

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

A study by a group of socially concerned citizens to understand the impact of COVID19 lockdown on rural households.

Based on Crowdsourced Data

Crowdsourcing data and translating questionnaire – Contributors

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Objective of the study

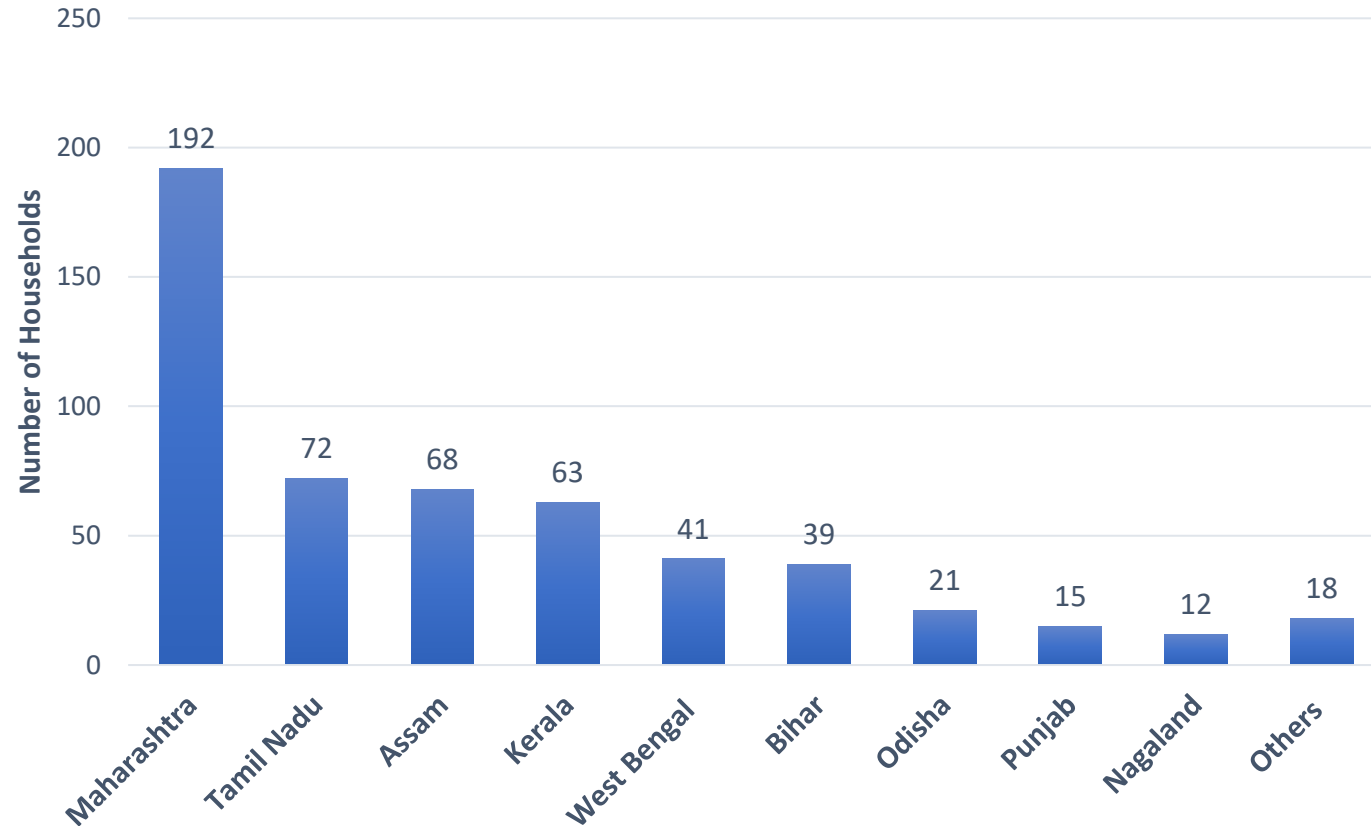
- **A rapid assessment of the effect of the COVID-19 induced lockdown on the rural households.**
- **What are the various coping mechanisms undertaken by the rural households?**
- **Assessment focused on:**
 - **Food security,**
 - **Change in expenditure pattern,**
 - **Readiness for the forthcoming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

Approach to the study

- Given the extraordinary situation we are in, the sampling strategy followed was guided by factors like **Spread**, **Speed** and **Simplicity**.
- **Spread** – A wide geographical coverage.
- **Speed** – Had to be completed within a time frame – effects could change over time making pooling of data difficult.
- **Simplicity** – telephonic interview – also the interview had to be kept short – we used free and open access tool (KoboToolbox) – closed ended responses – covering only *must ask* questions – a dipstick study.

