COVID-19 induced Lockdown – How is the Hinterland Coping?

A collaborative study by:

PRADAN, Action for Social Advancement, BAIF, Transform Rural India Foundation, Grameen Sahara, SAATHI-UP and The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (India)

With research support of:

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Sincere gratitude

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- To all the key personnel, especially field personnel of the partner organizations for their extraordinary efforts to ensure data collection within an extremely tight timeline

- Special thanks, to Sridhar Anantha, for assisting the study with his expertize of the KoBo Toolbox for design of instrument, training and back-stopping and a group of friends who translated the questions in multiple languages.

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Objective of the study

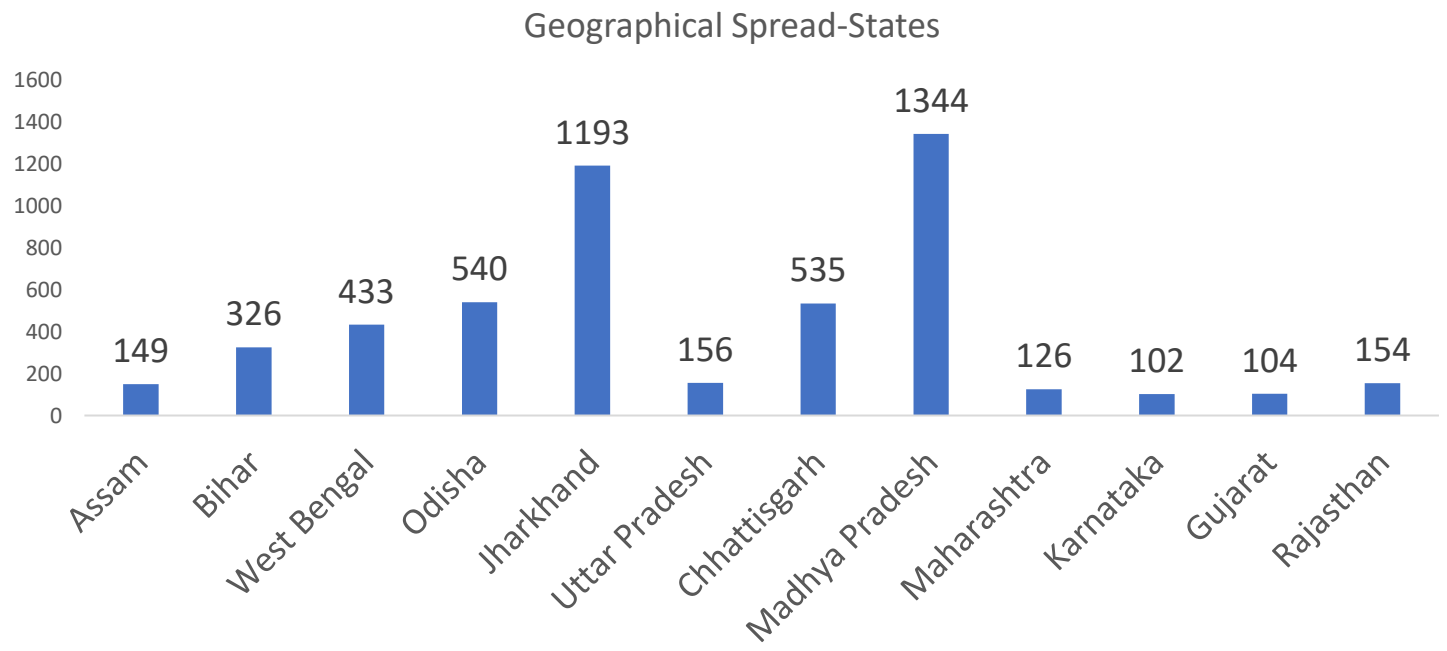
- A rapid assessment of the effect of the COVID-19 induced lockdown on the rural households.
- What are the various coping mechanisms undertaken by the rural households?
- A consortium of civil society partners undertook a rapid assessment.
- Assessment focused on:
  - Food security,
  - Change in expenditure pattern,
  - Readiness for the forthcoming Kharif season,
  - Drudgery faced by the women in the household,
  - Asset sales.

