

# **COVID-19 induced Lockdown – How is the Hinterland Coping?**

## **A collaborative study by:**

PRADAN, Action for Social Advancement, BAIF, Transform Rural India Foundation,  
Grameen Sahara, SAATHI-UP and The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (India)

## **With research support of:**

VikasAnvesh Foundation and Sambodhi

# Sincere gratitude

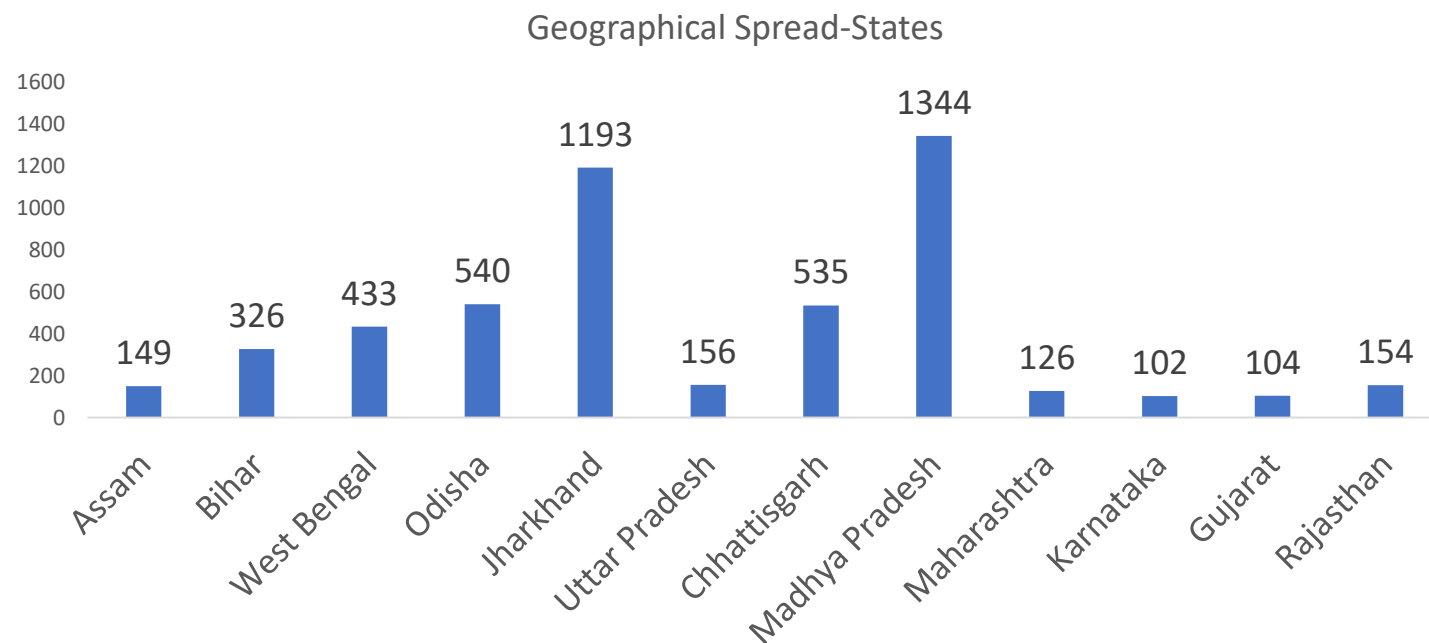
- To all the villagers we approached in the hinterland for the study, who in these extraordinary times gave their valuable time and input to complete the study .
- To all the key personnel, especially field personnel of the partner organizations for their extraordinary efforts to ensure data collection within an extremely tight timeline
- Special thanks, to Sridhar Anantha, for assisting the study with his expertize of the KoBo Toolbox for design of instrument, training and back-stopping.

# 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?**
- **A consortium of civil society partners undertook a rapid assessment.**
- **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.**