Geographical spread

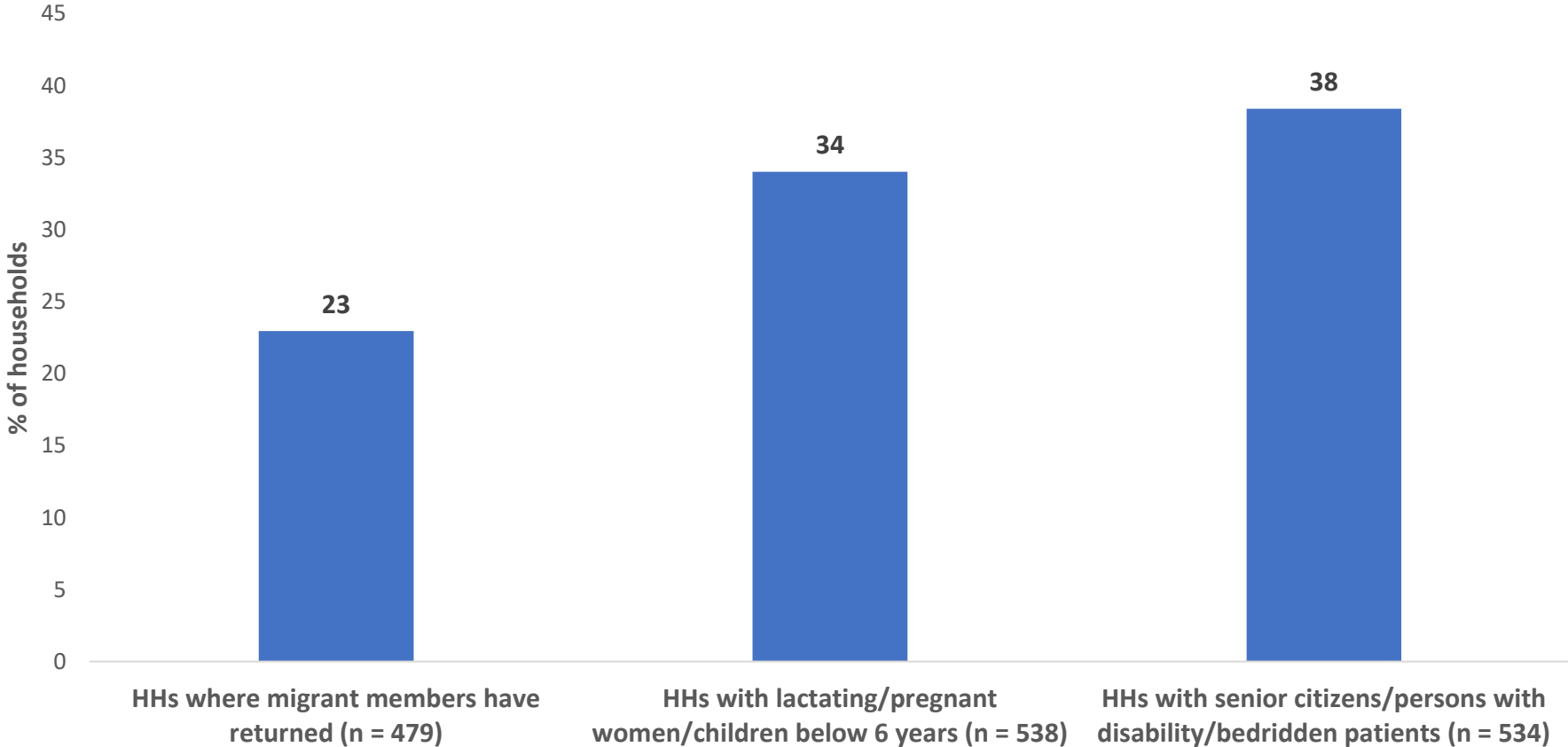
- 542 Households, 18 States, 90 Districts, 176 Talukas, 262 Villages
- Data collection took place between 26th April and 5th May 2020



States/UTs	Num of Districts
Maharashtra	22
Tamil Nadu	14
Assam	5
Kerala	12
West Bengal	3
Bihar	7
Odisha	3
Punjab	7
Nagaland	3
Others	14
Total	90

