



Save the Children

THE HIDDEN

IMPACT OF
COVID-19



This report is supported by Save the Children.

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world and in Albania, we give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

Prepared by:

Arlinda Ymeraj-Consultant

Working Group in Save the Children:

Blerina Celoliaj-Program Development and Quality Director

Eni Tresa-Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

Eda Hoxha-Communication Specialist

TIRANË, 2020

© “All Rights Reserved. The content of this publication may be freely used or copied for non-commercial purposes, provided that any such reproduction is accompanied by acknowledgement of the organizations, who implement, as the source”

The information in this publication is based on available information at the time of preparation. No responsibility is accepted for any errors or omissions contained within this publication and the author’s analysis does not necessarily reflect those of Save the Children.



COVID-19 GLOBAL ALBANIA

KEY MESSAGES

- COVID-19 created not only health crises, but an economic, social and psychological crises as well that have particularly impacted households with children in Albania
- International Donor Community and Relief Organisation should offer economic support to government that would enable them to effectively support the worst affected house holds in a timely manner
- Emotional and Mental Health support should be an integral part of Child Protection policies in Albania

ABOUT THE STUDY

COVID 19 appeared in humans in December 2019 and has rapidly spread across all countries of the Globe. Governments world-wide have implemented measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. In March 2020, the Government of Albania would join the ranks of countries which took a particularly severe restriction measures, including mediate school closure, complete home isolation and community lockdown, all of which have secondary impacts on the mental and physical health of populations, and education of children. Save the Children launched a Global research study, aimed at generating evidence on the: impact of school closures, home isolation/quarantine and community lockdown on children's wellbeing and education; and the health, psychosocial, protection and learning needs of children during times of school closures, home isolation/quarantine and community lockdown. The research explored differences in the impact and needs of children by country/state/city, age, gender, disability, type of minority group and indicators of poverty and deprivation. In total there was 385, out of which 343 were cleared from the regional office to be analysed for the purpose of this study interviews conducted with parents/caregivers (beneficiaries of Save the Children Projects) and children of the age between 11-17. The study has an exploratory nature, generating primary quantitative data collected through online surveys using random, purposive and convenience sampling methods (Phase 1), and linkage with secondary data on government interventions and COVID-19 case/death numbers (Phase 2).

- To generate evidence on children's wellbeing and education needs during school closures, home isolation/quarantine and community lockdown
- To provide parents and care givers with information to support them to maintain the wellbeing and education of their children during the COVID-19

Note: This study did not generate information on whether the survey itself (through referring parents and caregivers to information designed to support them support them maintain the wellbeing and education of their children), will actually contribute to minimising the impact of COVID-19 on children in lockdown.

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Around 49% of the respondents reported losing one source of income, while only 20% reported they did not. An interesting fact to know is that the remaining respondents preferred not to answer this particular question. The respondents who reported losing an income reported this type of loss:

- 16% losing all of their income.
- 21% losing about half of their income.
- 12% losing less than quarter of it.

Among those 49% respondents who reported losing income:

- 23% of reported losing the job of one of the bread winners.
- 7% reported losing supportive income sent from family or friends.
- 7% reported no longer receiving monetary support from the Government.

49% LOST
INCOME DUE TO
COVID-19
CONTAINMENT
MEASURES

Programme participants are struggling to pay for children's essential needs.

Nearly all the respondents have experienced difficulties in paying for specific critical needs due to income loss caused by COVID-19. Of these:

- 31% reported struggling to pay for food or nutrition supplements.
- 23% reported great difficulties in paying for medical assistance such as healthcare (10%), medical supplies (6%), disability services (3%), assistive medical devices and medical care helpers.
- 8% have difficulties in providing learning materials for their children.

Most adult respondents in this study have reported difficulty in handling emotional response after COVID-19 outbreak.

- More than a third of adults reported experiencing some form of depression and anxiety.

**73% ADULTS RESPONDENTS
HAD EXPERIENCED ANXIETY,
LONELINESS, DEPRESSION,
HOPELESSNESS AND INABILITY
TO COPE.**

Children's access to learning materials has been reduced.

- 11% of children respondents have experienced loss of access to learning materials, which were previously provided by schools.
- 12% of children respondents noted that schools closures led to lost access to necessary items previously provided by their school, such as meals and sanitary products.

I. STUDY BACKGROUND

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) Director General declared the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) (WHO, 2020a), then on 11 March 2020 declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic (WHO, 2020b). The government of Albania initiated restricted measures on the 9th of March upon the confirmation of the first infected person, with the closure on the same date of all first, secondary and tertiary education institutions as well as nurseries and kindergartens. The measures were intensified with the implementation of community lockdowns, inability of children to go outdoors and official permission to do grocery shopping. Healthcare centers were functioning with limited capacity and only for extreme urgencies. As this report is being written, nearly 44 million people from 200 countries have been infected and nearly 1.16 million have died (WHO 2020d).

