



## 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. By the time of the seventh and eighth rounds of the NLPS – conducted in November 7-23, 2020 and December 5-21, 2020 respectively – there were far fewer restrictions on activities and movement within the country. Yet by the end of December, recorded COVID-19 case numbers in Nigeria were starting to pick up, necessitating new limits, including on large gatherings (see Annex 1 for Round 7 and 8 survey timing and daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases). This brief presents the combined findings from the seventh and eighth rounds of the Nigeria COVID-19 NLPS. The seventh round of the NLPS repeated many previous questions on safe practices in response to COVID-19, so the progress of these indicators over time can be tracked. The seventh round also sought to ensure that all household members were correctly covered by the survey, by explicitly updating the household roster. Given the importance of agriculture for livelihoods in Nigeria, the eighth round of the NLPS included specific questions on crop farming: since the eighth round was carried out in December, these questions come after the end of the rainy season.

## SUMMARY

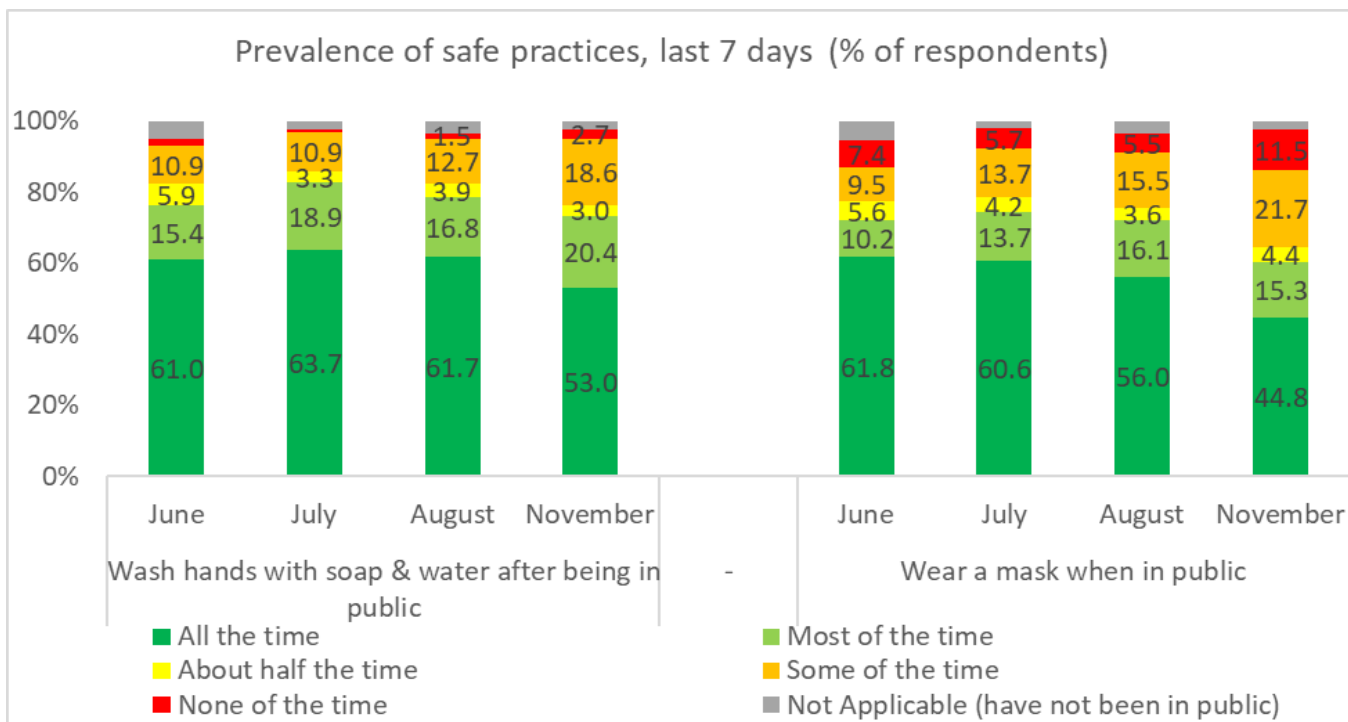
- ◆ Households have become laxer regarding safe practices, with the share of respondents washing their hands after being in public all or most of the time dropping from 83% to 73% between July 2020 and November 2020;
- ◆ Yet access to hygiene-related basic needs increased between July 2020 and November 2020 with the share of households having insufficient soap to wash hands in the last seven days declining from 24% to 11%;
- ◆ The share of respondents who were working remained around pre-crisis levels in December 2020, although persistent churning in the non-farm enterprise sector suggests that some businesses are yet to fully stabilize;
- ◆ Agriculture has become an even more important income source, with the share of households participating in crop-related farm work rising from 70% to 80% between the 2019 and 2020 agricultural seasons;
- ◆ More crop farming households are using farm inputs, and are positive about their revenues from crop sales in 2020/21 compared to previous agricultural seasons, potentially due to rising food prices;
- ◆ While rising food prices may help net producers, food price shocks continue to hit consumers, along with many other types of shocks: around 83% of households reported an increase in the price of major food items that they consumed;
- ◆ Household are still adopting potentially harmful coping strategies in response to shocks, with 58% of households that were hit by a shock between July 2020 and December 2020 reducing their food consumption in response.

