



**TRANSPARENCY  
INTERNATIONAL  
RWANDA**



**Public Expenditure Tracking Survey  
(PETS) in VUP-direct support to assess  
the impact of Covid-19 on the livelihood  
of the most vulnerable people  
(Ubudehe category 1)**

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## ACRONYMS

**BCC:** Behavior change communication

**CBHI:** Community Based Health Insurance

**CSO:** civil society organizations

**DS:** Direct support

**EDPRS:** Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy

**FARG:** Fonds d'Assistance aux Rescapes du Genocide

**FBO:** Faith Based Organization

**FGD:** Focus group discussion

**GoR :** Government of Rwanda

**ICPAR:** institute of Certified public accountants of Rwanda

**IFC:** International Finance Corporation

**IMF:** International monetary fund

**KPMG:** Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler

**LD:** Livelihoods development

**LODA:** Local Administrative Entities Development Agency

**MINALOC:** Ministry of Local Government

**MINECOFIN:** Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

**NCPD:** National Council of Persons with Disabilities

**NST:** National Strategy for Transformation

**OECD:** Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

**PETS:** Public expenditure tracking survey

**RDRC:** Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission

**REG:** Rwanda Energy Group

**SACCO:** Saving and credit cooperatives

**SET:** Supporting economic transformation

**SIDA:** Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

**TI-RW:** Transparency International Rwanda

**UNDP:** United Nations Development Programme

**VUP:** Vision Umurenge programme

**WHO:** World health organization

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The VUP Direct Support scheme is intended to provide regular and reliable income support to extremely poor and severely labour-constrained households. It is intended to ensure that these most vulnerable households are able to meet their most basic needs and protect them from destitution (LODA, 2018). In another hand, the battle against the Covid-19 pandemic presents the greatest threats to most vulnerable households and more specifically households with high economic insecurity. In this regard, in the context and framework of contributing to the fight against the spread of covid-19 as well as ensuring transparency and accountability in the implementation of measures and initiatives designed to support vulnerable Rwandans, TI-RW conducted a Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) in VUP-direct support to assess the impact of Covid-19 on the livelihood of the most vulnerable people (Ubudehe category 1). Specifically, the survey aimed to:

- Analyze the leakage in the flow of public funds through VUP-DS amidst the COVID-19 response.
- Analyze the timelines of disbursement of VUP-DS and its impact on the livelihood of beneficiaries.
- Examine alternative/additional emergency food support received by VUP-DS beneficiaries amidst the Covid-19 lockdown
- Analyze the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the VUP-DS households' basic needs
- To examine the mechanisms put in place for VUP-DS beneficiaries to claim for their support entitlement

For the purpose of this survey, a questionnaire was administered to 1253 VUP-DS beneficiaries randomly selected from the list provided by LODA in 15 selected districts, namely *Bugesera, Burera, Gasabo, Gatsibo, Gicumbi, Huye, Kamonyi, Kayanza, Kicukiro, Musanze, Nyabihu, Nyamagabe, Nyarugenge, Nyaruguru, and Rubavu*. A desk review was conducted to analyse the leakage of VUP-DS support and possible delays in funds disbursement. Interviews and FGDs were also conducted to supplement desk and questionnaire based data. Collected data were used to elaborate key results on vulnerability status of respondents, impact of Covid-19 on the households' basic needs, leakage of VUP-DS support and delays in disbursement and the mechanisms in place to claim about VUP-DS payment during the period of Covid-19 pandemic.

### • Demographics

In this survey, findings revealed that 81% of the total respondents (1013 out of 1,253) were very old people (aged from 61 years and above). The findings also revealed that majority of respondents were female (71%) than males (29%). With regard to the marital status of respondents, the survey indicated that 69% of them were widow, while only 21.1% were currently married. In addition, 77% of participants had no education level while 14% have completed primary education level and 6.4% never completed their primary education level.

### • Vulnerability status of respondents

The state of vulnerability examined in this survey identifies the degree of vulnerability of the sampled VUP-DS beneficiaries from different physical, social and economic perspectives. By defining their limitations, it offers further information into the degree of their ability to cope with a threat or resist the effect of COVID-19 restrictions measures in place. In this sense, these results can be used to reduce risk and evaluate where more resources and more assistance are needed.

As indicated in the findings, majority of DS beneficiaries (61.2%) who were interviewed were closer to the next school (less than 2 Km); as similarly, the majority of respondents revealed that they stay 2km and above far from the main road and 60.2% were far from the nearest market (beyond 2km from their homes); 56.5% were far from the nearest health centre (above 2km from their homes) and finally the majority (62.5%) staying far from the nearest SACCO. It emerged from the findings that majority of VUP-DS households (57.8%) who participated in this survey accommodate eligible members ranging between one and two while only 25.2% of them had between three and four members. Cumulatively, the survey shows a high proportion of respondents (70.9%) living or having other member with disability. As far as the source of water is concerned, the findings indicate that majority of VUP-DS beneficiaries (54%) surveyed could access water through payment of bills. These include paying bills for piped water supply and public taps. In terms of source of energy, majority of respondents (around 70%) use off-grid power source while only 30% utilize national grid.

#### • **Impact of Covid-19 on the households' basic needs**

Prior to the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, poor families were already suffering from inadequate financial resources to meet their basic needs. In Rwanda, food prices and other essential needs increased, as shoppers stock on essentials and sellers seek profits amid the coronavirus scare. The price was also increased because it was not possible to reach the market far from home where prices were expected to be low due to movement restrictions. The effect of Covid-19 on the basic needs of the VUP-DS was therefore explored in this research.

The finding showed a significant increase of respondents who could eat once a day during the COVID-19 pandemic (from 35.2% before COVID-19 to 59.3 % during COVID-19) compared to the period before COVID-19. This increase explains the drop of those who could eat twice a day during the COVID-19 crisis as the proportion of those who were able to eat twice a day decreased from 56.8% before COVID-19 to 21.1% during COVID-19 period. The impact of COVID-19 was so noteworthy on the livelihood of VUP-DS beneficiaries as the proportion of VUP-DS beneficiaries who could not get food for some days rose from 2.8% before COVID-19 to 19.0% during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Comparing the period before and after COVID-19, preferred household basic needs such as food did not significantly change. However, clothes and saving tontines were found to not be of first priority needs as they dropped from 47.6% before COVID-19 period to 27.9% during COVID-19 period and from 12.3% to 9.5% respectively. This denotes the scarcity of financial means whereby indispensable basic needs were prioritized over the inconsequential ones. The financial capacity of surveyed DS beneficiaries was also affected by the increase of food price in the local market as evidenced by a very high proportion of respondents (86%) who experienced a rise of food price during the time of COVID-19.

Likewise, the DS beneficiaries were affected by the limited access to charcoal or wood for cooking since 70% of them found difficult to access to cooking energy during COVID-19 period. The same applies to the shortage of food by respondents whereby 87.5% of them experienced difficulty to access foodstuff during the period under study. Unfortunately, only 15.3% of surveyed VUP-DS beneficiaries received food assistance during COVID-19 lockdown.

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic was also observed in other basic needs such as health and school disruption. The survey findings revealed that 74.4% of the respondents found difficult to get transport facility to reach the nearest health centre or pharmacy. In addition to

this, 39.3% of the respondents faced issues of misconduct of their children such as drug abuse and alcohol and early pregnancies (25.2%) as consequences of school suspension due to COVID-19. Even though they are very old they often live with their grandchildren or other family members at a young age

- **Leakage of VUP-DS support and delays in disbursement**

The leakage of VUP-DS support was also found to negatively affect the monthly earning of VUP-DS beneficiaries. As a matter of fact, between March and June 2020, respondents experienced a reduction of their DS payment. The estimated leakage ranging between 2 to 20% was found in 4 out of 15 selected districts. In as far as the delay of DS disbursement is concerned, the findings show some delays in VUP-DS disbursement. The data from the desk review show that 8 out of 15 districts were affected by delays varying between one to 20 days. Obviously, this delay has impacted on VUP-DS beneficiaries living conditions especially in the COVID1-19 crisis due to the lack of financial capacity to meet their basic needs while waiting for their entitlement. For example, as mentioned above, a vast majority of respondents experienced difficulty to access foodstuff.

- **Mechanisms to claim about VUP-DS payment during the period of Covid-19 pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the lives of Rwandans across the country with the poorest families suffering the most. Therefore, this survey analyzed the effectiveness of the mechanisms in place to address VUP-DS beneficiaries related inquiries. Among the mechanisms used during COVID-19, village leaders were rated on top by respondents (86.4%) as most solicited in claiming about the VUP- DS payments. Interestingly, respondents showed a very high level of satisfaction (82.9%) with regard to the feedback received while lodging their claims to village leaders. These leaders were also recognized by the majority of respondents (67.1%) in serving as a channel to timely notify beneficiaries about their monthly payments.

This seems to be consistent with the above findings which show little percentage of both delay and leakage. On the other hand, despite the high level of satisfaction of respondents with regard to the feedback received about their DS payment, 23.5% of the respondents claimed that they never get message notifying their monthly disbursement from SACCO.

In order to tackle some of the above challenges, some actions are recommended including for example the mobilization of VUP-DS beneficiaries on the process and rights to claim about their entitlement when deemed necessary, VUP managers to avoid delay and leakage in providing VUP benefits to beneficiaries, VUP managers and local leaders to set up a clear mechanism to organize regular visits to VUP-DS beneficiaries to address their claims.

- **Proportion of DS beneficiaries who received food assistance during the lockdown**

While people were out of work during the COVID-19 lockdown and unable to afford enough food, food assistance was not sufficient in Rwanda to satisfy all the needy households during the COVID-19 lockdown. As indicated in the findings, only 15.3% of DS beneficiaries benefited from food assistance. The study also shows that about 62% of them received food support from local government, while 25% received food from donors and about 15.1% from relatives and neighbors.

In the same way, during Focus Group discussions, some participants claimed that during the lockdown triggered by COVID-19, they did not get any food assistance. When asked about the above-mentioned concerns, government officials' focus group discussions mentioned the lack of enough food assistance as the primary reason for not offering food assistance to all needy households during the outbreak period.



## 1. BACKGROUND

COVID-19 has had a severe economic impact on Rwanda through the implementation of strict domestic measures to contain the spread of the virus and related global spillovers (IMF, 2020). While the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting every citizen in one way or another, the economic impact of COVID-19 becomes more severe on people living with extreme poverty (Ozili, 2020). Those living in socio-economic disadvantage are more likely to experience poor health (Blake, Bermingham, Johnson, & Tabner, 2020), lack of income and basic needs (Kalisa & Niyonzima, 2020), and poor and cramped housing during COVID-19 pandemic (Musanabagnwa et al., 2020). VUP beneficiaries are likely to experience an existential threat and serious living problems because they depend on VUP schemes for their survival. With this in mind, Transparency International Rwanda (TI-RW) a Rwandan Civil Society Organization with its mission to contribute to the fight against corruption and promote good governance through enhancing integrity in the Rwandan society has initiated a project funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) titled “Social accountability tools to Explore Covid-19 response effects on beneficiaries of social-protection programs in Rwanda”.

This resulted from the widespread of Covid-19 pandemic which has led to vast restrictions on citizens’ civic, political, and economic rights and the increased Government discretionary power to ensure the management of the pandemic.

The aim of this survey is to analyze the impact of COVID-19 crisis on the living conditions of people who are entitled VUP-direct support in 15 districts in Rwanda. This is motivated by the fact that during the COVID-19 lockdown, recipients of VUP-DS complained about delay and leakage of their support payment which prompted TI-RW to initiate this project.

## 2. STUDY OBJECTIVES

This study is aiming at analysing citizens’ engagement in to the fight against the spread of covid-19 as well as the level of transparency and accountability in the implementation of measures and initiatives designed to support vulnerable Rwandans.

### 2.1 Specific objectives

- Analyse citizens’ awareness on the negative effects of Covid-19 pandemic with the focus on VUP-DS beneficiaries.
- Analyze the leakage in the flow of public funds through VUP-DS amidst the COVID-19 response.
- Analyze the timelines of disbursement of VUP-DS and its impact on the livelihood of beneficiaries.
- Examine alternative/additional emergency food support received by VUP-DS beneficiaries amidst the Covid-19 lockdown
- Analyze the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the basic needs of the VUP-DS beneficiaries
- To examine the mechanisms put in place for VUP-DS beneficiaries to claim for their entitlement.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 Impact of covid-19 on global trends

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a huge economic and human cost since its outbreak in early 2020 (IFC, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has sunk the global economy into the deepest recession in eight decades (World Bank, 2020). Economists globally respond to predictions and estimate the severity of the global or regional economic shock that COVID-19 is likely to cause in the respective economies (World bank Group, 2020). In the study by Laborde, Martin, & Vos, (2020), the results show that the global growth forecast will cut in half in 2020, a growth decline of 1.5% from the previous estimate of 3%. The previous estimates showed that the 1% downturn of the global economy suggests a 2% increase in the number of poor and food-insecurity and a range of 1.6% to 3% in global extreme poverty. Particular to Eastern Africa, there is no question that the restrictions on services and businesses industry will adversely impact the Eastern African countries, including Rwanda (ICPAR, 2020).