Approach to the study

- **Spread – Geographical Coverage as much as possible – From Kamrup to Dang**
- **Speed – Quick turnaround time – 27th April till 2nd May**
- **Simplicity – Compatibility with hand held devices – use of open-access tool (*Kobo*) – closed ended responses – covering *must ask***

Geographical spread

- **5162 Households, 12 States, 47 Districts**



States	Districts
Assam	2
Bihar	4
Chattisgarh	4
Gujarat	1
Jharkhand	10
Karnataka	2
Maharashtra	2
Madhya Pradesh	10
Odisha	6
Rajasthan	1
Uttar Pradesh	2
West Bengal	3
Total Districts	47

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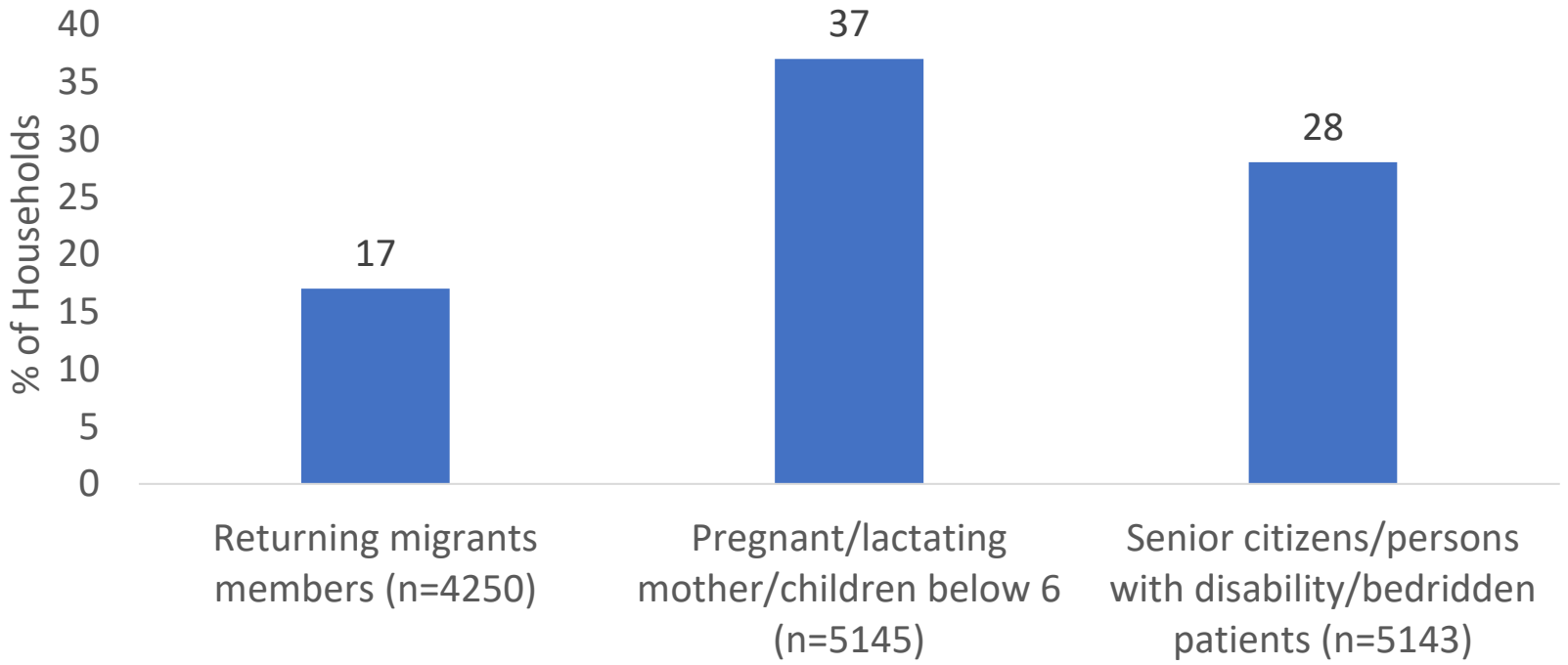
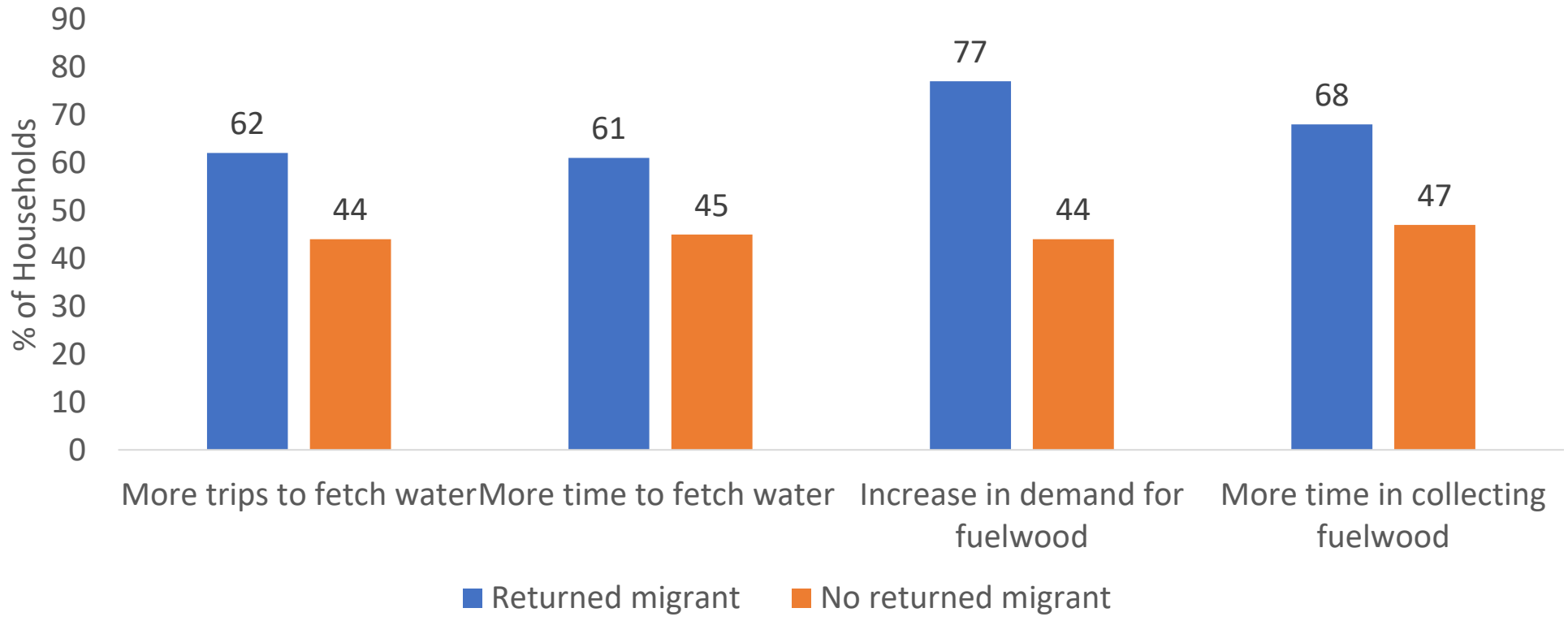
Key attributes of surveyed households

