

Myanmar COVID-19 Monitoring Platform

Updated results of high-frequency
phone survey of households in
August 2020.



Households appear to be **resilient** although their levels of welfare and activities remain **below** the levels before March 2020



Employment & income losses

Informality in the labor market may have helped partial recovery in August. However earnings have not recovered to pre-COVID levels, across all sectors. Recovery appears to be faster for better-off households than poorer ones.



Social assistance & coping mechanisms

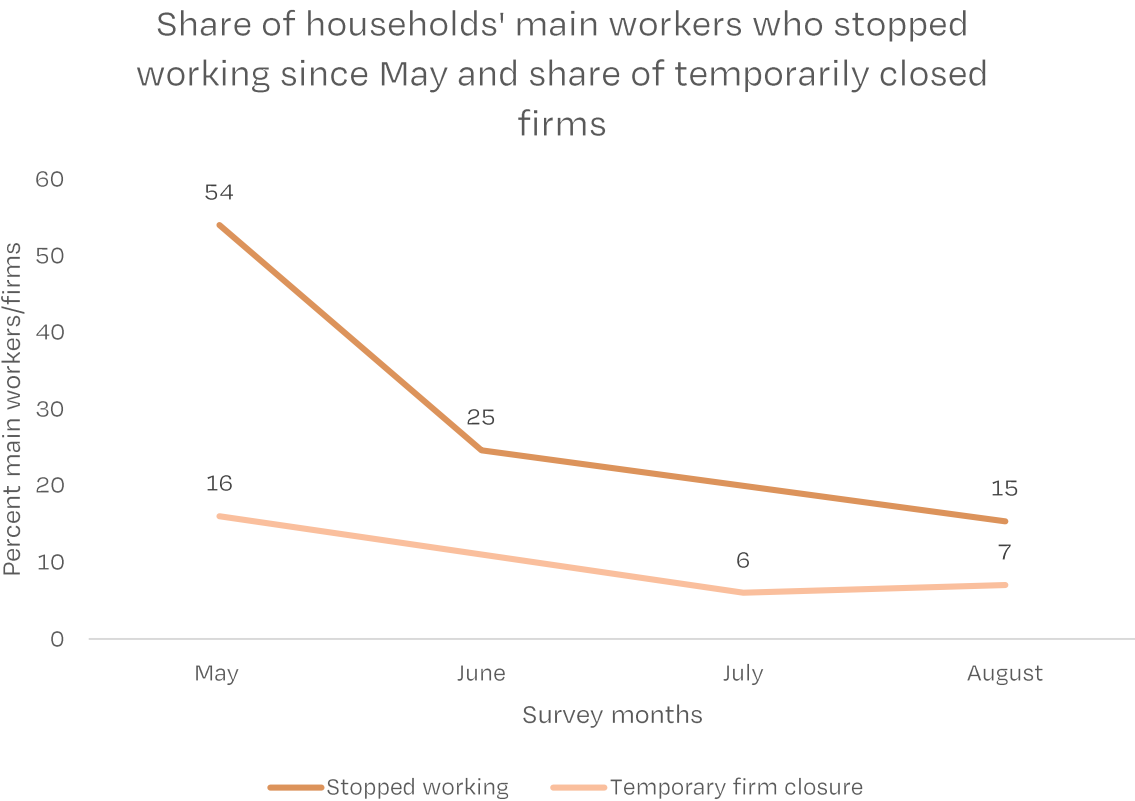
Government assistance has been more successful in reaching households than in the previous months although one-third of households still rely greatly on coping strategies that could have negative impacts in the long run.



Food security & financial uncertainty

Although food access is not of concern, households worry about their finances and about having enough to purchase food. Food security could worsen as households limit food consumption to cope with shocks.

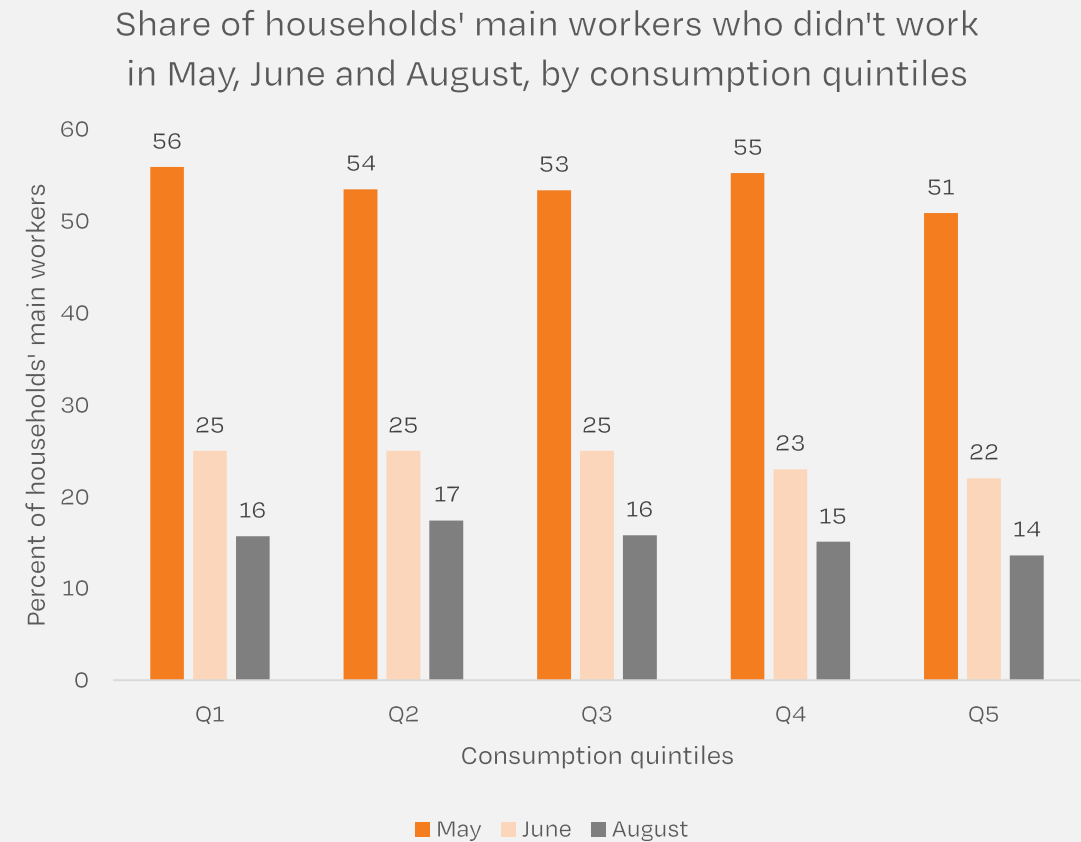
Households are going back to work but some still remain out of employment



Source: World Bank (2020) High-frequency phone survey of Households and Firms

Note: Share of households' main workers is measured considering the ones working pre-March.