The global coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak is already having a serious impact on global and national economies, health systems, education systems and ultimately on the fulfilment of children's rights, among others. Albania has been particularly affected, especially after the hardship faced from the earthquake of the 26th November, 2019. As confirmed by various national and international institutions, the economic decrease will be 7.5% this year

as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the 2019 earthquake. On September 30, the Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) also stated that Albania's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell at a rate of 10.2 percent during the second quarter of 2020. The significant drop in outputs reflected the worst-hit period by the pandemic lockdown, travel restriction, and prevention measures to contain the spread of the virus. In the World Bank report, Albania's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to decline by 8.4% this year, downgrading its forecast for a 5% contraction made in June. According to the same report, poverty is likely to rise in 2020, affecting up to 41% of the Albanian families, regardless of the government's efforts to counter the crisis.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 RESEARCH PURPOSE

This research report presents selected findings from a large-scale cross-thematic research study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and their families in Albania. The purpose of this study is to understand:

1. The impact of school closures, home isolation/quarantine and community lockdown on children's health, nutrition, learning, wellbeing and protection.
2. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households with children.
3. The health, psychosocial, learning and protection needs of children during times of school closures, home isolation/quarantine and community lockdown.
4. Children's right to be heard when talking about COVID-19.
5. Children's messages for leaders and other children around the world.

This knowledge will be used by Save the Children and shared with governments, donors, partners and other stakeholders to inform the development of a variety of information products, services, programmes and policies across multiple sectors.

2.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research report presents findings addressing the following child poverty-related research questions:

- What are the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on households with children?
- What social protection mechanisms do households with children have access to?
- What are the coping strategies of households with children?
- Can households with children pay for their essential needs?
- What are the economic needs of children during these periods?
- How could the COVID-19 pandemic affect livelihoods moving forward?
- What is the care burden on households with children?

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This section provides a summary of the study research design and methods. The full Study Methods Report describes in detail the methods and sample, as well as the limitations of the design and methods. The full Study Methods Report is available here: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/hidden-impactcovid-19-children-global-research-series>.

This study was approved by Save the Children US Ethics Review Committee (SCUS-ERC-FY2020-33).

2.3.1 STUDY POPULATIONS AND SCOPE

This research study was carried out among current programme beneficiaries of Save the Children-led projects in Albania, such as the:

- Education project
- Child protection project
- Juvenile Justice project
- Children Keeping Children Safe
- ECCD for Roma children
- Boosting Breakthroughs for Youth
- Towards an inclusive education for children with disability
- Community centers for children with disability in almost Table

There were 385 interviews carried out in 14 cities and 11 villages, as per Table I, out of a total number of 5123 program beneficiaries. Out of 385, 343 were cleared from the regional Save the Children office to be further evaluated for the purpose of this study. The number of interviews per each project depended on the number of parents they worked in proportion with total number of beneficiaries (parents). There were 8 project locations. The proportion of project beneficiaries per total and number of beneficiaries varies from 0.8% to 46.6%. The same proportion of interviews is calculated in the sample per each project. Then the total number of interviews of the project (ex. 67) will be equally divided by project location (ex. 3) so in each project location conducted were 23 interviews (11 in rural and 11 in urban areas). Please find below in table I a detailed explanation of number of interviews per project.

	Project	Location	Nr of beneficiarie s/parents	%	Nr of interviews
	Education project	Burrel, Gjirokaster, Elbasan	895	17.4%	67 in total, 23 per location (11 in villages and 11 in cities)
	Child protection project	Shkoder, Mat, Tirane, Gjirokaster Sarande.	762	14.8%	57 in total, 12 per location
	Juvenile Justice project	Berat, Gjirokaster	42	0.8%	57 in total, 12 per location
	Children Keeping Children Safe	Peshkopi, Durrës, Elbasan, Burrel	2389	46.6%	180 in total, 45 per location
	ECCD for Roma children	Elbasan, Fier, Durrës	476	9.2%	36 in total (7 per settlement)
	Boosting Breakthroughs for Youth	Shkoder, Cerrik	285	5.5%	22 in total (11 per location)
	Towards an inclusive education for children with disability	Elbasan, Korce	181	3.5%	14 in total (7 per location)
	Community centers for children with disability	Durrës, Kukes, Vlore	123	2.4%	3 (3 per location)
Total			5123		385

2.3.2 SAMPLING, RECRUITMENT AND DATA COLLECTION MECHANISMS

The research was designed to obtain a representative sample of the current Save the Children beneficiaries. Remote data collection methods had to be used due to the presence of COVID-19 and the risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19 during in-person data collection activities. The study population is restricted only to those programme participants with remote contact details (phone number or email) listed at the individual or household level.

