Sierra Leone RECOVR Survey Analysis
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IPA’s Research for Effective COVID-19 Responses (RECOVR)

- Rapid response surveys to answer critical policy questions (8+ countries)
- A global hub that centralizes research and policy lessons
- A portfolio of IPA studies to generate rigorous evidence (80+ studies)
- Advising 15+ governments on evidence-based approaches
- Research-on-Research to strengthen the quality of remote data collection
RECOVR Survey: Key Takeaways

**Health/COVID:** Around 10% of respondents or someone in their household have developed mental health symptoms since COVID-19 reached the country.

**Employment:** 45% of employed individuals have earned less pay than they did in a typical week before the government closed schools.

**Financial Security:** 60% of respondents say they have had to deplete savings to pay for food since February 2020.

**Food Security:** More than 40% of respondents say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times or reduce the number of meals they eat.

**Education:** 63% of respondents say their main concern regarding primary and secondary school-aged children in their household is their children falling behind in education.
Sierra Leone Survey Information

Dates of survey: May 27 - June 19, 2020

Sampling method: Random Digit Dialing of a nationally representative sample of phone numbers

Sample size: 1,304 respondents out of 3,831 call attempts

Average respondent demographics:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% women</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>32.5 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% that completed more than secondary school</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household size</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Under national poverty line:</td>
<td>24% (Estimated with the PPI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample is heavily concentrated in the capitol district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Area Urban</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>45.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Area Rural</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>15.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Province</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>10.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenema</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>8.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombali</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>6.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Loko</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kono</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonkolili</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koinadugu</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kambia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kailahun</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Definitions

● **Poor vs. non-poor**
  ○ Is this household most likely below the national poverty line?
  ○ Estimated using the [PPI](#), which uses a simple machine-learning algorithm to build a proxy means test estimating poverty rates using a set of household characteristics.
  ○ Based on the SLIHS-2018 dataset produced by GoSL and the World Bank.

● **School-age children**
  ○ “How many children who had been enrolled in primary/secondary school before the national quarantine live in your household?”

● **Employment Sectors**
  ○ 20+ occupations across agriculture, manufacturing, services, transport, mining, retail, etc.

● **Error Bars** in each graph represent the 95% confidence interval.
  ○ If error bars do not overlap, the difference between groups is statistically significant (p<0.05).
Sierra Leone RECOVR: Survey and Policy Timeline

- World Bank Announces $7.5 Million Grant for Health Response: Apr 2
- Declaration of State of Emergency for 12 Months: Mar 24
- Closure of Educational Institutions: Mar 31
- Usage of Face Masks Required in Public: Jun 1
- National Lockdown 1: Apr 5 - Apr 7
- National Lockdown 2: May 3 - May 5
- IPA RECOVR Survey Round 1: May 27 - June 19
- Closure of Land Borders: Mar 24 - Jun 24
Health & COVID-19 Mitigation
Health & COVID-19 Mitigation: Key Takeaways

- Around 10% of respondents or someone in their household have developed mental health symptoms since COVID-19 reached the country.

- Only 6% of respondents say they delayed or skipped needed healthcare visits since mid-March.

- About 85% of respondents have continued visiting community health centers for vaccinations and antenatal care.

- 32% of respondents say they did not stay home any days in the last week.
Only 6% of respondents say they delayed or skipped needed healthcare visits since mid-March

Of those who skipped, nearly 50% was because of concerns due to COVID-19
7% of respondents have been unable to obtain prescription medications since mid-March
Men and women have been similarly unable to obtain prescription medications since mid-March.
Poorer and wealthier respondents have been similarly unable to obtain prescription medications since mid-March.
Around 10% of respondents or someone in their household have developed mental health symptoms since the quarantine began.
Poorer households are more likely to say they or someone in their household have developed mental health symptoms.
About 85% of pregnant respondents and respondents living with small children have continued to visit community health centers for vaccinations and antenatal care.