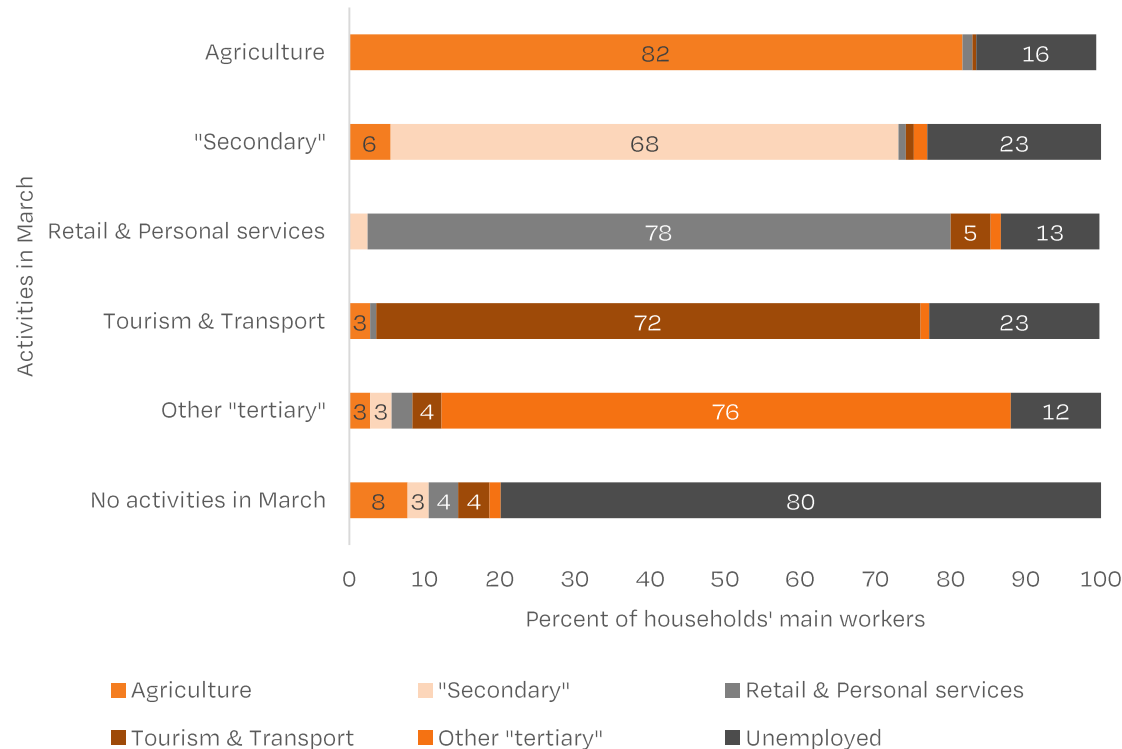
More households' main workers in the bottom quintiles are still out of employment.



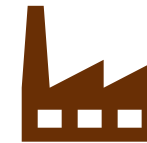
Note: Consumption quintiles (Q1 to Q5) are measured using a consumption aggregate predicted using multiple imputations and stepwise regressions and dividing the whole imputed consumption distribution into five continuous intervals

In August, most households' main workers are engaged in the same type of activities as the ones that they had in March.

Percent of households' main workers considering their activity types in March and where they are working in August



82% of households' main workers engaged in agriculture in March are working in agriculture in August.



68% of the ones engaged in secondary activities* in March are working in such activities in August and 23% are unemployed.



78% of households' main workers engaged in retail-type activities in March are working in these activities in August.



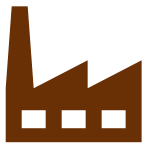
72% of households' main workers engaged in tourism and transport in March are working in these activities in August. 23% are unemployed.

Note: Secondary includes manufacturing, construction and other type of secondary activities. Tertiary includes public and private administration and other types of activities.

Overall, one-third of main workers have lower incomes. Retail is hit hardest.



While 44% of households' main workers are engaged in agriculture in August, 40% have lower income compared to March or June.



11% of households' main workers engaged in secondary activities in August. 73% have higher or the same level of income in August as they had in March or June.



17% of households' main workers engaged in retail-type activities in August. These workers (44%) are the most likely to have lower income