# Geographical spread

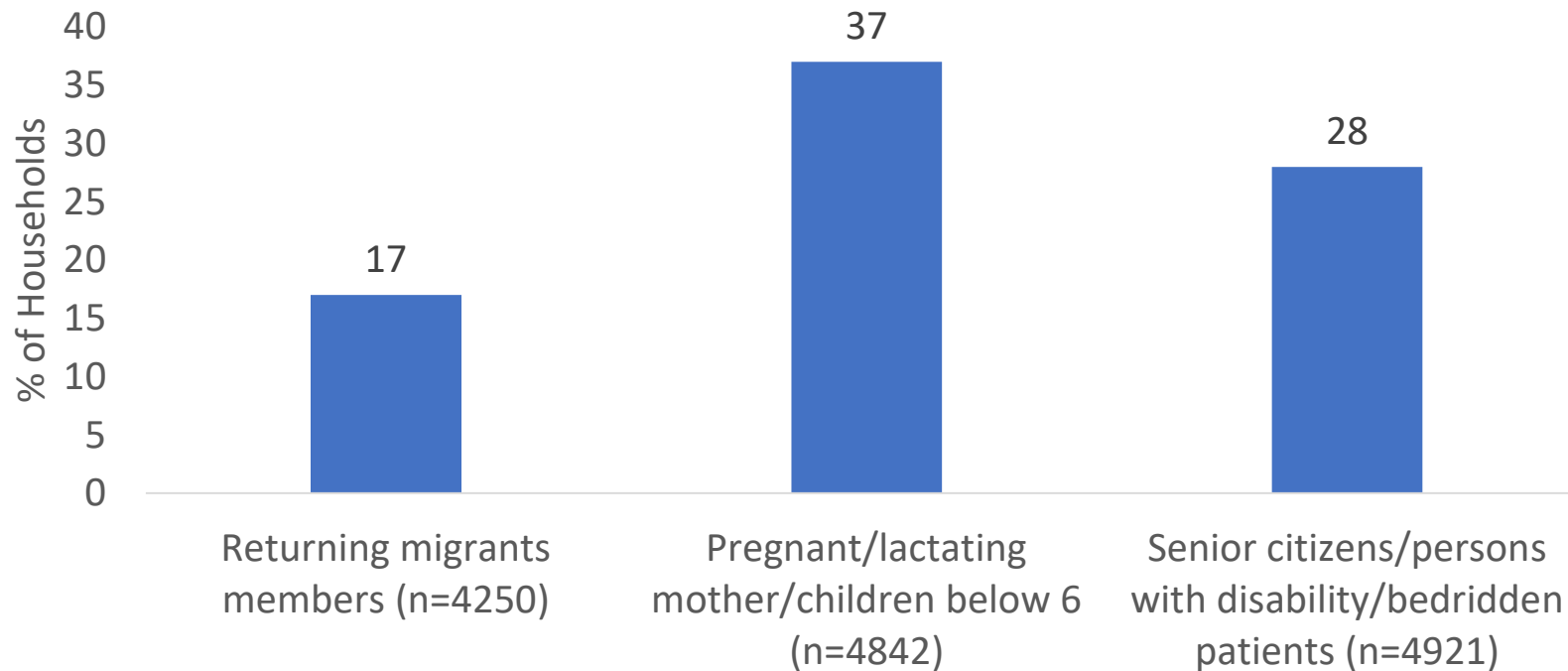
- 5162 Households, 12 States, 47 Districts
- Data collection took place between 28th April and 2nd May



| States                 | Districts |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Assam                  | 2         |
| Bihar                  | 4         |
| Chattisgarh            | 4         |
| Gujarat                | 1         |
| Jharkhand              | 10        |
| Karnataka              | 2         |
| Maharashtra            | 2         |
| Madhya Pradesh         | 10        |
| Odisha                 | 6         |
| Rajasthan              | 1         |
| Uttar Pradesh          | 2         |
| West Bengal            | 3         |
| <b>Total Districts</b> | <b>47</b> |