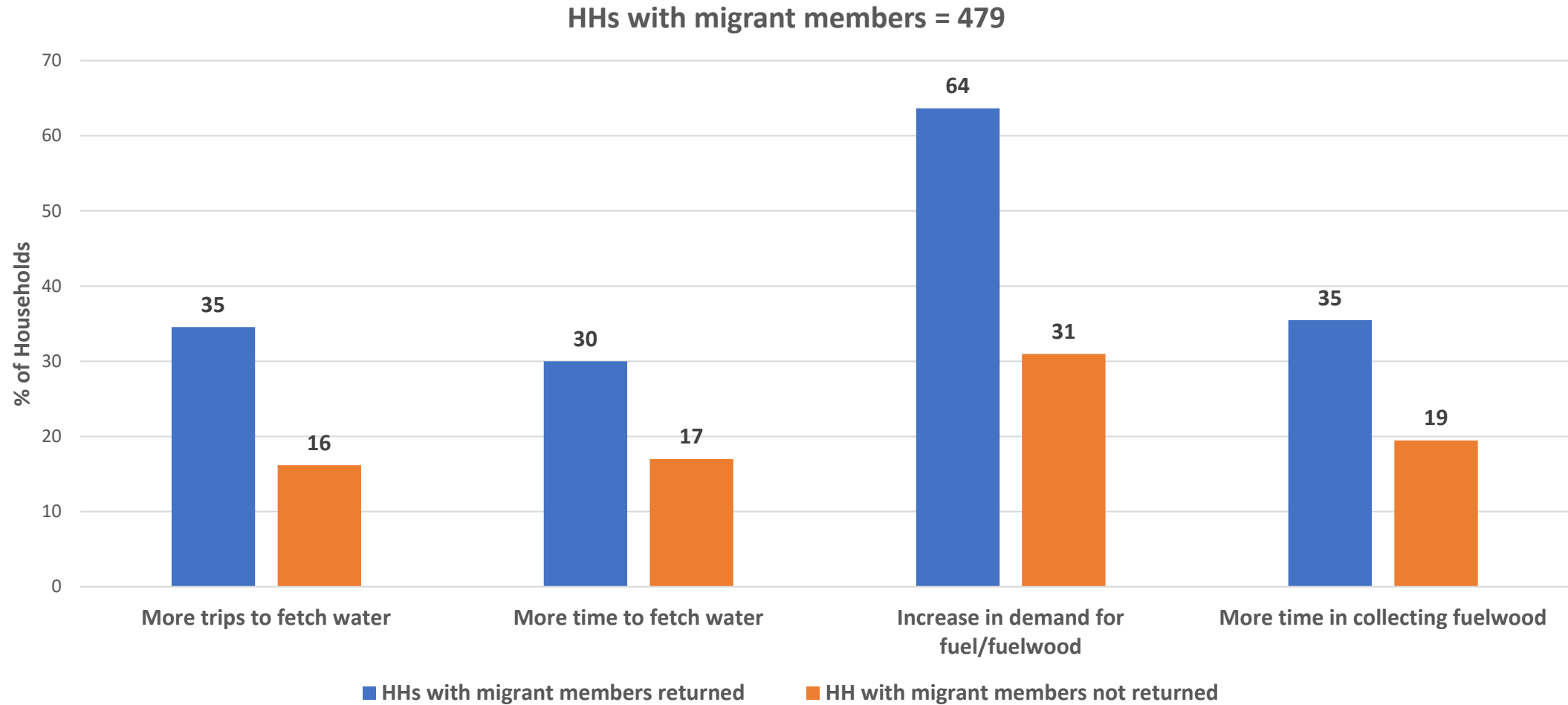
Key attributes of surveyed households

- 88% of households reported having migrant members, but few households (23%) migrants have returned.
- More than a one-third of the surveyed households reported dependent members (young children, bedridden, persons with disability, senior citizens, pregnant women, lactating mother).