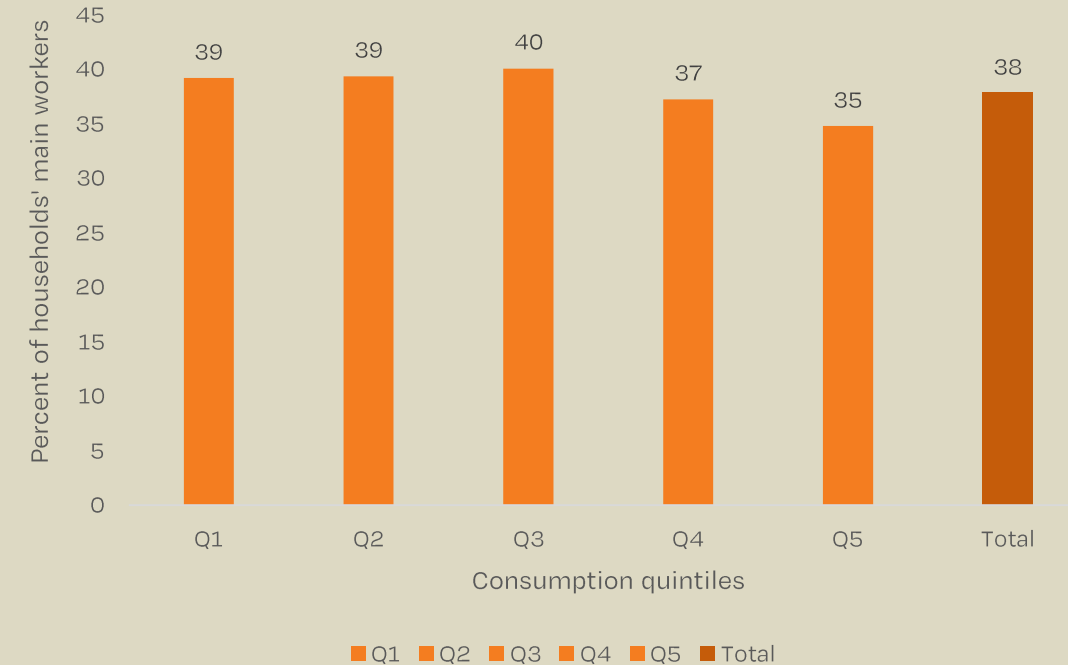
12% of households' main workers are engaged in tourism and transport in August and 37% have lower income.

Note: Secondary includes manufacturing, construction and other type of secondary activities. Tertiary includes public and private administration and other types of activities. Share of households' main workers with less income is measured on the ones working pre-March who are working in the last seven days.

** When surveying new households, the period of reference is March while for households who have been surveyed over multiple periods, the reference period is June*

Reduced income affect households' main workers across all consumption quintiles

Percent of households' main workers with lower incomes, by consumption quintiles



Note: Consumption quintiles (Q1 to Q5) are measured using a consumption aggregate predicted using multiple imputations and stepwise regressions and dividing the whole imputed consumption distribution into five continuous intervals

The majority of household business owners are still operating, but face lower earnings.



11% of households owned a business in March 2020. 90% of them are still operating this business in August.

A third of the households who stopped operating their businesses did it because of COVID.



81% of households' businesses have lower or no earnings in May.

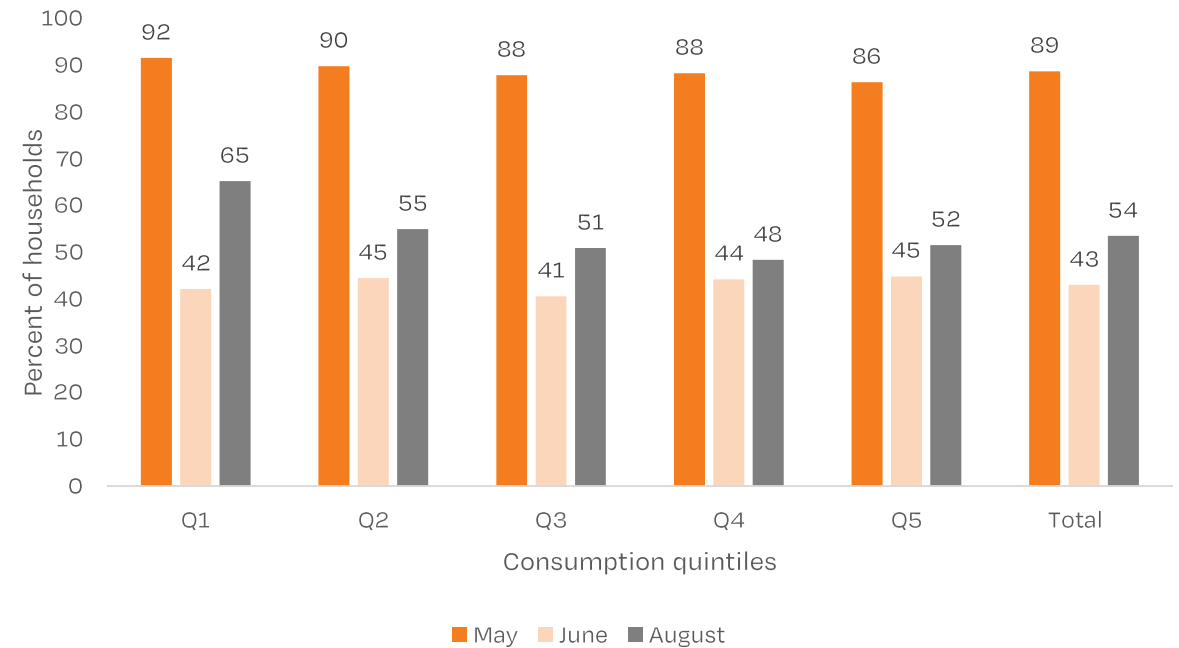


47% of households' businesses have lower or no earnings in August.

Households' businesses in transport and tourism are the most affected.

More poorer households have lower business incomes in August than richer households. There was no recovery between June and August.

Percent of households with lower business incomes, by consumption quintiles



Note: Consumption quintiles (Q1 to Q5) are measured using a consumption aggregate predicted using multiple imputations and stepwise regressions and dividing the whole imputed consumption distribution into five continuous intervals

When movement restrictions were lifted, farming activities have picked up relative to May.

About 44% of households' main workers engaged in agriculture before March 2020 but

Percent of farming households who could not farm

May 2020 – 45%



August 2020 – 10%



10% of poorer households are not able to farm compared to 7% of wealthier households.

Half of the farming households sold their agricultural products through direct sales in the market in March. About **30%** of farmers able to work in their farm have lost one marketing channel in August and only **4%** of them have managed to gain a new sale marketing channel.



Note: Marketing channels are routes through which agricultural products move from producers to consumers.