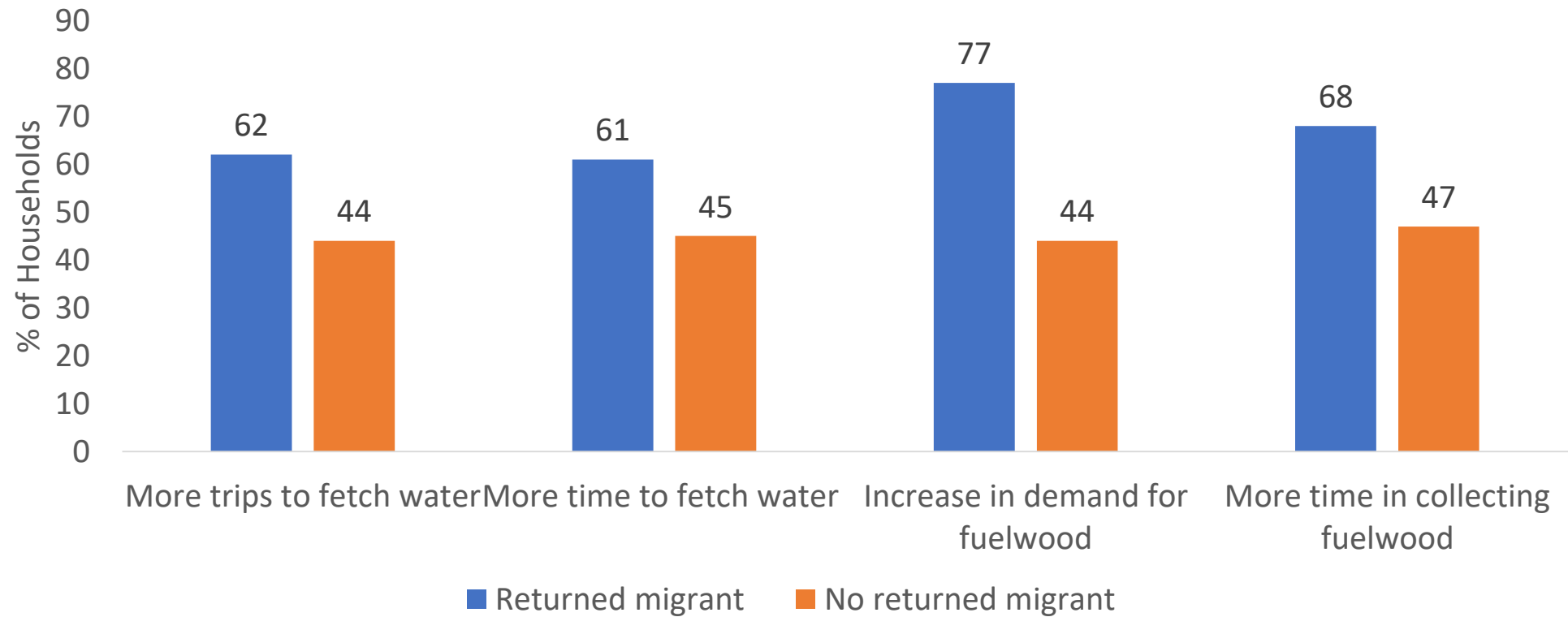
# Key attributes of surveyed households

- In most of the surveyed families migrant members yet to return
- More than a quarter of the surveyed households reported dependent members (young children, senior citizens, pregnant women, lactating mother)