In 2019, Africa's GDP growth at 3.6% was insufficient to accelerate economic and social progress and reduce poverty. Growth per capita was around 0.7% and job creation has not kept pace with the need to provide opportunities to the 29 million young people entering working age each year. At the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, prospects differed across economies (SET, 2020). Some were displaying high growth-rates, in excess of 7.5% (Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire and Ethiopia), but Africa's largest economies had slowed down. In Nigeria (GDP growth of 2.3%), the non-oil sector has been sluggish, in Angola (-0.3%) the oil sector remained weak, while in South Africa (0.9%) low investment sentiment weighed on economic activity (OECD, 2020a). The World Bank estimates that the COVID-19 crisis could push 49 million people globally into extreme poverty in 2020, of which almost 23 million in sub-Saharan Africa including Rwanda (World bank, 2020).

As results of COVID-19 lockdown, poorly functioning markets have direct effect on food security especially among the urban population who is dependent on food produced elsewhere, while the farmers see the markets for their products disappear (SIDA, 2020). The tourism industry contributed to more than 10% of GDP of the following countries (in descending order of % GDP): Seychelles, Cabo Verde, Mauritius, Gambia, Tunisia, Madagascar, Lesotho, Rwanda, Botswana, Egypt, Tanzania, Namibia, Comoros, and Senegal in 2019. In these countries, economic growth is expected to drop on average to a value of -3.3% in 2020, whereas the impact will be much higher in countries like Seychelles, Cabo Verde, Mauritius, and Gambia, with an expected -7% drop at least in 2020 (OECD, 2020a).

### 3.2 Impact of covid-19 on Rwandan economy

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Rwanda was in the midst of an economic boom with real economic growth of 9.4 percent in 2019, powered mainly by massive public spending to enforce the National Transformation Strategy (United nations Rwanda, 2020). With the implementation of COVID-19 preventive measures to curb the spread of coronavirus recommended by WHO, (2020) such as movement restrictions, external flows of goods and services have been seriously disrupted with significant spillovers to the global economy (World bank, 2020). Rwanda's economy has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with weaker domestic demand losses of revenue, and a sharp decline in exports and remittances (IMF, 2020). In the midst of disruptions in international trade and tourism, the service sector, which accounts for more than half of Rwanda's gross domestic product, has been hit hard. Conservative projections for 2020, reflecting the already acute impact on Rwanda, have reduced economic growth by approximately 7% points to between 2 and 3.5% (United nations Rwanda, 2020).

As of February 2020, the Monetary and Financial Stability Statement Report shows that the industry and services sectors are contributing 17.7% and 10.6% respectively, to real GDP growth, respectively. The 2018/2019 fiscal performance was generally fine. It developed slightly at a constant slow pace to a certain degree. This was due to the general domestic macroeconomic performance, which influenced both the collection of revenue and the disbursement of donor budget assistance. Looking at the current status, as mentioned in IMF Country Report No. 20/285 published in October, 2020, COVID-19 has had a severe economic impact on Rwanda through the implementation of strict domestic measures to contain the spread of the virus and the related global spillovers. As revealed in this report, real GDP growth is projected at 2% in 2020 and 6.3% in 2021.

According to KPMG, (2020) the Rwandan economy is vulnerable to a number of economic risks stemming from the pandemic. Rwanda has adjusted growth projections for 2020 downward from 8% to 5.1%. The international tourism industry has also been particularly affected; by March 20th, the Rwandan Hoteliers Association had already reported losses in excess of \$14 million (0.15% of GDP) and the risk of job losses in the sector. At present, tourism and hospitality alone accounts for 142,000 jobs (SET, 2020).

### 3.3 Socio-economic impact of covid-19 on vulnerable households in Rwanda

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused business, job losses and household livelihoods to be disrupted, resulting in increased poverty with the most vulnerable and poorest suffering (KPMG, 2020). According to Deloitte, (2020), the loss of income as a result of the lockdown is likely to lead to extreme hunger and vulnerable households remaining poor and to a further

strengthening of chronic poverty. Impacts for poor households range from loss of food security and health challenges to loss of jobs and income and increased risk of poverty or persistent poverty (IFC, 2020) are likely to take place. In the report by United nations Rwanda, (2020), the prices of food have been showing an upward trend. In March 2020, CPI (consumer price index) increased by 4% compared to the previous month, 24% compared to the previous year and 49% higher than five years earlier. Due to containment measures, certain social protection programmes are not running at the same pace as before the pandemic.

As revealed by SIDA's report, (2020), the pandemic puts also more pressure on social protection and delivery mechanisms that are unlikely to cope with the increased demand from 'new-poor' households leaving some eligible households without support. The COVID-19 regulations also limited access to services offered by community health workers at the local level (Hamadani, Hasan, Baldi, Hossain, & Shiraji, 2020). High transport charges, which were unaffordable for low income households in Rwanda due to the preservation of social distance in public transport limited timely access to health services (United nations Rwanda, 2020). In the same vein low-income households faced restrictions during the COVID-19 lockdown to afford water costs (either water at their premises and in public taps), soaps, and other sanitation resources.

### 3.4 Overview on PETS

Savedoff & Bank, (2008) define PETS as “quantitative exercises that aim to track the flow of public resources across various layers of the administrative hierarchy, from the allocating agency to the intended beneficiary, and determine inefficiencies in the system and their magnitude.” To improve social service delivery, a key contributing factor is the efficient use of public sector funds (UNDP, 2017). The first PETSs in the health and education sectors were conducted in Uganda. The analysis of education expenditure flows was motivated by the specific question of how education expenditure in Uganda could have risen without a demonstrable improvement in enrollment and attainment. The study found that only 13 percent of the funds intended to provide primary school education supplies had actually reached their intended use between 1991 and 1995.

Similar approaches are used in later studies to investigate paradoxes in which additional expenditure is not linked to more service provision. However by identifying differences between official and effective allocations at different administrative levels and in time, PETS are useful tools for understanding malfunctions in service delivery systems such as delays, leakages and capture of funds by bureaucratic actors, corruption, and inequity in the allocation of the financial support. In this survey, PETS shed a significant light on the actual

functioning of public expenditure systems, in particular, evaluating financial and institutional constraints on improving services in VU-DS scheme, identifying the rules and mechanisms in practice for allocating direct support within 15 districts in Rwanda, examining delays in disbursements, and possible leakage of financial support.

### 3.5 Overview on VUP-DS

The Vision 2020 Umurenge Program established in 2008 under the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC, 2019). Originally established as a flagship program within the first Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS). The VUP remains a key mechanism for the delivery of a range of national targets under EDPRS2 (2013-2018) and realization of Vision 2020 as well as the National Strategy for Transformation (NSTI) (2018-2024).

The purpose of the VUP is to make a critical contribution to the Government of Rwanda's efforts to eradicate extreme poverty, malnutrition and promote socio-economic transformation by accelerating graduation from extreme poverty and strengthening household resilience. This has been achieved through the implementation of the VUP's three components. The first of these is a Safety Net component that provides a mixture of public works and Direct Support (depending on household circumstances). These schemes aim to protect households from the most severe forms of poverty and prevent vulnerable households from falling further into poverty in the event of life cycle, economic or environmental shocks<sup>1</sup>.

The Safety Net component also aims to stabilize household assets and income and thereby lay the ground for household participation in a livelihoods development (LD) component (second VUP component). The LD component promotes more productive and self-sufficient livelihoods through the provision of productive assets; formal skills training; micro-credit, and financial education and coaching on a wide range of issues affecting livelihoods, and access to insurance.

The third component, Sensitization, and Public Communications, provides crosscutting support to the achievement of program objectives through the delivery of beneficiary sensitization and informal mentoring on a range of priority issues such as agricultural livelihoods, health and hygiene, rights and responsibilities. Sensitization activities delivered through a caseworker mechanism, a comprehensive public communications strategy and in partnership with other local government departments. This component will revitalize the

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<sup>1</sup> Ministerial Order of Minaloc on the implementation of VUP Umurenge DS Flagship, October 2019.

community mobilization and sensitization elements of VUP and will scale up selected behavior change communication (BCC) through channels such as radio and other media.

### **Key design and implementation principles**

1. Geographic targeting: VUP Direct Support is implemented in all sectors nationwide,
2. Target group: the target group for VUP Direct Support are extremely poor, severely labor constrained households.
3. Eligibility criteria: All extremely poor households in Ubudehe Category I with a) no workers b) only one worker caring for someone with severe disabilities<sup>2</sup> (holding disability card provided by NCPD) or a person with Disability who has not yet been categorized but demonstrating severe disability and approved through community approach.
4. Approach to household targeting: Validation of household eligibility and size conducted every 3 years through community meetings. Sector Councils are responsible for approving the targeting list on an annual basis. Changes to household composition for existing enrolled households are processed on-demand basis based on requests from households as well as on an annual basis (latest June each year) by the Cell and Village Coordinator so these changes reflected any households that have gained labor during implementation and be removed from the eligible list
5. Provisional Targeting List generated from the household Ubudehe data and validated by the Cell and Village Coordinators (working in collaboration with local Disability Committees) prior to submission to the Sector Council for final approval.
6. Appeals: Any appeals from newly eligible households submitted through the Village General Assemblies for consideration by the Sector Council. If the household is not in Ubudehe Category 1, they must have their Ubudehe classification revised as part of the process of registering for Direct Support.
7. If the household is dissatisfied with the decision of the Sector Council, they may escalate their appeal to the District Executive Committee. If still dissatisfied, appellants may submit an appeal to MINALOC or LODA who work with local governments to investigate and resolve the appeal. However, Districts remain the final decision-maker in all cases.

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<sup>2</sup>Severe disability shall cover persons with disability classified in category 1&2 according to the classification.

**Direct Support payments shall vary according to household size as follows:**

**Table 1: Household size and direct support**

No. household members	Monthly entitlement
1	7,500
2	12,000
3	15,000
4	18,000
5 above	21,000

**Source: Direct Support benefit rates for FY2019/2020**

8. Payment process: Payments made directly to beneficiaries' accounts through formal financial institutions such as Banks and SACCOs. Payments made every month and not later than 10 calendar days of the following month. For households who have lost a household member, benefits for that month which they are due, provided in full amount. However, the benefit for the following month adjusted in line with the remaining household members. In the event that a household has lost all the eligible household members, or the eligible households have migrated, payments for those households withheld and returned to the District Accounts.
9. Sensitization: Direct Support beneficiaries also benefit from sensitization delivered by local government staffs, civil society organizations and/or other service providers. These provided on at least semester basis. Where VUP caseworkers are present, DS beneficiaries may also benefit from theme.

Despite the significant scale-up of the VUP, coverage remains low compared to needs. By end of 2016/17, only around 50% of households in Ubudehe 1 covered by Direct Income Support schemes<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, only 31 percent of households with unacceptable food consumption and 32 percent and 34 percent of moderately and severely food insecure households respectively, receive any form of social assistance. Finally, only around a quarter of older people and people with disabilities accessed to any form of old age or disability pension or other form of direct income support.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The VUP reached 227,477 households out of 467,099 in Ubudehe category 1. This may slightly underestimate coverage, as FARG and RDRC do not record the Ubudehe classification of their Direct Support beneficiaries. However, given the limited scale of FARG and RDRC Direct Support schemes, this under-estimation expected to be minor.

<sup>4</sup> At end FY2016/17, pensions and Direct Support schemes provided by RSSB, VUP, FARG and RDRC covered approximately 156,000 older people and PwDs.

### 3.6 Rationale of the survey

As one of the fastest-growing economies on the continent, Rwanda has earned a reputation for innovation in many sectors, including health care (ICPAR, 2020). The country provides nearly universal healthcare to its thirteen million citizens (United nations Rwanda, 2020). It also uses drones to deliver essential medical products, such as blood donations, around the country, which reduces the wait time for patients for their needs (Muhayimana et al., 2020). After the first positive case of COVID-19 hit on March 8, there was little surprise that the government formed and implemented a robust nationwide response.

In order to contain the spreading of Covid-19 countrywide, the government of Rwanda has resorted to extreme measures such as the derogation of certain fundamental rights including freedom of assembly or freedom of movement, enhanced surveillance on its citizens. This enabled by the establishment of a total lockdown in the whole country from the 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2020 to the 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2020. The lockdown situation has created a state of emergency and this situation negatively impacted the citizens economically vulnerable. To tackle this issue, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) introduced a number of policies and innovative approaches to support vulnerable citizens in rural and urban areas, especially those people who could not afford feeding themselves on a daily basis due to loss of their jobs, or their key sources of income were totally dislocated. Among those policies we may say for examples, COVID-19 Joint Task Force (JTF) to coordinate and control COVID-19 response, followed by food, hygiene, and related relief to the most vulnerable families.

