



COVID-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Lasting Impacts and an Agenda for Recovery



Cover Photo: Domestic worker Mwanahamisi Hassan in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Photo credit: Fanuel Halelwa

Key Findings

- Work and Earnings
 - In May 2021, almost all domestic workers (94%) interviewed reported working at least one day, compared to 87% in June 2020 and 84% in April 2020.
 - One in four respondents reported that fear of becoming ill made it harder to work or earn money at the same levels as pre-COVID-19.
 - Almost half of domestic workers (45%) reported that they had to work longer hours compared to pre-COVID-19.
- Distinct Pathways
 - Live-in domestic workers were now earning on average 77% of the amount live-out domestic workers were earning, compared to 96% of live-out earnings prior to the pandemic.
- Food Security
 - Almost half of respondents (47%) reported hunger among adults in their household, and almost a third (30%) of respondents who have children under 16 in their households reported hunger among children. This is a significant increase from a year ago during Round 1 when 12% of respondents reported hunger among adults and children.
- Occupational Challenges and Wellbeing
 - One in five respondents (19%) reported increase in harassment/threats from employer, 17% reported increased isolation.
 - More than a quarter of respondents (27%) reported that their mental and psychological stress has increased compared to pre-COVID-19.
- Coping Strategies
 - More than a third of respondents (35%) adopted one or more coping strategies to help their households survive the crisis in the last 12 months, which mainly consisted of drawing down their savings in the last 12 months (28%).
 - Of those respondents who drew down their savings since the start of COVID-19, more than half (55%) reported that they have not replaced these savings.

Recommendations

- Improve the Tanzanian legal framework to account for and efficiently cover the specific circumstances and living arrangements of domestic workers. This should include restricting domestic workers' working hours, setting a higher minimum wage, and guaranteeing health insurance coverage and protection against economic exploitation and harassment.
- Tanzania should also ratify ILO Convention No. 189.
- Promote and enforce employment laws and employment contracts to protect domestic workers' work conditions.
- Provide workers legal support that would enable them to claim and safeguard their rights.
- Provide workers capital that they can invest in other businesses to secure more earnings and cover the cost of their everyday needs.

Provide workers with trainings and information that would familiarize domestic workers with their rights and provide them guidance on how to increase their earnings.

Background

COVID-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy is a WIEGO-led longitudinal study that assesses the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on specific groups of informal workers and their households.¹ Using a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews, Round 1 assessed the impact of the crisis in April 2020 and mid-year 2020 compared to February 2020 (the pre-COVID-19 period).²

Round 2 was conducted in mid-year 2021 to assess how workers were experiencing COVID-19 resurgences and ongoing economic strains, and to what extent (if any) they had recovered. This report presents the summary findings of Round 2 of the study in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Researchers in Tanzania surveyed 261 of the original Round 1 respondents to assess how their situation had changed roughly a year after the initial survey. In Round 2, two new respondents were added. The research was conducted in collaboration with the Tanzanian Conservation, Hotels, Domestic, Social Services and Consultancy Workers Union (CHODAWU).

All findings which compare Round 2 findings to Round 1 findings consist of unbalanced panels, meaning that they include all participants from Round 2 and all participants from Round 1. For this reason, they are not perfect representations of changes experienced by the Round 1 sample.

¹ Study cities are Accra (Ghana), Ahmedabad (India), Bangkok (Thailand), Dakar (Senegal), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Delhi (India), Durban (South Africa), Lima (Peru), Mexico City (Mexico), New York City (USA), Pleven (Bulgaria), Tiruppur (India).

² Results from Round 1 in Dar es Salaam are available at: <https://www.wiego.org/publications/covid-19-crisis-and-informal-economy-informal-workers-dar-es-salaam-tanzania>

Domestic Work in Dar es Salaam

In Tanzania, 5% of the total working-age population (15–64 years) are employed as domestic workers, according to the ILO.³ However, this figure is likely underestimated and closer to 7%, mainly because many domestic workers are engaged in this work without being recognized, implying that they are invisible and unprotected.