- **In most of the surveyed families migrant members are yet to return**
- **More than a quarter of the surveyed households reported dependent members (young children, senior citizens, pregnant women, lactating mother)**



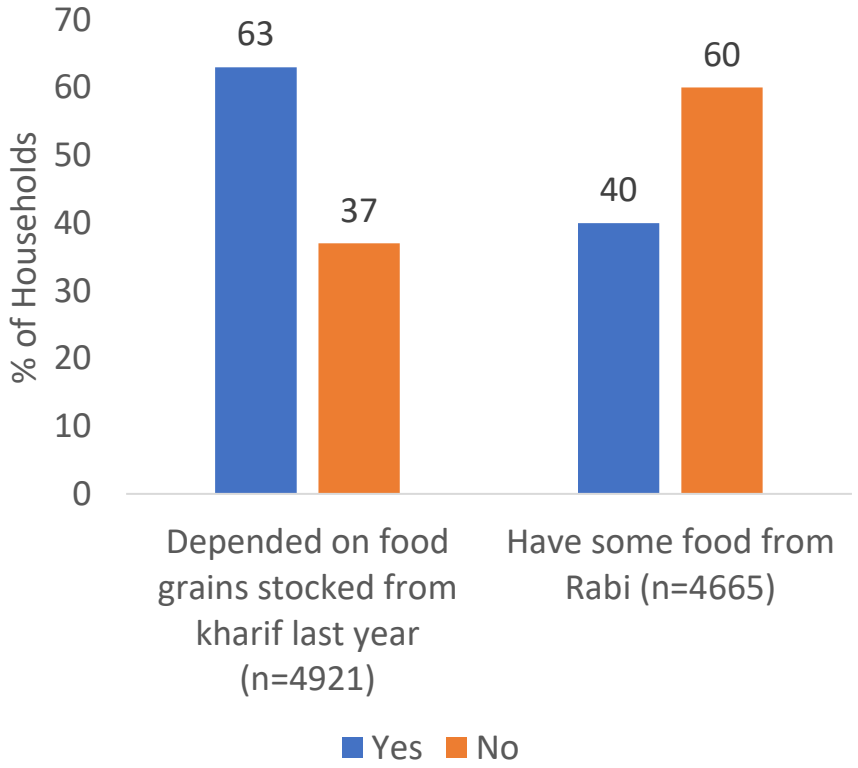
Workload within the household

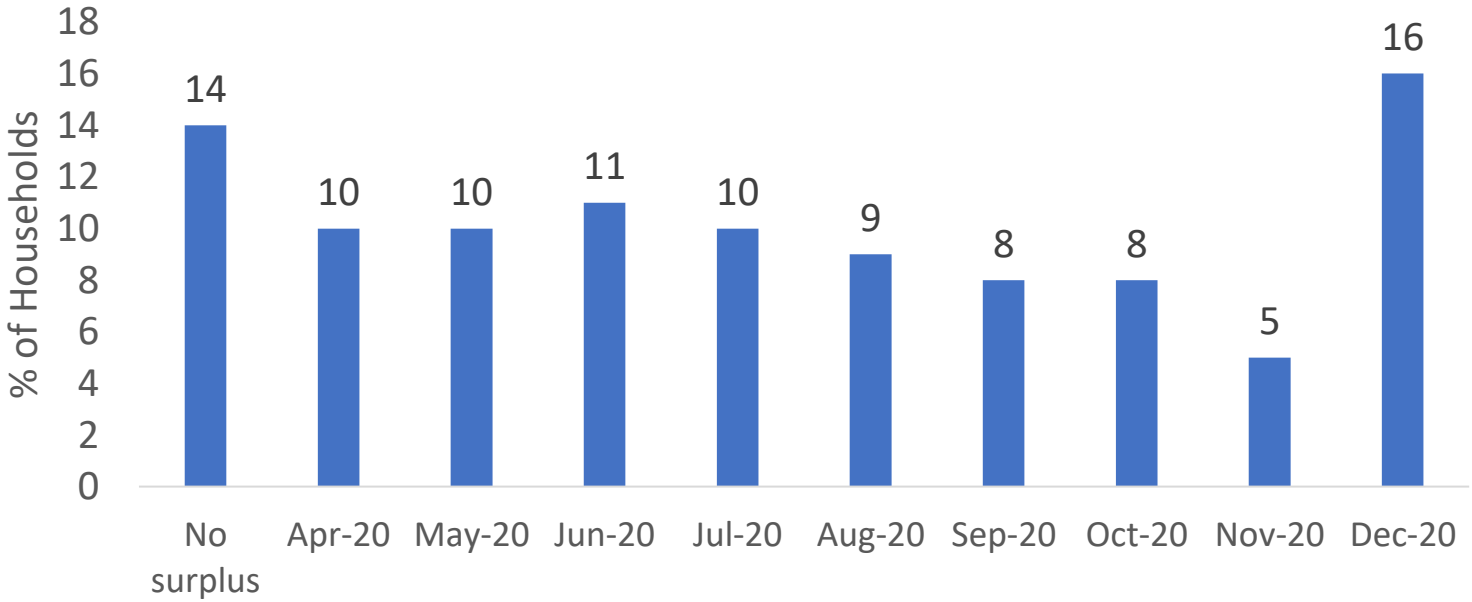
- **Already an increase in drudgery among the women members in the households with returnee migrants.**
- **Only few households have returnee migrants – significant chunk are now returning/ will return**



Dependence on existing food stock

- More than 1/3rd did not have any surplus from last Kharif.
- More than half could not depend on rabi produce for food.
- Around 1/3rd of the respondent reported that Kharif stock would only last till May end.
- **Food provision through PDS and cultivating food crop in Kharif 2020 – important.**