On the other side, in addition to citizens' complaints received by TI-RW and VUP-DS beneficiaries about the absence of direct support, different media outlets and social media reported cases of lack of transparency and fairness in the distribution of GoR's emergency support to the affected citizens, inaccurate information about instructions, and many cases of no-respect of instructions by citizens. In this context, TI-RW is conducting a PETS in VUP direct support (DS) during COVID-19 response (March, 2020- June, 2020) in 15 districts of Rwanda. The aim of PETS-DS is to analyze the impact of COVID-19 crisis on the living conditions of people who were entitled VUP-direct support in 15 districts in Rwanda. This is motivated by the fact that during the COVID-19 lockdown, recipients VUP-DS complaining about delay and leakage of their support payment.

Such survey will be a reference tool for various actors keen to allocate targeted support which integrated the Covid-19 new dimensions to VUP-DS beneficiaries.



## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Approach

To achieve the survey objectives, this study utilized a mixed methods-based approach, which allowed researchers to collect and analyze different views of beneficiaries of VUP-DS. This mixed-method approach allowed for a thorough triangulation of data in order to produce a verifiable body of evidence. Specifically, quantitative data collection approach was used to answer questions elaborated in the questionnaire. In addition, qualitative approach provided data explanation to emerging issues from the analysis. Furthermore, the study used an important part of desk review, literature and qualitative data obtained from administrative records, various reports and beneficiaries of VUP-DS respectively.

### 4.2 Target population and survey scope

The VUP-DS aims at protecting households in all 30 districts from the most severe forms of poverty and prevent vulnerable households from falling further into poverty. As published by the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1, 2017-2024), 107,000 DS beneficiaries were eligible countrywide. In this regard, all DS beneficiaries considered were aged above 18 years old. For the purpose of this PETS-VUP -DS, questionnaires were administered to only DS beneficiaries randomly selected from 15 districts, namely *Bugesera, Burera, Gasabo, Gatsibo, Gicumbi, Huye, Kamonyi, Kayanza, Kicukiro, Musanze, Nyabihu, Nyamagabe, Nyarugenge, Nyaruguru, and Rubavu*.

### 4.3. Sampling design

For this PETS, the questionnaire was administered among the DS beneficiaries as secondary sampling units at grassroots level. The sampling strategy used multi-stage sampling with two-stage sampling design. The district was taken as stratum while the sector was considered as cluster. From each selected cluster/sector, we randomly selected DS beneficiaries at sector level.

The population parameter considered as the mean of DS beneficiaries, and small ( $n$ ) the number of clusters (SU1) sampled while ( $m_i$ ), the number of elements (SU2) sampled from cluster (SU1 $_i$ ), the expected values and the variances of the mean calculated taking into consideration the two stages. In addition to that, a response rate ( $r$ ) was estimated at 80%. The margin of error (0.05), confidence level (95%), none response rate ( $1-r$ ), and variability of the estimator (mean) have affected sample size computations.

Thus, the sub-indices 1 and 2 refer respectively to the first and to the second sampling stages.

### First sampling stage (district level)

$E_1$  refers to the expected value of the estimator among all possible first-stage samples selected from the population.  $V_1$  refers to the sampling variance of the estimator among all possible first-stage samples selected from the population.

### Second sampling stage (sector level)

$E_2$  refers to the expected value of the estimator among all possible second-stage samples selected from the first-stage clusters already sampled, that is, conditional on the  $SUI$  sampled. From the first stage, within each cluster/sector, second sampling units as DS beneficiaries ( $SU2$ ) randomly selected.

$V_2$  refers to the sampling variance of the estimator among all possible second-stage samples selected from the first stage clusters already sampled, that is, conditional on the  $SUI$  sampled.

Once the  $\theta$  is an estimator of the population parameter  $\theta$  for both the first and second stage, the expected value of the estimator is:

$$E[\hat{\theta}] = E_1[E_2(\hat{\theta})] \quad (1)$$

and its sampling variance is:

$$V[\hat{\theta}] = V_1[E_2(\hat{\theta})] + E_1[V_2(\hat{\theta})] \quad (2)$$

The first term relates to the sampling variance of the estimator between the clusters ( $SUI$ ) and the second term relates to the sampling variance between the elements ( $SU2$ ) within the clusters ( $SUI$ ).

### Sample size calculation

The sample size that would now be necessary shown in the following Equation

$$n = \left( \frac{\frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2}}{1 + \frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2 N}} \right) \quad (3)$$

Where  $N = 107,000$  a total number of VUP DS beneficiaries and  $p = 80\%$  (Fiscal Year: 2020/2021) that is the proportion of core social protection program (VUP, FARG, RDRC) payments delivered on time as published by the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1, 2017/18-2023/2024).  $r = 80\%$ , the fraction of responses that we are interested in, and 95% of confidence level  $Z = 1.96$ , and margin of error  $e = 5\%$ .

Then the sample size of DS beneficiaries,  $n = 245$

Adjusted upwards to account for the expected non-response rate to make sure that at the end of the survey we had the required number of responses. The formula used for adjustment is the following

$$n_f = \frac{n_0}{1-r} \quad (4)$$

Where  $n_0$  is the sample size calculated using formula (3) and  $n_f$  the adjusted sample size of households taking into account expected non-response rate  $(1 - r)$  and a total number of sample becomes **1,253 households** selected in 15 stratum/districts (First stage) and 45 clusters/sectors (Second stage).

**Table 2: Sample size allocation**

District	Female	Male	Total (n)	
Bugesera	61	32	93	
Burera	55	26	81	
Gasabo	48	21	69	
Gatsibo	66	26	92	
Gicumbi	79	24	103	
Huye	60	20	80	
Kamonyi	52	19	71	
Kayonza	65	30	95	
Kicukiro	30	10	40	
Musanze	49	28	77	
Nyabihu	45	22	67	
Nyamagabe	79	35	114	
Nyarugenge	32	14	46	
Nyaruguru	101	28	129	
Rubavu	65	31	96	
<b>Total (n)</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>1253</b>	

#### 4.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical standards to conduct quality research was strictly observed throughout the process. Interviewees informed about the background of the assessment, its ultimate goal and objectives, intended use of findings and measures taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of data sources. They were equally given an opportunity to seek clarifications on unclear areas from the interviewer before giving their consent to take part in this assessment. Respondents were assured that nobody else, except the TI-RW research team, gain access to their data and that their names not revealed to anyone without their prior consent. The TI-Rw research team strictly complied with the “do no harm” principles of undertaking research involving human being.

## 4.5 Household visits and selection of respondents

Due to covid-19, instructions preventive measures were carefully observed at every step. Especially, every participant wore facemask, sanitized or washed properly his or her hands, and put two-meter distance between each other. Using the list of DS beneficiaries in selected sector, team leader used simple random sampling to select names of households from the whole list.

## 4.6 Desk review approach

The desk review was an important part of this PETS D by collecting, organizing and synthesizing available real data per month from LODA, MINECOFIN, MINALOC, Districts, Sectors, and or SACCOs. The period of covid-19 from 21<sup>st</sup> March up to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 and fiscal financial year of 2019-2020 were taken as references. The TI-Rw research team gained an understanding of the VUP DS context, DS priorities, DS payment-timeline trends, DS fund requests and disbursements. Desk review activities included scanning the literature, analyzing secondary data, and creating a reference list or structured guide so that all documents are organized and easily accessible to all research team members.

## 4.7. Data analysis

Since tablets were used to collect data, the latter were automatically transmitted and entered into a database for downloading and quality checks. The data were merged and cleaned before being analyzed. Merging of data was necessary to bring together data collected at different places into one dataset.

- **Analysis of the leakage**

The following formula was applied in order to measure possible leakage in the flow of requested, transferred and obtained funds: According to VUP-DS guidelines (2019), “no deductions whatsoever shall be made from VUP-DS payments during the payment process”.

$$\text{Leakage} = 1 - \frac{\text{Resources Received by facility}}{\text{Resources Intended for facility}}$$

- **Analysis of the Delay**

DS payment must be paid at the beginning of each month, as stated in the VUP-DS guidelines, but not later than 10 calendar days after the end of that month, with the exception of July when disbursement may be delayed. However, the payment made after 10 calendar days is considered in this survey as the delay for the previous month.

## 5. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) in VUP-direct support displays a generalized and analytical data image of the impact of Covid-19 on the livelihood of the most vulnerable people (Ubudehe category 1) from 15 selected districts in Rwanda as mentioned above. This chapter focuses on findings from PETS which analyses leakage and delays. In addition to the respondents' demographics and vulnerability status of VUP-DS beneficiaries, the study presents the findings on socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on VUP-DS beneficiaries.

### 5.1 Demographics

For this survey, demographic information provides data regarding research participants who are VUP DS beneficiaries for the fiscal financial year from 2019-2020. This section includes gender, marital status and age.

**Table 3 : Age, Gender and Marital status of DS beneficiaries**

Characteristics	Response	Count	%
Age	30 years and below	21	1.7%
	31-35	20	1.6%
	36-40	25	2.0%
	41-45	36	2.9%
	46-50	40	3.2%
	51-55	42	3.4%
	56-60	56	4.5%
	61 years and above	1013	80.8%
	Total	1253	100.0%
Gender	Female	887	70.8%
	Male	366	29.2%
	Total	1253	100.0%
Marital status	Divorce	17	1.4%
	Married	264	21.1%
	Separated	45	3.6%
	Single	60	4.8%
	Widow	867	69.2%
	Total	1253	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

From the overall sample of 1,253 people, around 81% (1013 out of 1,253) are very old. They are aged between 61 years and above. These findings concur with the guidelines of VUP-DS with regard to selection criteria which target the high labor- constrained households including old people.

In this survey, female participants represent 71% against 29% of males. The high representation of females in VUP-DS support corroborates the findings from a study conducted by United Nations, Rwanda (June 2020) which indicates that 68% of women are the majority benefiting from Direct Support under the VUP program.

With regard to the marital status of respondents, the study shows that at least, 69% of all participants are widow, while only 21.1% are currently married. Again, these results reflect the VUP-DS targeting guidelines of households which are extremely vulnerable.

## 5.2 Vulnerability status of VUP-DS beneficiaries

Defining the vulnerabilities status of VUP-DS beneficiaries offers further information into the degree of their ability to cope with a challenge or resist the effect of COVID-19. Hence, such results can be used to address their problems and determine where additional resources and more assistance are needed. COVID-19 restrictions measures have led to severe impact on essential needs such as access to market, education, and health and bank services. Thus, this section illustrates vulnerability status of VUP-DS beneficiaries with regard to the above-mentioned services.

Table 4: Vulnerability status about distance to the nearest facility

Status	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Distance to the next school	2 to 5 Km	296	33.4%	114	31.1%	410	32.7%
	5 to 10 Km	59	6.7%	11	3.0%	70	5.6%
	Less than 2 Km	527	59.4%	240	65.6%	767	61.2%
	More than 10 Km	5	.6%	1	.3%	6	.5%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Distance to market	2 to 5 Km	383	43.2%	167	45.6%	550	43.9%
	5 to 10 Km	126	14.2%	41	11.2%	167	13.3%
	Less than 2 Km	350	39.5%	148	40.4%	498	39.7%
	More than 10 Km	28	3.2%	10	2.7%	38	3.0%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Distance to the next road main road	2 to 5 Km	303	34.2%	115	31.4%	418	33.4%
	5 to 10 Km	134	15.1%	49	13.4%	183	14.6%
	Less than 2 Km	403	45.4%	183	50.0%	586	46.8%
	More than 10 Km	47	5.3%	19	5.2%	66	5.3%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Distance to the next Health Center	2 to 5 Km	384	43.3%	155	42.3%	539	43.0%
	5 to 10 Km	100	11.3%	43	11.7%	143	11.4%
	Less than 2 Km	381	43.0%	164	44.8%	545	43.5%
	More than 10 Km	22	2.5%	4	1.1%	26	2.1%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Distance to the next SACCO or Bank	2 to 5 Km	384	43.3%	162	44.3%	546	43.6%
	5 to 10 Km	126	14.2%	54	14.8%	180	14.4%
	Less than 2 Km	356	40.1%	145	39.6%	501	40.0%
	More than 10 Km	21	2.4%	5	1.4%	26	2.1%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

Source: Primary data, 2020

The study revealed a high proportion of VUP-DS beneficiaries (61%) who stay close to the nearest school facility (Children living in their households may be their grandchildren or other young relatives). This is a good indication of Rwandan government efforts to provide to citizens with social infrastructure that are closer to them and hence avoid unnecessary

transport expenses and other associated costs. This proves very supportive for people in ubudehe category one who would not afford school transport costs and therefore limiting the access to education of their children. The low level of vulnerability in terms of distance to school among VUP-DS beneficiaries (61.2% stay closer to school facility) is also encouraging especially in this period of COVID-19 pandemic where movement restrictions measures are still enforced in Rwanda in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

On the other hand, the study found out that the majority of respondent (53.3%) declared that they stayed 2km and above far from the main road and 60.2% of them(majority) said they were far from the nearest market (beyond 2km from their homes). Additionally, 56.5% respondents revealed that they were far from the nearest health centre (above 2km from their homes) and finally the majority of surveyed VUP-DS beneficiaries (62.5%) affirmed that they were staying far from the nearest SACCO. The vulnerability status of VUP-DS beneficiaries was observed as hindrance to acquire essential needs namely access to main road and market, health and bank services. The long travel distance by VUP-DS beneficiaries may hamper their timely access to essentials needs and putting their living conditions at more risk. The impact of long distance on VUP-DS beneficiaries was also confirmed by qualitative data. This was echoed by a VUP-DS beneficiary who participated in FGD in Kayonza district.