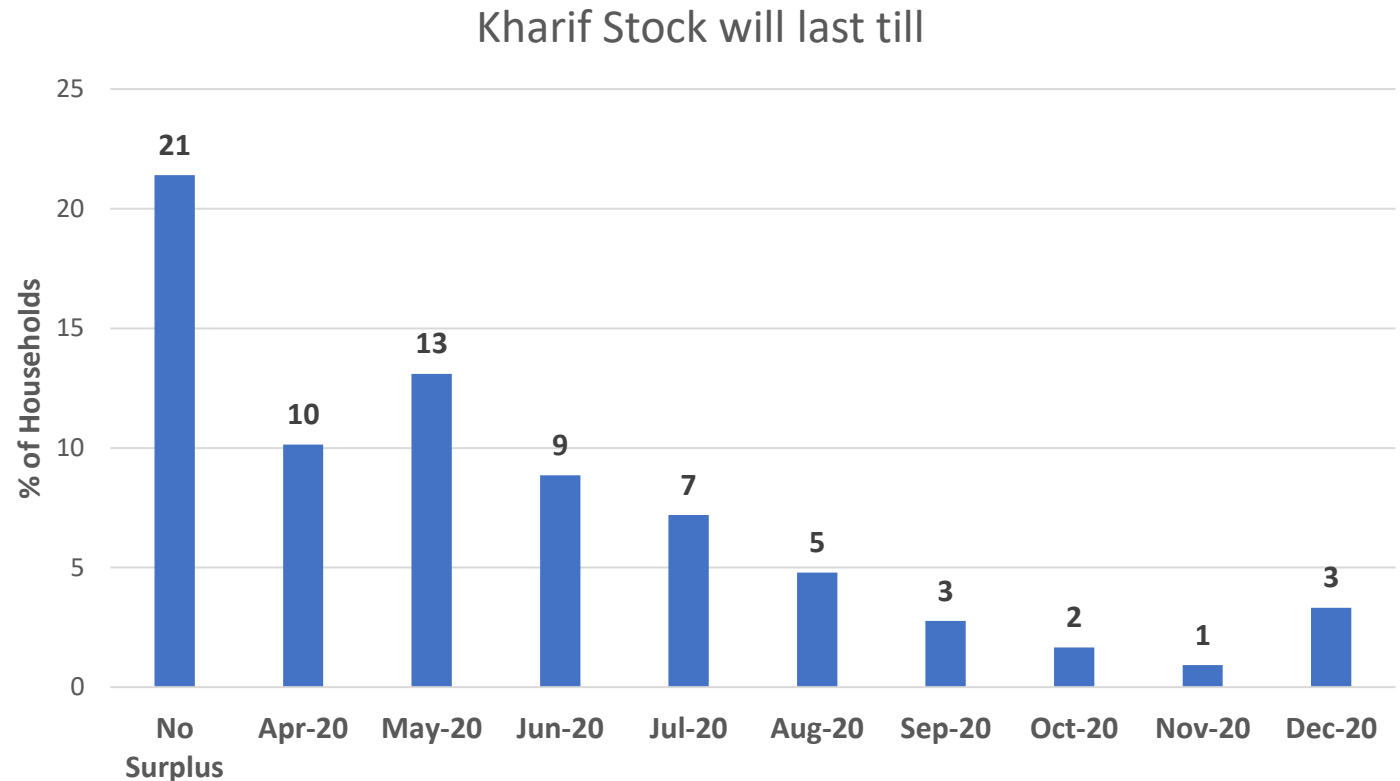
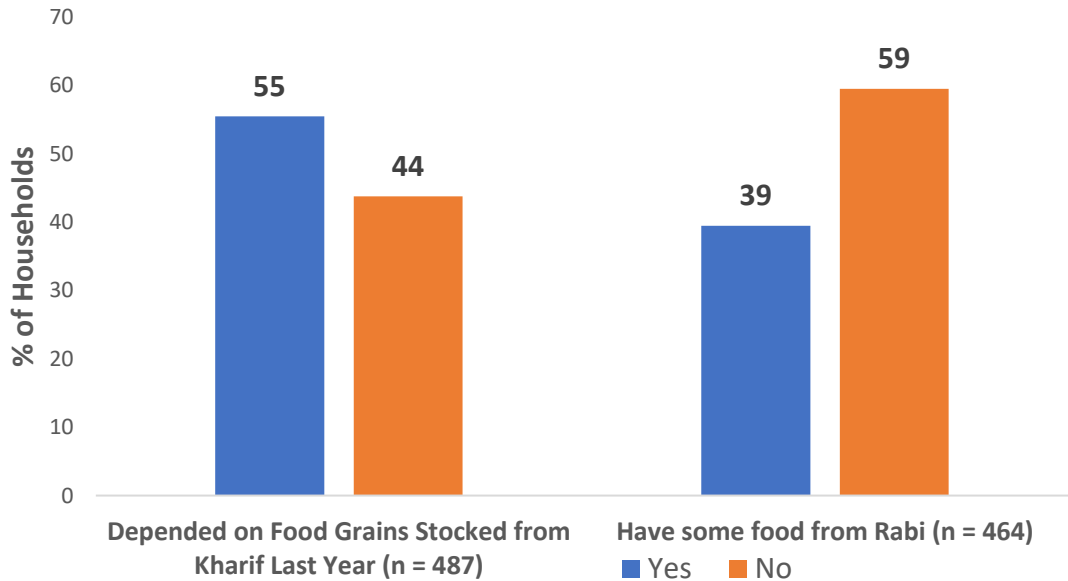
Workload within the household