The ambiguity of the definitions of employee and workplace in Tanzanian laws and their weak enforcement means that domestic workers in Tanzania often do not benefit from the protections of employment acts that safeguard their livelihoods and working conditions, such as the Employment and Labour Relations Act of Tanzania of 2004, the Workmen Compensation Act of 2008, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 2003.

For instance, while the Employment and Labour Relations Act of Tanzania provides contracts that set employment conditions such as minimum wages for workers including domestic workers, these contracts are not enforced, and domestic workers often work with neither a contract nor specific employment terms.⁴

Moreover, Tanzania has not yet ratified the ILO's Convention C189, which serves to recognize the economic contribution of domestic workers and protect their labor rights.

Domestic workers' limited legal and social protection in Tanzania compounded the impact of the pandemic on workers' socio-economic circumstances.

Most domestic workers (72%) interviewed were not living with their employers in May 2021 (live-out), and 28% were living in their employers' house (live-in). This distribution contrasts with the ILO's Empirical Survey of Domestic Workers in United Republic of Tanzania which found that 73% of domestic workers were live-in. This difference could reflect the challenges in reaching live-in domestic workers for the survey since interviewing them often required going through their employers.⁵

Study Dates and Sample

Dates of study

- Round 1: July 2020
- Round 2: June 2021

Total Sample R1: 283

Total Sample R2: 263

³ ILO (2016) A Situational Analysis of Domestic Workers in the United Republic of Tanzania

⁴ ILO (2021) Making decent work a reality for domestic workers

⁵ Key informant interview.

Table: Sample by sector⁶ and new v. R1 respondents

Sector	n	% of Total sample	% Women	% New respondents
Domestic Workers	245	93	97	1
Other	18	7	94%	0
Total	263	100	97	1

Table: Age distribution

Age range	n	%
18-25	16	6
26-35	82	31
36-45	107	41
46-55	48	18
56-65	9	3

Table: Place of Birth

Place	n	%
This country & city	234	89
This country, different city	29	11

The data are not intended to be representative of domestic workers in Dar es Salaam or even of the membership of each organization. In fact, the Empirical Survey of Domestic Workers in United Republic of Tanzania conducted by the ILO in 2016, revealed that 75% of domestic workers in Tanzania are women, 68% are aged between 18 and 24 years old, and 68% are migrants working in districts outside their place of origin or birth. This suggests that non-migrant older women are overrepresented in our study sample.

⁶ R1 Respondents who changed their primary occupation are categorized as "Other." R1 respondents who have stopped working entirely or were not working at the time of survey are tabulated as domestic workers.

COVID-19 in Dar es Salaam: Key Dates

March to May 2020:

- The government announced the interdiction of all public gatherings (excluding prayers), closed schools up to secondary level, public universities and hotels.
- Incoming flights were suspended. Residents were urged to avoid unnecessary movements and to wear masks.

June 2020 to March 2021:

- All the restrictions due to COVID-19 are lifted.
- The President declares Tanzania COVID-19-free.

March to April 2021:

- On **March 17th**, Tanzania's President John Magufuli died.
- On **April 6th**, Tanzania's new president Samia Suluhu announced plans to set up a national COVID-19 taskforce to inform a new state response to the pandemic. The president urged Tanzanians to be precautionous by washing their hands, wearing masks, and observing social distancing.

May 2021:

- On **May 17th**, the COVID-19 taskforce recommended overhaul of the country's approach to COVID-19, including information on COVID-19, strengthening interventions at all levels to prevent a third wave of COVID-19, and joining the global COVAX initiative for the provision of vaccines.

June 2021:

- On **June 29th**, the government announced that USD470 million will be spent on buying vaccines, protective gear and other medical equipment, and supporting economic sectors hit hard by the coronavirus.
- The government also released figures on coronavirus for the first time after more than a year.