***“I felt sick during the lockdown and could not go to hospital because I had no money to pay for transport. It was very expensive for me to pay 500 RFW for transport from home to the hospital. I could not afford it”***

Besides, this study examined the vulnerability status of VUP-DS beneficiaries in terms of the household size and disability.

**Table 5: Vulnerability status about the household size and living with disability**

Status	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Number of dependents in the household</b>	0	4	.5%	2	.5%	6	.5%
	1	278	31.3%	79	21.6%	357	28.5%
	2	271	30.6%	96	26.3%	367	29.3%
	3	132	14.9%	57	15.6%	189	15.1%
	4	82	9.2%	45	12.3%	127	10.1%
	5 and above	120	0	86	0	206	0
	Total	887	100.0%	365	100.0%	1252	100.0%
<b>People living with disability</b>	No	461	52.0%	154	42.1%	615	49.1%
	Yes	426	48.0%	212	57.9%	638	50.9%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Other member living with disability in the household</b>	No	736	83.7%	259	71.0%	995	80.0%
	Yes	143	16.3%	106	29.0%	249	20.0%
	Total	879	100.0%	365	100.0%	1244	100.0%

<b>Type of disability</b>	Combined impairment	65	15.3%	20	9.4%	85	13.3%
	Deaf and Mute	9	2.1%	3	1.4%	12	1.9%
	Hearing impairment	16	3.8%	10	4.7%	26	4.1%
	Mental impairment	52	12.2%	15	7.1%	67	10.5%
	Other	16	3.8%	13	6.1%	29	4.5%
	Physical impairment	220	51.6%	126	59.4%	346	54.2%
	Visual impairment	48	11.3%	25	11.8%	73	11.4%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

It emerged from the findings that majority of VUP-DS households (57.8%) who participated in this survey accommodate eligible members ranging between one and two while only 25.2% of them had between three and four members. In reference to VUP-DS guidelines, VUP-DS payment varies according to the size of household. In this case, considering that the majority of VUP-DS beneficiaries accommodate between 1 and 2 dependent members, in monetary value, this corresponds to at most 12000 RWF monthly earning for these households (see 2019 VUP-DS guidelines). In this context, considering the market trend in Rwanda during COVID-19, where the CPI increased by 4% in March 2020 compared to previous month and 24% compared to previous year (United Nations Rwanda 2020), it is worth noting that the household's consumption status was heavily affected and apparently reduced the household capacity to manage the existing VUP-DS monthly support (which did not change since 2017) and cope with the current market fluctuations.

Cumulatively, the survey shows a high proportion of VUP-DS beneficiaries (70.9%) living or having other member with disability. Participants with physical impairment were most represented (54.2%). Generally, people living with disability have special needs linked with their disability status. The impact of COVID-19 on their livelihood is overwhelmingly threatening especially when it comes to move from their home seeking for essential services while it is impossible for them to walk without any care taker. This reality is also supported by UNFPA-Rwanda (June, 2020) in that people living with disability faced challenges due to the fact that transport means such as moto-taxi have been disrupted and it is complex to access other transport services such as Bus or Taxi which are also costly for people living in extreme poverty.

The study sought to analyze the vulnerability of respondents with regard to access to fundamental domestic needs such as clean water, electricity and lighting. The table below presents related results.

**Table 6: Vulnerability status about the access to clean water, electricity and other sources of lightening**

Status	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Access to sources of clean water</b>	Community well	330	37.2%	117	32.0%	447	35.7%
	Household hand pump	33	3.7%	15	4.1%	48	3.8%
	Household water supply (piped)	256	28.9%	102	27.9%	358	28.6%
	Other	57	6.4%	25	6.8%	82	6.5%
	Public tap	211	23.8%	107	29.2%	318	25.4%



	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Access to electricity and other sources of lightening</b>	I don't have access to any power source	100	11.3%	50	13.7%	150	12.0%
	I have electricity in my house through REG supply	269	30.3%	108	29.5%	377	30.1%
	I have electricity through battery power	28	3.2%	9	2.5%	37	3.0%
	I use Kerosene lamp	124	14.0%	68	18.6%	192	15.3%
	I use solar supply energy	85	9.6%	40	10.9%	125	10.0%
	Other source of energy	281	31.7%	91	24.9%	372	29.7%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

The above findings indicate that majority of VUP-DS beneficiaries (54%) could access water through payment of bills. These include paying bills for piped water supply and public taps. As mentioned in previous findings, VUP-DS monthly rate was significantly affected by the increase of consumer good prices in the local market. This might be a serious threat for VUP-DS beneficiaries to pay water bills among other expenses. In the same context, COVID-19 lockdown has severely hit the significant percentage (35.7%) of VUP-DS beneficiaries who use community well to fetch water for domestic use since the movements outside home was restricted to curb the spread of COVID-19.

In terms of source of energy, majority of respondents (around 70%) use off-grid power source while only 30% utilize national grid. Although electricity access appears to have improved significantly in Rwanda, potential challenges remain, especially in providing affordable electricity access for poor households in UBUDEHE category 1. Notably, though 70% of respondents used off-grid power, one can wonder whether the purchasing power of VUP-DS beneficiaries while paying electricity bills has not been affected by the increase of food price in the local market during the COVID-19 period. The following testimony from a VUP-DS beneficiary who participated in FGD in Musanze district illustrates the issue.

***-I normally use candles to get light in my house at night. However, during COVID-19 period, I couldn't afford it and I was forced to spend several nights in darkness due to lack of sufficient means to cover all domestic expenses.***

The section below discusses the timelines of disbursement of VUP-DS and its impact on the livelihood of beneficiaries.

### 5.3. Delays and leakage of VUP-DS disbursement and their impact on beneficiaries

According to the VUP DS guidelines of October 2019, all payments should be made directly to beneficiaries' accounts through formal financial institutions such as Banks and SACCOs. Payments should be made every month and not later than 10 calendar days of the following month. This section presents experiences of DS beneficiaries in reception of their payments, timeliness and amount received before and during the period of covid-19 pandemic.

**Table 7: Percentages and number of DS beneficiaries who received regular payments**

Question	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Before, the period of covid-19 did you regularly receive your DS per month?</b>	No	30	3.4%	12	3.3%	42	3.4%
	Yes in partial	40	4.5%	22	6.0%	62	4.9%
	Yes in total	817	92.1%	332	90.7%	1149	91.7%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>During the period of covid-19, did you regularly receive your DS per month?</b>	No	15	1.7%	9	2.5%	24	1.9%
	Yes in partial	67	7.6%	31	8.5%	98	7.8%
	Yes in total	805	90.8%	326	89.1%	1131	90.3%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

Source: Primary data, 2020

As shown in this survey, 91.7% of VUP-DS recipients who participated in this survey earned their payments on a regular basis prior to the covid-19 period compared to 90.3% of VUP-DS recipients who continuously received DS payments during the COVID-19 period. In line with the above-mentioned result, which does not show much delay in VUP-DS during the COVID-19 pandemic, it implies that VUP-DS payments were not disrupted too much during the COVID-19 period. This study analyzed the extent of delays in disbursing VUP-DS support to beneficiaries.

**Table 8: Analysis of delays in VUP-DS disbursement**

The findings presented in the below table were collected and analyzed in desk review, where we tried to select a few VUP-DS beneficiaries who had problems delaying access to their direct supports. We have purposively selected three cases at each sector in 15 districts.

District	Sector	Number of respondents	Months	Date of Payment	Delay (days)
KAMONYI	GACURABWENGE	3	March	14/4/2020	4 days
			April	14/4/2020	4 days
			May	15/6/2020	5 days
			June	13/07/2020	3 days
KAMONYI	RUNDA	3	March	16/3/2020	6 days
			April	20/4/2020	10 days

District	Sector	Number of respondents	Months	Date of Payment	Delay (days)
NYAMAGABE	KADUHA	3	May	15/5/2020	5 days
			June	15/7/2020	5 days
			March	3/4/2020	None
			April	14/4/2020	4 days
			May	19/5/2020	9 days
			June	18/06/2020	8 days
NYARUGURU	NGOMA	3	March	-	-
			April	4/4/2020	None
			May		11
				21/5/2020	days
			June	20/06/2020	10
					days
NYABIHU	JOMBA	3	March	02/04/2020	None
			April	27/4/2020	17
					days
			May	1/6/2020	None
			June		14
				24/6/2020	days
NYABIHU	MUKAMIRA	3	March	1/4/2020	None
			April	29/4/2020	19
					days
			May	2/6/2020	None
			June	22/6/2020	None
GASABO	JABANA	3	March	24/3/2020	14
					days
			April	15/4/2020	5 days
			May	12/5/2020	2 days
			June	11/6/2020	1 day
GASABO	NDERA	3	March	27/3/2020	17
					days
			April	14/4/2020	4 days
			May	14/5/2020	4 days
			June	16/6/2020	6 days
KICUKIRO	GAHANGA	3	March	14/3/2020	4 days
			April	6/4/2020	None
			May	14/5/2020	4 days
			June	11/6/2020	1 day
BURERA	CYANIKA	3	March	10/3/2020	None
			April	3/4/2020	None
			May		11
				21/05/2020	days
			June	15/06/2020	5 days
BURERA	CYERU	3	March	21/4/2020	11
					days
			April		17
				27/05/2020	days
			May	19/06/2020	9 days
			June	30/7/2020	20
HUYE	KIGOMA	3	March	9/4/2020	None
			April	28/4/2020	18
					days

District	Sector	Number of respondents	Months	Date of Payment	Delay (days)
HUYE	SIMBI	3	May	15/5/2020	5 days
			June	10/06/2020	None
			March	21/02/2020	None
			April	3/4/2020	None
			May	21/5/2020	11 days
			June	9/06/2020	None

**Source: PETS of VUP DS, 2020**

The data from desk review revealed some delays in VUP-DS disbursement. In fact, eight (8) out of Fifteen (15) districts were affected by delays varying between one to 20 days. Obviously, this delay has impacted on VUP-DS beneficiaries living conditions especially in the COVID1-19 crisis due to the lack of financial capacity to meet their basic needs while waiting for their entitlement. To support the above results, below are the respondent's views during focus group discussion;

A VUP-DS beneficiary from kayonza district said;

- *"I did not get VUP-DS support on time during lockdown. This had serious effects on my family because my husband is very old and we have a child living with disability, I decided to take dept from the nearest boutique to overcome starvation during that period". Upon the reception of the funds, I was not able to fully pay the dept as the price kept rising at the local market.*

Another VUP-DS beneficiary who participated in the FGD in Nyamagabe district testified:

*"Before COVID-19 pandemic, we usually get our support on time. During the lockdown, our family seriously starved due to VUP-DS payment delay".*

While the previous section analyzed the delays in funds disbursement, the table below illustrates the leakage of funds between March and June 2020.

**Table 9: Leakage of VUP-DS Funds between March and June 2020**

District	Sector	Number of respondents sampled	Months	Entitlement amount	Amount paid	Leakage (%)
KAMONYI	GACURABWENGE	3	March	21300 rwf	20300 rwf	4%
			April	21300 rwf	20300 rwf	4%
			May	21300 rwf	20300 rwf	4%
KAMONYI	RUNDA	3	March	21000 rwf	20000 rwf	4%
			April	21000 rwf	20000 rwf	4%
			May	21000 rwf	21000 rwf	0%
			June	21000 rwf	20000 rwf	4%
NYAMAGABE	KADUHA	3	March	12500 rwf	11500 rwf	8%

			April	15500 rwf	14500 rwf	6%
			May	12500 rwf	11000 rwf	12%
			June	12500 rwf	11000 rwf	12%
NYARUGURU	NGOMA	3	March	0	0	-
			April	12250 rwf	12000 rwf	2%
			May	12250 rwf	11000 rwf	10%
			June	12250 rwf	11000 rwf	10%
NYABIHU	JOMBA	3	March	7,500 rwf	6,000 rwf	20%
			April	7,500 rwf	6,000 rwf	20%
			May	7,500 rwf	6,000 rwf	20%
			June	7,500 rwf	6,000 rwf	20%

**Source: PETS of VUP DS, 2020**

The survey indicates that the leakage of VUP-DS support is a reality in Rwanda. The leakage of VUP-DS funds has also a negative impact on the monthly earning of VUP-DS beneficiaries. As a matter of fact, between March and June 2020, the estimated leakage is ranging between 2 to 20% and was found in 4 out of 15 selected districts. The highest leakage (20%) was found in Jomba sector in Nyabihu district. Comparing with situation before COVID-19, the findings from PETS conducted by TI-RW in education sector (2012) revealed that there was no leakage between the amount requested by District and the amount received by Districts schools from the Ministry of Finance. Additionally, TI-RW didn't find leakage between the Capitation Grant provided by the Ministerial order and the amount disbursed by the Ministry of Finance and received by schools. Although these families are already threatened by limited financial means to cope with COVID-19 effects, one might wonder why such a leakage.