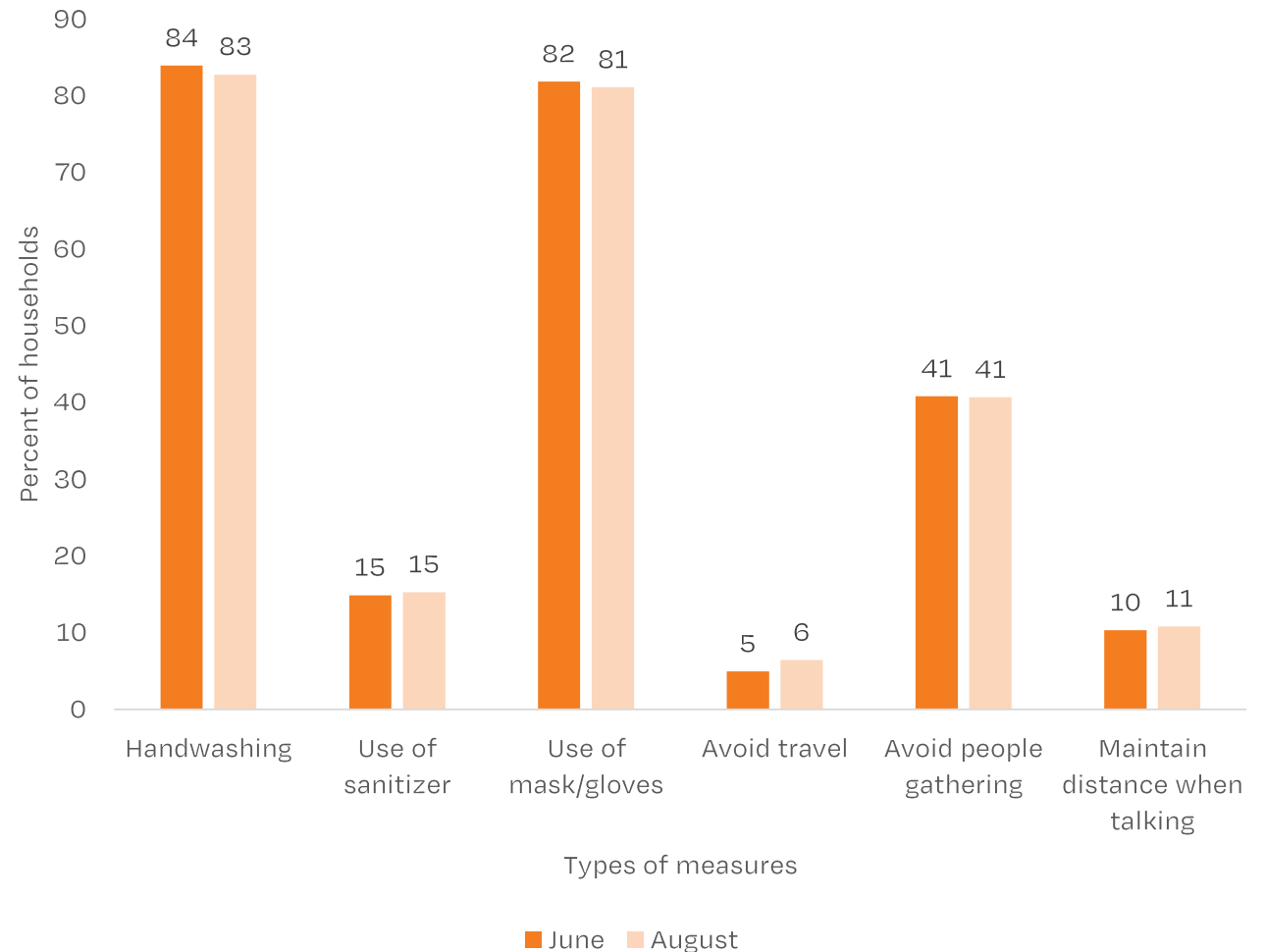
Knowledge and adoption of COVID-19 measures could help contain the spread of the virus

In August, a larger share of households (**95%** vs **85%** in June) were familiar with and had adopted behaviors to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, with handwashing and use of masks and gloves being among the most common measures.

Access to handwashing facilities is high (99%). DHS 2015 reported 94% of households had handwashing station.

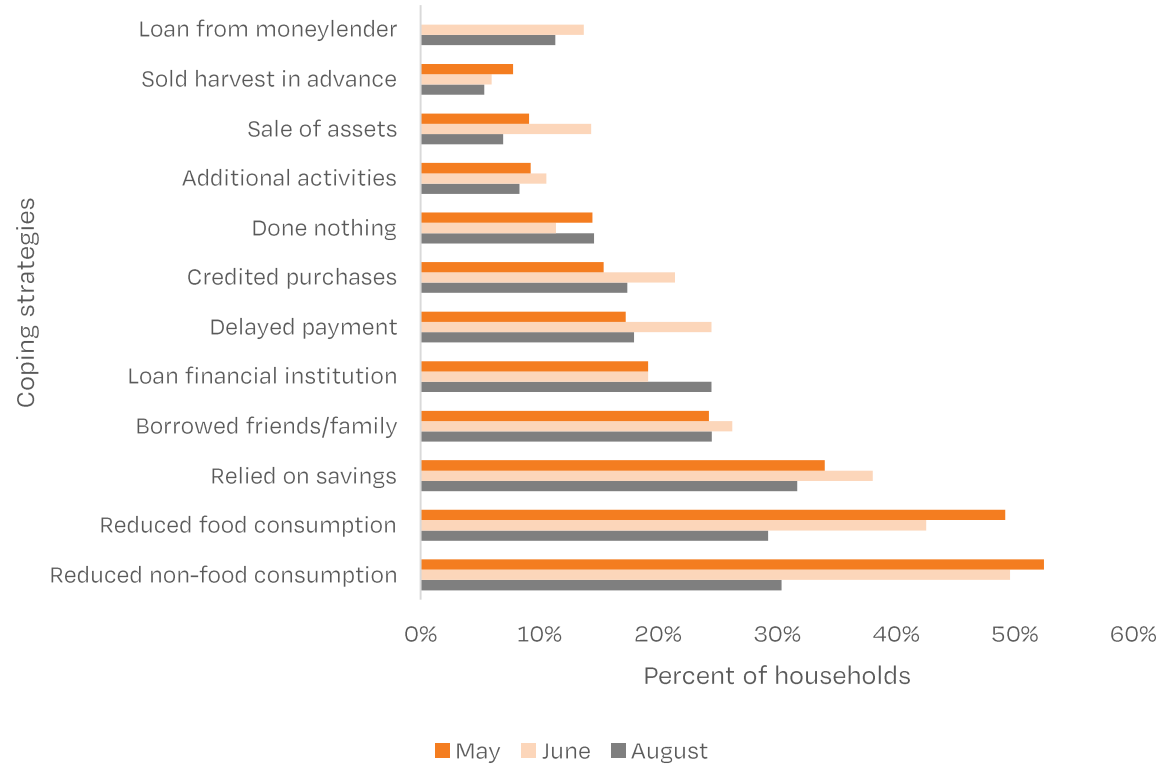
In June, nearly **two thirds** of households were familiar with government advised measures, such as being quarantine, stay-home directives, and travel restrictions.