## SAFE PRACTICES AND HEALTH

The share of respondents implementing safe practices has fallen throughout the course of the COVID-19 crisis despite the rising daily confirmed cases. In July 2020, 83% of respondents reported washing their hands after being in public all or most of the time, yet by November 2020, this figure had dropped to 73%. Similarly, the share of respondents wearing masks in public all or most of the time reduced from 74% in July 2020 to 60% in November 2020.

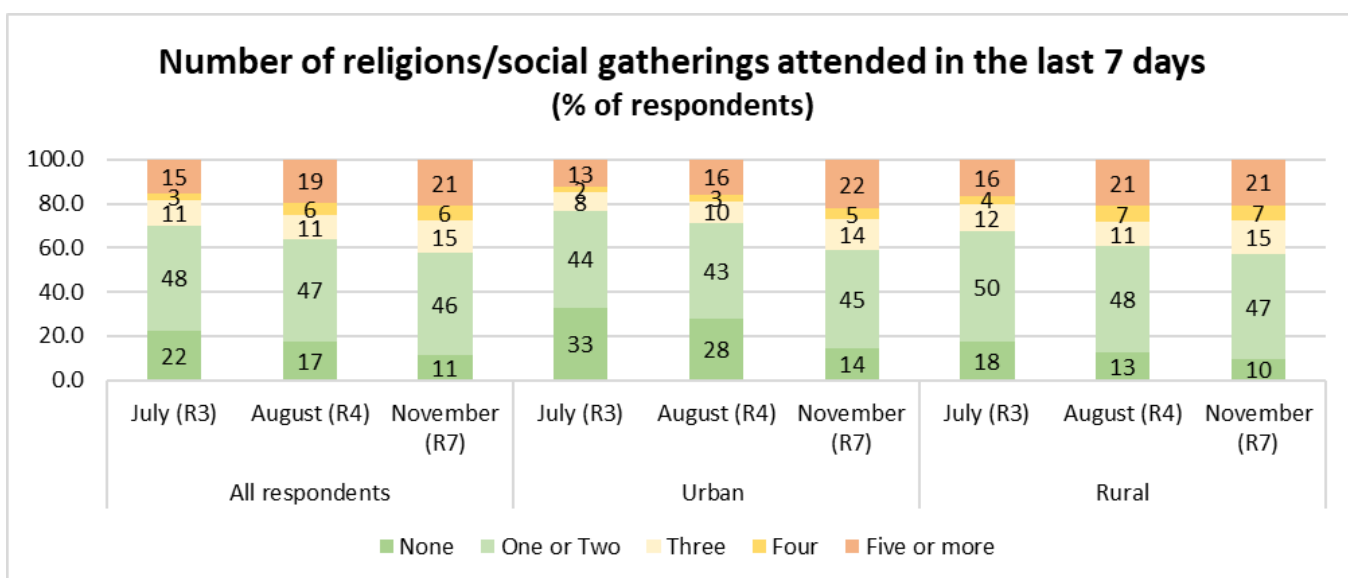
Public Disclosure Authorized

Public Disclosure Authorized  
**NIGERIA**



\*This figure includes only 1,607 observations that represent HHs with information for June, July, August, and November

Additionally, respondents started to attend more religious or social gatherings in the last seven days almost doubled, from 23% to 41% over the same period. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the November 2020 and November 2020, the share of respondents attending three or more religious or social gatherings in the bans on large social gatherings initiated in late December 2020: the effects of these increased restrictions may not yet be captured by the data. share of respondents attending three or more religious