Those who have not been visiting community health centers (n=20) cite fear of COVID-19 or lack of time.
More than 80% of respondents are confident that the community health clinic could help them if they were to seek medical assistance.
Men and women are similarly confident that the community health clinic could help them if they were to seek medical assistance.
Poorer respondents are only slightly more confident than wealthier respondents that the community health clinic could help them if they were to seek medical assistance.
32% of respondents say they did not stay home any days in the last week
Women are much more likely to stay home every day than men, and more than 35% of male respondents report not staying home any days in the last week.
Poorer and wealthier respondents are similarly likely to say they did not stay home any days in the last week.
More than 80% of respondents say they washed their hands more often this week than before mid-March.
Men and women are similarly likely to say they washed their hands more often this week than before mid-March
Poorer and wealthier respondents are similarly likely to say they washed their hands more often this week than before mid-March.
20% of respondents say they feel their household is at risk of contracting COVID-19

For those who do not feel at risk, nearly all respondents cite compliance with preventive measures
Men are more likely than women to say they feel their household is at risk of contracting COVID-19

For those who do not feel at risk, men and women similarly cite compliance with preventive measures
Poorer and wealthier respondents are similarly likely to say they feel their household is at risk of contracting COVID-19.

For those who do not feel at risk, poorer and wealthier respondents similarly cite compliance with preventive measures.
70% of respondents have access to a Veronica bucket in their home/compound
Poor and non-poor respondents have nearly identical rates of access to a Veronica bucket in their home/compound.
42% of respondents use a public toilet (a toilet that is shared with other households)
Poorer households are more likely than wealthier households to report using a public toilet (a toilet that is shared with other households)
Social Protection & Financial Resilience
Social Protection & Financial Resilience: Key Takeaways

- 60% of respondents say they have had to deplete savings to pay for food since February 2020
- More than 40% of respondents say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times or reduce the number of meals they eat
- Nearly 80% of respondents say they have had difficulty going to food markets because the price of food was too high. 70% indicate it is because household income has dropped.
- Nearly 90% of households have no additional assistance from the government in response to COVID-19
60% of respondents say they have had to deplete savings to pay for food since February 2020.
Poorer respondents are more likely than wealthier respondents to resort to selling off assets, depleting savings, borrowing money, and adjusting spending to pay for food since February 2020.
Respondents with school-age children are more likely than those without to resort to buying fewer inputs than planned to pay for food since February 2020.
60% of respondents say they have had to deplete savings to pay for food since February 2020, a problem especially prevalent in the districts of Bombali, Tonkolili, and Port Loko.
More than 40% of respondents say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times or reduce the number of meals they eat.
Poorer respondents are more likely than wealthier respondents to say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times or reduce number of meals.
Respondents with/without school-age children similarly say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times in the past week.
More than 40% of respondents say they have had to limit portion sizes at meal times or reduce the number of meals they eat, particularly in the northern district of Koinadugu.
27% of respondents say they have had difficulty going to food markets due to mobility restrictions.
Men and women report similar mobility restrictions for accessing food markets
Poor respondents are more likely to report that they have had difficulty going to food markets due to market closures.
Households with school-aged children are more likely to have faced market access challenges
Nearly 80% of respondents say they have had difficulty going to food markets because the price of food was too high. 70% indicate it is because household income has dropped.
Men and women cite similar difficulties in going to food markets between shortages, high prices, and lower household incomes.
Poorer respondents are more likely than wealthier respondents to report difficulty going to food markets due to shortages in the markets, high food prices, and lower household incomes.
Households with school-age children are more likely to say they have had difficulty going to food markets due to market shortages, the high price of food, and lower household incomes.
Nearly 80% of respondents say they have had difficulty going to food markets because the price of food was too high, especially in Kambia and Kailahun.

70% indicate it is because household income has dropped. We see this in the east in Kailahun, and in the west in Port Loko.
80% of respondents say they have access to an account where they can make and receive payments
Men are more likely than women to say they have access to an account where they can make and receive payments.
Poorer and wealthier respondents report similar rates of access to an account where they can make and receive payments.
Respondents with/without school-aged children say they have access to an account where they can make and receive payments.
58% of respondents say they have access to an account in Kambia, but over 90% do in Koinadugu, Kono, and Kenema
Out of 13 households that usually receive payments, almost half have experienced delays or difficulties in accessing these payments.
Nearly 90% of households have received no additional assistance from the government in response to COVID-19
Wealthier households are less likely to have received food/cash from the government in response to COVID-19
There are no significant differences in households with/without school-age children receiving food/cash from the government in response to COVID-19.
There are no significant differences in households with/without elderly family members receiving food/cash from the government in response to COVID-19.
Similarly, an overwhelming majority of households have not received food, cash, or other support from someone else in response to COVID-19.
Men and women report receiving similar levels of assistance in response to COVID-19
Poorer and wealthier households report receiving similar levels of assistance in response to COVID-19.
Households with elderly family members (33 households) are more likely to report receiving assistance from relatives in response to COVID-19.
Education
Education: Key Takeaways

● 63% of respondents say their main concern regarding primary and secondary school-aged children in their household is their children falling behind in education.