Impacts of and Responses to the Crisis

Work, Earnings and Food

While strict restrictions were not enforced nationally at the onset of the pandemic in Tanzania, Round 1 data revealed that domestic workers still experienced adverse impacts on their work conditions and food security within six months of the start of the pandemic. The pandemic's obstruction of global markets and tourism impacted Tanzanians' economic activities, especially across export-oriented sectors such as tourism and manufacturing,⁷ which in turn hindered employers' ability to pay domestic workers' wages and benefits. Moreover, fear of COVID-19 often affected domestic workers' work routines.

A year later, with the overhaul of Tanzania's response to the pandemic, domestic workers were still experiencing the pandemic's negative repercussions.

Work

Ability to work: In May 2021, a year and a half after the first case of COVID-19 was detected in Tanzania, almost all respondents (94%) still considered domestic work as their primary occupation. Among the 12 respondents who did not, 8 switched to another occupation including home-based work and market trading, and 4 stopped working completely.

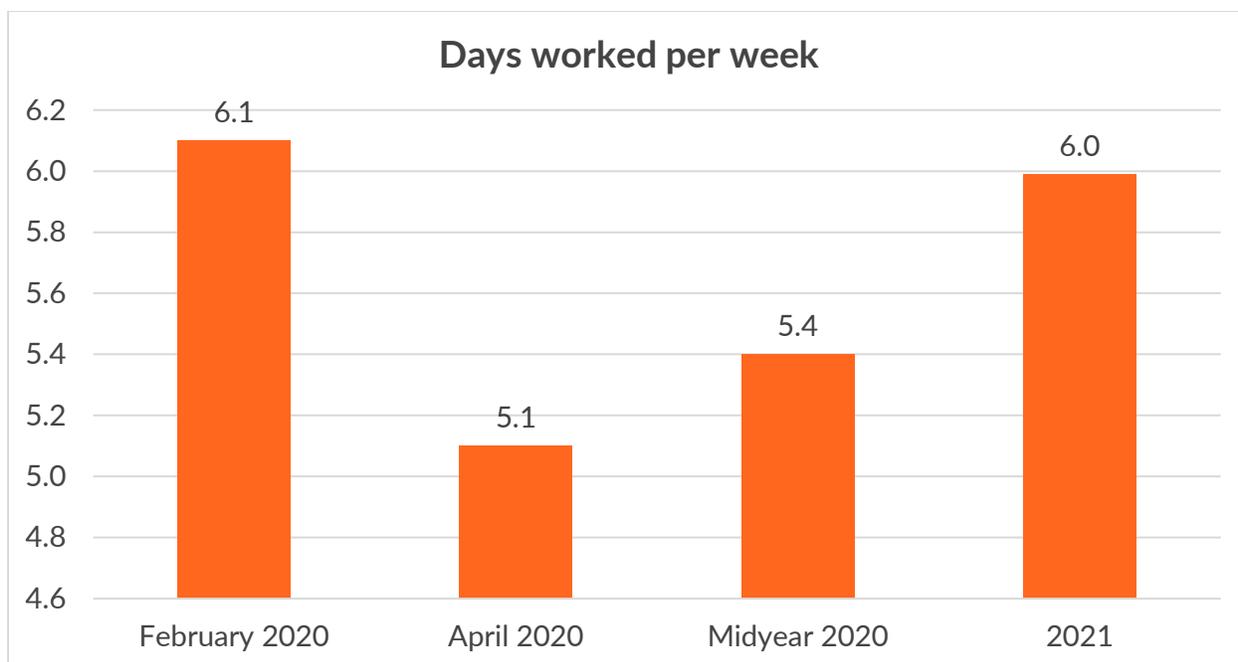
Most domestic workers (93%) were able to work throughout every month from June 2020 to May 2021; only 7% of domestic workers reported skipping 10 days of work or more during a month of this period, and none reported skipping at least 10 days of work during more than a month.