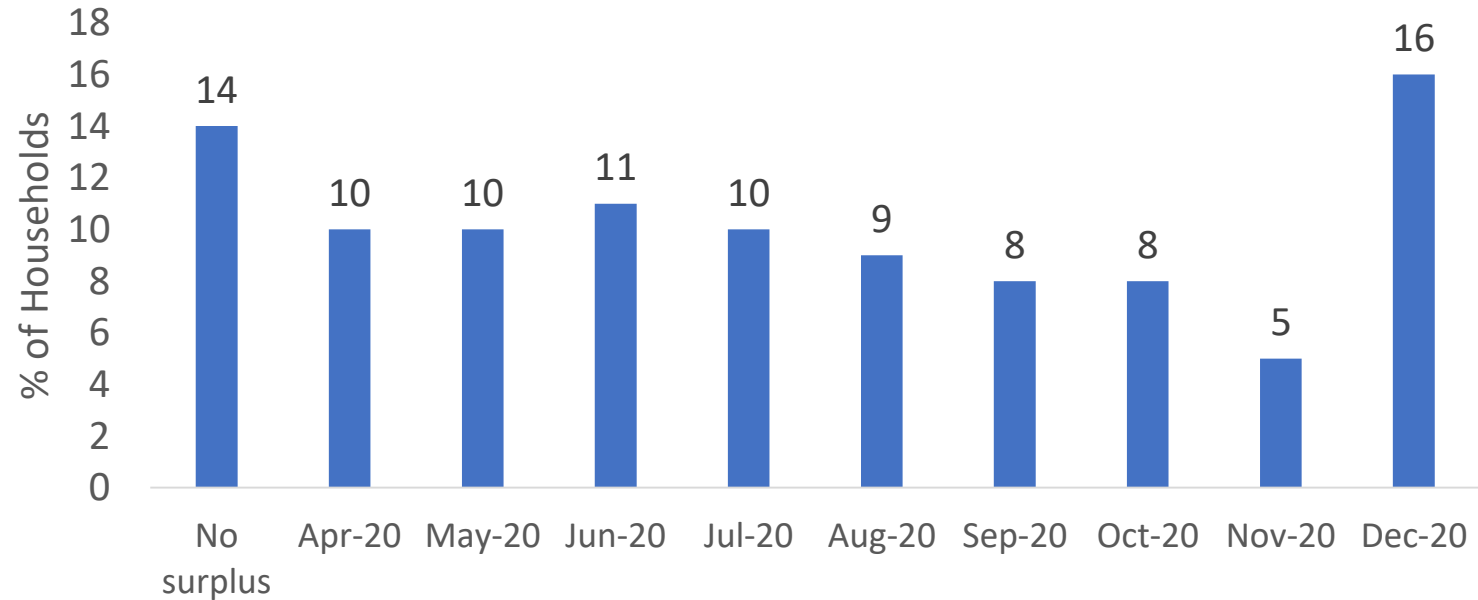
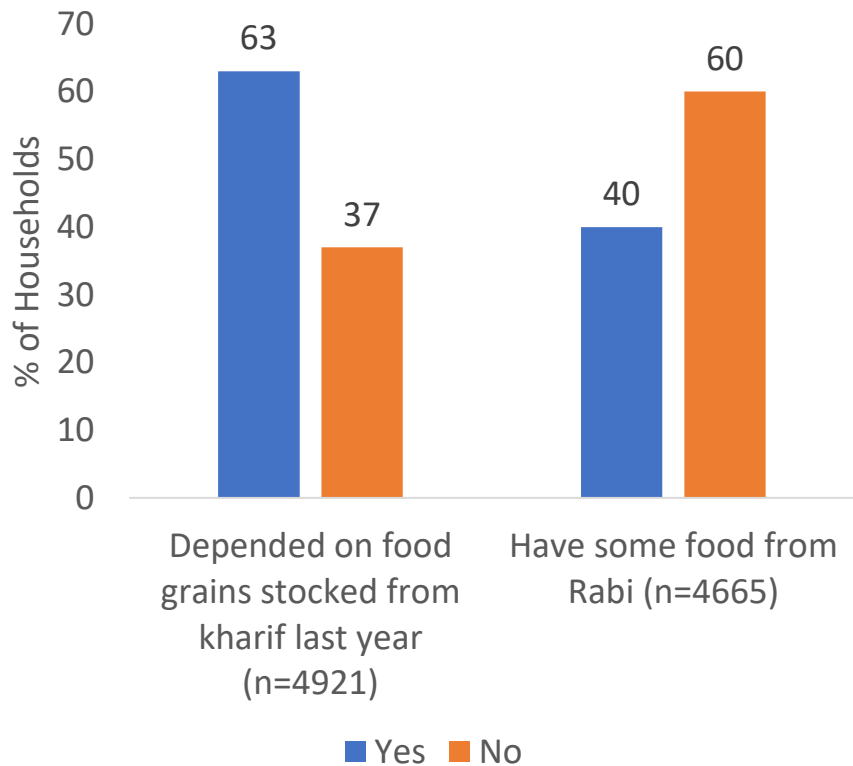
# Workload within the household