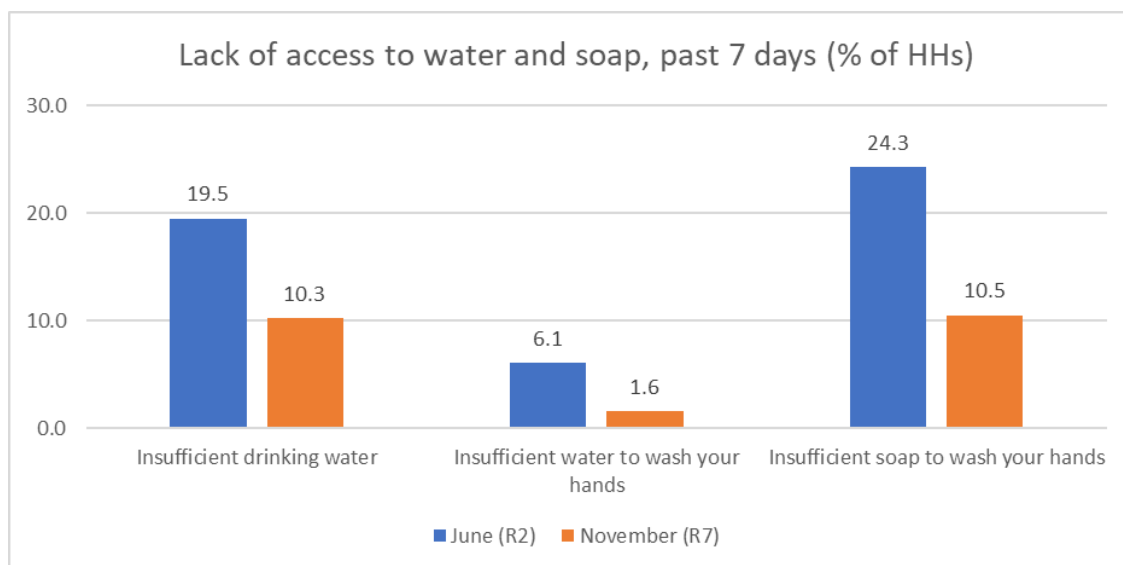
\*This table includes only 1,607 observations that represent HHs with information for June, July, August, and November



### BASIC NEEDS

Even if respondents became laxer about health and safety practices, their access to soap and water appeared to improve throughout 2020. The share of households with insufficient access to drinking water in the past seven days halved from 20% to 10% between June 2020 and November 2020, while the share of households with insufficient access to water for hand-washing dropped from 6% to 2% over the same period.

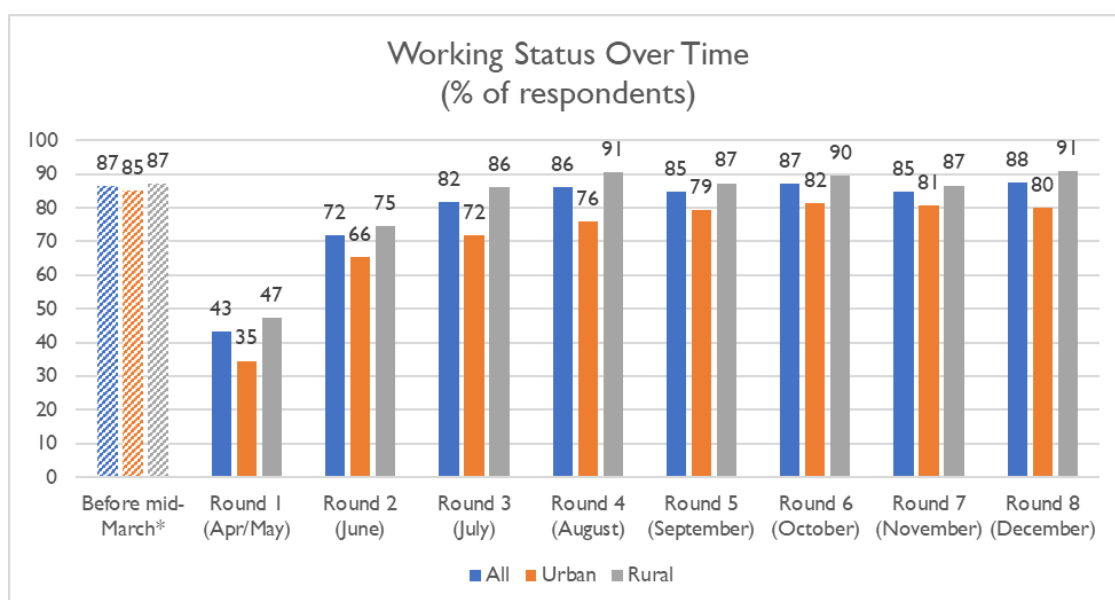
This may partially be due to seasonal variation, as June is typically just after the arrival of the rainy season, while November is shortly after. Yet access to soap for handwashing – which would not be subject to the same seasonal variation – also improved substantially between June 2020 and November 2020, with the share of households having insufficient soap to wash hands in the last seven days declining from 24% to 11%.



### EMPLOYMENT

The rebound in the share of respondents working with pre-crisis levels. As in previous rounds, the share showed little sign of wavering in November and December of 2020. The overall share of respondents working was 88% in December 2020, roughly in line

with pre-crisis levels. As in previous rounds, the share of respondents working was higher in rural areas (at 91%) than in urban areas (at 80%).