According to some participants in FGDs with VUP-DS beneficiaries, the leakage was explained by the fact that in some sectors the VUP-DS payments were subject to various charges such as SACCO management fee, bank transaction sheet fee, SACCO's office construction fee, security guard fee and Ejo Heza savings for sporadic cases. These charges were also confirmed by the SACCO manager who were interviewed in some sectors and who also acknowledged that the charges of Ejo Heza savings was even a compulsory requirement for all SACCO members.

Considering the little amount entitled to VUP-DS beneficiaries which unfortunately remain unchanged for years ago, bearing in mind the consumer goods price increase during COVID-19 pandemic, it can be noticed that these charges negatively affected VUP-DS beneficiaries who always depend on this support to survive.

The retained charges were also testified by respondents who participated in FGDs. Some participants complained about compulsory charges of their support known as EJO Heza savings. In this regard, a VUP-DS beneficiary in Musanze district said;

*“I had to be paid 12000RWF but they gave me 10 000rwf. when complained about such unauthorized charges, they said they had charged me EJOHEZA savings and that they will use it to buy coffins so that I won’t burden to my family”.*

The above findings are undoubtedly surprising and contradict with the 2019 VUP-DS guidelines which stipulate that “no deductions whatsoever shall be made from VUP-DS payments during the payment process”. Additionally, it is unclear to pretend making savings for people who totally depend on government support all over their lifetime. In contrary, this attempt to deduct some money as savings would lead them to adverse consequences and hamper the outcome of the existing support.

#### 5.4. Impact of Covid-19 on the households’ basic needs

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has affected households in numerous ways. COVID-19 and the lockdown measures imposed to prevent its spread have pushed VUP-DS beneficiaries deeper into poverty. Therefore, this section illustrates the impacts of covid-19 pandemic on livelihoods of DS beneficiaries. About households’ basic needs, the impact measurements is made on eating frequencies, source of food, food expenditure and other household basic needs. The following tables illustrate the situation.

**Table 10: Eating frequencies before and during covid-19 pandemic among VUP-DS beneficiaries**

Question	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Before the period of covid-19. How often did you eat per day?</b>	None food for some days	23	2.6%	12	3.3%	35	2.8%
	Once	303	34.2%	138	37.7%	441	35.2%
	Twice	520	58.6%	192	52.5%	712	56.8%
	Triple	41	4.6%	24	6.6%	65	5.2%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>During the period of covid-19. How often did you eat per day?</b>	None food for some days	158	17.8%	80	21.9%	238	19.0%
	Once	528	59.5%	215	58.7%	743	59.3%
	Twice	196	22.1%	68	18.6%	264	21.1%
	Triple	5	0.6%	3	0.8%	8	0.6%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

Source: Primary data, 2020

It is emerged from the above findings that COVID-19 impacted on the eating frequency of VUP-DS beneficiaries who took part in this survey. The results show a significant increase of respondents who could eat once a day during the COVID-19 pandemic (from 35.2% before COVID-19 to 59.3 % during COVID-19). This increase also denotes the drop of those who could eat twice a day during the COVID-19 crisis as the proportion of those who were able to eat twice a day decreased from 56.8% before COVID-19 to 21.1% during COVID-19 period. The impact of COVID-19 was so noteworthy on the livelihood of VUP-DS beneficiaries as the proportion of VUP-DS beneficiaries who could not get food for some days rose from 2.8% before COVID-19 to 19.0% during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These findings corroborate the UN assessment report in Rwanda (June, 2020) which highlighted that COVID-19 has increased poverty in Rwanda with the vulnerable and poorest suffering the most. As also reported by IMF (2020), limited access to food stuff and lack of financial support during COVID-19 pandemic led poor families to deepest poverty status.

The study further showed that the effect of COVID-19 on respondent's basic needs slightly varied among males and females' respondents. For example, in few days, 21.9 percent of male-headed households have faced food shortages for some days, compared to 17.8 percent of female-headed households facing the same problem.

During focus group discussion, some VUP-DS beneficiaries who participated in FGD in Bugesera district explained how COVID-19 worsened the living condition in their families. Below are some of the respondent's views;

*“Amidst the lockdown, it was difficult for my family to get food. We sometimes used to cook food for only children and adults slept without taking anything”.*

Another participant in FGD conducted in Musanze district said:

*“The lockdown brought so many effects because we had no other source of income except from VUP-DS. During lockdown, we were only able to eat once a day while we used to get food at least twice a day before covid-19”.*

Amidst COVID-19 pandemic, the sources of food might be affected by various restrictive measures introduced to curb the spread of coronavirus. The table below illustrates the VUP-DS beneficiaries' sources of food during the period under review.

**Table 11: DS households' sources of food**

Items	Before the period of covid-19 pandemic					
	Response	Female		Male		Total
		Count	%	Count	%	Count %
Shopping in the market	No	58	6.5%	37	10.1%	95 7.6%
	Yes	829	93.5%	329	89.9%	1158 92.4%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253 100.0%
Agriculture crops	No	568	64.0%	237	64.8%	805 64.2%
	Yes	319	36.0%	129	35.2%	448 35.8%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253 100.0%
Neighbors	No	834	94.0%	339	92.6%	1173 93.6%
	Yes	53	6.0%	27	7.4%	80 6.4%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253 100.0%
Family relatives	No	853	96.2%	355	97.0%	1208 96.4%
	Yes	34	3.8%	11	3.0%	45 3.6%

	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Casual agricultural labor</b>	No	816	92.0%	334	91.3%	1150	91.8%
	Yes	71	8.0%	32	8.7%	103	8.2%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Government</b>	No	707	79.7%	286	78.1%	993	79.2%
	Yes	180	20.3%	80	21.9%	260	20.8%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Donors</b>	No	840	94.7%	341	93.2%	1181	94.3%
	Yes	47	5.3%	25	6.8%	72	5.7%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Other sources</b>	No	861	97.1%	358	97.8%	1219	97.3%
	Yes	26	2.9%	8	2.2%	34	2.7%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

#### During the period of covid-19 pandemic

Response	Female		Male		Total		
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
<b>Shopping in the market</b>	No	66	7.4%	37	10.1%	103	8.2%
	Yes	821	92.6%	329	89.9%	1150	91.8%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Agriculture crops</b>	No	671	75.6%	285	77.9%	956	76.3%
	Yes	216	24.4%	81	22.1%	297	23.7%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Neighbors</b>	No	830	93.6%	339	92.6%	1169	93.3%
	Yes	57	6.4%	27	7.4%	84	6.7%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Family relatives</b>	No	857	96.6%	354	96.7%	1211	96.6%
	Yes	30	3.4%	12	3.3%	42	3.4%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Casual agricultural labor</b>	No	846	95.4%	344	94.0%	1190	95.0%
	Yes	41	4.6%	22	6.0%	63	5.0%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Government</b>	No	695	78.4%	270	73.8%	965	77.0%
	Yes	192	21.6%	96	26.2%	288	23.0%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>Donors</b>	No	828	93.3%	344	94.0%	1172	93.5%
	Yes	59	6.7%	22	6.0%	81	6.5%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

Source: Primary data, 2020



As revealed in the table above, during the covid-19 period, the major sources of food of DS beneficiaries sampled in this survey remain as the same situation as it was before covid-19 period. For instance, before the covid-19 period the major sources of food of respondents were strictly market which changed marginally from 92.4% before to 91.8% during the covid-19 period. The second source of food was agriculture crops which dropped from 35.8% before COVID-19 period to 23.7% during COVID-19 period. This can be explained by the fact that during COVID-19 Lockdown movements outside the home or between provinces in some cases have been banned for an initial two weeks except for essential services such as health care and shopping for groceries. Government food assistance was positively changed from 20.8% before COVID-19 period to 23% during COVID-19 period. This implies that government food assistance to vulnerable households has been increased during COVID-19 related lockdowns. The least sources of food before and after COVID-19 period are family relatives which changed from 3.6% before COVID-19 to 3.4% during COVID-19. Donors which changed from 5.7% before COVID-19 to 6.5% during COVID-19. Neighbor' source which changed from 6.4% before COVID-19 to 6.7% during COVID-19 and casual agriculture labor which changed from 8.2% before COVID-19 period to 5% during COVID-19 period. The change in casual agriculture labor as source of income might be due to COVID-19 lockdown.

**Table 12: Preference of household basic needs before and during COVID-19 pandemic**

<b>Before the period of covid-19 pandemic</b>						
<b>items</b>	Female		Male		Total	
	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Food</b>	878	99.0%	363	99.2%	1241	99.0%
<b>Charcoal or woods</b>	369	41.6%	160	43.7%	529	42.2%
<b>Cooking oil</b>	391	44.1%	169	46.2%	560	44.7%
<b>Salt</b>	568	64.0%	226	61.7%	794	63.4%
<b>Petrol for lamp</b>	41	4.6%	28	7.7%	69	5.5%
<b>Electricity</b>	84	9.5%	44	12.0%	128	10.2%
<b>Water</b>	173	19.5%	97	26.5%	270	21.5%
<b>Clothes</b>	425	47.9%	172	47.0%	597	47.6%
<b>School fees</b>	41	4.6%	26	7.1%	67	5.3%
<b>House renting fees</b>	15	1.7%	10	2.7%	25	2.0%
<b>Airtime for communication</b>	7	.8%	12	3.3%	19	1.5%
<b>Loan reimbursement in Tontine</b>	11	1.2%	15	4.1%	26	2.1%
<b>Saving in Tontine</b>	98	11.0%	56	15.3%	154	12.3%
<b>Transport</b>	43	4.8%	14	3.8%	57	4.5%
<b>Others</b>	189	21.3%	67	18.3%	256	20.4%
<b>During the period of covid-19 pandemic</b>						
<b>Response</b>	Female		Male		Total	
	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Food</b>	875	98.6%	362	98.9%	1237	98.7%
<b>Charcoal or woods</b>	388	43.7%	165	45.1%	553	44.1%
<b>Cooking oil</b>	388	43.7%	154	42.1%	542	43.3%
<b>Salt</b>	570	64.3%	232	63.4%	802	64.0%

<b>Petrol for lump</b>	41	4.6%	23	6.3%	64	5.1%
<b>Electricity</b>	75	8.5%	40	10.9%	115	9.2%
<b>Water</b>	167	18.8%	91	24.9%	258	20.6%
<b>Clothes</b>	260	29.3%	89	24.3%	349	27.9%
<b>School fees</b>	2	.2%	7	1.9%	9	.7%
<b>House renting fees</b>	15	1.7%	6	1.6%	21	1.7%
<b>Airtime for communication</b>	3	.3%	9	2.5%	12	1.0%
<b>Loan reimbursement in Tontine</b>	12	1.4%	12	3.3%	24	1.9%
<b>Saving in Tontine</b>	76	8.6%	43	11.7%	119	9.5%
<b>Transport</b>	30	3.4%	16	4.4%	46	3.7%
<b>Others</b>	143	16.1%	52	14.2%	195	15.6%

Source: Primary data, 2020

Comparing the period before and after COVID-19, preferred household basic needs did not significantly change. For example, mostly preferred food changed slightly from 99% before COVID-19 period to 98.7% during COVID-19 period while salt changed from 63.7% before COVID-19 period to 64% during COVID-19 period.

A significant drop from 47.6% before COVID-19 to 27.9% was reported to clothes preference. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, fundamental basic needs must be met before other needs can be considered (Aruma & Hanachor, 2017). Though, this is in consistence with this theory, the significant change in preference of clothes can be attributed to the fact that shopping for clothes won't be a priority due to an increase of economic uncertainty among VUP-DS beneficiaries in the COVID-19 period.

The least preferred household's basic needs were airtime for communication; Loan reimbursement in tontine, transport, petrol for lump and cooking charcoal/wood. As observed in the findings, VUP-DS beneficiaries have been greatly relying on the most preferred needs which match well with the hierarchy of needs theory cited above. This was mainly due to lack of sufficient means to accommodate all basic needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As mentioned in the literature, the consumer price index has been significantly increased during the COVID-19 period in Rwanda. The data below display the extent of food price increase and its impact on VUP-DS beneficiaries in the period between March and June 2020.

