



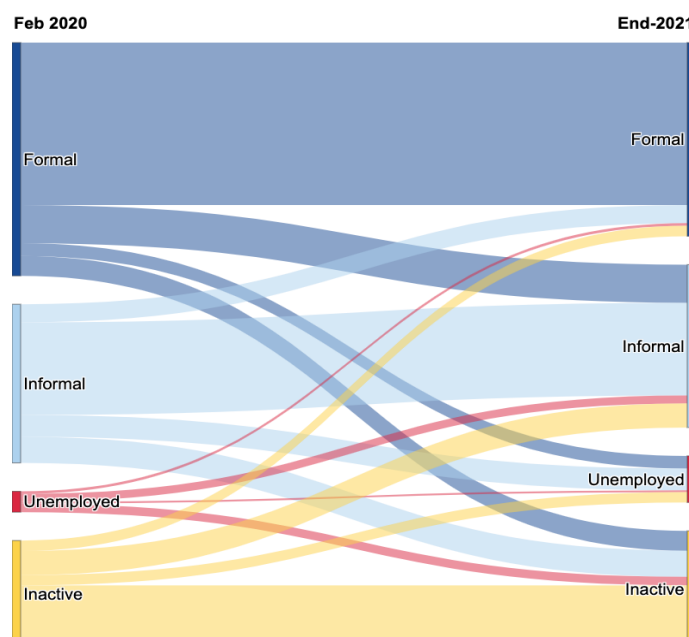
The pandemic severely impacted the Jamaican economy by disrupting the tourism and service sectors. Jamaica's GDP recorded negative growth of -10.0 per cent in 2020, with adverse effects being felt along many different welfare dimensions and likely increased poverty and inequality among Jamaicans. More than two years after the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the deterioration of labour market conditions remains evident. By late 2021, 20.5 per cent of those who were employed before the pandemic had lost their jobs. Although this percentage is high, the indicator stood at 25.8 per cent halfway through the year. More specifically, 11.7 per cent of those who were economically active before the pandemic dropped out of the labour force altogether, and 8.8 per cent became unemployed. Some 38.3 per cent of older adults who were employed pre-Covid jobs lost their jobs—of these, just 9.2 per cent chose to remain in the labour force, while 29.1 per cent opted to leave it altogether. The number of people leaving the labour market was offset by the entry of 42.2 per cent of those who were previously economically inactive. This share was exceptionally high for inactive young people (those aged 18–24 years), 61.8 per cent of whom became part of the economically active population during the pandemic. The labour market entry rate for men was 57.1 per cent, 22.6 percentage points higher than that of women. Some 77.0 per cent of those entering the labour market found work. However, 69.6 per cent of these jobs were in the informal segment. Likewise, 43.1 per cent of those who held formal jobs, were unemployed or were economically inactive pre-Covid had become informal workers by late 2021. This shift was particularly prevalent among young people (81.9 per cent) and households whose heads had tertiary education or higher (55.8 per cent). The pandemic brought an increase in the time respondents spent on unpaid care work. In late 2021, some 55.2 per cent of respondents reported spending more time helping their children with school activities; 4.2 percentage points below the figure reported halfway through the year. In mid-2021, the burden of care fell primarily on women (64.3 per cent versus 53.1 per cent of men), but this trend was reversed by the end of the year, at which point 56.4 per cent of men and 54.4 per cent of women said they were spending more time providing support for children's education.

Key indicators: Individuals (18+ years old)

Distribution among groups	Labour		Childcare	
	% of employed population (pre-pandemic) who lost their pre-pandemic job	% of inactive population (pre-pandemic) who entered the labour market	% of formal, unemployed or inactive (pre-pandemic) who were working and transited into informality	Change in % of population reporting an increase in time spent supporting children's education activities (compared to pre-pandemic) between mid-2021 and end of 2021 (pp)
Overall	20.5%	42.2%	43.1%	-4.2
Females	27.7%	34.5%	43.7%	-9.9
Males	14.2%	57.1%	42.8%	3.3
18 to 25 years old	35.3%	61.8%	81.9%	4.3
26 to 45 years old	17.5%	47.9%	33.3%	-12.1
46 to 64 years old	16.6%	41.4%	35.1%	13.4
65 and older	38.3%	19.5%	61.2%	-37.5
Primary or less	23.0%	35.2%	35.7%	9.6
Secondary	24.3%	50.3%	41.2%	-2.7
Tertiary and more	13.8%	29.6%	55.8%	-12.9

Source: LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 2

Figure 1: Transitions in the labour market



Despite government efforts to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic, household welfare continued to be affected. Some 30.2 per cent of households reported drops in their income compared with the middle of 2021. Households with dependent children and low asset holdings experienced income losses more frequently. To offset lost revenue, households were forced to resort to coping strategies that included not paying financial obligations, using savings and adults and children who were previously economically inactive entering the workforce. According to the survey, 71.2 per cent of households turned to at least one of these coping mechanisms. This figure was even higher for households with dependent children (76.9 per cent). It is concerning that a child had to seek work to offset lost income in 9.1 per cent of households with school-age children. The households that resorted most frequently to this mechanism had lower asset ownership rates (12.4 per cent).