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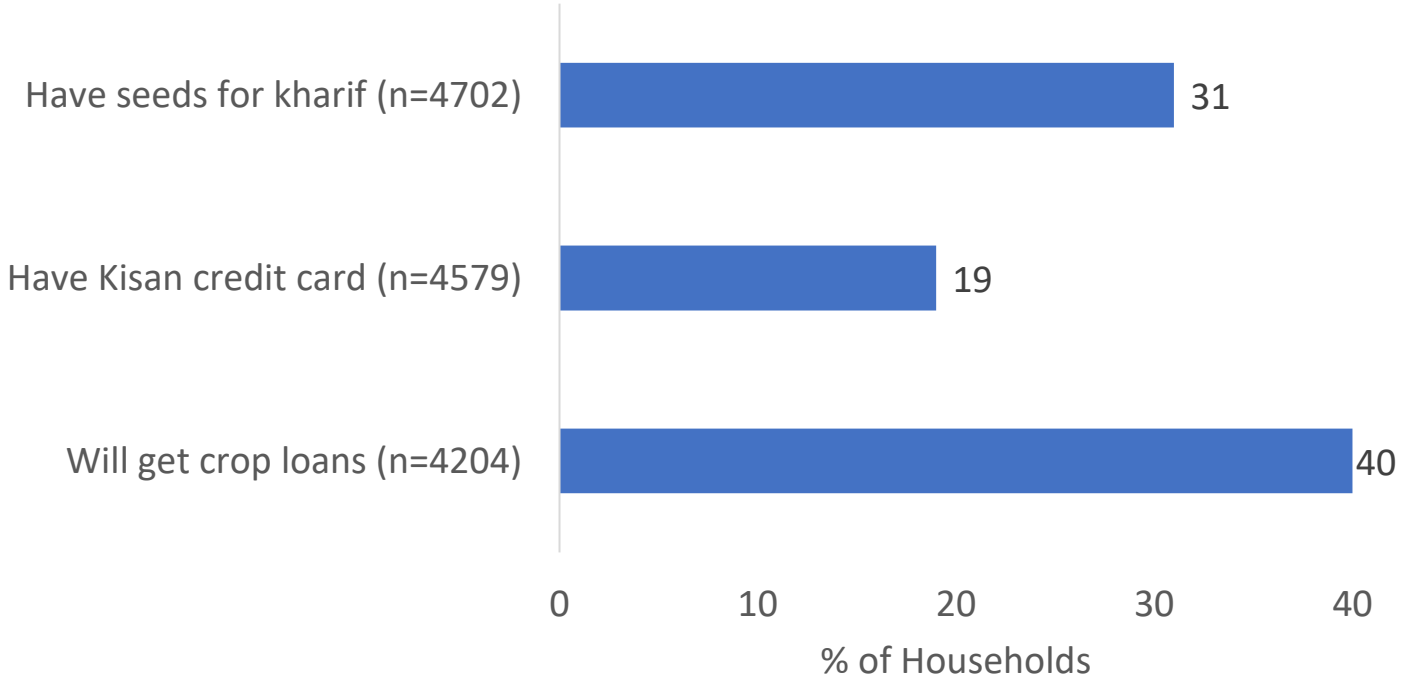
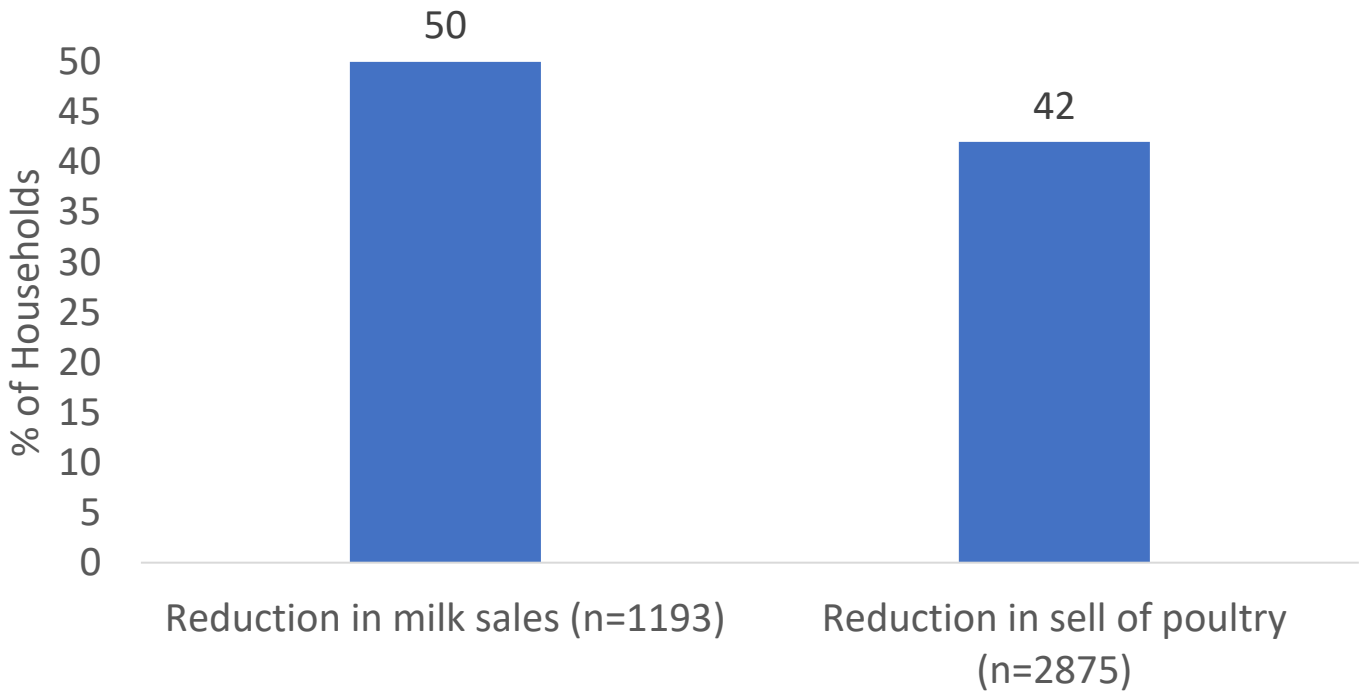
Readiness for *Kharif* 2020

