

STATEMENT BY HON. (AMB.) UKUR YATANI, EGH, CABINET SECRETARY FOR THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND PLANNING, DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE REPORT ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HOUSEHOLDS, MONDAY, 9TH JULY 2020.

Members of the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning!

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all to this official launch of the second wave Report on Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Households.

The report, whose data was collected in early June 2020, highlights the impact of COVID-19 mainly on Health, Labour Market, Transport Cost and Housing.

As you are all aware, Corona Virus is highly contagious and the first case was confirmed in 13th March 2020. This led the Government to institute several measures in order to curb its spread. Such measures included: banning of all passenger flights; temporary closure of bars; suspension of learning in all education institutions; dusk to dawn curfew; cessation of movement in and out of some high-risk areas among others. In order to cushion the citizens from the adverse effects of the disease, the Government instituted a number of interventions spearheaded by various committees and organs.

The Government cognizant of the need for evidence-based approach in responding to issues affecting the economy, tasked the Economic and Business Response Working Group, which is led by my Ministry, to undertake a survey on Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Households.

This report, therefore, contains information which will help the Government to provide targeted response and for sound formulation of strategies and policies necessary for developing interventions to cushion the households.

The objectives of the survey include measurement of the impact of COVID-19 on health, labour market, transport cost, and housing. The survey is also aimed at assessing the awareness of COVID-19 and the appropriate protective measures.

The data collection for the second wave was undertaken from 30th May to 6th June 2020. The survey is being implemented using Computer Assisted Telephone

Interviews (CATI) approach in which the interviews are conducted through telephone.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Among the key findings of the report in the first wave of the survey include;

Economic Activity

The survey results show that out of the population aged **18 years** and above that worked for at least one hour during the seven days preceding the survey period, **55.9 per cent** were **aged 35-64 years**. On working status, almost half (48.5%) of the working population were self-employed persons comprising of working employers and own account workers, while **35.0 per cent** were paid employees. About four out of ten (**41.1%**) **males** were in paid employment compared to about three out of ten (**27.9%**) of the **females**.

The proportion of those absent from work due to Covid-19 related issues was **61.9 per cent** up from **49.9 per cent** that was recorded in May 2020. Of those absent from work, **77.8 per cent** were not sure when they would return to work.

Travel patterns and cost of transportation

Overall, 26.4 per cent of individuals aged 18 years and above reported that they had not changed their travel patterns as a result of the COVID - 19 pandemic. Nearly 27.0 per cent indicated that they had travelled less often, while a further 17.4 per cent had travelled less often but with more difficulty.

Further, about 16.8 per cent of the individuals indicated that they were unable to travel at all.

Change in Cost of Travel

Nationally, 59.2 per cent of the respondents reported a change in their cost of travel due to the pandemic, with 91.3 per cent of them reporting an increase.

Means of transport

About 14 per cent of respondents changed their main means of transport as a coping mechanism to counter the effects of the pandemic. Out of those who had changed their means of transport, 62.2 per cent opted to walking while 19.4 per cent opted to use *Boda Boda*. Only 5.8 per cent indicated use of private vehicles as their main means of transport.

Payment of house rent

Nationally, 31.6 per cent of households reported having paid rent for May 2020 on time, while 37.0 per cent indicated they were unable to pay on time. Further, about 30.9 per cent of the households who usually paid rent on time were unable to pay for May 2020. For those whose payment date was not yet due, 8.3 per cent indicated that they would pay on time.

Majority (61.0%) of the households that were unable to pay rent cited reduced income/earning as the main reason.

The survey further revealed that only 0.7 per cent, of the households that were paying rent, had received full waiver/relief from landlords. About a third of the households (33.0%) had not put in place any coping mechanism to counter the effect of COVID-19 on their ability to pay rent.

Health

The findings from the survey show that 18.2 per cent of the households reported having at least one individual with a pre-existing medical condition.

About 35.0 per cent of the households indicated that they had members with high blood pressure/hypertension while a further 19.1 per cent and 15.0 per cent, reported having members with allergies and diabetes, respectively. On testing for COVID-19, over 88 per cent of the population aged 18 years and above indicated that they would be willing to be tested if the chance arose. When asked what one had done to feel better and cope during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, 25.4 per cent indicated that they had found solace in family and relatives while 25.3 per cent had resulted to prayers and worshipping.

Food Security

Nationally, 78.1 per cent of households reported that they had food stock. About four out of five (78.8 %) of the households perceived that there was an increase in food commodity prices over the COVID-19 pandemic period. Generally, 77.6 per cent of households reported having no challenge in accessing a market/grocery store to purchase food items.

Knowledge of Corona virus

Knowledge of corona virus among the population aged 18 years and above is almost universal at 99.0 per cent.

Nationally, 82.8 per cent of these individuals received information on corona virus through radio while 58.6 per cent received the information through television. The

Survey assessed awareness of various methods used to protect against Coronavirus. The most widely known methods are washing hands and use of masks at 96.0 per cent and 86.8 per cent, respectively.

Coping Mechanisms

Education

Nationally, 65.8 per cent of the surveyed households reported to have at least one member who usually attend a learning institution. Self-learning at home was reported as the main coping mechanism used by majority (57.5%) of these households. Notably however, 17.0 per cent of households with members who usually attend a learning institution were not using any method to continue with learning.

Financial distress

To overcome the financial distress caused by the pandemic, majority (41.9%) of the households had cut on financial spending on commodities they could do without while 14.8 per cent took a loan from a friend/relative/neighbor. Notably, 36.7 per cent did not take any measure to overcome the financial distress caused by the COVID – 19.

Household Assistance and Cash transfers/remittances

The proportion of households that reported to have received cash transfers/remittances from family/relatives or friends since the first case of COVID-19 in the country stood at 18.4 per cent. A higher proportion (22.9%) of female-headed households received cash transfers/remittances from relatives or friends compared to 16.9 per cent of male-headed households.

Servicing of loans

Almost a quarter (24.5%) of population aged 18 years and above who were servicing a loan had successfully renegotiated the loan repayment terms due to circumstances emanating from COVID-19.

Domestic violence and Households main cause for worry:

Overall, 23.6 per cent of the respondents reported to have witnessed or heard cases of domestic violence in their communities.

On main cause for households' worry, majority (72.5%) of the households reported that they were concerned about COVID-19 while 21.6 per cent of the households reported being mainly worried about lack of food.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the KNBS management and its entire staff for their dedication in ensuring that they continue to provide quality statistics in a timely fashion. My Ministry commits to continue supporting the Bureau as it undertakes its activities.

I would also like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to the general public for their continued cooperation in provision of data to the Government which facilitates it in formulation of policies geared towards offering quality services to the citizenry.

I also wish to recognize the technical and financial support provided by United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-women)

In Conclusion, I would like to appeal to the general population to continue cooperating with the KNBS and provide the requested information whenever the Bureau contacts them.

Thank you very much.