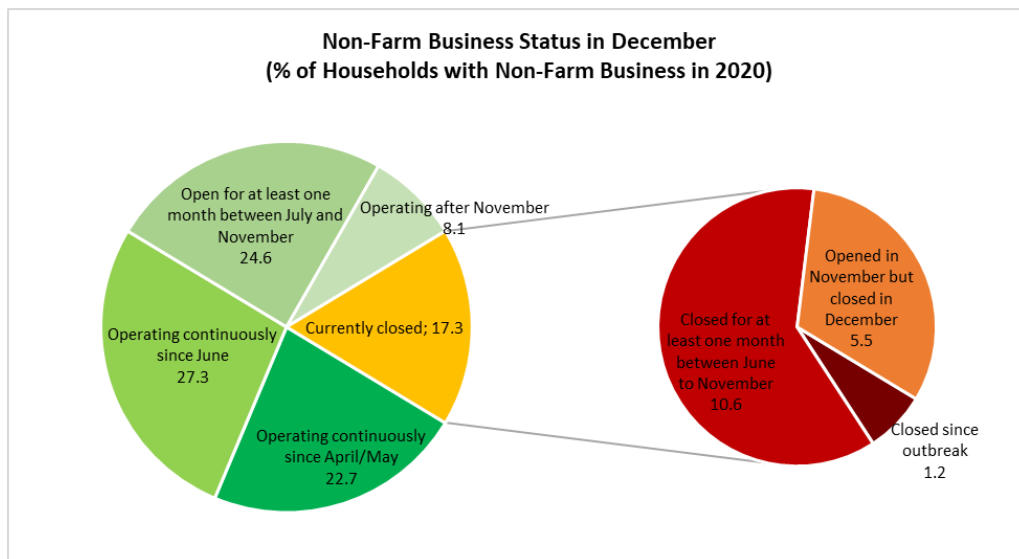


This figure includes only 1,383 observations that represent HHs with information for all rounds and that they did not change respondents along the way.



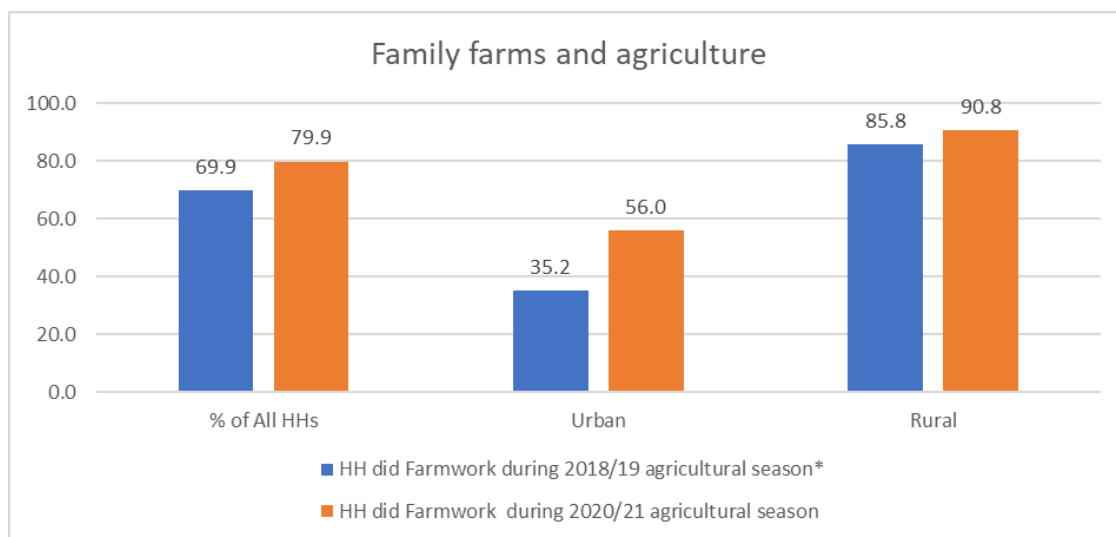
### NON-FARM ENTERPRISES

Even with respondents back at work, however, evidence of churning in the non-farm enterprise sector suggests people’s working situations remain precarious. Around 17% of households who had non-farm businesses during 2020 were not operating their business in December 2020. Of these, 61% (11% of all households with non-farm businesses) had also been closed for at least one month between June and November 2020. Moreover, just 23% of households with non-farm businesses in 2020 operated them continuously since the peak of restrictions in April/May.



### AGRICULTURE

An increase in agricultural activity appears to be one key response to the COVID-19 crisis. In previous rounds of the NLPS, it was observed that households’ main income earners were switching into – or returning to – work in the agricultural sector, as work was resumed. As the December 2020 round of the NLPS shows, the share of households doing crop-related farm work in the 2020/21 agricultural season (running from March 2020 to February 2021) reached 80%, rising from 70% in the 2018/19 agricultural season (running from March 2018 to February 2019). The increase was particularly stark in urban areas, where the share of households doing crop farming rose from 35% to 56% between the 2018/19 and 2020/21 agricultural seasons. Yet even in rural areas, there was a slight increase in the share of households doing crop farming – from 86% to 91% – over the same period.