- 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**



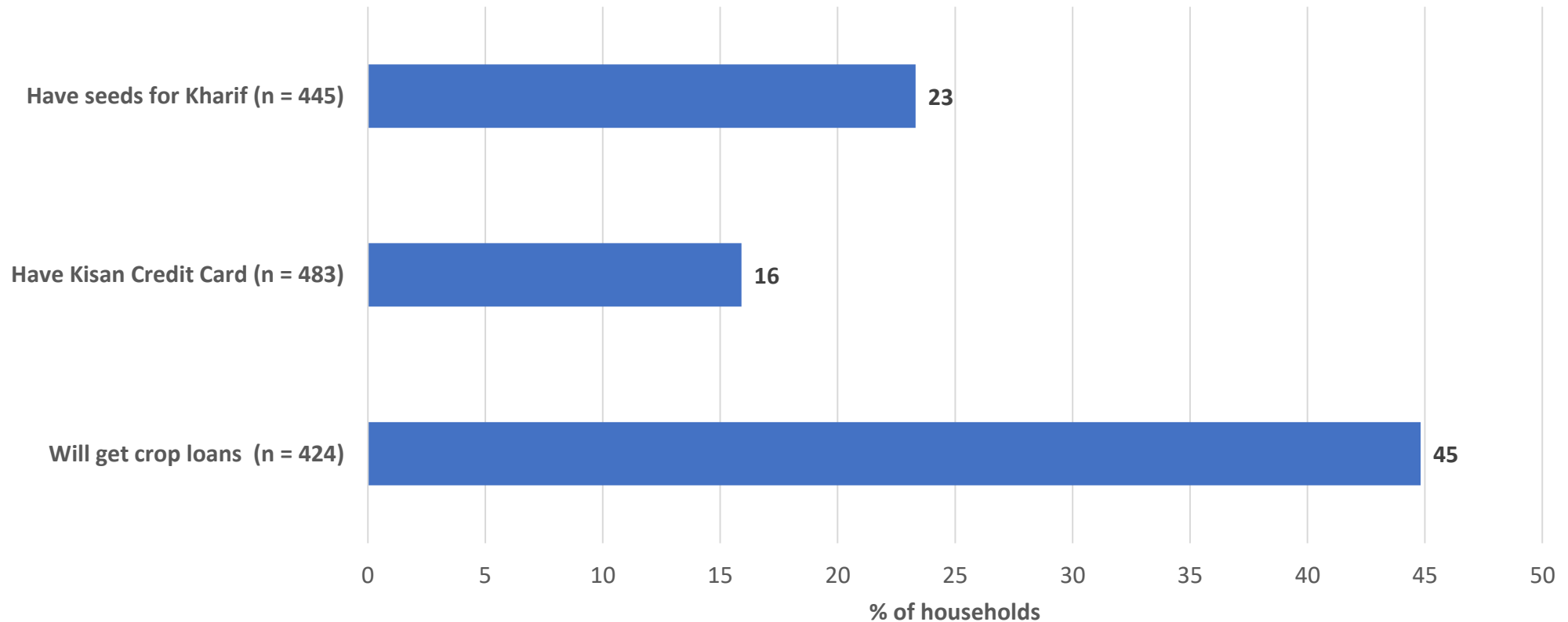
Existing food stock is depleting fast

- More people depended on Kharif 2019 for their food grain requirements than the Rabi 2019-2020.
- Kharif food stock is depleting fast
- 1/5th already used up their stock, 1/3rd would deplete stock by June 2020.
- Migrants are yet to return in most families – once they come – more pressure to the already depleting stock.
- **Focus on increased food provision through PDS and cultivating food crop in Kharif 2020.**