Most commonly adopted behaviours to contain spread of COVID-19, by month



As households are going back to work, households are using fewer coping mechanisms than in June.

Percent of households by coping mechanisms in May, June and August



But the coping mechanisms being used could have long term negative impacts on households' capacity to fulfil their basic needs and on households' financial solvency.

In relative terms, poorer households are using more strategies that can have negative impacts on welfare in the long term.



36% of households in bottom quintile cut down food consumption compared to 31% of households in top quintile



37% of households in bottom quintile cut down food consumption compared to 33% of households in top quintile

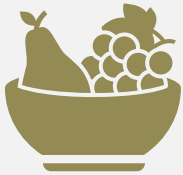


More households in bottom quintile are getting new loans (31%), crediting purchases (21%), or delaying payments (20%) than households in top quintile; increasing the risk that the former enter into a debt trap considering also that poorer households keep using their savings.

More households have benefitted from Government support in August compared to previous months



32% of households received electricity subsidy in August compared to 22% in June.



16% of households received food assistance from the Government in August which remains the same as in May and June.

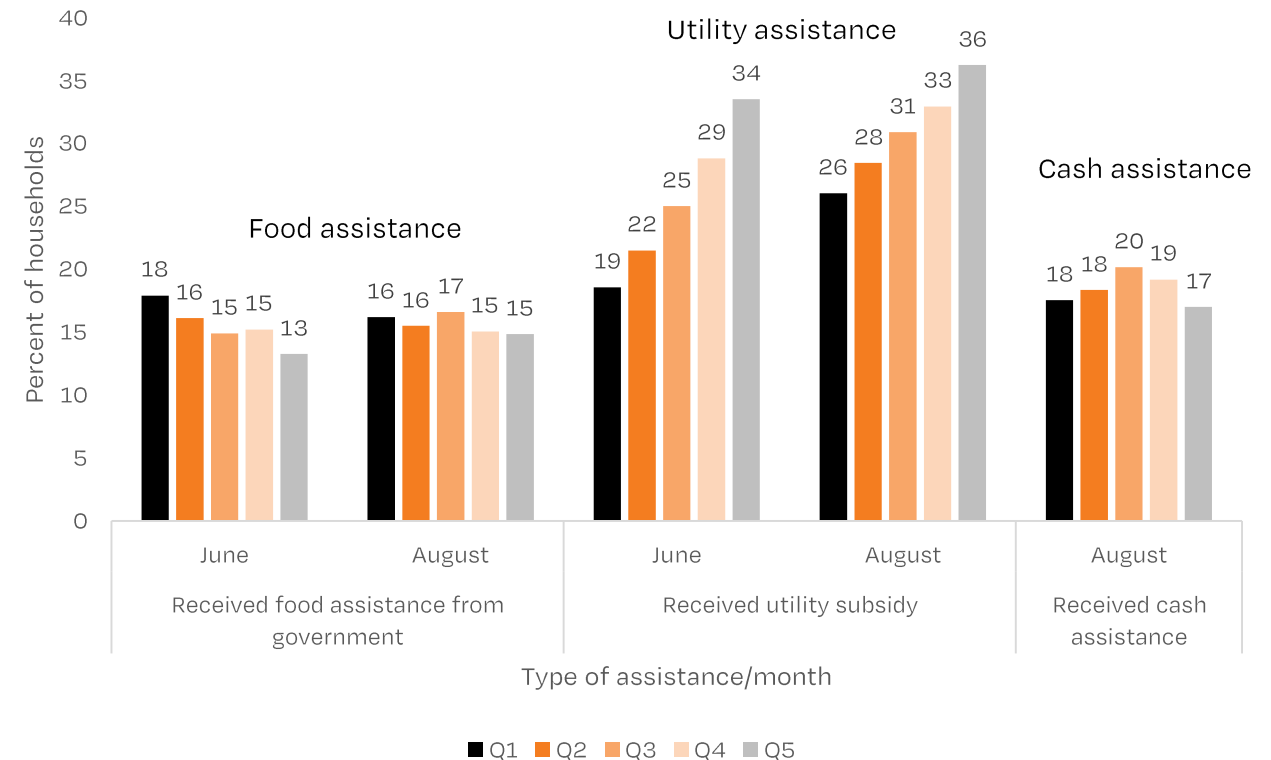


18% of households received cash assistance* from the Government in August.

* Data on cash assistance were only collected starting August 2020.

Government assistance does not always benefit the poorest although food assistance went to more households with unemployed main workers than ones with employed ones.

Percent of households receiving Government assistance, by assistance type and consumption quintile



Note: Consumption quintiles (Q1 to Q5) are measured using a consumption aggregate predicted using multiple imputations and stepwise regressions and dividing the whole imputed consumption distribution into five continuous intervals

Access to food is not a concern although some households face difficulties securing an appropriate diet.

Households did not report any issues to access staple food products.



August

Since May, between **15** to **18%** of households reported having at least one problem related to food security.

When looking at all eight indicators to calculate the food insecurity experience score, 21% of households in the bottom quintiles compared to 16% of households in the top quintiles.