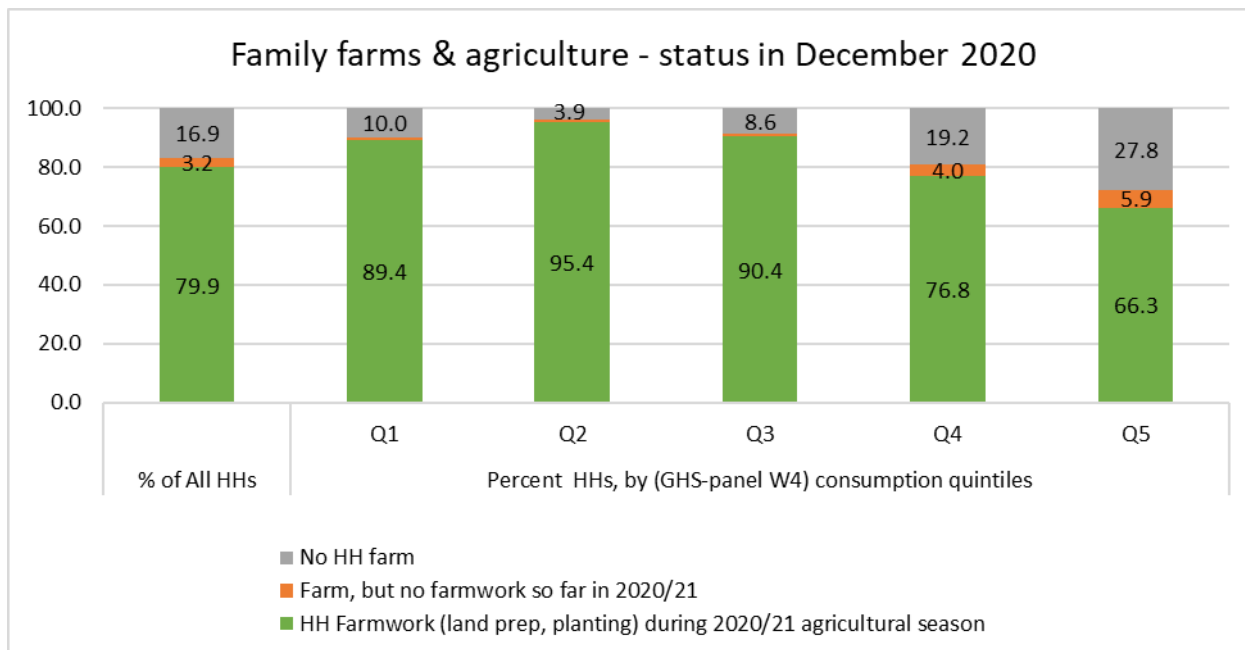


\*The sample was restricted to only the HHs that also participated on Phone Survey R3, R5, and R8 (N=1,645).



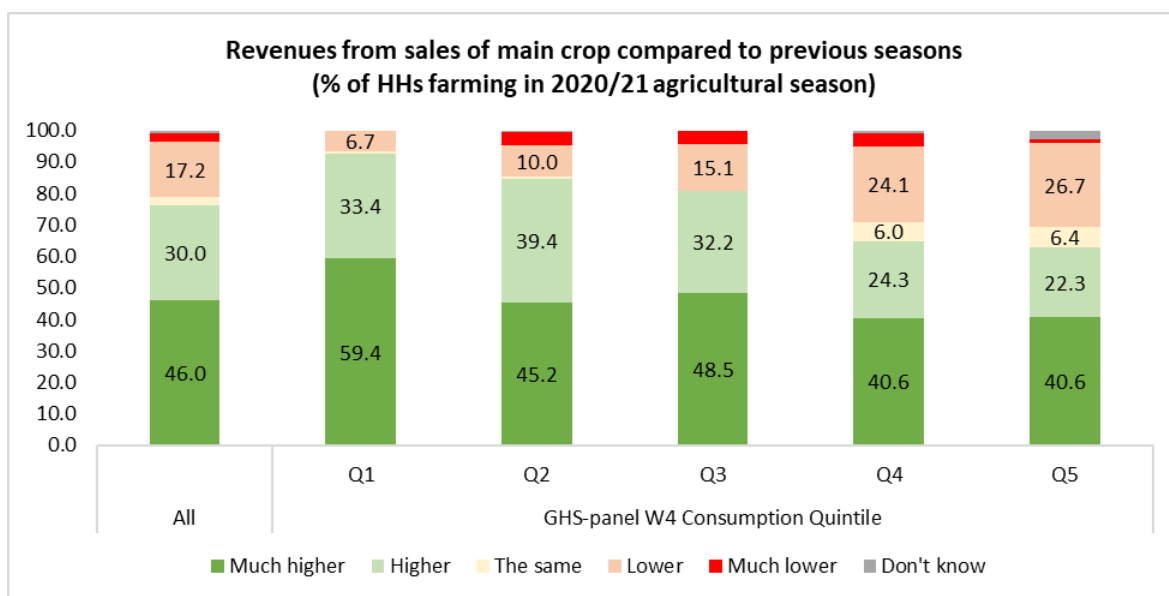
Farm work was more prevalent for poorer households than richer households in the 2020/21 agricultural season. Around 89% of households in the poorest consumption quintile engaged in crop-related farm work in

the 2020/21 agricultural season, compared with 66% of households in the richest consumption quintile. This underlines the particular importance of agricultural work for poor and vulnerable Nigerians.