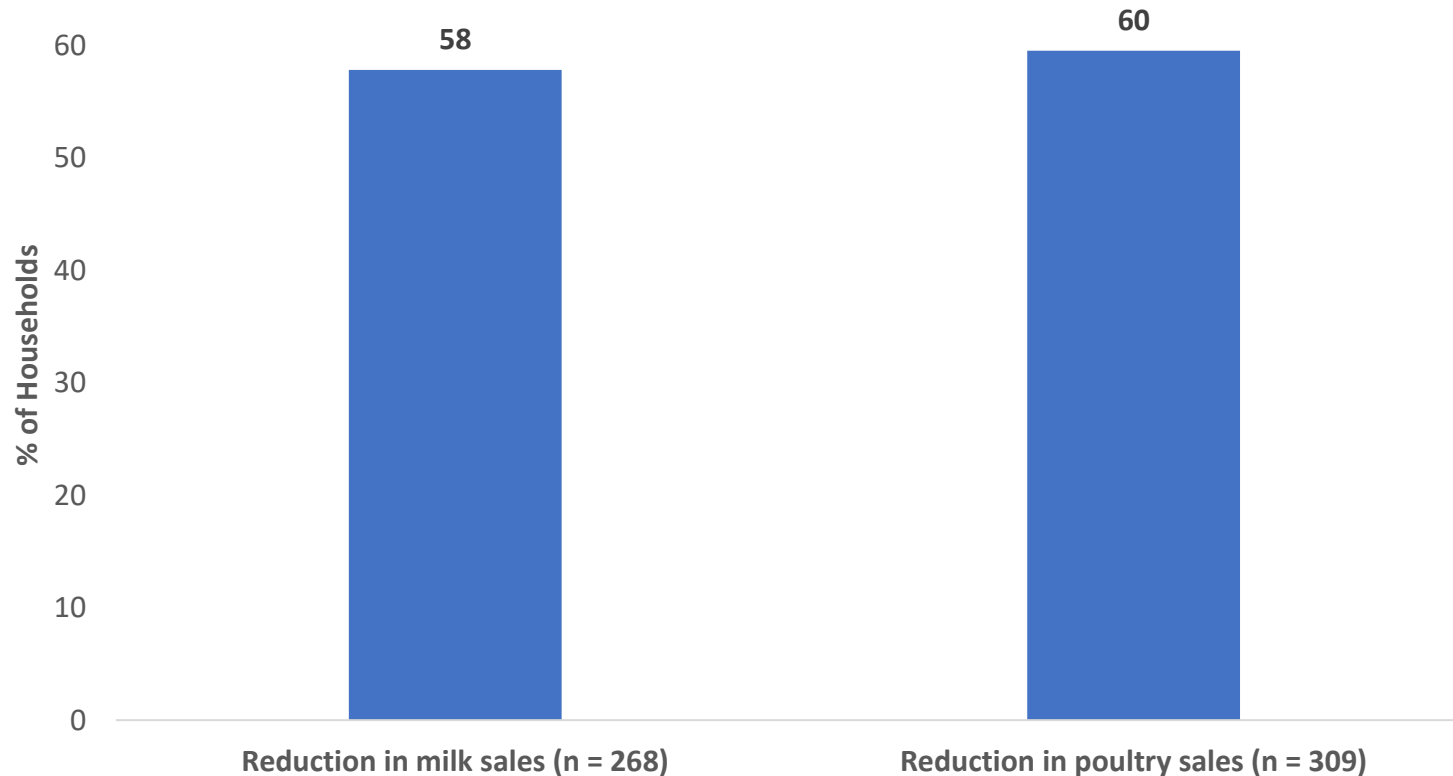
Preparedness for Kharif 2020 is low

- A quarter of the surveyed households have seeds for the upcoming Kharif.
- Less than 1/5th have Kisan Credit Card.
- Less than half of the respondents were of the view that they would get crop loans.
- **Make provision of seeds and credit for the upcoming Kharif season – put money in the hand of the people.**