There were only two eligibility criteria for participation in the study:

1. Adult respondents (aged 18 and above) had to be parents and/or caregivers of children aged 0–17 living in the same household (Part 1 of the survey); 385 respondents
2. Child respondents had to be aged 11–17 (Part 2 of the survey). 134 children out of 385 respondents.

Data was collected through a single online SurveyMonkey (Enterprise version) survey. The majority of beneficiaries, in the majority of cities, were reached by phone and invited to participate in the study. In these cases, an interviewer would talk through the survey and enter the participants' responses directly into the online survey on their behalf.

The minimum requirements for participation in the study were a confidence level of 90% and margin of error of 5%.

For the majority of countries, this meant a minimum sample size of 273 adult respondents; in Albania the sample size is of 385 and 119 were children. A detailed description of the sampling approach and final response numbers per participating country can be found in the full Study Methods Report, available at:

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/hidden-impact-covid-19-children-globalresearch-series>.

2.3.3 THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Data was collected through a single survey divided into two parts. The first part was for the adult parent or caregiver and gathered household level information, as well as information specifically about the parent/caregiver and children in their care. This part of the survey questionnaire also prompted the parent/caregiver to think about one particular child ('the indexed child') and answer some specific questions about them related to COVID-19.

Prompts in the survey were designed to prioritise the capture of data on school-age children, while still facilitating the collection of data on an even spread of children of different ages.

If the adult parent/caregiver had a child aged 11–17, they were then asked whether they consented to their child answering some additional survey questions – the second part of the survey. If the adult parent/caregiver consented, they passed the survey to their child, who then went through an assent process before being asked to answer the children's questions.

Only one adult and one child (aged 11–17) per household could take part in the survey. If the adult had more than one child aged 11–17, then they could choose which child would complete the children's section of the survey.

There are various limitations with the questionnaire structure that are discussed in the full Study Methods Report, available at:

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/hiddenimpact-covid-19-children-global-researchseries>.

2.3.4 DATA COLLECTED

The survey was designed to capture information across multiple sectors or themes, including household economies, health and nutrition, child education and learning, child protection and child rights. An overview of the data collected in the survey are shown in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2 OVERVIEW OF DATA VARIABLES

Variable Level	Household	Individual Level	
Respondent	Parent	Parent	Child
Subject of Variable	Household	Parent	Child Participant
Item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Closure • Lockdown • Settlement Type • Number/Gender of Adults • Number/Gender of Children • Income lost (amount) • Income lost (sources) • Ability to pay for basic needs • Coping strategies in home • Government support and social protection • Household physical health and nutrition • How many household illnesses since COVID-19 • Barriers to medical care • Barriers to medications • Barriers to food and nutrition • Barriers to other health/ sanitation items • Medical care, medication and other health/ sanitation items needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age • Minority status • Disability status • Relationship to children in household • Parent's/caregiver's wellbeing and perceptions of family relationships • Parent's/caregiver's feelings and worries • Changes in relationships with children and in the household • Violence in the home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age • Children's learning and education: • Whether children feel they are learning at home • What helps or stops children from learning at home • Children's wellbeing: • What children do to have fun • What children miss and miss out on by not attending school • Children's contact with friends • How children describe their home situation • What children have enjoyed most about being at home • Children's rights: • Children's right to information about COVID-19 • Children's right to be heard when talking about COVID-19 • Children's messages for leaders • Children's messages for other children around the world

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Probability weighing was used to weigh the beneficiary sample against the total beneficiary population. Regression analysis was performed using the F-Statistic test in STATA. A p-value of <0.05 was used to denote statistical significance. The quotes featured in this report were selected following qualitative analysis of five open-ended survey questions answered by the child respondents, which were:

1. Q17 - What can adults in your home do differently during the outbreak of COVID-19?
2. Q18 - What have you enjoyed most about this time?
3. Q19 - What worries you the most about the COVID-19 outbreak?
4. Q20 - If you were asked to write a letter to leaders in your country, what would you say?
5. Q21 - What message do you have for children in other countries affected by COVID-19?

The qualitative analysis employed a conceptual content approach to identify key themes that children described. The framework allowed flexibility to code inductively and therefore new emerging themes were added during the coding process. The research team provided the quotes and some demographic information about the child and family they belong to. Each child had a different row in the dataset. A specific number was given to themes and subthemes in columns. The quotes and the sub-theme categories were reviewed and all of the children's open-ended responses were examined and coded, irrespective of any perceptions on saturation point. Quotes and case studies reported because of the qualitative data analysis are consistent with these key themes, or were noted as particularly important to the child respondent.

The qualitative data analysis identified themes/sub-themes that are common throughout these hundreds/thousands of responses. The analysis served to identify and select several quotes that best represent each of these common themes/sub-themes. These common themes/sub-themes are part recommendations and conclusions of this report, and the example quotes will be used in the Save the Children in advocacy, campaigning and media/communications.