- 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**



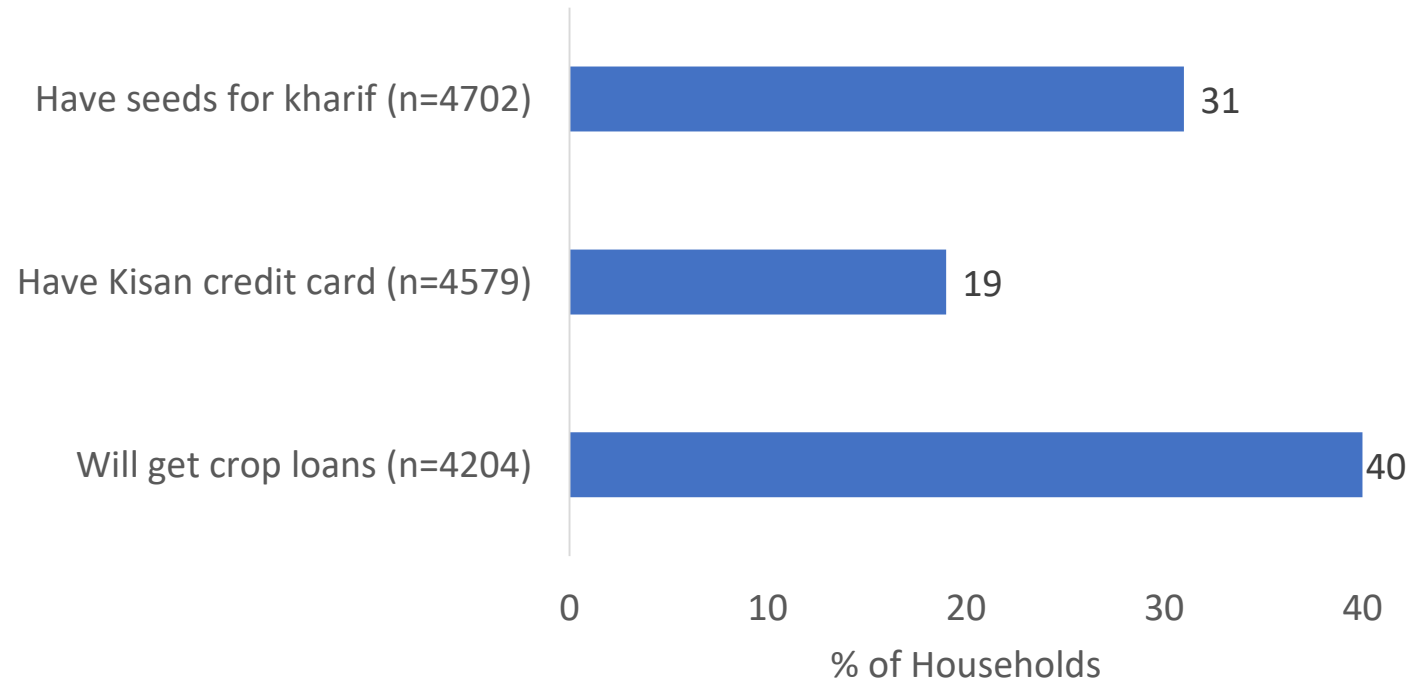
# Dependence on existing food stock

- More than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> did not have any surplus from last Kharif.
- More than half could not depend on rabi produce for food.
- Around 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the respondent reported that Kharif stock would only last till May end.
- **Food provision through PDS and cultivating food crop in Kharif 2020 – important.**



# Readiness for *Kharif* 2020

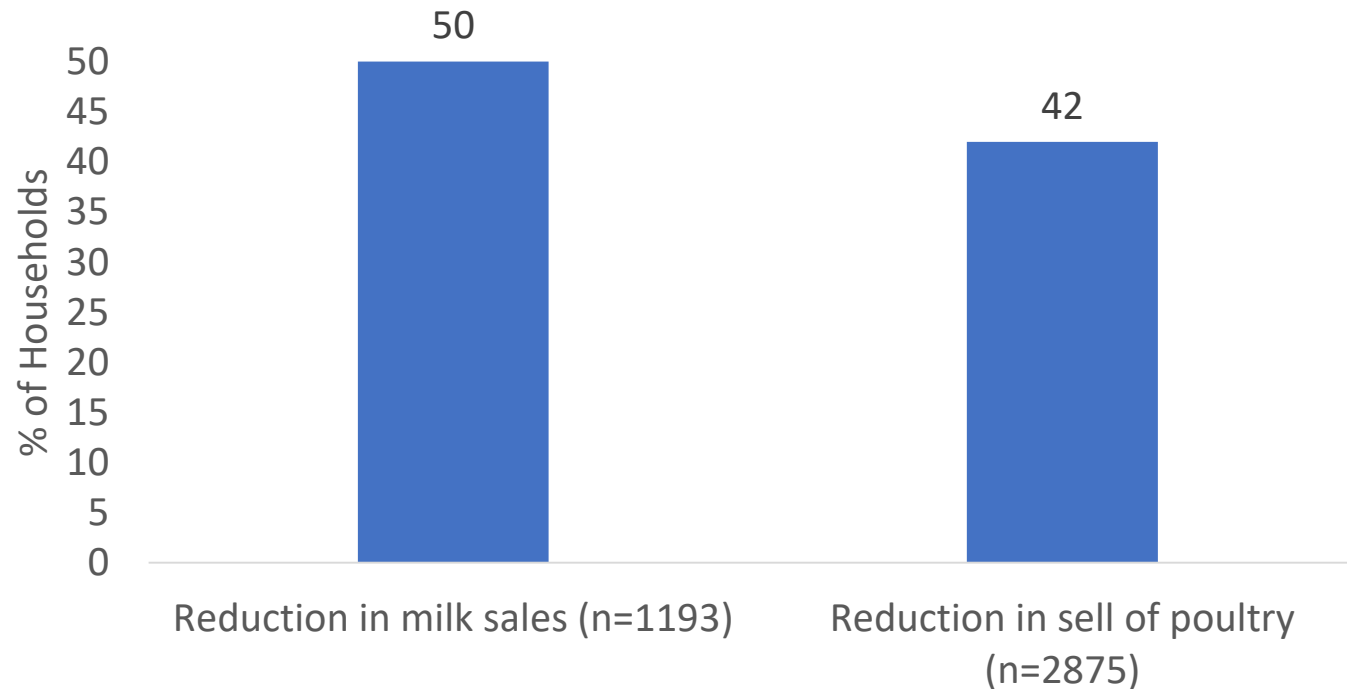
- More than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the respondents do not have seeds for the upcoming Kharif
- Less than 20% have KCC.
- Less than half of the respondents were of the view that they would get crop loans
- **Provision of seeds and credit for the upcoming Kharif season - important**