Even with the sizeable shift towards agricultural work, farming households were relatively positive and optimistic about their main crop revenues for the 2020/21 agricultural season. More than three-quarters of crop farming households reported that actual and expected revenues from the sale of their main crop would be higher or much higher in the 2020/21 agricultural season compared with previous agricultural seasons. Moreover, the situation seems more positive for poorer households. Almost 93% of crop farming households in the bottom consumption quintile reported that their

actual or expected revenues would be higher or much higher in the 2020/21 agricultural season than in previous agricultural seasons, compared with 63% of crop farming households in the top consumption quintile. In part, these patterns may arise because prices of food items have risen sharply throughout 2020: this could benefit net producers, although many households may be experiencing loss of purchasing power – as they have to buy food too – even as their farm revenues rise.

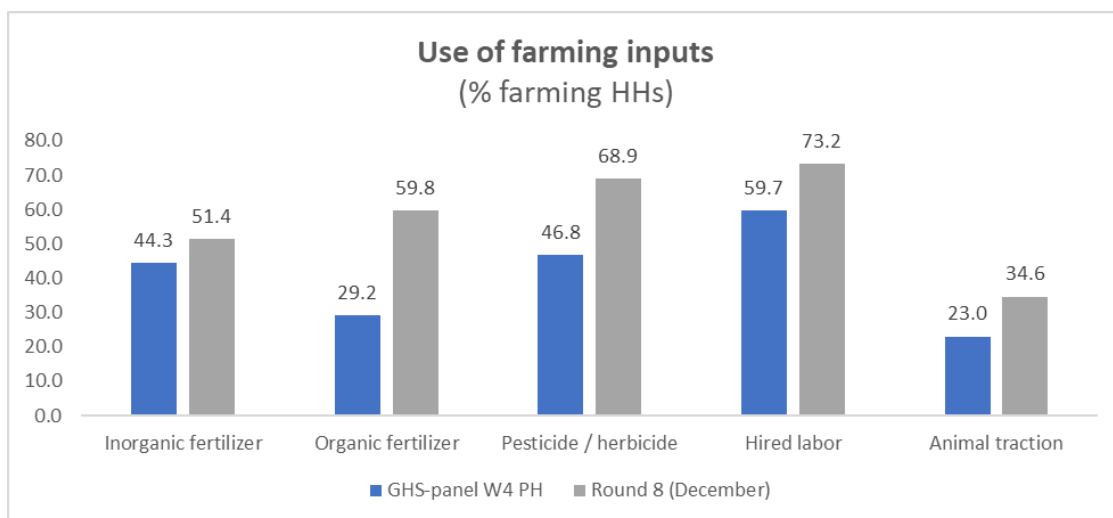


Note: It includes actual revenue from sales and expected revenue when harvests have not been sold.



As well as increased farm revenues, more crop farming households are using farm inputs during the COVID-19 crisis. The share of crop farming households using organic fertilizer more than doubled from 29% to 60% between the 2018/19 and 2020/21 agricultural seasons, while the share using pesticides or herbicides rose from 47% to 69% over the same period. Agriculture’s capacity to create jobs may also have increased over the same

period, with the share of crop farming households using hired labor rising from 60% to 73% between the 2018/19 and 2020/21 agricultural seasons. Such increases arise in both urban and rural areas. Since the months in which the two surveys were conducted were so close, these findings are unlikely to be down to seasonality alone.

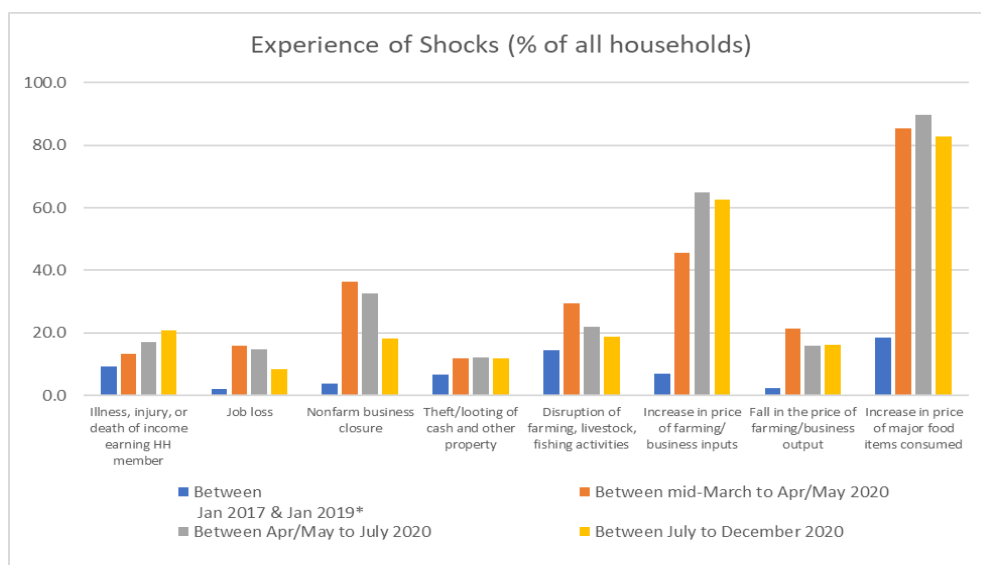


The sample was restricted to only farming HHs in both GHS-Panel W4 and NLPS R8.