3.1 STUDY SAMPLE NUMBER AND CHARACTERISTICS

Data was collected from 343 adult respondents and 134 child respondents, from across 10 Cities, Shkodra, Tirana, Gjirokastra, Elbasan, Durres, Burrel, Cerrik, Korca, Saranda and Kukës. The detailed characteristics of the programme participant respondents are presented in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3: SAVE THE CHILDREN PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS RESPONDENTS CHARACTERISTICS SAMPLE

Variable	Adult Respondent Parent/Caregiver		Child Respondent (11-17 AGE)	
	Number of Adult Respondent	Percentage of Adult Respondents	Number of child respondents	Percentage of child respondents
TOTAL	343	100	134	100
REGION				
Shkodra	17	5%	6	4%
Tirana	26	8%	5	4%
Gjirokastra	42	13%	16	13%
Elbasan	20	6%	12	9%
Durres	51	15%	13	10%
Burrel	33	11%	13	11%
Cerrik	5	1%	4	3%
Korca	6	2%	0	1%
Saranda	9	3%	5	4%
Kukes	5	1%	1	1%
Fier	7	2%	6	4%
Vlore	2	1%	2	1%
No region re- ported	66	20%	30	23%
GENDER				
Female	113	33%	72	55%
Male	87	26%	57	43%
Prefer not to say	5	1%	N/A	N/A
No Response	135	40%	5	8%
AGE				
11-14	N/A	N/A	70	54%
15-17	N/A	N/A	64	46%
18-24	17	5%	N/A	N/A
25-29	28	8%	N/A	N/A
30-39	114	34%	N/A	N/A
40-49	82	24%	N/A	N/A
50-59	18	5%	N/A	N/A
60+	0	0%	N/A	N/A
No response	75	22%	N/A	N/A

DISABILITY STATUS				
Has Disability	18	5%	N/A	N/A
Does Not Have Disability	217	63%	N/A	N/A
Partial Disability	25	7%	N/A	N/A
No Response	83	24%	N/A	N/A

TABLE 3: SAVE THE CHILDREN PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS RESPONDENTS CHARACTERISTICS SAMPLE

Variable	Adult Respondent Parent/Caregiver		Child Respondent (11-17 AGE)	
	Number of Adult Respondent	Percentage of Adult Respondents	Number of child respondents	Percentage of child respondents
TOTAL	343	100	134	100
BELONGS TO A MINORITY				
Yes	79	23%	N/A	N/A
No	153	46%	N/A	N/A
No response	111	31%	N/A	N/A
WEALTH				
Poor (below me- dian wealth index)	68	20%	35	31%
Not poor (on or above the median wealth index)	76	22%	50	42%
No Response	199	58%	31	27%
SETTLEMENT TYPE				
City	233	29%	67	58%
Village	100	68%	49	42%
Small Town	8	2%	N/A	N/A

4. FINDINGS

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread with alarming speed, infecting millions and bringing economic activity to a near-standstill as countries imposed tight restrictions on movement to halt the spread of the virus. As the health and human toll grows, the economic and social damage is already evident and represents the largest economic and emotional shock the world has experienced in decades. The June 2020 Global Economic Prospects presents forecast envisions a 5.2 percent contraction in global GDP in 2020, marking thus the deepest global recession in several decades. Governments have taken unprecedented measures to stop the downturn with fiscal and monetary policy support. Over the longer horizon, the deep recessions triggered by the pandemic are expected to leave lasting scars through lower investment, an erosion of human capital through lost work and schooling, and fragmentation of global trade and supply linkages and that achievement of the SDG 2030 objectives will be compromised. While children do not seem to be severely affected by the pandemic in terms of health (although emerging evidence suggests that COVID-19 poses a health threat to them as well), they are becoming the biggest victims of its social and economic impacts. COVID-19 will likely push children into poverty or exacerbate existing deprivation from both a monetary and a multidimensional poverty angle.

Albania economy, healthcare and schooling system has been deeply affected by the effects of the restriction measures triggered by the need to deter the spreading of COVID 19 pandemic. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) team stated that Albania's economic output is expected to decrease by 7.5% this year as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the 2019 earthquake, more than the 5% contraction previously projected. The IMF also expects Albania's fiscal deficit to increase to about 7% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and the public debt-to- GDP ratio to rise to 80% in 2020. This statement was further supported when on the 30 September, the Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) stated that Albania's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell at a rate of 10.2% during the second quarter of 2020. The significant drop in outputs reflected the worst-hit period by the pandemic lockdown, travel restriction, and prevention measures to prevent the spread of the virus. Data from INSTAT confirm that trade, transport, accommodation, and food services had the largest contribution to the GDP decline by -4.11%. The activity, in these sectors and many others, was almost completely stopped as Albania was under lockdown orders during April. Other sectors that had an impact on the GDP decline were Net Taxes (-1.85%); Extractive industry, manufacturing, power, water (-1.45%); and Professional and administrative activity (-1.23%), among others. Immediately after the publication by INSTAT, the Bank of Albania (BoA) governor confirmed that the Albanian economy is expected to contract 7.6% this year in view of the impact of the Novel coronavirus epidemic. A related World Bank statement noted that Albania's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to decline by 8.4% this year, downgrading its forecast for a 5% contraction made in June. According to the same report Albania is facing a significant fall in employment and GDP due to the effects of the November 2019 earthquake and the COVID-19 pandemic. Poverty is likely to rise in 2020, affecting up to 41% of the Albanian families, regardless of the government's efforts to counter the crisis, the World Bank noted.