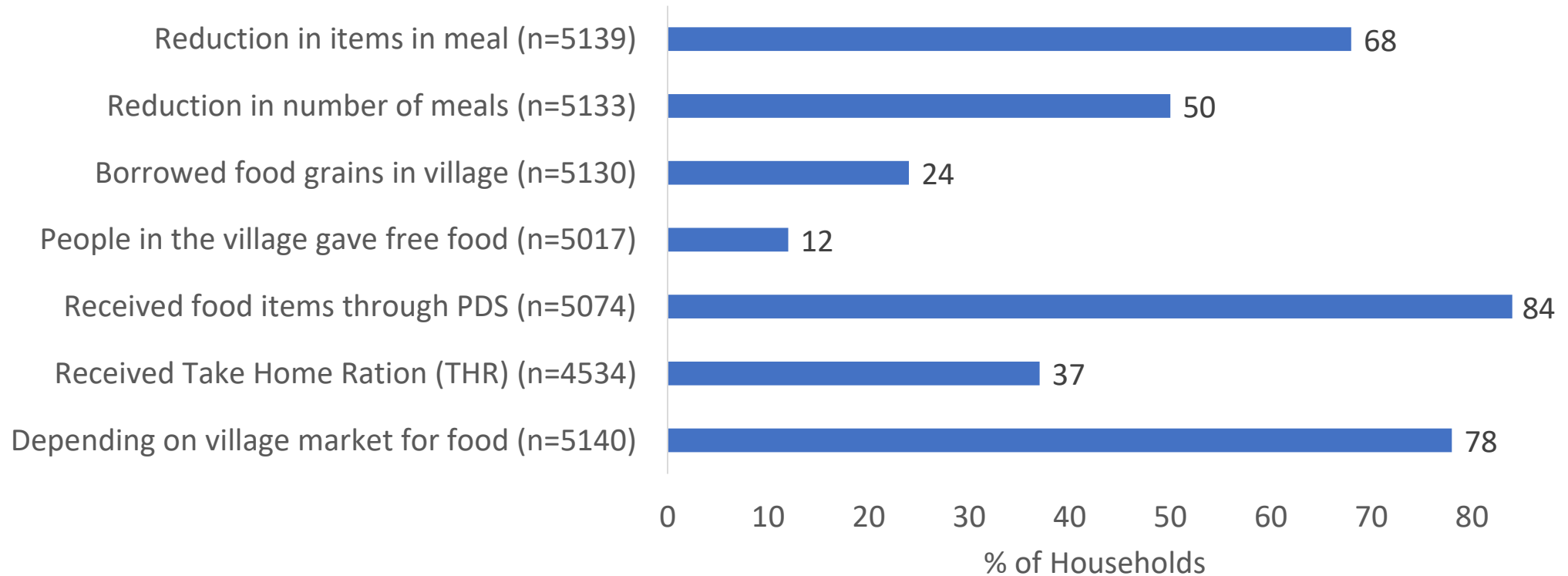
# Reduced income from key livelihood activities

- Lockdown and rumors have adversely affected income
- 23% households sell milk, out of which half have reported reduction in sales
- 56% households are in poultry, out of which more than 40% reported reduction in sales



