker)

Figure 2: Workers who lost employment by sex (%)

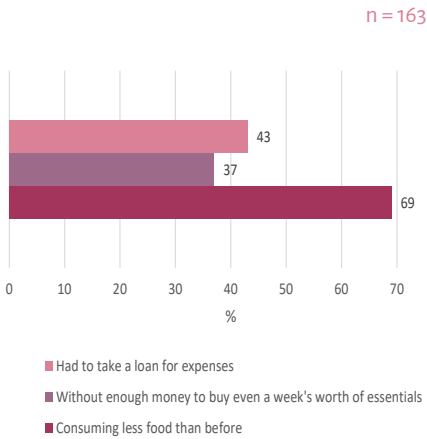




Impact on households

This section looks at how households were faring under the lockdown particularly with respect to food intake and access to savings and credit.

Figure 3: Impact on households (%)



Nearly **7 in 10 households** reported **consuming less food** than before during the lockdown.

SC and ST were the worst affected when it came to levels of food consumption during the lockdown. **85%** of SC and ST households were **consuming less food than before**.

37% of households **did not have enough money to buy even a week's worth of essentials**.

Half of SC and ST households did not have enough money to buy more than a week's worth of essential items.

43% of households **had to take a loan** as a result of this lockdown.



Access to relief measures

This section studies the reach and impact of relief measures announced by the Government. We focus on availability of food rations, cash transfers to beneficiaries and benefits accruing to vulnerable households.

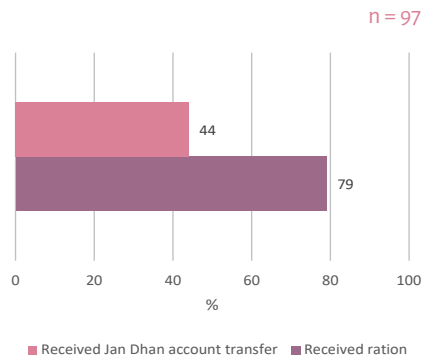
Nearly **8 in 10 vulnerable households** received **ration**.

52% of vulnerable households did **not** have a Jan Dhan account, **92%** of account holders received a cash transfer.

40% of vulnerable households did **not** receive any cash transfer.

Nearly **half of the farmers** received a PM-KISAN transfer.

Figure 4: Vulnerable households who received ration and Jan Dhan account transfer (%)





Survey Coverage

42% of respondents were **males** and **58%** were **females**.

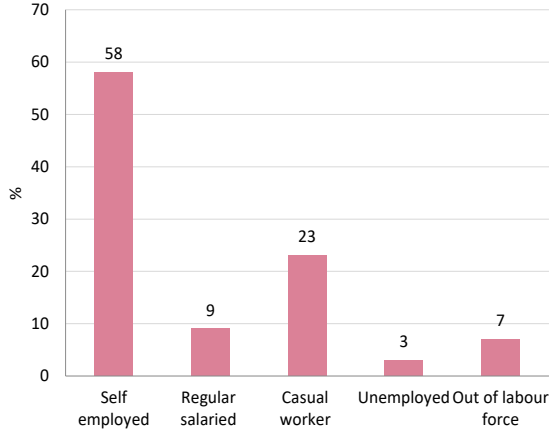
Hindus comprised **89%** of respondents, and **Muslims** **10%**.

56% of respondents hailed from the **OBC community**.

79% of the households were **vulnerable** i.e. they earned **less than Rs 10,000 in February**.

Figure 5: Share of Respondents by Activity Status in February (%)

n = 173



Results from other surveys happening in the state

- * According to a rapid assessment study carried out by ActionAid in Bihar, **82 per cent of respondents lost their jobs and returned to their home districts**. As per the same study, the percentage of workers **who consider their savings to be sufficient has dropped steeply from 48 per cent to less than 1 per cent**.
- * The telephonic survey conducted by Indus Action showed that unemployment in this state rose from 9% pre-lockdown to 62% post-lockdown.
- * COVID-19 impact studies conducted by Dalberg, IDinsight, IIT-Delhi and Society for Social and Economic Research also feature Bihar in their sample drawn from a number of states.

For a compilation of the various Covid-19 surveys and studies conducted across the country please visit : cse.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/covid19-analysis-of-impact-and-relief-measures/#other_surveys