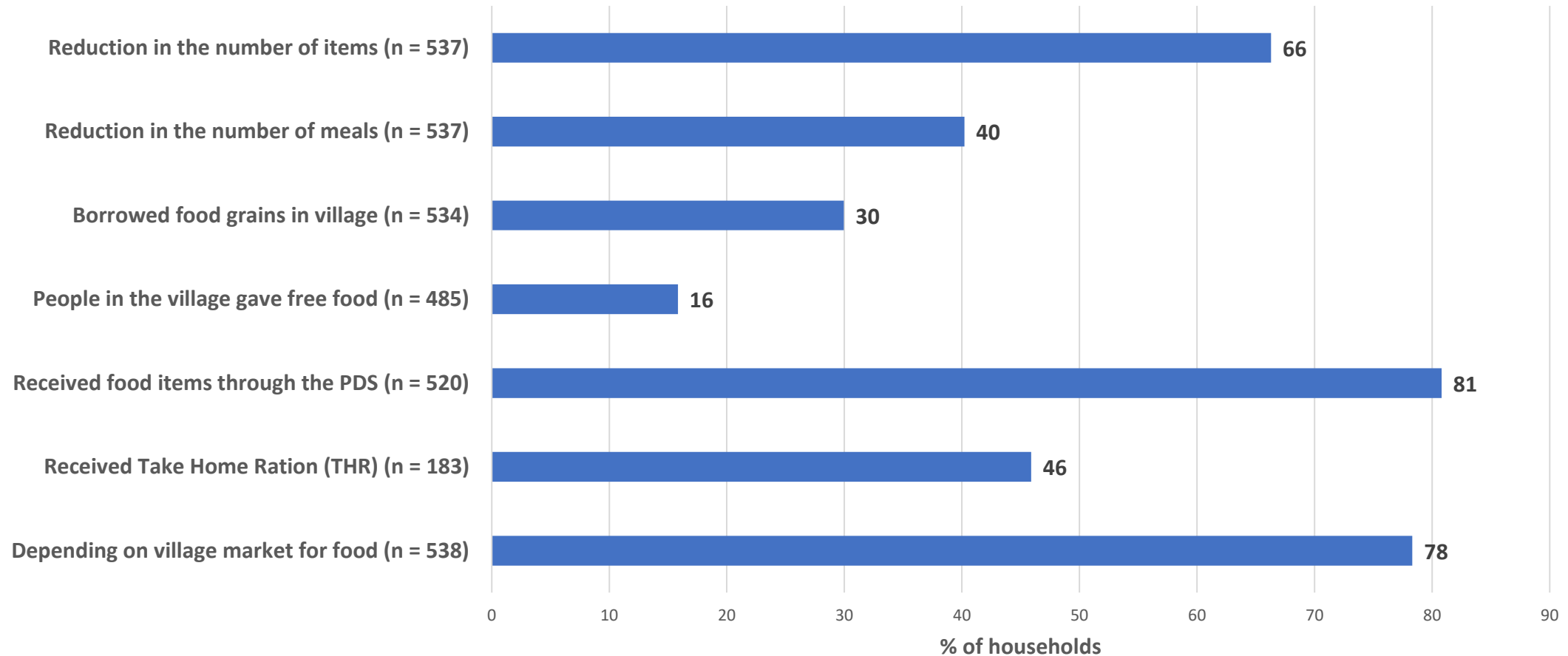
Reduced income from dairy and poultry

- Rumors first and then lockdown have adversely affected the income from dairy and poultry.
- Almost 50% of surveyed households sold milk – 58% of them have reported a reduction in sales.
- More than 57% of surveyed households are into poultry – 60% of them reported reduction in sales.



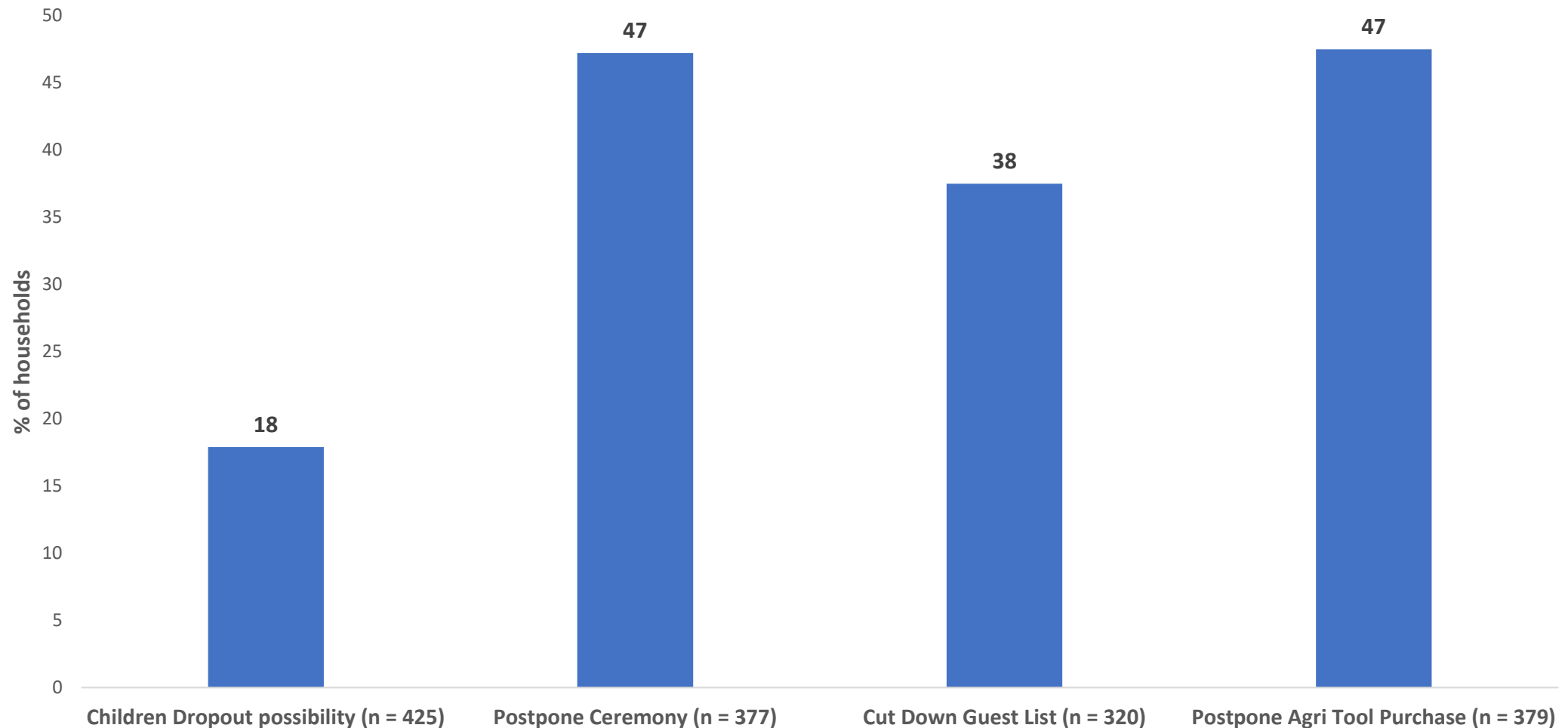
Coping: Immediate adjustments for food security

- More than 2/3rd of the households are eating fewer items and 40% have reduced the number of meals.
- Nearly 1/3rd households are borrowing food grains from others in the village.
- PDS working for the majority – 81% received food through PDS.