More households in the bottom quintiles (18%) have to eat less nutritious or healthy food compared to households in top quintiles (15%)



More households in the bottom quintiles (39%) are worried about not having enough food compared to households in top quintiles (35%)



Many households are worried about not having resources to fulfil their food or financial needs in August showing that uncertainty about the future might affect households' stress.

33% of households in August say they are very or somewhat worried about not having enough food in the next week.



... and for financial needs



33% of households in August say they are very or somewhat worried about their finances, which is higher than in June

Households in the bottom quintiles are more worried than households in the top quintile: 35% of them are very or somewhat worried about food compared to 26% of richer households and 48% of the poorer ones are very worried or somewhat worried about finances compared to 27% of the richer households.

Thank you

A background illustration of a diverse crowd of people, mostly of Southeast Asian descent, wearing white face masks. The people are depicted in a stylized, flat design with various shades of orange, brown, and grey. Some are wearing traditional hats like conical straw hats. The crowd is dense and fills the upper and middle portions of the slide.

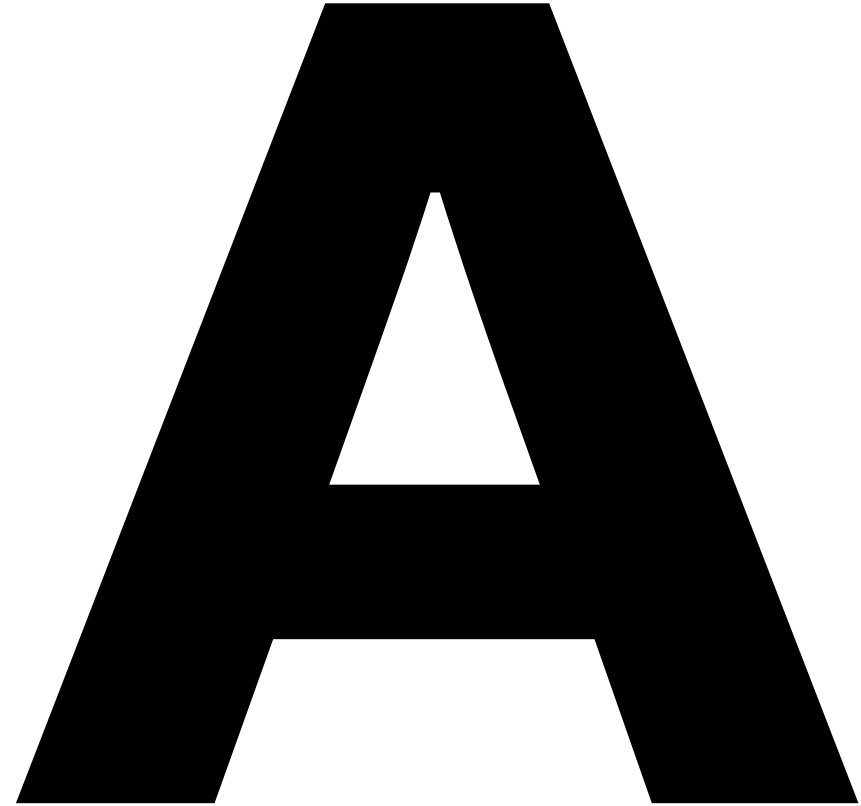
More information is available on

Myanmar COVID-19 Monitoring Platform

And upon request
myanmar@worldbank.org

ANNEXES

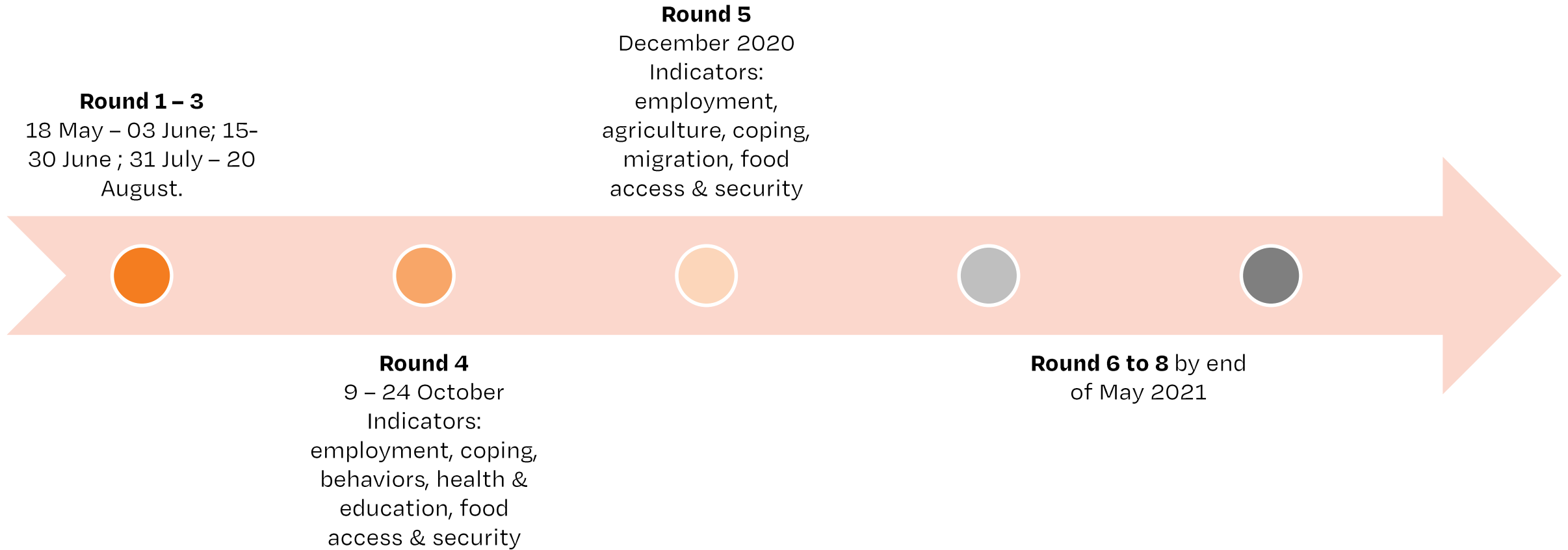
Survey design and sampling



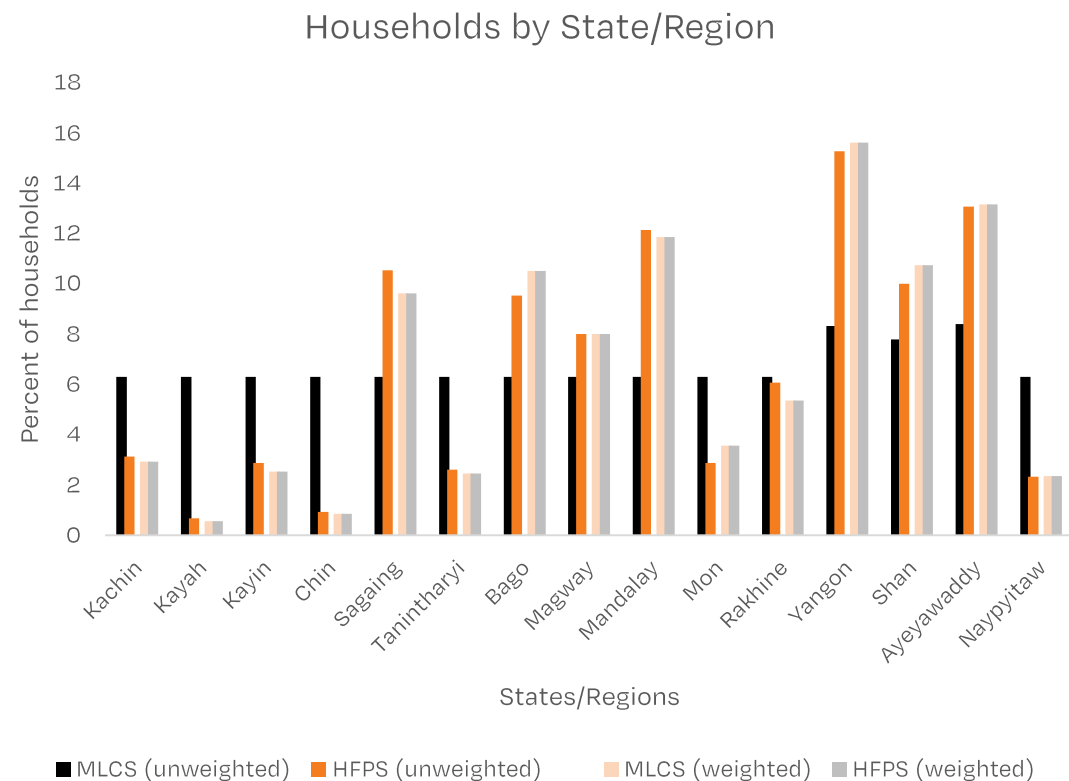
Design

- **Method:** Panel surveys were conducted monthly through a 20-25 minute phone interview on 1,500 households starting May 2020. The Central Statistical Organization provided technical and implementation support.
- **Tracked indicators:** Labor market and livelihood strategies, food security and poverty and households' coping strategies are recorded in all survey rounds. Questions relating to behavioral changes, access to health and to education, and migratory trends will be asked in subsequent survey rounds as the pandemic situation unfolds.
- Respondents were sampled from an existing and consenting pool of respondents sourced from a private firm. Respondents were adult women and men, irrespective of their household responsibility status.
- Estimates were representative at the Union level.

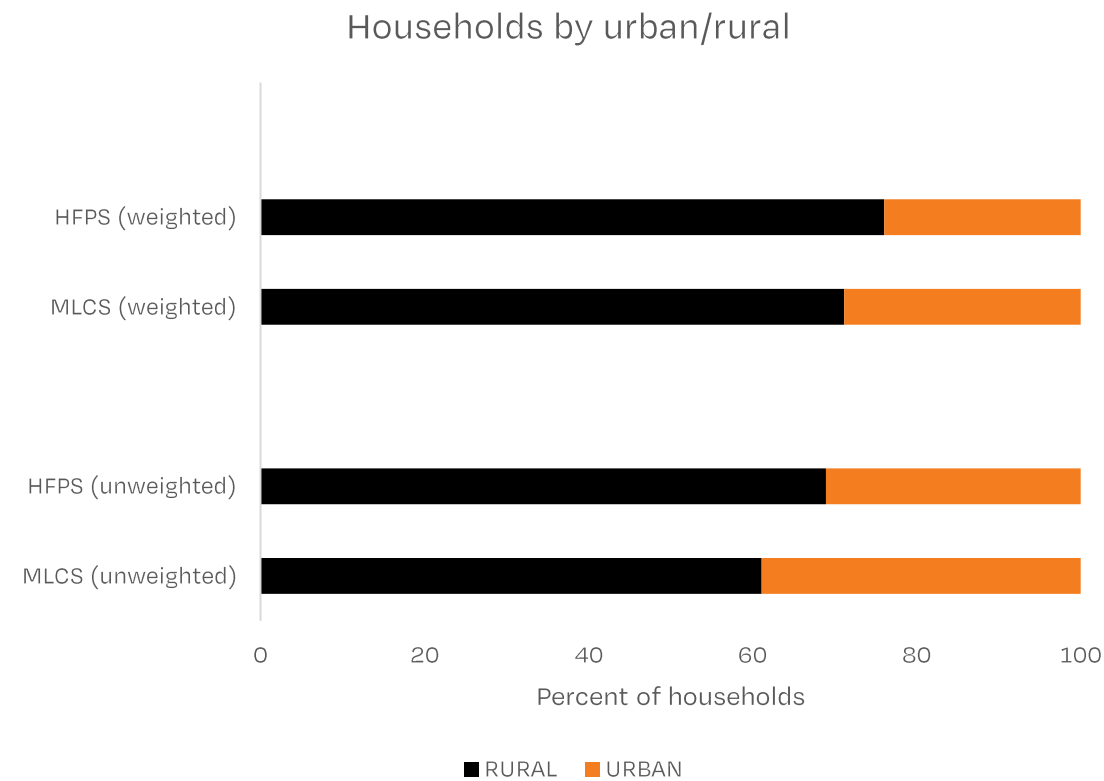
Implementation plan



Similarity of sample distribution of MLCS 2017 and HFPS 2020...