The healthcare sector is also facing difficulties, with the COVID 19 new cases increasing exponentially. As of 26th of October 2020, only 3.95% (113,781) of the population is tested, of which 17,09% of those tested (919,445) have been infected, and 8260 active cases of COVID-19. This is pushing the government into talking and studying the possibility to return restriction measures, the social and economic impact of which could be devastating.

4.1. WHAT ARE THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN?

As evidenced by this survey, Albania has been greatly affected by the restriction measures, with almost half of the respondents, 49% reported losing an income, and a 20% reported they did not, but it is interesting to know that the remaining respondents preferred not to answer this particular question. 14% of the respondents reported to losing all of their income, 20% lost about half of their income and 12% losing less than quarter of it.

FIGURE 1: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO REPORTED THE LOSS OF A HOUSEHOLD INCOME SOURCE SINCE THE START OF THE PANDEMIC

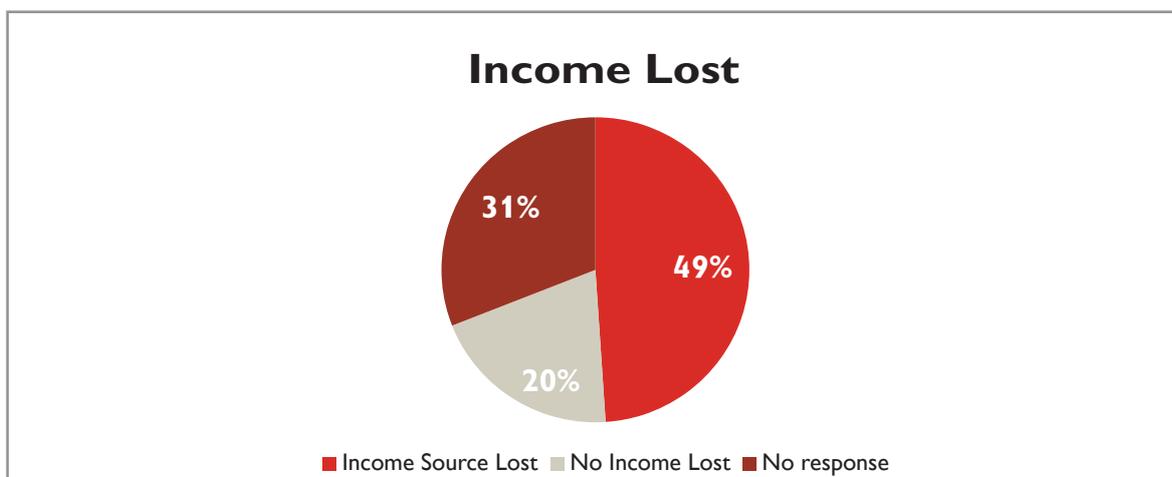
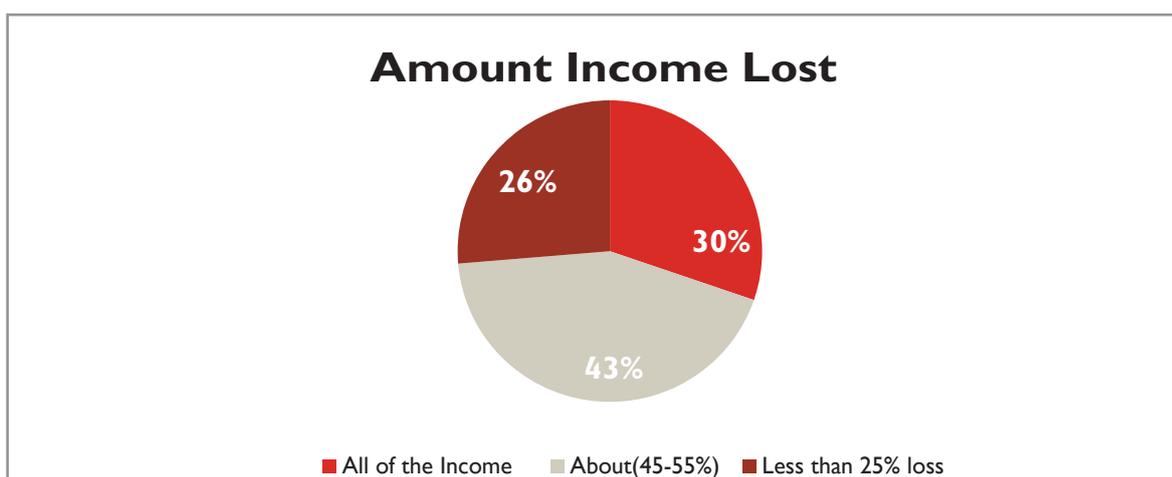