**Table 13: VUP-DS beneficiaries' perception on the price of food during COVID-19.**

Question	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Before the period of covid-19. Did you think that the food was more expensive on</b>	Not expensive	322	36.3%	113	30.9%	435	34.7%
	Not expensive at all	10	1.1%	8	2.2%	18	1.4%
	Yes, expensive	348	39.2%	140	38.3%	488	38.9%

Question	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
the market than your household's financial capacity?	Yes, more expensive	41	4.6%	23	6.3%	64	5.1%
	Yes, somehow expensive	166	18.7%	82	22.4%	248	19.8%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
During the period of covid-19. Did you think that the food was more expensive on the market than your household's financial capacity?	Not expensive	2	.2%	2	.5%	4	.3%
	Not expensive at all	1	.1%	0	0.0%	1	.1%
	Yes, expensive	115	13.0%	44	12.0%	159	12.7%
	Yes, more expensive	760	85.7%	318	86.9%	1078	86.0%
	Yes, somehow expensive	9	1.0%	2	.5%	11	.9%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

As shown in the above table, around 99% of VUP- DS beneficiaries thought that food was expensive during the time of covid-19 pandemic against 63.8 % before COVID-19 period. In another hand, 36.1% perceived that food was not expensive before COVID-19 period compared to 0.4% during COVID-19. In this regard, it can be noticed that COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase of food prices, as many places instituted stay-at-home orders in an effort to limit the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. This can be also explained by the fact that Food Suppliers had a difficult time meeting the increased food demand as some businesses had to shut down or limit production capacity when COVID-19 outbreaks occurred. As mentioned earlier in this report, the increase of food price as perceived by VUP-DS beneficiaries had various implications in deteriorating their vulnerability status with more negative effect on basic needs such as food and water. The increase of food price was also echoed by participants in FGDs conducted in Burera district as to how it has affected their daily life.

*“The payment from VUP-DS we got in March was spent in few days and we remain empty hand before getting the next support. We were told the prices of the food stuffs in the market suddenly increased when the lockdown started”.*

Another VUP-DS beneficiary who was part of the FGDs in Rubavu district stated:

*“The price of food and other essential needs sharply increased during lockdown. For example, 1kg of Irish potatoes cost between 150 rwf and 170 rwf before*

*COVID-19 but during COVID-19 the price rose up to 350 rwf We were obliged to eat once a day to cope with upward price change”.*

The effect of increase of food price was not only measured through the perception of respondents (see table above) but also was captured in analyzing how easy VUP-DS beneficiaries were able to access food and other basic needs during lockdown due to COVID-19.

**Table 14: Accessibility of food, charcoal/woods, and gas during the covid-19 lockdown**

Item	Response	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
<b>Food</b>	Very difficult	551	62.4%	227	62.2%	778	62.3%
	Difficult	210	23.8%	104	28.5%	314	25.2%
	Moderately difficult	81	9.2%	22	6.0%	103	8.3%
	Very Easy	2	0.2%	0	0.0%	2	0.2%
	Easy	38	4.3%	12	3.3%	50	4.0%
	Don't use it	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
	Total	883	100.0%	365	100.0%	1248	100.0%
<b>Charcoal or woods</b>	Very difficult	290	35.5%	114	33.4%	404	34.9%
	Difficult	282	34.5%	125	36.7%	407	35.1%
	Moderately difficult	126	15.4%	57	16.7%	183	15.8%
	Very Easy	17	2.1%	5	1.5%	22	1.9%
	Easy	93	11.4%	37	10.9%	130	11.2%
	Don't use it	7	0.9%	2	0.6%	9	0.8%
	Don't know	3	0.4%	1	0.3%	4	0.3%
<b>Gas</b>	Total	818	100.0%	341	100.0%	1159	100.0%
	Very difficult	6	0.8%	3	0.9%	9	0.8%
	Difficult	3	0.4%	1	0.3%	4	0.4%
	Moderately difficult	6	0.8%	1	0.3%	7	0.6%
	Very Easy	4	0.5%	1	0.3%	5	0.4%
	Easy	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%
	Don't use it	607	76.6%	263	79.7%	870	77.5%
	Don't know	165	20.8%	61	18.5%	226	20.1%
	Total	792	100.0%	330	100.0%	1122	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

The vast majority of VUP-DS beneficiaries (87.5%) who participated in this survey ascertained that it was difficult for them to access food during the lockdown while 70% of them experienced the difficulty to access charcoal or woods for cooking in the same period. Males respondents who participated in this survey found it more difficult to access food than females. On the other hand, the study showed that VUP-DS beneficiaries were not using gas as source of cooking energy as affirmed by cumulatively 97.5 % who said they do not use it (77.5%) against 20.1 % who do not know how they can access it.

These findings are consistent with the fact that during the lockdown, VUP-DS beneficiaries faced financial difficulty resulting from the delays of discussing their monthly financial support. Moreover, the access to food and charcoal and wood were also affected by the restrictions of movements that were instituted by the government of Rwanda to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A number of studies have reported about the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people in Rwanda. For example, as study conducted by United nations Rwanda, (2020) UN-Rwanda showed that restrictions movements (transport, market operations) have negatively affected households that rely on market sales especially those who do not have a harvest in stock to survive on. In the same vein, a study conducted by SIDA, (2020) , revealed that in Rwanda, low-income households faced restrictions during the COVID-19 lockdown that could not allow them to afford the cost of basic needs. The impact of the lockdown and related restrictions on the access to food was also discussed during the FGDs with beneficiaries of VUP-DS support. A FGD participant in Kayonza district confirmed this in the following words:

*“ We felt it was like thunder that had hit us when our country was put under lockdown. We tried to go to the cheapest market located far from home to buy some food but it was impossible due to lack of transport facilities. It was difficult to get affordable food in the nearest boutique. With my little money, I was only able to afford porridge that I bought in the neighborhood”.*

Considering that 87.5% of VUP-DS beneficiaries experienced difficulty of accessing food during the lockdown, the table below provides the proportion of those who received food assistance in this period.

**Table 15: Proportion of DS beneficiaries who received food assistance during the lockdown**

Question	Response	Female	%	Male	%	Overall	%
<b>9.1 During the period of lockdown due to covid-19, did you receive any food assistance?</b>	No	746	84.1%	315	86.1%	1061	84.7%
	Yes	141	15.9%	51	13.9%	192	15.3%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
<b>9.2 From whom did you receive the food assistance?</b>	Government through local government	91	64.5%	28	54.9%	119	62.0%
	Donors	31	22.0%	17	33.3%	48	25.0%
	Family	8	5.7%	1	2.0%	9	4.7%

relatives						
Neighbors	14	9.9%	6	11.8%	20	10.4%
CSOs	9	6.4%	5	9.8%	14	7.3%
FBOs	22	15.6%	4	7.8%	26	13.5%
Others	2	1.4%	2	3.9%	4	2.1%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

As indicated in the above table, only 15.3% of DS beneficiaries benefited food assistance. Female recipients received slightly more food assistance than males. This finding proves to be very challenging in that an overwhelming majority of the neediest people was already having severe difficulties accessing food during the lockdown (see table above). The survey also showed that around, 62% of them received food assistance from the government (local government) while 25% of them got food from donors and around 15.1% from family relatives and neighbors. During Focus Group Discussions, participants claimed that they didn't get any food assistance during COVID-19 lockdown. On the side of officials, findings from Focus Group revealed that the shortage of food assistance was the main reason of not distributing food assistance to all needy households during COVID-19 lockdown. In Rwanda, the food assistance was not sufficient to meet the satisfaction of all the needy households during COVID-19 lockdown as highlighted in the interview conducted in Huye district with a local leader at Sector level.

***“We did not get any food support from the government in this Sector. We managed to mobilize citizens to collect food support by themselves and provide it to most vulnerable people. Through the community support, we were able to provide food assistance to 900 families in this Sector”.***

During COVID-19 period, some restriction measures were taken aimed at reducing the transmission rate of the pandemic. Hence, that climate of unexpected measures such as lockdown or other movement restrictions might have impacted the health conditions of VUP-DS beneficiaries, thus the table below present the findings on the health status of VUP-DS beneficiaries during COVID-19 period.

**Table 16: Proportion DS beneficiaries' suffering from serious illness and related challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Question	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>During the covid-19. Did you have a person in this household suffering of serious illness?</b>	No	775	87.5%	290	79.5%	1065	85.1%
	Yes	111	12.5%	75	20.5%	186	14.9%
	Total	886	100.0%	365	100.0%	1251	100.0%
<b>If answer is “yes”. What type of</b>	Contagious disease	5	4.5%	1	1.3%	6	3.2%

<b>disease?</b>	Non-communicable disease	88	79.3%	66	88.0%	154	82.8%
	Others specify	18	16.2%	8	10.7%	26	14.0%
	Total	111	100.0%	75	100.0%	186	100.0%

### Health related challenges faced by VUP-DS beneficiaries during the period of covid-19

Question	Response	Female		Male		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>In addition to the illness situation, did you meet any other complicated issue during the period of covid-19?</b>	No	83	74.8%	60	80.0%	143	76.9%
	Yes	28	25.2%	15	20.0%	43	23.1%
	Total	111	100.0%	75	100.0%	186	100.0%
<b>If the answer is “yes”. What challenges did you face among the following?</b>	There was no easy transport to health facility or pharmacy	20	71.4%	12	80.0%	32	74.4%
	Getting permission of Police	5	17.9%	2	13.3%	7	16.3%
	The panic was everywhere due to covid-21	12	42.9%	4	26.7%	16	37.2%
	Lack of money for paying health services	6	21.4%	1	6.7%	7	16.3%
	Death of someone in the family and never go to burial event	4	14.3%	1	6.7%	5	11.6%
	Others	1	3.6%	2	13.3%	3	7.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

From the above findings, during the covid-19 period, around 15% of DS households who participated in this study had someone suffered from serious sickness where among them, 82.8% got non-communicable disease. Of the 23.1% who suffered from serious diseases faced health challenges such as struggling in getting transport to reach health facility or pharmacy (71.4%), panic due to fear of potential contamination of COVID-19 (37.4), burden of police permission to allow movement and get access to health services and lack of money to pay health services. The issue of difficulty to get transport to reach health facility or pharmacy was also cited by the UN-Rwanda Report (United nations Rwanda, 2020). According to this report, the high transport charges as a result of maintaining social distancing in public transport in Rwanda which are unfordable for many households in

Rwanda might have been a constraint to timely access to health services in the country. This challenge was further discussed with some participants in FGDs conducted in Gasabo district. According to one of the VUP-DS beneficiaries who participated in the FGD, the lack of transport facilities impacted on her health status as testified below.

*“I am a widow with heart disease. Before COVID-19, I always have to go to Kibagabaga Hospital every month and I was well served. I can testify that doctors took care of us at that time. The only challenge for me is that during the lockdown, I could not go to the Hospital because of limited transport facilities. Due to these circumstances, the status of my heart disease has worsened”.*

The impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable people with non-communicable diseases was also emphasized by some local leaders who were interviewed in Musanze district. According to them, during the lockdown some patients were reluctant to seek for health services due to fear of being suspected for COVID-19 positive and being put in quarantine. In this regard, a local leader in Musanze district attested the following:

*“Amid the COVID-19 lockdown, we experienced cases of patients who were reluctant to seek for health services at the health center because they feared to be quarantined. Most of them include those with respiratory diseases who thought they could be suspects of COVID-19.”*

COVID-19 restrictions measures have affected people in various ways. Below findings, illustrate its effects on VUP-DS beneficiaries in accessing essential goods and services for domestic consumption such as water, electricity, salt and cooking oil.

**Table 17: Accessibility of water, cooking oil, salt, and electricity during the period of covid-19 pandemic**

Response	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%	
Cooking oil	Very difficult	247	30.6%	101	29.5%	348	30.3%
	Difficult	240	29.7%	97	28.4%	337	29.3%
	Moderately difficult	146	18.1%	72	21.1%	218	19.0%
	Very Easy	13	1.6%	6	1.8%	19	1.7%
	Easy	70	8.7%	19	5.6%	89	7.7%
	Don't use it	84	10.4%	40	11.7%	124	10.8%
	Don't know	8	1.0%	7	2.0%	15	1.3%
	Total	808	100.0%	342	100.0%	1150	100.0%
Salt	Very difficult	215	25.2%	96	27.2%	311	25.8%
	Difficult	258	30.2%	114	32.3%	372	30.8%
	Moderately difficult	207	24.2%	85	24.1%	292	24.2%
	Very Easy	18	2.1%	10	2.8%	28	2.3%
	Easy	125	14.6%	38	10.8%	163	13.5%
	Don't use it	22	2.6%	6	1.7%	28	2.3%



	Don't know	9	1.1%	4	1.1%	13	1.1%
	Total	854	100.0%	353	100.0%	1207	100.0%
<b>Water</b>	Very difficult	186	22.1%	78	21.7%	264	22.0%
	Difficult	184	21.9%	84	23.4%	268	22.4%
	Moderately difficult	180	21.4%	69	19.2%	249	20.8%
	Very Easy	71	8.5%	37	10.3%	108	9.0%
	Easy	197	23.5%	80	22.3%	277	23.1%
	Don't use it	7	0.8%	2	0.6%	9	0.8%
	Don't know	15	1.8%	9	2.5%	24	2.0%
	Total	840	100.0%	359	100.0%	1199	100.0%
<b>Electricity</b>	Very difficult	46	5.7%	22	6.5%	68	5.9%
	Difficult	55	6.8%	25	7.3%	80	7.0%
	Moderately difficult	44	5.4%	25	7.3%	69	6.0%
	Very Easy	50	6.2%	16	4.7%	66	5.7%
	Easy	63	7.8%	22	6.5%	85	7.4%
	Don't use it	432	53.4%	201	58.9%	633	55.0%
	Don't know	119	14.7%	30	8.8%	149	13.0%
	Total	809	100.0%	341	100.0%	1150	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

Basing on the above findings, during the period of covid-19 pandemic, DS beneficiaries who took part in this survey strived for accessing the selected basic needs. The difficulty level ranges from 59.6% for cooking oil, followed by getting salty food (56.60%), access to water (44.40%) and Electricity (13.00%).