- **More than 2/3rd of the respondents do not have seeds for the upcoming Kharif**
- **Less than 20% have KCC.**
- **Less than half of the respondents were of the view that they would get crop loans**
- **Provision of seeds and credit for the upcoming Kharif season - important**



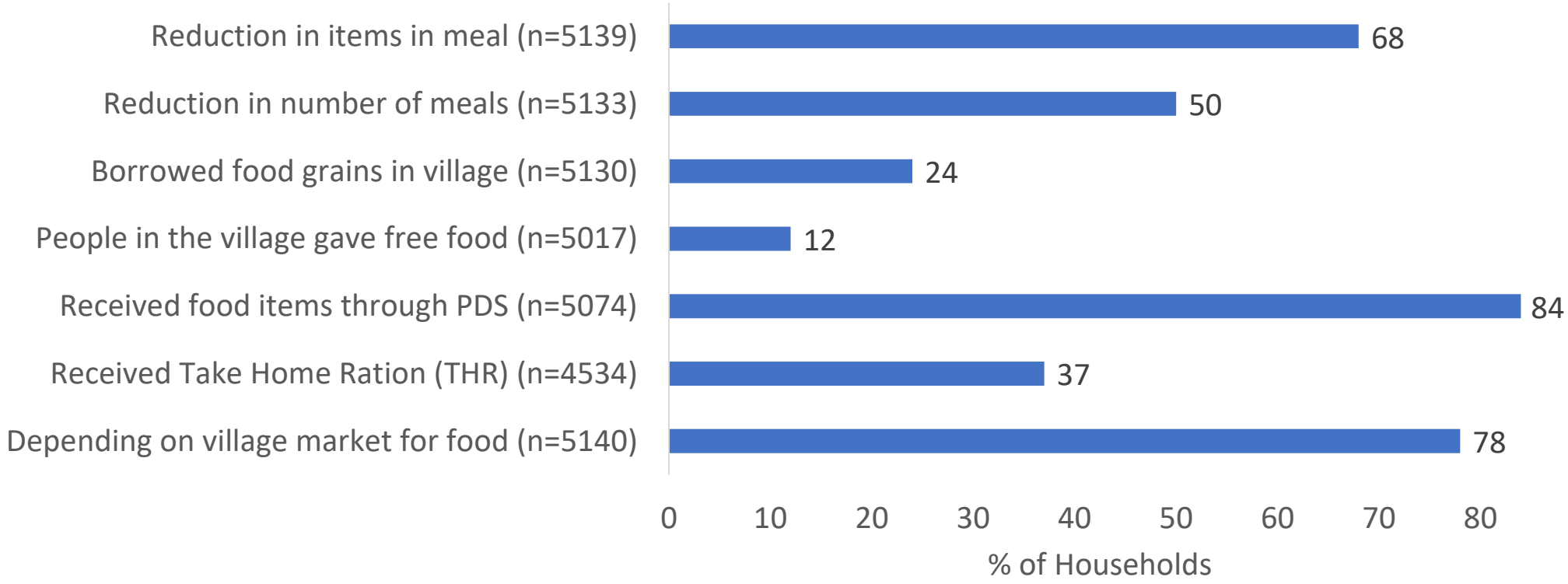
Reduced income from key livelihood activities

- **Lockdown and rumors have adversely affected income**
- **23% households sell milk, out of which half have reported reduction in sales**
- **56% households are in poultry, out of which more than 40% reported reduction in sales**



Coping: Immediate adjustments for food security

- **More than half of the households are eating fewer items and less number of times**
- **Nearly a quarter is depending on borrowing from others in the village**
- **PDS working for the majority – not reaching to 1/6th of the eligible households**



