

**Timeline**

May 2020-November 2020

**Study Type**

Descriptive / Surveillance

**Article Link**

<https://www.poverty-action.org/recovr/recovr-survey>

**Research Implemented by IPA**

Yes

# RECOVR Colombia: Tracking the Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic

## Researchers

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## Abstract

Tracking how people's lives are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic can enable policymakers to better understand the situation in their countries and make data-driven policy decisions. To respond to this need, IPA has developed the RECOVR survey—a panel survey that will facilitate comparisons, document real-time trends of policy concern, and inform decision-makers about the communities that are hardest-hit by the economic toll of the pandemic. In Colombia, the survey is providing rapid data to inform policy with the Department of National Planning, and includes questions tailored specifically to the country's social safety net programs and education system. The first round of the survey was conducted from May 8-15 and comprised 1,507 respondents reached through random digit dialing of a nationally representative sample of numbers. In August 2020, IPA Colombia launched a second round of the survey; more information is available in English [here](#) and in Spanish [here](#). In November 2020, IPA Colombia launched the third and final round of the survey; more information is available in English [here](#).

## Project Outcomes of Interest

Some of the key questions the survey aims to answer at the global level include the size and scope of the disruptions to government service provision, work disruptions and type of disruptions, whether and how households with school-aged children are spending time on education since schools have been closed, extent to which people are skipping necessary healthcare, identification of populations most at risk of skipping necessary healthcare. The Colombia survey focuses on health symptoms and care, COVID-19 mitigation behavior, education, work and income, social safety net support received, food and market security,

and financial health.

## Partners

Colombia Department of National Planning, UNICEF (Rounds 2 and 3)

## Key Findings

### Round 1:

- Forty-three percent of respondents reported that someone in their household skipped necessary healthcare since the start of the National Quarantine.
- Over half of respondents say they have reduced their number of meals in the last week.
- Over half of respondents say they would not be able to find COP 1,000,000 (around USD\$270) to pay for an emergency.
- Half of all respondents who worked at all in February are still working. Of those still working, 20 percent earned less and 15 percent worked fewer hours in the past week.
- The vast majority of households living with school-aged children report that those children are still spending time on school.

### Round 2:

- Twenty percent of respondents have tried to take a COVID-19 test and eighty percent would get a vaccine. The proportion of respondents who think they are at risk for COVID-19 and who are taking self-protection measures increased from Round 1 to Round 2.
- Although more than one third of respondents have had to limit their food portions or number of meals in the last week, the proportion of respondents taking these measures has decreased from Round 1.
- About sixty four percent of respondents reported that their debts had increased during the quarantine, with informal workers more likely to report an increase.
- Respondents with formal employment report maintaining their jobs in May and August in higher proportions than respondents with informal employment.
- Between thirty five percent and fifty percent of respondents (based on children's education levels) said they would not send their children back to educational institutions in the second half of 2020.
- More than forty percent of children (6-18 years) have developed additional anxieties or concerns since the beginning of quarantine.
- Seven percent of respondents who live with a partner report being more concerned about physical violence between partners since the beginning of quarantine.

### Round 3:

- Over the course of the national quarantine, a higher proportion of respondents reported an increase in adult mental health symptoms, but this proportion declined from 45

percent to 26 percent of respondents after the national quarantine.

- The proportion of respondents who cut back on portions in the week prior to the survey dropped to 37 percent in November, compared to at least 50 percent in March and August.
- Forty eight percent of respondents spent their savings to pay for basic expenses, 16 percent borrowed money they were unsure if they could pay back on time, and 16 percent skipped required payments.
- Respondents in formally employed households are more than twice as likely (54 percent) as those with informal employment (23 percent) to earn the same amount of money since February.
- The percentage of respondents who say they will attend college, university, or technical school in the first half of 2021 increased significantly.
- 33 percent of respondents have the perception that efforts to recruit children or adolescents by criminal or armed groups have increased.
- Conflicts and arguments within the household between romantic partners increased during the quarantine for 22 percent of respondents, but decreased after the quarantine to 17 percent.

### **Policy Briefs:**

The following briefs were developed to provide further policy analysis on key topics in the RECOVR survey (all briefs are in Spanish):

- [Violencia en el hogar durante COVID-19](#)
- [¿Cómo se relaciona la pandemia del COVID-19 con la salud mental de los colombianos?](#)
- [Seguridad Alimentaria y Protección Social en Colombia durante el COVID-19](#)
- [Retos ocultos de la pandemia: vinculación de niños, niñas y adolescentes con actividades ilegales en Colombia](#)
- [Mercado laboral en la crisis del COVID-19](#)
- [Vacunación contra el COVID-19 en Colombia: opinión pública sobre su priorización y distribución](#)
- [RECOVR Hallazgos Principales](#)

## Link to Results

Round 1 results are discussed in blog posts in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), and the [full Round 1 results presentation \(in Spanish\) is here](#) (the Round 1 results and their policy implications were also covered in [this webinar in Spanish](#)).

Round 2 results are discussed in a blog post in [English](#), and the full Round 2 results presentations are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Round 3 results are available in [Spanish](#).

## Impact Goals

- Build resilience and protect the financial health of families and individuals
- Build resilient and adaptable businesses and employment opportunities
- Improve social-safety net responses
- Improve women's health, safety, and economic empowerment
- Keep children safe, healthy, and learning
- Reduce COVID-19 transmission rates

## Project Data Collection Mode

- CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing)

## Link to Data Collection Instruments

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17-oFALx\\_mEff-b8hfWYcoQ-Er2HCOol\\_yQErP6UyvVo/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17-oFALx_mEff-b8hfWYcoQ-Er2HCOol_yQErP6UyvVo/edit?usp=sharing)

## Link to Public Data

<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/PAHU0X>

## Results Status

Results