● Among children in primary and secondary school engaged in distance learning, the majority are using their own schoolbooks.

● Nearly 75-80% of respondents report all children in primary and secondary school in their household are spending time on education at home.

● 55-60% of children in primary and secondary school are spending an average of more than two hours per day on education.
63% of respondents say their main concern regarding primary school-aged children in their household is their children falling behind in education.
63% of respondents say their main concern regarding secondary school-aged children in their household is falling behind on their education.
Nearly 80% of respondents report all children in primary school in their household are spending time on education at home.
Poorer and wealthier households similarly report that all children in primary school in their household are spending time on education at home.
60% of students are spending an average of more than 2 hours per day on education.
Wealthier households are slightly more likely to report that children in primary school in their household are spending an average of more than two hours per day on education.
75% of respondents report that all children of secondary school age in the household are spending time on education at home.
Poorer and wealthier respondents report similar rates of children in secondary school in the household spending time on education at home.
Nearly 60% of respondents with children in secondary school report the children are spending an average of more than two hours per day on education.
Wealthier respondents are slightly more likely to report children in secondary school in the household are spending an average of more than two hours per day on education.
Among children in primary school engaged in distance learning, the majority are using their own schoolbooks.
Among children in secondary school engaged in distance learning, the majority are using their own school books.
Children in primary school face barriers in access to television, a lack of motivation, and competing priorities when attempting to spend time on education at home.
Children in secondary school face barriers in access to television, a lack of motivation, and competing priorities when attempting to spend time on education at home.
Respondents are supporting primary school children’s education by telling their children to review their books, talking to their children about school, and reading to their children.
Poorer and wealthier respondents are similarly supporting primary school children’s education by telling their children to review their books.
Respondents are supporting secondary school children’s education primarily by telling children to review their books and talking to children about school.
Poorer and wealthier households support secondary school children’s education in similar ways, including telling children to review their books and talking to children about school.
Parents with different education levels are similarly likely to support secondary school children’s education by telling children to review their books and talking to children about school. Parents with post-secondary education are slightly more likely to help children with their homework.
4 Economic Activity & Employment
Economic Activity & Employment: Key Takeaways

● 60% of households working in agriculture have altered planting, harvesting, or marketing of agricultural products because of COVID-19-related restrictions

● Almost 70% of employed individuals have spent fewer hours working for pay/running a business/helping on a family business than they did in a typical week before the government closed schools

● 36% of employed individuals have earned less pay than they did in a typical week before the government closed schools
60% of households working in agriculture have altered planting, harvesting, or marketing of agricultural products because of COVID-19-related restrictions.

These respondents have faced challenges in buying required inputs, carrying out farming activities as usual, and selling crops or livestock as planned.
19% of households’ places of work are currently open with no disruptions, while 28% are closed. Almost 40% are open with reduced operations.
Respondents in the manufacturing and retail sector are more likely to report their workplaces being closed temporarily due to the outbreak. Respondents working in services, agriculture, and manufacturing and retail are similarly likely to report their workplaces being open with reduced operations.
28% of households’ places of work are currently closed. Around 50% are closed in Tonkolili, the worst hit district.
Almost 70% of employed individuals have spent fewer hours working for pay/running a business/helping on a family business than they did in a typical week before the government closed schools.
Respondents working in the services, agriculture, and manufacturing & retail sectors have similarly spent fewer hours working for pay/running a business/helping on a family business than they did in a typical week before the government closed schools.
36% of employed individuals have earned less pay than they did in a typical week before the government closed schools.
Respondents working in the services sector were more likely to report that they have earned the same pay that they did in a typical week before the government closed schools.
Thank you

https://www.poverty-action.org/recovr