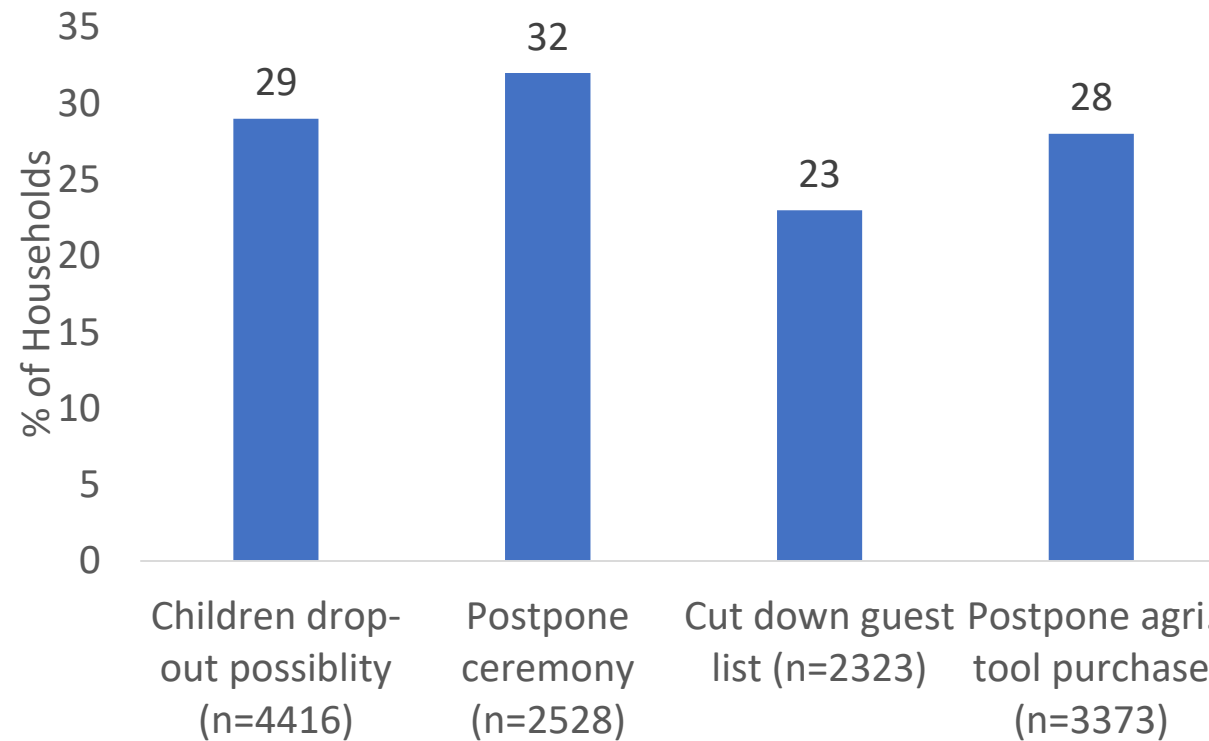
# Coping: Immediate adjustments for food security

- More than half of the households are eating fewer items and less number of times
- Nearly a quarter is depending on borrowing from others in the village
- PDS working for the majority – not reaching to 1/6th of the eligible households



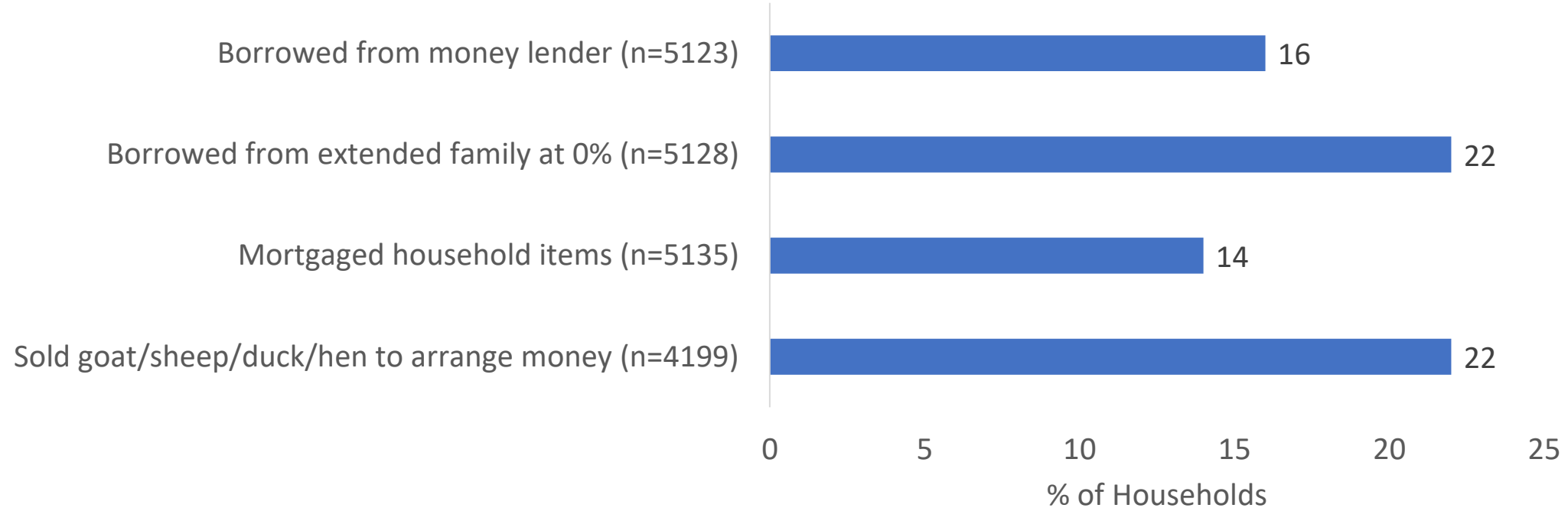
# Coping: Postponing discretionary expenses