The effects of COVID-19 have caused immense harm to low-income families. Within this regard, the results indicate that COVID-19 effect was severe when it comes to the VUP-DS beneficiaries. For example, while nutritionists recommend good dietary intake for old people, these results reveal that VUP-DS beneficiaries strive to get even basic need such as cooking oil or salt. In another hand, whilst the number of people gaining access to electricity has been accelerating in Rwanda, electricity remains very rare for VUP-DS beneficiaries especially in the period of COVID-19. As a matter of fact, around 68 % of VUP-DS households cannot afford or do not have access to electricity and lighting.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94% of the world's student population, up to 99% in low and lower-middle income countries (World bank, 2020). In this respect, the table below provides a summary of findings on how school disruption due to COVID-19 affected VUP-DS families.

**Table 18: Effect of school disruption (due to COVID-19) on VUP-DS families**

Effects	Female		Male		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Poor hygiene	457	51.5%	180	49.2%	637	50.8%
Tiredness of waiting for reopening of schools	563	63.5%	243	66.4%	806	64.3%
Misconduct through drug abuse and alcohol	345	38.9%	147	40.2%	492	39.3%
Early teenager pregnancy	231	26.0%	85	23.2%	316	25.2%
Others	154	17.4%	69	18.9%	223	17.8%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

As reflected in the table above, the majority of respondents (64.3%) of DS beneficiaries observed tiredness of children due to the long wait for the schools to open against 50.8% of who claimed about poor hygiene among their children while 39.3% of respondents who mentioned the issue of misconduct of their children and 25.2% While 25% said they knew school girls from their families and neighbors, who had an early pregnancy

Likewise, other sources revealed that, the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected school children as schools closed their premises in response to lockdown measures (OECD, 2020b) . Hence, it should be noted that COVID-19, once in a lifetime phenomenon is not just a public health crisis, but a crisis for human existence. It has negatively affected social and behavioral psychology among school children. According to this report, children were extremely disheartened with abrupt stoppage of schooling, home-confinement and fear of uncertainty concerning the ongoing pandemic in Rwanda.

The findings also concur with UN report where they highlighted the effect of school closure due to COVID-19. In their report, World bank Group, (2020) asserted that COVID-19 caused an increased risk for girls in Rwanda, as they are more vulnerable to multiple types of abuse, such as domestic violence, transactional sex, and early and forced marriages (UN,2020). However, these results explain how COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems in Rwanda and more specifically in VUP-DS households. The negative effect of COVID-19 on school children has been also evidenced by VUP-DS beneficiaries who participated in focus group discussion. The following quotes were noted from FGD respondents in Nyamagabe and Burera districts:

- ✓ *“There are many girls who early got married because schools were closed due to Covid-19. There are other cases of young girls who are pregnant. In general, our children have become wanderers. They go everywhere searching for jobs.”*
- ✓ *My own children were very polite but their behaviors have changed. They have now become gamblers. Instead of following lessons on the radio, most students in our sector went to work in farms of sugarcane.*

## 5.5. Mechanisms in place to claim VUP-DS payment during the period of Covid-19

While the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic has been observed across the world, vulnerable families especially VUP-DS beneficiaries appear to be the most suffered with regard to the availability of their entitlement. This study examined whether during COVID-19, the VUP-DS beneficiaries have got ways of channeling their complaints during COVID-19 pandemic. The table below provides the results.

**Table 19: Mechanisms in place to request VUP-DS payment during the period of Covid-19 pandemic**

Mechanism	Response	Female	%	Male	%	Overall	%
Village leader	No	117	13.2%	53	14.5%	170	13.6%
	Yes	770	86.8%	313	85.5%	1083	86.4%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Cell ES	No	668	75.3%	272	74.3%	940	75.0%
	Yes	219	24.7%	94	25.7%	313	25.0%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Sector ES	No	829	93.5%	327	89.3%	1156	92.3%
	Yes	58	6.5%	39	10.7%	97	7.7%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
V/C Mayor Social Affairs	No	861	97.1%	355	97.0%	1216	97.0%
	Yes	26	2.9%	11	3.0%	37	3.0%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Minaloc/LODA	No	883	99.5%	366	100.0%	1249	99.7%
	Yes	4	.5%	0	0.0%	4	.3%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%
Other	No	818	92.2%	331	90.4%	1149	91.7%
	Yes	69	7.8%	35	9.6%	104	8.3%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

Referring to the table above, the majority of respondents (86.4%) strongly attested that they claim VUP-DS payment from their village leaders. Although village leaders were listed by a great number of respondents, very few others indicated the following other authorities; Cell ES (25%), sector ES (7.7%), V/C Mayor Social Affairs (3%) and MINALOC/LODA (0.3%). According to MINALOC, the Village is the smallest politico-administrative entity of the Country and hence closest to the people. The village is the entity through which the problems, priorities and needs of the people at a grassroots level can be identified and addressed. Therefore, based on the above arguments, it seems reasonable that during the COVID-19 pandemic, village leaders were very close to DS beneficiaries. Perhaps this is also due to movement's restrictions measures during COVID-19 period. This was also confirmed by local leaders who were interviewed in Huye district.

*'Recently, we found out that there are some VUP-DS beneficiaries who misuse the support. There are also cases of violence and family conflicts resulting from this misuse. At this juncture we always remind the village leaders to support these families*

*and advise them on the role of saving”, Interview with an Executive Secretary in Huye District.*

Table 20: DS beneficiary’s views on how their complaints were received by local leaders during the period of covid-19 pandemic

Response	Female	%	Male	%	Overall	%
Accepted	734	82.8%	305	83.3%	1039	82.9%
Accepted with complications	21	2.4%	9	2.5%	30	2.4%
Rejected	106	12.0%	46	12.6%	152	12.1%
Still pending	26	2.9%	6	1.6%	32	2.6%
Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

As shown in the above table, 82.8% of DS beneficiaries affirmed that their requests about DS related complaint were accepted against 12% whose requests were rejected during the covid-19 period. These results match with the respondents’ views during focus group discussions where they mentioned that COVID-19 command post at each local administrative level was established to facilitate service delivery in the period of COVID-19.

As VUP-DS beneficiaries passed through hard times due to COVID-19 consequences, SACCO SMS would have been used as the means of alerting VUP-DS beneficiaries to avoid unnecessary movements while seeking for their payments. Sending notification message to their mobile phones on the VUP-DS payment made to their account is an alternative option that can limit VUP-DS beneficiary’s movements to SACCO and therefore reduce their risk of being exposed to COVID-19 spread. The table below presents the findings on VUP-DS beneficiaries’ message reception during the period of covid-19 pandemic.

Table 21: Proportion of DS beneficiaries’ who received notification message about their payment during the period of covid-19 pandemic

Question	Response	Female	%	Male	%	Overall	%
<b>How often did you receive message from financial institution (SACCO, Bank,...) about your DS transactions during the period of covid-19?</b>	Don't know	54	6.1%	28	7.7%	82	6.5%
	Never	214	24.1%	80	21.9%	294	23.5%
	Once per month	616	69.4%	257	70.2%	873	69.7%
	Once per three months	3	.3%	1	.3%	4	.3%
	Total	887	100.0%	366	100.0%	1253	100.0%

**Source: Primary data, 2020**

As indicated in the above table, during the period of covid-19 pandemic, around 69.7% of DS beneficiaries received monthly bank message against 23.5% who never got any bank message

about the DS transactions and 6.5% who did not have any information about SACCO notification message.

Although mobile phones have become ubiquitous and basic communications tools, some proportions of VUP-DS beneficiaries who do not have access to their account via mobile phones have been identified in the above findings. These findings imply that some VUP-DS beneficiaries do not access information about their DS payment due to their incapacity to buy mobile phones that can be used to receive messages.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusion

This survey analyzed the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the living conditions of people who are entitled to VUP-direct support in 15 districts in Rwanda. To achieve the aim of this study, the following specific objectives have been formulated

- Analyze the leakage in the flow of public funds through VUP-DS amidst the COVID-19 response.
- Analyze the timelines of disbursement of VUP-DS and its impact on the livelihood of beneficiaries.
- Examine alternative/additional emergency food support received by VUP-DS beneficiaries amidst the Covid-19 lockdown
- Analyze the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the livelihood of VUP-DS beneficiaries
- To examine the mechanisms put in place for VUP-DS beneficiaries to claim for their entitlement

This survey used a mixed-based approach, which allowed researchers to collect and analyze different views of beneficiaries of VUP-DS. This mixed-method approach allowed for a thorough triangulation of data in order to produce a verifiable body of evidence. The qualitative method was used to supplement questionnaire-bases data in order to explain issues arising from statistical data.

#### **The following major findings were identified by the survey;**

Vulnerability status examined in this survey provides more details on the degree to which respondents (VUP-DS beneficiaries) are capable of dealing with the challenges or resisting from the effects of the COVID-19 restriction measures in place by identifying their limits and constraint. These results offer further information into the severity of the risks threatening these groups of people in this outbreak period.

- The majority of DS beneficiaries (61.2%) who were interviewed were closer to the next school (less than 2 km) compared to the majority of respondents (53.3%) who stayed far from the main road (2 km and above) while 60.2% of the respondents live far from the nearest market (more than 2 km from their homes) and 56.5% were far from the nearest market.
- The majority of VUP-DS households (57.8%) had eligible members ranging between one and two while only 25.2% of them had between three and four members. The majority of the respondents (70.9%) lives or have member with disability. The findings indicate that majority of VUP-DS beneficiaries (54%) surveyed could access water through payment of bills while the majority of respondents (around 70%) use off-grid power source.
- The survey findings revealed that the proportion of VUP-DS beneficiaries who received their entitlement in full amount dropped slightly from 91.7% before COVID-19 to 90.3% during COVID-19 pandemic. The findings further showed a significant

increase of respondents who could eat only once a day during the COVID-19 pandemic (from 35.2% before COVID-19 to 59.3 % during COVID-19).

- The findings indicate the drop of VUP-DS beneficiaries who could eat twice a day during the COVID-19 crisis as the proportion of those who were able to eat twice a day decreased from 56.8% before COVID-19 to 21.1% during COVID-19 period
- Comparing the period before and after COVID-19, preferred household basic needs such as food did not significantly change. However, clothes and saving tontines were found to not be of first priority needs as they dropped from 47.6% before COVID-19 period to 27.9% during COVID-19 period.
- Likewise, the DS beneficiaries were affected by the limited access to charcoal or wood for cooking since 70% of them found difficult to access to cooking energy during COVID-19 period. The survey findings also revealed that 74.4% of the respondents found difficult to get transport facility to reach the nearest health centre or pharmacy
- The results show that some respondents witnessed a decrease in their payment between March and June 2020. In 4 out of 15 selected districts, an estimated leakage ranging from 2 to 20 % was observed.
- Among the mechanisms used to claim about VUP-DS payments during COVID-19, village leaders were rated on top by respondents (86.4%) as most solicited in claiming about the VUP- DS payments.
- Respondents also showed a very high level of satisfaction (82.9%) with regard to the feedback received while lodging their claims to village leaders.
- On the other hand, despite the high level of satisfaction of respondents with regard to the feedback received about their DS payment, 23.5% of the respondents claimed that they never get message notifying their monthly disbursement from SACCO.

## 6.2 Recommendations

### General recommendations

Covid-19 created unprecedented socio-economic disruption and although all sectors are negatively affected, categories of citizens traditionally vulnerable were the most affected.