### SHOCKS AND COPING MECHANISMS

Households continued to experience severe shocks as the COVID-19 crisis persisted since March 2020. Between July 2020 and December 2020, 83% of households reported an increase in the price of major food items that they consumed, demonstrating a widespread deterioration in purchasing power. This builds on the rise in prices already observed between mid-March 2020 and April/May 2020. Notwithstanding the increased share of crop farming households that used farm inputs

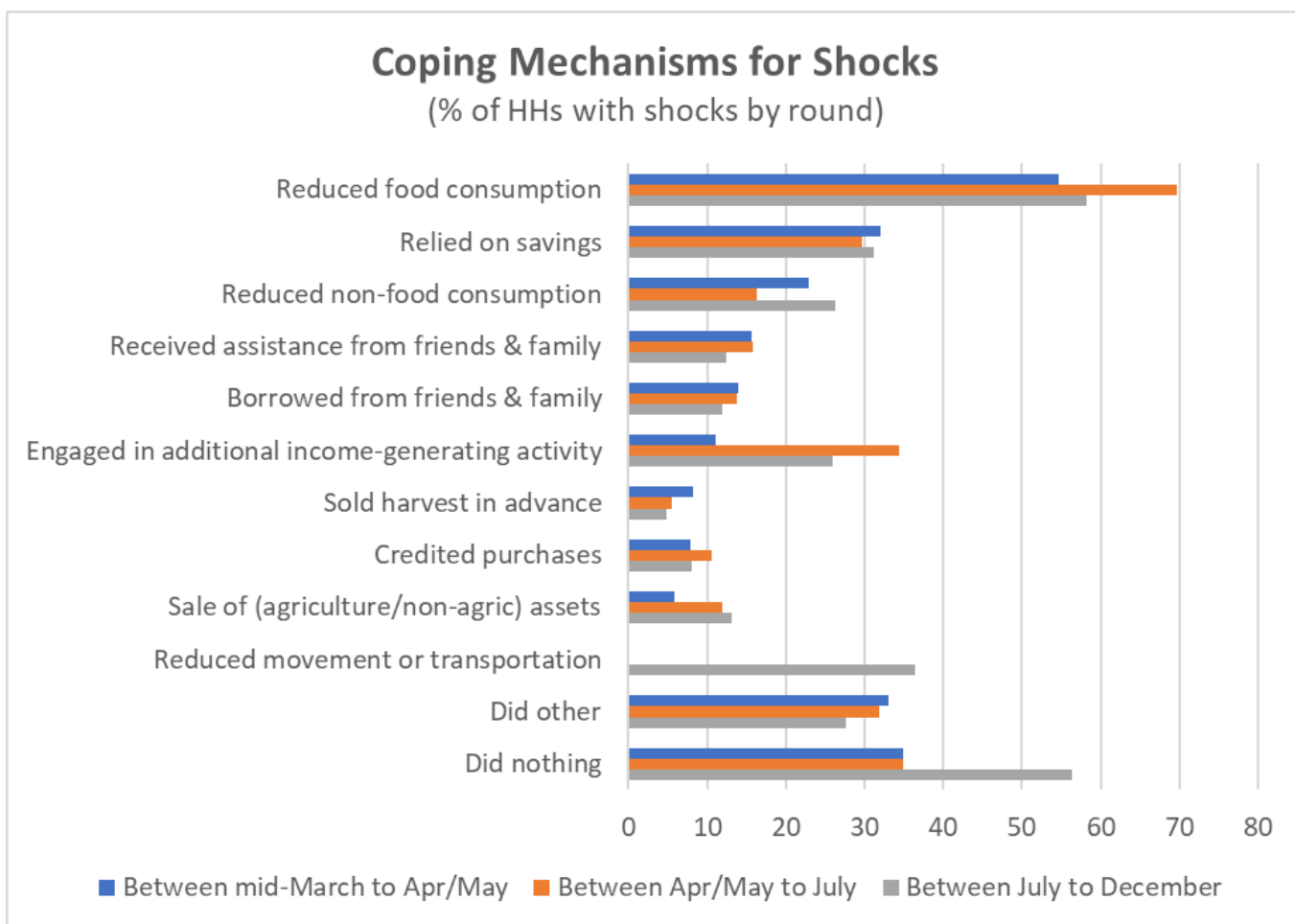
in the 2020/21 agricultural season, around 63% of households also reported that prices of farm and business inputs increased between July 2020 and December 2020. Nevertheless, the prevalence of some shocks has waned as the crisis has drawn on. For example, between mid-March 2020 and April/May 2020, 36% of households experienced the closure of a non-farm business, but this share had halved to 18% by the period covering July 2020 to December 2020.