FIGURE 2: PROPORTION OF DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLD INCOME LOSS INCURRED DUE TO COVID-19



Among those who lost income:

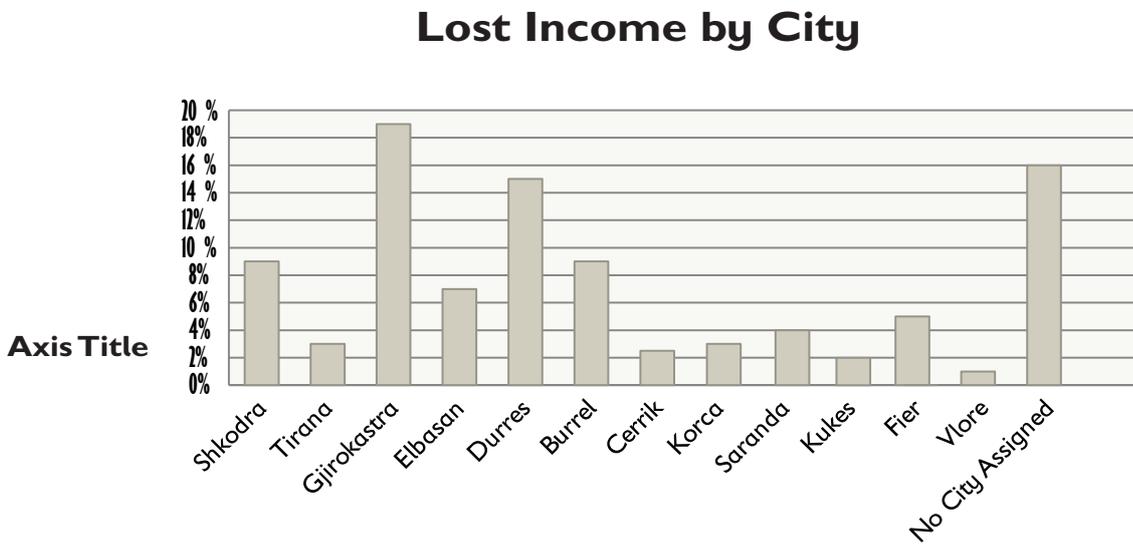
23% of the respondents reported losing the job of one of the bread winners

7% reported losing supportive income sent from family or friends.

7% reported not receiving monetary anymore support from the Government.

Among our programme participant population, respondents in Gjirokastra were most affected by income losses – **80% of respondents in this region reported an income loss – followed by Shkoder and Durres (60%).**

FIGURE 3: PROPORTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WHO HAVE LOST INCOME DUE TO COVID-19 BY REGION



2. CAN HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN PAY FOR THEIR ESSENTIAL NEEDS?

Findings in this survey indicate that COVID-19 households are struggling to pay for essential items more than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost 70% of respondents that reported lost of income, had difficulty in securing food or critical nutrients, thus marking 31% of total respondents being unable to secure enough food in the last couple of days. One quarter 23% have reported great difficulties in paying for medical assistance such as; healthcare (10%), medical supplies (6%), disability services (3%), assistive medical devices and medical care helpers. 8% have difficulties in providing learning materials for their children. A strong majority of households that can be classified as relatively poor struggle to pay for food (92%).

70 % of adult respondents that had lost income reported struggling to pay for food due to income loss caused by COVID-19.

“My parents can no longer go and sell our produce in the market therefore we can lose everything”

17 years old Girl, rural Albania

Out of 169 individuals that reported loss of income, 53% of them did not receive any governmental support, after the pandemic outbreak.

3. WHAT ARE THE MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES OF POVERTY AND COVID-19?

The findings of this survey show that there is close link between income loss and emotional and psychological wellbeing for both adults and children. **More than half (52%) of children from households that lost more than half of their income reported feeling ‘less happy’ than before the pandemic**, compared to 69% of children from households that did not incur income losses. Similarly, a smaller proportion of children (23%) from households that had lost more than half of their income reported feeling about as happy as before, compared to 45% of children from households that did not incur such losses.