1. It is therefore crucial to readjust all social protection programs, taking in mind that the number of people in needs for the support has tremendously increased.
2. While government try to rescue economic sectors affected through the recovering funds, it is critical to strengthen LODA's financial capacity to allow the agency to provide basic assistance to those who have been weakened to play an economic role due to Covid-19.
3. There is an urgent need to include a psychological assistance component for some categories of people who lost their beloved ones due to Covid-19 and could not provide them adequate accompaniment and still experience surviving issues due to their economic vulnerability.

### Specific recommendations

A set of specific recommendations have been formulated based on the opinions of the respondents against all the challenges found in this survey.

Table 22: Specific recommendations

Identified issue	Solution required	The institution concerned
Most VUP-DS beneficiaries live with disabilities and others suffer from none-communicable diseases, and their access to health services is very limited Because they can't walk long distances on foot to reach health facilities	Community health workers should be strengthened by the Ministry of Health so that they can also assist people who are prone to health problems, particularly very elderly people living with disabilities and none-communicable diseases by providing them with the necessary medical care at home.	MINALOC Ministry of Health
Majority of respondents use unsafe and dangerous power sources such as Kerosene lamp, battery power and other unidentified energy sources which may be expensive, harmful to health, hazardous and polluting	The government should intensify its efforts to bring affordable renewable energy sources such as Residential Solar Panels, Solar and Wind Hybrid Systems, Micro hydropower Systems, Solar Water Heaters, Geothermal Heat Pumps that provides low-cost solutions to bring reliable electricity to the vulnerable households	MINALOC MININFRA
Some VUP- DS beneficiaries still experiencing unauthorized charges on their	As stipulated in VUP-DS guidelines 2019, concerned authorities should introduce	LODA, BNR, MINECOFIN and



support.	proper mechanisms to ensure any charges on VUP-DS support-won't happen again.	MINALOC
A significant increase of respondents who could eat once a day during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to the period before COVID-19 pandemic due to price increase and delay of their support	Government and its partners to strengthen the food assistance to needy families during emergency periods. Government to extend assistance scheme to the most vulnerable households during the period of emergencies to cope with negative effects of the crisis	Government of Rwanda and partners
A significant number of respondents who could not access to the basic needs such as transport, health care etc...	Government to increase access to essential needs during period of emergence especially to the most vulnerable families	Government of Rwanda
Some VUP-DS beneficiaries do not receive any notification messages from SACCO	Notification message could help these vulnerable people avoiding unnecessary movements to SACCO. Concerned authorities could mobilize them or their caretakers to register for SMS notification in their nearest SACCO.	LODA/Local administrative entities
Some VUP-DS beneficiaries complained about missing proper feedback when lodging their support related claims	VUP managers and local leaders should set up a clear mechanism to organize regular visits to VUP-DS beneficiaries to address their claims.	LODA/Local administrative entities. CSOs
Beneficiaries of VUP-DS are unaware of their rights, procedures and process of claiming about VUP- direct support	Mobilizing the entire VUP-DS beneficiaries on access to rights and ways of appealing for inconsistencies	LODA/ Local administrative entities, CSOs
Price hikes in Rwanda aggravated the coronavirus crisis among VUP-DS beneficiaries	The government should enhance price controls in the emergency periods to protect the vulnerable.	MINICOM/MINALOC, Local administrative entities

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**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR A PUBLIC EXPENDITURE TRACKING SURVEY (PETS) IN VUP-DIRECT SUPPORT TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE (UBUDEHE CATEGORY 1)**

**INTRODUCTION**

Hello, my name is (.....) and I am working with Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rw). The purpose of research is to conduct a public expenditure tracking survey (PETS) in vup-direct support to assess the impact of covid-19 on the livelihood of the most vulnerable people (ubudehe category 1). This interview will take about 30 minutes. All of the answers you give will be confidential and only used for this research purpose.

**Section 01: CONSENT**

ID	Question	Yes	No
1	Respondent agrees to be interviewed (If no, drop the interview)	1	2

**Section 02: RESIDENCE IDENTIFICATION**

ID	Names	Codes
1	Province.....	/ / /
2	District .....	/ / / / /
3	Sector.....	/ / / / / / /
4	Cell.....	/ / / / / / / /
5	Village.....	/ / / / / / / /

### Section 03. RESPONDENT IDENTIFICATION - (DEMOGRAPHICS)

Question	Option/type	Answer
3.1. How old are you?	Age in number	
3.2. Gender	Single choice	1)Male, 2) Female, 3) Don't want to specify
3.3. What is your marital status?	Single choice	1) Single, 2) Married, 3) Widow, 4) Divorced, 5) Separated, 6) Don't want to specify
3.4. What is the highest level of education successfully completed?	Single choice	1)Primary education completed, 2)Secondary education completed, 3) TVET completed 4)Tertiary education (university) completed, , 5)Primary education not completed, 6)Secondary education not completed, 7) TVET not completed, 8)Tertiary education (university) completed not completed, 9) no education / school attendance

### Section 04: RESPONDENT VURNERABILITY STATUS

4.1. Question	Option/type	Answer
4.2. Distance to the next school	Single choice	1) Less than 2 Kms, 2) 2 to 5 Kms, 3) 5 to 10 Kms, 4) More than 10 Kms

4.3. Distance to market	Single choice	1) Less than 2 Kms, 2) 2 to 5 Kms, 3) 5 to 10 Kms, 4) More than 10 Kms
4.4. Distance to the next main road	Single choice	1) Less than 1 Kms, 2) 1 to 2 Kms, 3) 2 to 5 Kms, 4) 5 to 10, 5) More than 10 Kms Kms
4.5. Distance to the next health centre	Single choice	1) Less than 1 Kms, 2) 1 to 2 Kms, 3) 2 to 5 Kms, 4) 5 to 10, 5) More than 10 Kms Kms
4.6 Distance to the next SACCO or Bank	Single choice	1) Less than 1 Kms, 2) 1 to 2 Kms, 3) 2 to 5 Kms, 4) 5 to 10, 5) More than 10 Kms Kms
4.7. Which of the following sources of clean water are available in your neighbourhood	Single choice	1) Household hand pump, 2) Public tap, 3) Community well, 4) Household water supply (piped), 5) Specify if other
4.8. Access to electricity and other sources of energy	Single choice	1) I have electricity in my house through REG supply, 2) I use solar supply energy, 3) I have electricity through battery power, 4) I use Kerosene lamp, 5) I don't have acces to any power source, 6) Other, Specify
4.9. How many dependants do you have in your household?	Number	1) ..... 2) Prefer to not say

#### Section 05: COVID-19 VULNERABILITY STATUS

Question	Option/type	Answer
5.1. Did your income reduce during Covid-19 pandemic?	Single choice	1) Yes 2) No 3) Neither/nor
5.2. Did you loose your job due to Covid-19 pandemic?	Single choice	1) Yes, 2) No 3) Neither/nor
5.3. Did you experience reduction of food intake in your household due to Covid 19 pandemic?	Single choice	1) Yes, 2) No, 3) Neither/nor
5.4. Did you reduce your food portion (From three to two or even one) due to Covid 19 pandemic?	Single choice	1) Yes, 2) No, 3) Neither/nor
5.5. Did you face challenges for basic supplies due to Covid 19 pandemic?	Single choice	1) Yes, 2) No, 3) Neither/nor 4) If yes, specify
5.6. Did you face challenges, which prevented you from paying your health insurance on time?	Single choice	1) Yes, 2) No

**Section 06. PROPORTION OF VUP-DS BENEFICIARIES WHO RECEIVED THEIR ENTITLEMENT DURING COVID-19 PERIOD (FROM 21<sup>ST</sup>, MARCH TO 30<sup>TH</sup> June 2020)**

Question	Option	Answer
6.1 Before, the period of covid-19 did you	Single	1)Yes in total, 2) Yes in partial 3)No

regularly receive your DS per month?	choice				
6.2 During the period of covid-19, did you regularly receive your DS per month? (If any answer is “no”, skip to section 5)	Multiple choice	Month	Yes in total	Yes in partial	No
		March	1	2	3
		April	1	2	3
		May	1	2	3
		June	1	2	3
6.3 How much do usually receive per month? (In Frws)	Number	/ _____ /			
6.4 How much less did you receive during the period of covid-19 per months? (In Frws)	Number	Month	Received amount		
		March			
		April			
		May			
		June			
6.5 If you did not receive your DS regularly/on time during the period of covid-19, what consequences did you face in your household?	Text				



**Section 07. SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON BENEFICIARIES IN THE ABSENCE OF VUP-DS FUNDS (FROM 21<sup>ST</sup>, MARCH TO 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020)**

Question	Option	Answer
<b><i>Sub-section 7.1 Impact of the covid-19 on basic needs</i></b>		
7.1.1 Before the period of covid-19. How often did you eat per day?	Nber	1)Once, 2) Twice, 3) Triple, 4) None food for some days, 99) Don't know
7.1.2 During the period of covid-19. How often did you eat per day?	Nber	1)Once, 2) Twice, 3) Triple, 4) None food for some days, 99) Don't know
7.1.3 Before the period of covid-19. What was the source of food for your household?	Multiple choice	1)Shopping in the market, 2) Agriculture crops, 3) Neighbors, 4) Family relatives, 5) Casual agricultural labor, 6) Government, 7) Donors, 8) Other sources (Specify)
7.1.4 During the period of covid-19. What was the source of food for your household?	Multiple choice	1)Shopping in the market, 2) Agriculture crops, 3) Neighbors, 4) Family relatives, 5) Casual agricultural labor, 6) Government, 7) Donors, 8) Other sources (Specify)
7.1.5 Before the period of covid-19. If you received your DS, what would be the most preferred on the list, among the following household needs?	Multiple choice	1)Food, 2) Charcoal or woods, 3) Cooking oil, 4) Salt, 5) Petrol for lump, 6) Electricity, 7) Water, 8) Clothes, 9) School fees, 10) House renting fees, 11) Airtime for communication, 12) Loan reimbursement in Tontine, 13) Saving in Tontine, 14) Transport, 15)Others (specify)
7.1.6 During the period of covid-19. If you received your DS, what would be the most preferred on the list, among the following household needs?	Multiple choice	1)Food, 2) Charcoal or woods, 3) Cooking oil, 4) Salt, 5) Petrol for lump, 6) Electricity, 7) Water, 8) Clothes, 9) School fees, 10) House renting fees, 11) Airtime for communication, 12) Loan reimbursement in Tontine, 13) Saving in Tontine, 14) Transport, 15)Others (specify)

7.1.7 Before the period of covid-19. Did you think that the food was more expensive on the market than your household's financial capacity?	Single choice	1)Yes, more expensive, 2)Yes, expensive, 3)Yes, somehow expensive, 4) Not expensive, 5) Not expensive at all						
7.1.8 During the period of covid-19. Did you think that the food was more expensive on the market than your household's financial capacity?	Single choice	1)Yes, more expensive, 2)Yes, expensive, 3)Yes, somehow expensive, 4) Not expensive, 5) Not expensive at all						
7.1.9 Before the period of covid-19. How did you get water in this household?	Single choice	1)Paid water Tap, 2) Shallow well, 3) Marshland drainage, 4) Borehole, 5) Spring, 6) Stream, 7) Rain catchment pond, 8) Roof catchment, 9) Lake, 10) Dam, 11) Other (Specify)						
7.1.10 During the covid-19. How did you get water in this household?	Single choice	1)Paid water Tap, 2) Shallow well, 3) Marshland drainage, 4) Borehole, 5) Spring, 6) Stream, 7) Rain catchment pond, 8) Roof catchment, 9) Lake, 10) Dam, 11) Other (Specify)						
7.1.11 During the period of covid-19. How easy was the access to the following domestic needs?	Needs	Very difficult	Difficult	Moderately difficult	Easy	Very Easy	Don't use it	Don't know
	Food	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
	Charcoal or woods	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
	Gas	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
	Cooking oil	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
	Salt	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
	Petrol for traditional lump	1	2	3	4	5	6	99

	Petrol for modern lump	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
	Electricity	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
	Water	1	2	3	4	5	6	99
<b>Sub section 7.2 Impact of the covid-19 on health status of DS beneficiaries</b>								
7.2.1 During the covid-19. Did you have a person in this household suffering of serious illness or disability?	Single choice	1)Yes, 2)No						
7.2.2 If Q 5.2.1's answer is "yes". What type of disease?	Single choice	1)Disability, 2) Non-communicable disease, 3) Contengious disease, 4) Others (specify)						
7.2.3 During that situation, did you carry him or her to the nearest heathcare facility?	Single choice	1)Yes, 2)No						
7.2.4 If you brought the person to the healthcare facility, what type of facility?	Multiple choice (Yes or No)	1)Community Health Workers (CHWs), 2) Health Center, 3) Health Post, 4) District Hospital, 5) Provincial Hospital , 6) Referral Hospital						
7.2.5 If you brought him or her to the health care facility. Did you pay any invoice for services?	Single choice	1)Yes, 2)No						
7.2.6 If you paid for health services including drugs from	Single choice	1)Family relatives, 2) Neighbors, 3) Donors, 4) No one, 5) Others (specify)						



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