Despite these efforts, the decrease in income was associated with 43.9 per cent of households reporting having gone without food in the 30 days leading up to the survey due to lack of means. More worryingly, this figure only decreased by 1.7 percentage points compared to mid-2021 and remains 23.6 percentage points above where it stood before the pandemic started. Households with dependent children, fewer assets and less educated heads were affected the most: one in every two of these households experienced food insecurity. Partial and total school closures continued throughout the school year, as a result of which there was no significant variation in the in-person attendance rate. By late 2021, this rate stood at 25.2 per cent (23.1 percentage points below the regional average). Finally, three out of every five respondents thought that children were learning less than before the pandemic. This figure was as high as 67.8 per cent for households with heads with primary education or less, which reveals the huge challenge that lies ahead for the Jamaican education system in terms of quality, especially for the most vulnerable populations.

Figure 2: Households reporting a change in income (%)
End of 2021 vs. Mid 2021

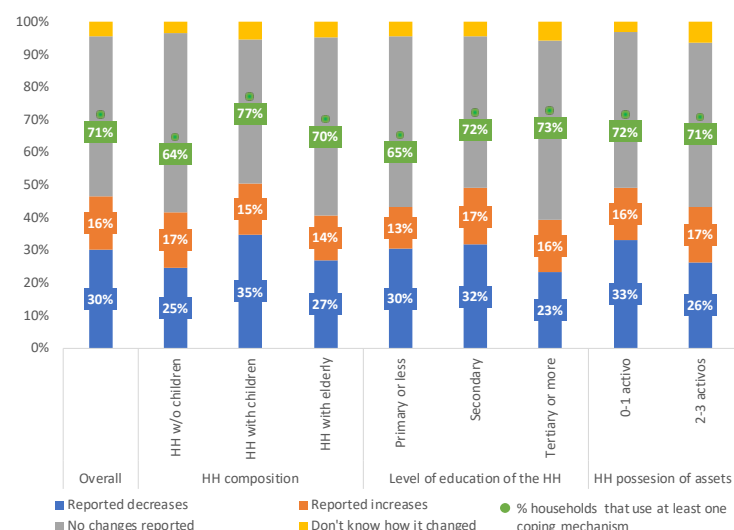
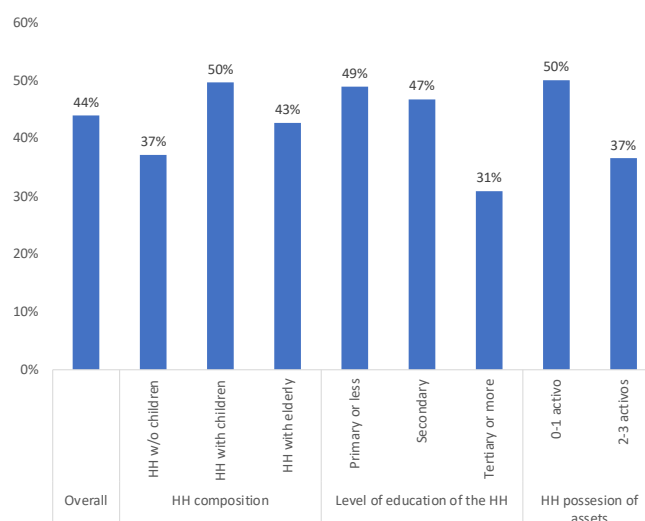


Figure 3: Household that ran out of food (%)
End of 2021



Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 2

Key indicators: Households and children

Distribution among groups	Income	Coping	Food Insecurity		Education (6-17 yo)	
	% households that report a reduction in total income (End of 2021 vs. Mid 2021)	% of households that resorted to at least one coping mechanism to manage financial stress in 2021*	% of households reporting school-age children entering in the labour force as a coping mechanism	% households that ran out of food (last 30 days)	Change in the % of school-age children who attended face-to-face classes (End 2021 vs. Mid 2021) (pp)	% of enrolled children who are learning less than before the pandemic
Overall	30.2%	71.2%	9.1%	43.9%	0.0	59.8%
HH w/o children (0-17)	24.6%	64.4%	-	37.2%	-	-
HH with children (0-17)	34.8%	76.9%	9.1%	49.7%	0.0	59.8%
HH with elderly (65+)	27.0%	69.9%	10.9%	42.7%	0.4	60.7%
HH with 0-1 asset	33.3%	71.5%	12.4%	50.1%	3.1	60.6%
HH with 2-3 assets	26.4%	70.8%	6.3%	36.6%	-1.6	59.3%
HH education - Primary or less	30.4%	65.3%	10.7%	49.0%	-7.6	67.8%
HH education - Secondary	31.7%	72.0%	10.2%	46.9%	-2.0	58.6%
HH education - Tertiary or more	23.4%	72.7%	4.4%	31.0%	8.6	62.3%

* Coping mechanisms are the strategies used to cope with the financial stress generated by the reduction in income during the pandemic. Particularly, non-payment of financial obligations, use of savings and entry into the labour force.

Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 2

HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEY

The World Bank and UNDP conducted a multi-wave High-Frequency Phone Survey (HFPS) in 2021 to assess the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the welfare of Latin American and Caribbean households. The second wave was collected between November and December 2021, and the data is nationally representative for 22 countries: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia and Uruguay. The HFPS provides information on the welfare impacts that households experienced with respect to food insecurity, changes in employment, income changes, access to health and education services, and coping mechanisms. For further information see [Chapeau Phase II, wave 2](#).