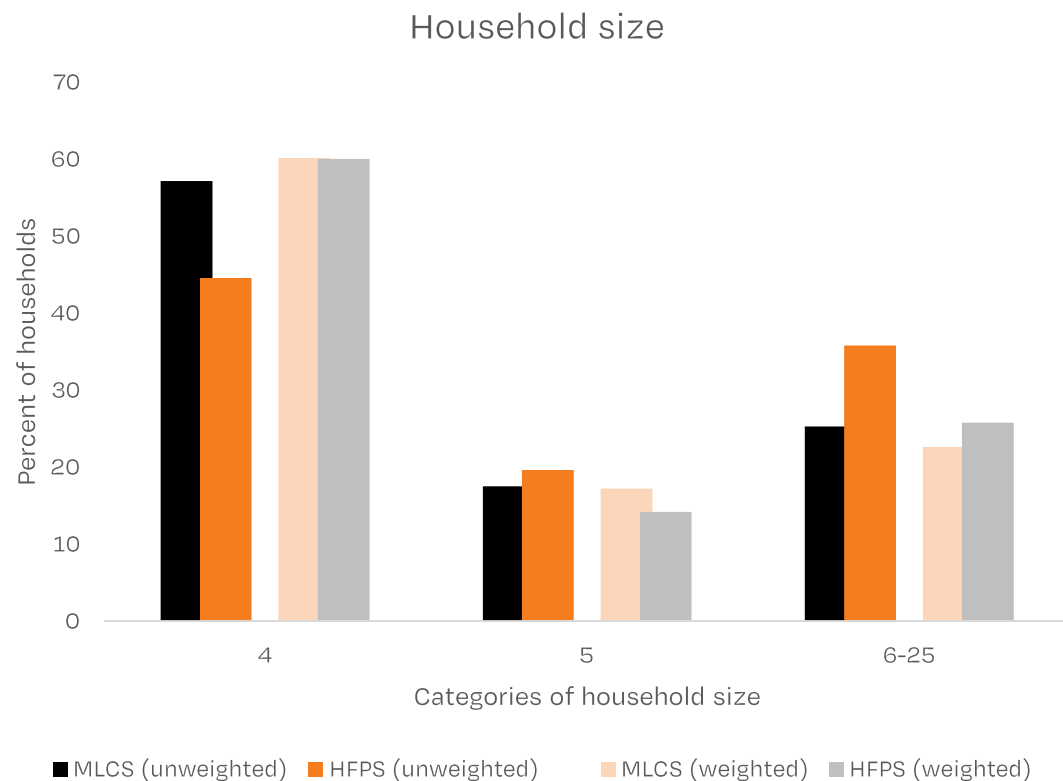


MLCS: Myanmar living conditions survey (2017))
HFPS: High-frequency phone survey (2020)

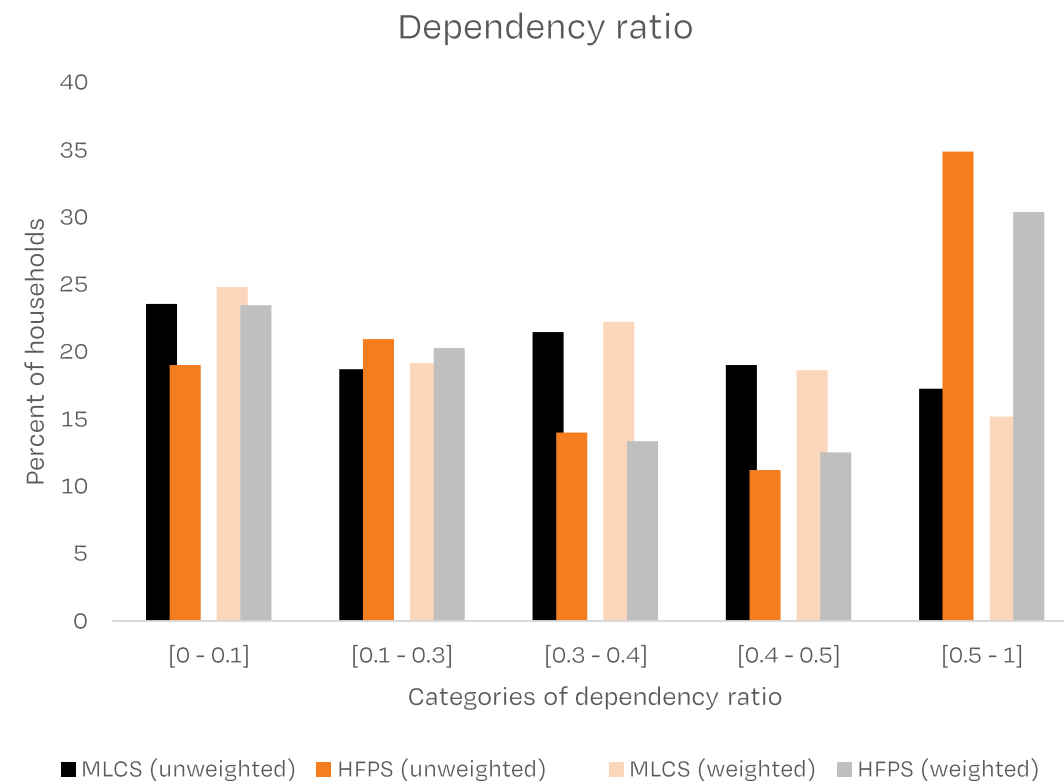


MLCS: Myanmar living conditions survey (2017))
HFPS: High-frequency phone survey (2020)

... strengthening confidence of representativeness of the HFPS



MLCS: Myanmar living conditions survey (2017))
HFPS: High-frequency phone survey (2020)



Dependency ratio: share of children (0-14 years old) and elderly (65 years old and over) over adults

Characteristics of surveyed population

B

The HFPS drew from a representative and diverse sample of respondents and households