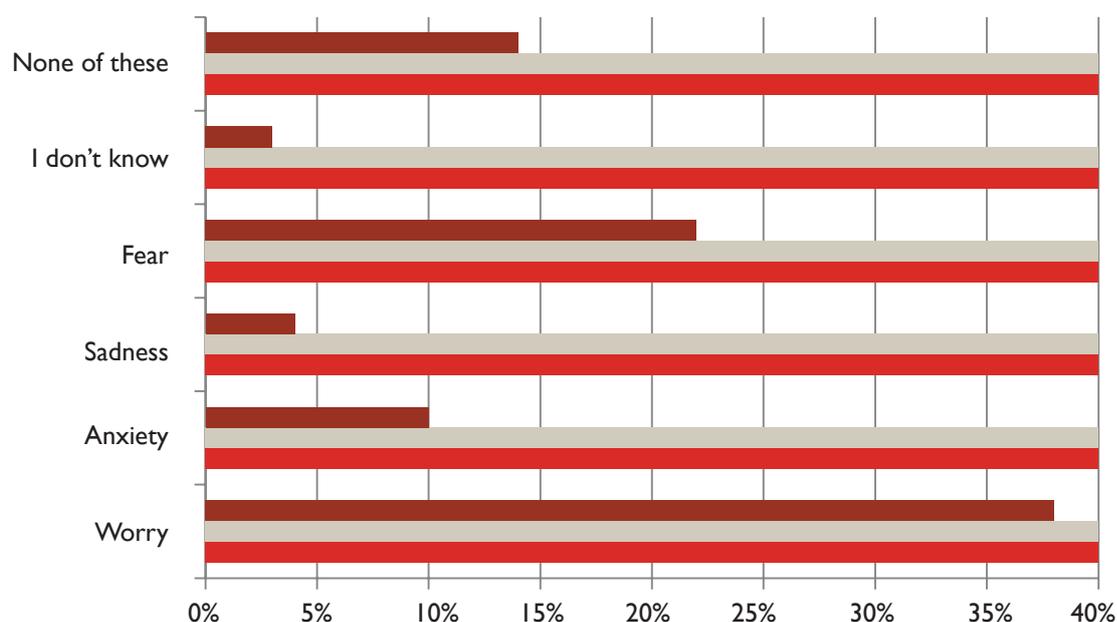
“I need my parents to be calmer and not yell so much, as they are driving me crazy. They unload all their worries on the children”

14 year old girl from urban area, Albania

Another interesting factor to analyse is the ability of parents/caregivers to provide children with their usual regular health and rehabilitation services, with 8% of the respondents admitting to not being able to do so since the outbreak of COVID 19, due to close of health centers and lack of public transportation.

During this survey, most of the parents expressed that their children were emotionally affected by the situation of Lockdown, with 38% of them expressing worry, 10% anxiety, 4% sadness and 22% fear. The affliction was manifested in a differentiated manner with bed wetting 2%, sleeping pattern changes 12%, changes in appetite 10%, changes in emotional regulation 8%, unusual crying and screaming 1%, more withdrawn 10%, more aggressive behavior 6%, other signs of distress 3%.

FIGURE 3: PROPORTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WHO HAVE LOST INCOME DUE TO COVID-19 BY REGION



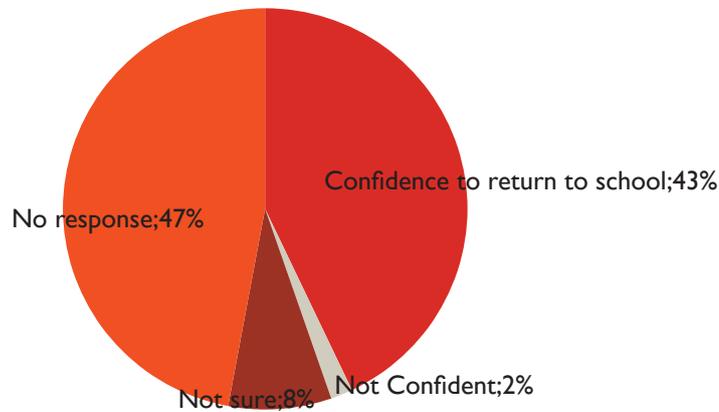
4. RETURN TO SCHOOL

During the study, the children respondent were attending school before the outbreak of COVID-19, with nearly 91% of them and no distinction between girls and boys and almost all of them were confident that they would eventually return to school, with only a 5% of them being fearful that they would not.

However, when parents were asked if they felt the confidence that their children would return to face to face learning, 43% of them were positive, 2% were inclined to think that would be no return to school, 8% were uncertain and the remaining 47% prefer to not respond.