- Nearly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the respondents reported that there is possibility that children will drop-out of schools
- Postponement and downscaling of ceremonies and purchases reported by nearly a quarter of households



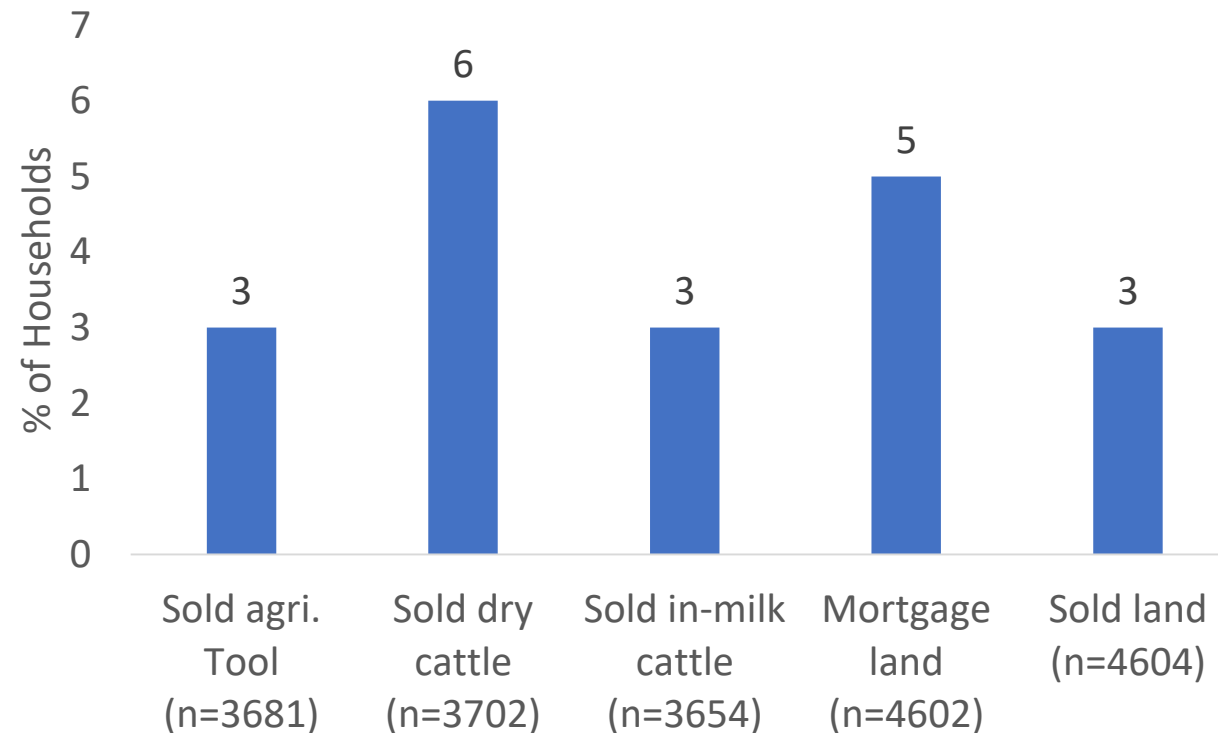
# Coping: Borrowing/mortgaging of assets

- At least 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the families depended on family networks for borrowing
- Borrowing from moneylender also reported
- **Indebtedness rising?**
- Mortgage of household items and sale of liquid assets already taking place



# Coping: Sale of productive assets

- Has implication on the long term economic base of the household
- Expected to manifest when a shock/stress has a prolonged/intense effect.
- Though less, but around (3-5)% of the respondents reported asset sales



# To summarize (1/2)

- Households have depended on Kharif stock more than Rabi – but that stock is now dwindling
- Households are coping with the shock by eating less food and lesser number of times and with large dependence on PDS
- **Need for food support through PDS and promotion for food crop cultivation in Kharif**
- Preparedness for Kharif 2020 is low - **need for public support in terms of seed provision and credit for Kharif 2020.**
- Large chunk of migrants yet to return – but already the increased workload enhances the drudgery faced by the women.

## To summarize (2/2)

- **Lockdown and rumors have indeed adversely affected income – 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 still low - but already reported by a small fraction of respondents**
- **Gives a snapshot – to understand how the hinterland is getting affected progressively – more rounds will be needed.**