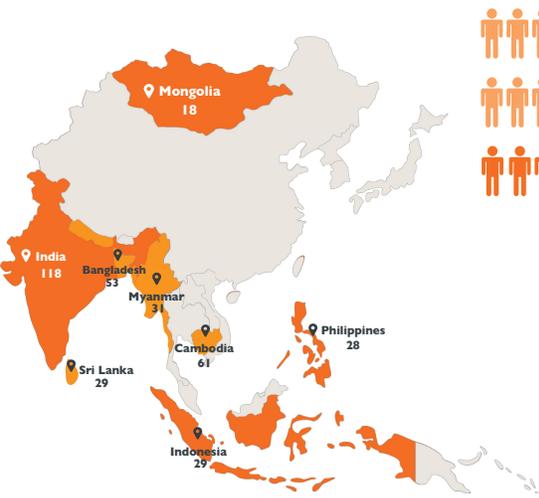


Unmasking the Impact

of COVID-19 on Asia's Most Vulnerable Children

We are facing a global health and economic crisis unlike any, since the second world war — one that is killing people, spreading human suffering, and turning people's lives upside down.

The **COVID-19 Early Recovery Assessment** includes a total of:



26,269 people
from **335** communities
across **9** countries
in ASIA PACIFIC

2,043 key stakeholders interviewed

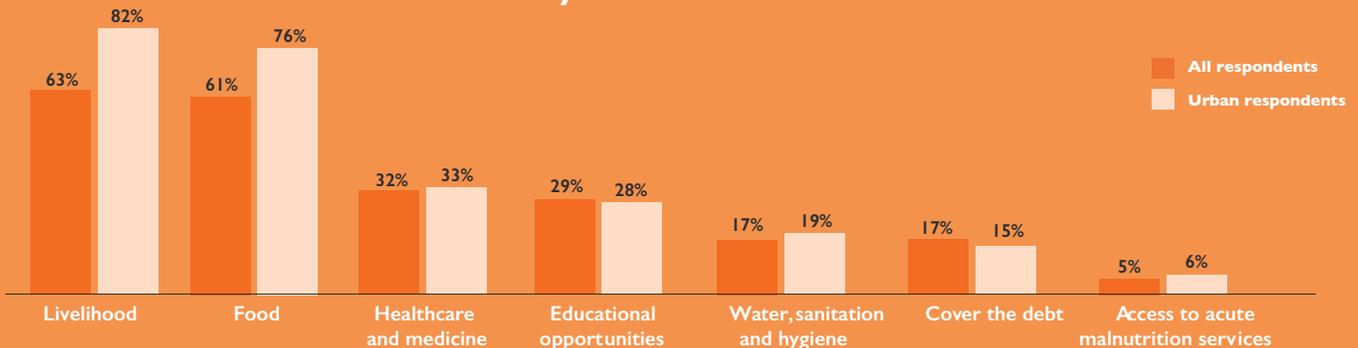
including parents/caregivers, children, community leaders, gov't, women's groups, faith leaders, local partners & CBOs

14,166 households surveyed
43% men
57% women
73% rural
20% urban
4% peri-urban

10,060 children surveyed
45% boys
55% girls

1,983 families having members with disability

LOSS OF LIVELIHOOD is the top-most concern for the rural and urban poor, followed by limited access to food.



Daily wage workers (59% of the sample), the largest segment in the survey, and the largest segment of many Asian economies, have been the hardest hit.

71% of that segment indicated that they have been **fully (34%) or severely affected (37%).**

“ I lost my husband two years ago. Before COVID-19, I worked as a maid in 3 houses. I lost my income after the pandemic as no one would allow me to work in their homes. I was helpless and resorted to begging from house to house. They told me to find other means of supporting my two children.” **Laila, 45, Bangladesh**

Highlights of the significant findings



61%
of respondents' livelihoods
fully affected



52%
of households rely on
less nutritious food



32%
of households are
diminishing core assets



27%
increased gap in access to basic hospital
services (34% for urban respondents)

Loss of livelihood is forcing parents and caregivers to take desperate measures that are negatively impacting children's well-being.



24% of parents/caregivers resorted to
physical punishment or emotional abuse
in the last month (40% for urban parents)

26% of children confirmed that caregivers had used
physical or psychological punishment in the
last month



47% of parents/caregivers are partially
able or completely unable to handle changes
in their children's behaviour



18% households reported experiencing
severe stress, while **5%** reported
mental health illnesses



In Bangladesh,
over **33%** of children
may be at risk
of engaging

in begging or other
high-risk jobs



and almost **2%** are likely
to be married off early.

Highlights of the key recommendations

National Governments

- 1 Scale-up social protection interventions for nutritious food, cash, and voucher assistance that are child-sensitive, gender-responsive which provide a pathway to broader social protection.
- 2 Optimise the targeting of beneficiaries in governmental social assistance schemes.
- 3 Increase investment in public works programmes.
- 4 Address the immediate gap in healthcare access, including community health worker scale-up and skill building.
- 5 Support micro, small, and medium enterprises to achieve business continuity through flexible finance.

International Cooperation Agencies & Multi-lateral Partners

- 1 Invest in economic recovery programmes that build household resilience to climate change and disaster impacts.
- 2 Leverage faith-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, and civil society actors' community engagement, footprint and reach to complement gov't capacity and efforts.

Implementing Partners

- 1 Strengthen social accountability mechanisms to ensure feedback to policymakers on the impact of their COVID-19-related policy implementation at the local level.
- 2 Ensure Cash Voucher programme assistance is market-based and linked to longer-term financial inclusion and economic recovery activities.
- 3 Use this crisis to "build back better" to link short-term emergency measures such as cash assistance to medium-term recovery efforts that are "green" and linked closely into local and national markets.

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