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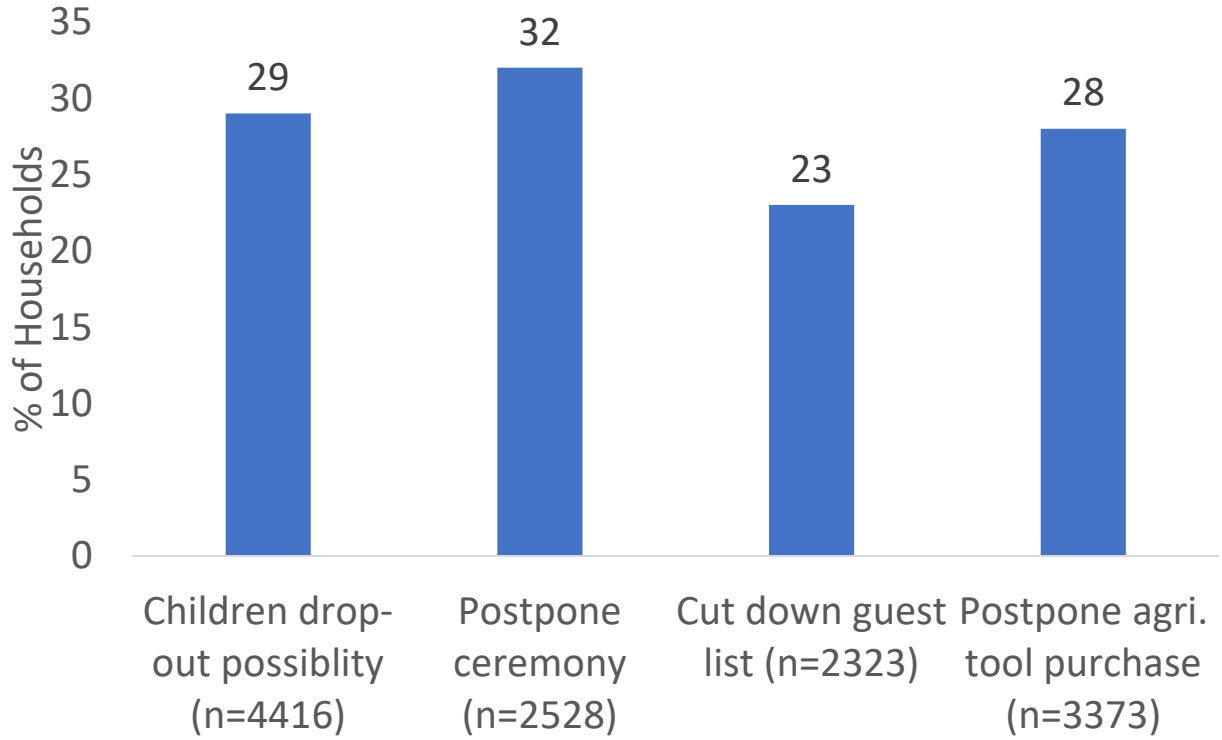
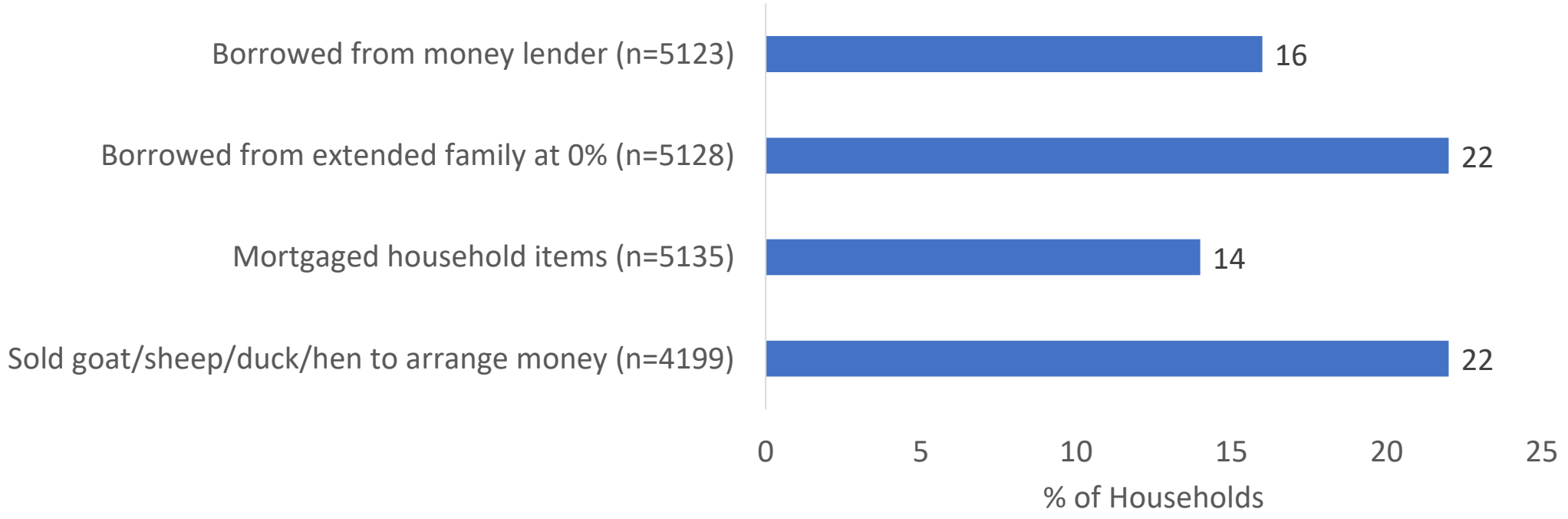
Coping: Postponing discretionary expenses

