

**Timeline**

June-December 2020

**Study Type**

Descriptive / Surveillance

**Article Link**

<https://www.ifpri.org/program/myanmar-strategy-support-program>

**Research Implemented by IPA**

Yes

# COVID-19 Economic Vulnerability Phone Survey in Myanmar: Rural-Urban Food Security Survey

## Researchers

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## Abstract

The Feed the Future Myanmar Agriculture Policy Support Activity (MAPSA) is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded activity, led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), in partnership with Michigan State University (MSU), that seeks to improve governance in the agricultural sector in Myanmar. MAPSA partnered with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) to conduct six rounds of Rural-Urban Food Security Survey (RUFSS). The RUFSS survey monitors food security, nutrition and gender impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on households with pregnant women in peri-urban Yangon and households with young children in rural areas.

## Project Outcomes of Interest

Economic activities of farmers, retailers and rural households, including the constraints these actors face as a result of the economic crisis and the efforts made by the Government of Myanmar to mitigate the health crisis caused by COVID-19.

## Partners

United States Agency for International Development, International Food Policy Research Institute, Michigan State University, Innovations for Poverty Action

## Key Findings

- COVID-19 has had strong negative impacts on income-based poverty among both rural and urban households. Losses of jobs or other income have been the main impacts.
  - Twenty percent of respondents reported their household earned no income in June.
  - USD 1.90/day poverty in the sample increased by 27 percentage points from January to June.
- Falling into poverty was strongly associated with loss of employment and recent childbirth.
- The poor frequently coped with income losses through loans or other credit, although between 15 and 20 percent of households also reduced their food expenditures.
- Self-reported food insecurity experiences and inadequate dietary diversity among mothers were much more common in the urban sample, despite the rural sample being poorer.
  - In urban areas, one-quarter of respondents were worried about food quantity and quality, and one-third had inadequate diets.
- Self-reported losses of income and jobs were strong predictors of food insecurity and inadequately diverse diets.
  - Mothers who had given birth in the past month had much less diverse diets than pregnant women.

## Link to Results

- [Policy Note \(Burmese\)](#)
- [June-July 2020 Policy Note](#)

## Impact Goals

- Improve social-safety net responses
- Improve women's health, safety, and economic empowerment

## Project Data Collection Mode

- CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing)

## Results Status

Results

### Results

Full results forthcoming