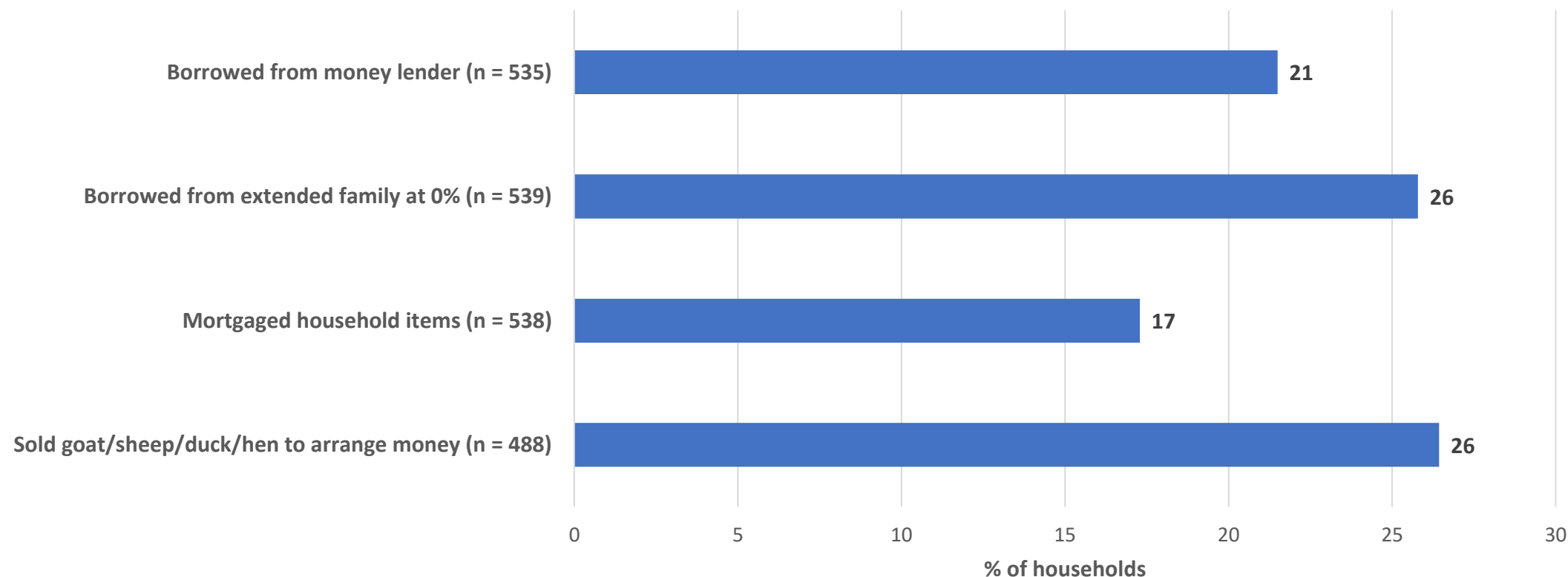
Coping: Postponing of discretionary expenses taking place

- Nearly 1/5th of respondents in households shared that its possible that children might dropout.
- Postponement of ceremony and downscaling of ceremonies is high.
- Nearly half of the respondents postponed purchase of agricultural tools.



Coping: Borrowing/Mortgaging/Selling of assets is taking place

- More than 1/4th of the families depended on family networks for borrowing.
- Borrowing from moneylender also reported for more than one fifth of the surveyed households.
- Mortgage of household items has started.
- More than a quarter have sold liquid assets like livestock.



Coping: Sale of productive assets has started

- Has implication on the long term economic base of the households.
- Expected to happen when a shock/stress has a prolonged/intense effect.
- More than 1/5th respondents already sold dry cattle
- 13% have mortgaged the land, close to 10% have sold in-milk cattle
- Land sale has started though low



Summary (1/2)

- Households have depended on Kharif stock more than Rabi – but that stock is now depleting.
- 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.**
- **But preparedness for Kharif 2020 is low – need for public support in terms of seed provision and credit for Kharif 2020.**
- Large chunk of migrants are yet to return – but already the increased workload within household enhances the drudgery faced by the women.

Summary (2/2)

- **Lockdown and rumors have indeed adversely affected income from 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 have started.**
- **We only got a snapshot – if we are able to resurvey the same households after couple of months we can see how the proportions are changing – that will give us a better idea on the effect and how people are changing their coping strategy over time.**

We once again thank you for all your help in collecting the data. In these extraordinary times, without your help we would not have been able to collect the data.

We plan to make the dataset public in due course of time. The analysis that you saw was basic aggregative descriptive analysis. We plan to analyze the dataset more in the coming days and aspire that this study can translate to positive action on ground, to improve the situation of lives in rural India.

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For any suggestions, doubts or complaints, please email us at covid19ruralresearch@gmail.com.

Once again THANK YOU.