\*From GHS-panel W4. Restricted to HHs that are in NLPS (N= 1,645 HHs)



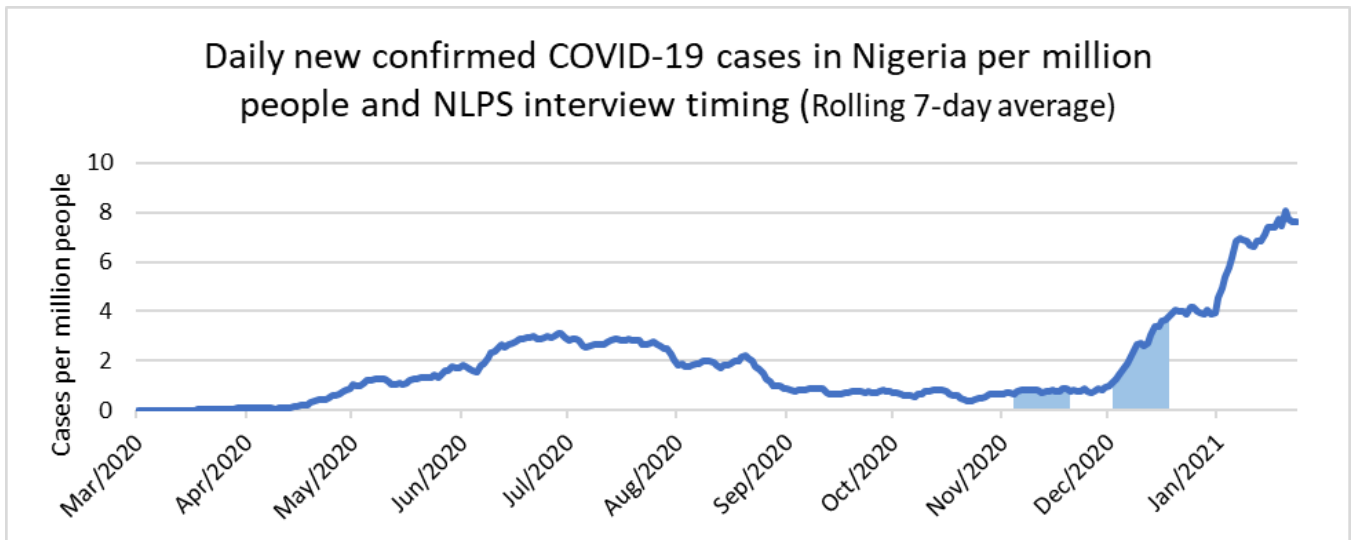
Households have also continued to adopt potentially harmful coping strategies in response to shocks. Around 58% of households that experienced a shock between July 2020 and December 2020 reduced their food consumption, while 26% reduced their non-food consumption. As in the past, many households also adopted coping strategies which could reduce their long-term financial security, with 31% of shock-hit households relying on their savings. There was also a rise in the share of households that reported doing nothing in response to shocks. While this may partly indicate that households are less reliant on potentially harmful coping strategies, it may also be that households are reaching a subsistence welfare level where coping strategies deployed in the past may no longer be tenable.



One additional change observed among Nigerian households, which may constitute a coping mechanism, is that they have become larger. Specifically, households had 6.6 members in November 2020, compared with 5.5 members in January/February 2019. One of the main reasons reported for this is that individuals have moved in with parents or other relatives, potentially to pool incomes and manage the risks faced through the COVID-19 crisis, while others have reported returning from work migration or education. In this way, Nigerian households are having to fully restructure in order to find ways to cope with the crisis.



ANNEX 1: ROLLING 7-DAY AVERAGE OF DAILY NEW CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES IN NIGERIA PER MILLION PEOPLE AND NLPS INTERVIEW TIMING



Source: Our World in Data

Shaded blue areas represent the dates when Round 7 and 8 of the NLPS were conducted.

**Data Notes:** The Nigeria COVID-19 National Longitudinal Phone Survey (COVID-19 NLPS) 2020 Seventh and Eighth Rounds were implemented by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in November and December 2020. 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. These surveys are the seventh and eighth of a planned 12 rounds of the COVID-19 NLPS of households in Nigeria. 1,839 households from the baseline were contacted and 1,726 and 1,723 households, fully interviewed in the seventh and eighth rounds respectively. 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/>

For details on the survey, contact **Biya Fafunmi** ([biyifafunmi@nigerianstat.gov.ng](mailto:biyifafunmi@nigerianstat.gov.ng)) and **Tunde Adebisi** ([tundeadebisi@nigerianstat.gov.ng](mailto:tundeadebisi@nigerianstat.gov.ng))