- **Nearly 1/3rd of the respondents reported that there is possibility that children will drop-out of schools**
- **Postponement and downscaling of ceremonies and purchases reported by nearly a quarter of households**



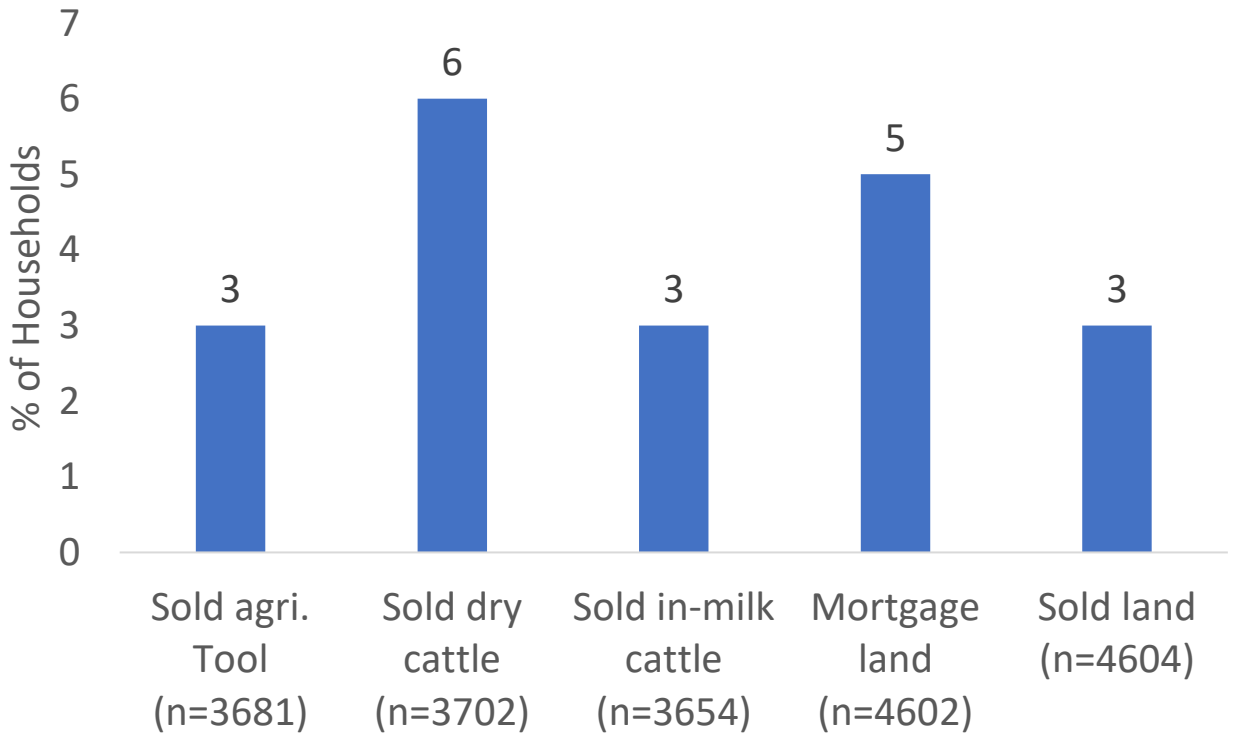
Coping: Borrowing/mortgaging of assets

- **At least 1/5th of the families depended on family networks for borrowing**
- **Borrowing from moneylender also reported**
- **Indebtedness rising?**
- **Mortgage of household items and sale of liquid assets already taking place**



Coping: Sale of productive assets

- **Has implication on the long term economic base of the household**
- **Expected to manifests when a shock/stress has a prolonged/intense effect.**
- **Though less, but around (3-5)% of the respondents reported asset sales**



To summarize (1/2)

- **Households have depended on Kharif stock more than Rabi – but that stock is now depleting fast.**
- **Households are coping with the shock by eating less food and lesser number of times and with large dependence on PDS**
- **Need for increased food support through PDS and promotion for food crop cultivation in Kharif**
- **Preparedness for Kharif 2020 is low - need for public support in terms of seed provision and credit for Kharif 2020.**
- **Large chunk of migrants yet to return – but already the increased workload enhances the drudgery faced by the women.**

To summarize (2/2)

- **Lockdown and rumors have indeed adversely affected income – dairy and poultry**
- **Coping mechanisms mostly clustered around change in food habits and reduction in expenditures**
- **Borrowing is taking place – indebtedness might increase if the effect of shock prevails**
- **Asset sales still low - but already reported by a small fraction of respondents**
- **Gives a snapshot – to understand how the hinterland is getting affected progressively – more rounds will be needed.**