FIGURE 5: PROPORTION OF PARENT CONFIDENCE ON RETURN TO SCHOOL

Parents Confidence to Return to School

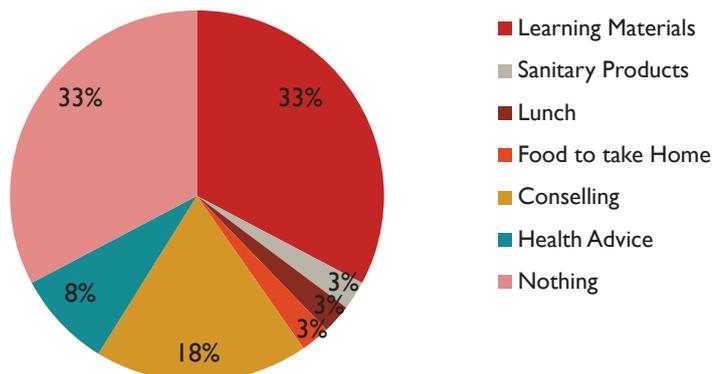


4.1 LEARNING MATERIALS

In terms of learning items children had access to during the pandemic and in what proportion, 6% of adult respondents reported that their children has no learning materials, 22% used Worksheet and Activity Sheets, 32% used textbooks, 2% Braille books, 24% Reading books, 6% Electronic books, 5% Educational Radio programs, 18% Educational TV programs, 16% Educational Apps for phone or tablet, 16% Educational program to use with computer, 28% the internet. However, children responded reported also loss of educational materials and education system support items during the pandemic.

FIGURE 5: EDUCATION SUPPORT LOSS

Education Support Loss



Children's messages

“

“All children are equal and we have equal rights and why some have much better conditions than others not. They should not discriminate them but if they can they should help them, and if this would seem like a fairy tale they should be at least once be on their feet and then you can understand the tears of the orphans, the tears of the homeless, of the poor people who collect things on the streets to earn a living”

15-year-old girl, rural area Albania

“

“The only thing I would ask my government is to manage better the situation and give more food provisions and relief for families that really need it. This should be done more seriously and more transparently”

16-year-old girl, urban area Albania

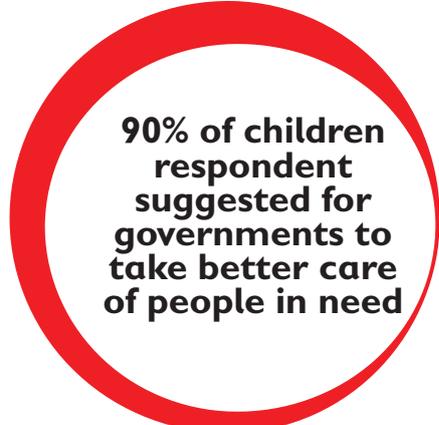
“

“I ask my parents to use this time to spend more time together, talk to us more and take part in our activities”

16-year-old-boy., urban area Albania

5. Recommendations

Save the Children has a crucial role to play, in coalition with other active international donors toward the protection of children's right, to increase understanding of social protection and children rights understanding among governmental institutions and civil society to develop policies that would help address the economic needs of households, and to advocate for the increased coverage of social protection. We advocate that government leaders, including high-level decision makers, must step up immediate efforts to protect children from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by:



**90% of children
respondent
suggested for
governments to
take better care
of people in need**

- Prioritizing the basic needs of households with children to address repercussion caused by income loss after the onset COVID -19 pandemic, such as limitation to food, nutrient items, learning materials, access to basic medical care and habitation, through the deliverance of social protection schemes, such as emergency income support schemes.
- Prioritizing basic healthcare needs of the most deprived and marginalized children, such as through child grants and mobile basic health care and home health care provision.
- Providing opportunities for children to continue their education through online platforms wherever possible, including specific additional support to the poorest households and to girls, who may be at risk of education deficits.
- Ensuring other forms of communication are available for those children who do not have access to the internet, such as radio or mobile phone technology and paper-based learning packs. This is especially important given the unequal access to learning materials and online availability found in this study.
- Launch an awareness campaign on the emotional impacts caused by COVID-19 restrictive measures on both adults and children.
- Ensure the development of a mental health support strategy, to be rolled out in schools for crisis situation such as the one caused by the Earthquake of the 26th of November and the onset of restrictive measures caused by the onset of the COVID 19 Pandemic.
- Providing support to households in the geographic locations worst hit by the pandemic. This pandemic has posed the extreme inequalities in urban contexts. We have an opportunity to address deeply-rooted urban inequalities, reassess the food security of communities, their access to basic services, healthcare and their rights to access land and housing.
- Collaborating with organizations of persons with disabilities to ensure that their beneficiaries are aware of the available support and rights to social protection, and that cash transfer programs and the coverage of social protection systems include disability situation analysis, identification of households with disabilities in need and accessibility measures for service provision.



Save the Children

Rruga: Mihal Popi, Ndërtesa 7, ish Pallatet 1 Maji
(Vila Lami); PO Box 8185, Tiranë, Albania

Phone: +355 4 2261840/+355 42261929/+355 4 2266227

E-mail: info.albania@savethechildren.org

Web Page: albania.savethechildren.net

 [Savethechildrenal](#)

 [SaveChildrenAlb](#)

 [savethechildreninalbania](#)