Moreover, in May 2021, almost all domestic workers (95%) interviewed reported working at least one day, compared to 87% in June 2020 and 84% in April 2020. All workers that switched to another occupation were able to work during May 2021.

For those who were not able to work for at least 10 days during a month since June 2020, the main reasons cited were that they were laid off or asked not to come by their employer (23%), and/or they became ill (23%).

The average number of days worked by domestic workers during May 2021 has recovered to the pre-COVID-19 number of 6 days per week, after it had dropped to 5.4 days in June 2020 and 5.1 days per week in April 2020. Almost all domestic workers (94%) reported that this number of days worked was the same as the number of days worked in a typical week in the last six months. Workers that switched to another occupation were working on average 4.5 days per week, and most of them (87%) also reported that their days were longer than before the pandemic.

⁷World Bank (2021) Tanzania Has an Opportunity to Ignite Inclusive Economic Growth by Transforming Its Tourism Sector, Press Release, available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/07/29/tanzania-has-an-opportunity-to-ignite-inclusive-economic-growth-by-transforming-its-tourism-sector>



Note: Respondents were asked to report workdays in the last seven days, including days during which they worked part-time.

Work conditions: While the lack of a strict lockdown meant that domestic workers were largely able to work in May 2021, they experienced increasing challenges in their work routines.

One in four respondents reported that fear of becoming ill made it harder to work or earn money at the same levels as pre-COVID-19.

When asked in interviews what the single most important impact of COVID-19 was, fear of contracting the virus was the most cited impact, “thoughts overwhelm me for fear of illness because it is so intense, and we travel every day,” said one domestic worker.

In fact, falling sick could threaten domestic workers’ employment. While the Employment and Labour Relations Act of 2004 of Tanzania states that an employee is entitled to a minimum of 126 days in a leave cycle of 36 months, most households have one domestic employee and if the employee cannot perform her/his work, he/she risks being replaced and having her/his employment terminated.⁸

Additionally, contracting COVID-19 or any other illness adds an economic burden on workers as although domestic workers may access health insurance through one of the several voluntary pre-payment schemes (most notably, the Community Health Fund and TibaKwaKadi), coverage

⁸ Making decent work a reality for domestic workers, ILO (2021)

remains very low. Among informal workers, less than 5% currently have health insurance⁹ (Verbrugge et al, 2018). Employees are also not required to cover their health bills.¹⁰

In contrast, almost half of domestic workers (45%) reported that they had to work longer hours compared to pre-COVID-19. Workers also frequently cited in interviews economic exploitation as an important impact of the pandemic, particularly, delay in payment of wages.

Single Most Important Impact of COVID-19

“Living in fear of getting COVID-19 and being excluded for security reasons.”

– Woman Domestic Worker

“Stigma at work and fear of getting infected escalated.” – Woman Domestic Worker

“Workers are not accessing any health services, if there is a need to attend any hospital either public or private it is up to the workers themselves to pay for the services, Employers and our MBO are not responsible for the Health Services Bills.” – CHODAWU Key Informant

Earnings¹¹

In May 2021, domestic workers had, on average, recovered to their pre-COVID-19 earnings. Domestic workers were earning TZS123,000 per month in May 2021 compared to TZS118,000 in February 2020. This was an improvement from April and June 2020 during which they were earning TZS94,400 and TZS98,000 respectively. This earning recovery could reflect relaxation of global markets and tourism activities which led to the slow recovery of businesses,¹² and in turn increased employers' ability to hire and pay domestic workers.

Nonetheless, although in May 2021 most workers' earnings had recovered to their pre-COVID-19 levels, 88% were earning less than the minimum wage of TZS180,000 set for workers in other domestic and hospitality services by the Employment and Labour Relations Act of Tanzania.¹³

⁹ Verbrugge, Boris, Adeline Ajuaye, and Jan Van Ongevalle. 2018. *Contributory Social Protection for the Informal Economy? Insights from Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI) in Senegal and Tanzania*. Belgium, BeFind

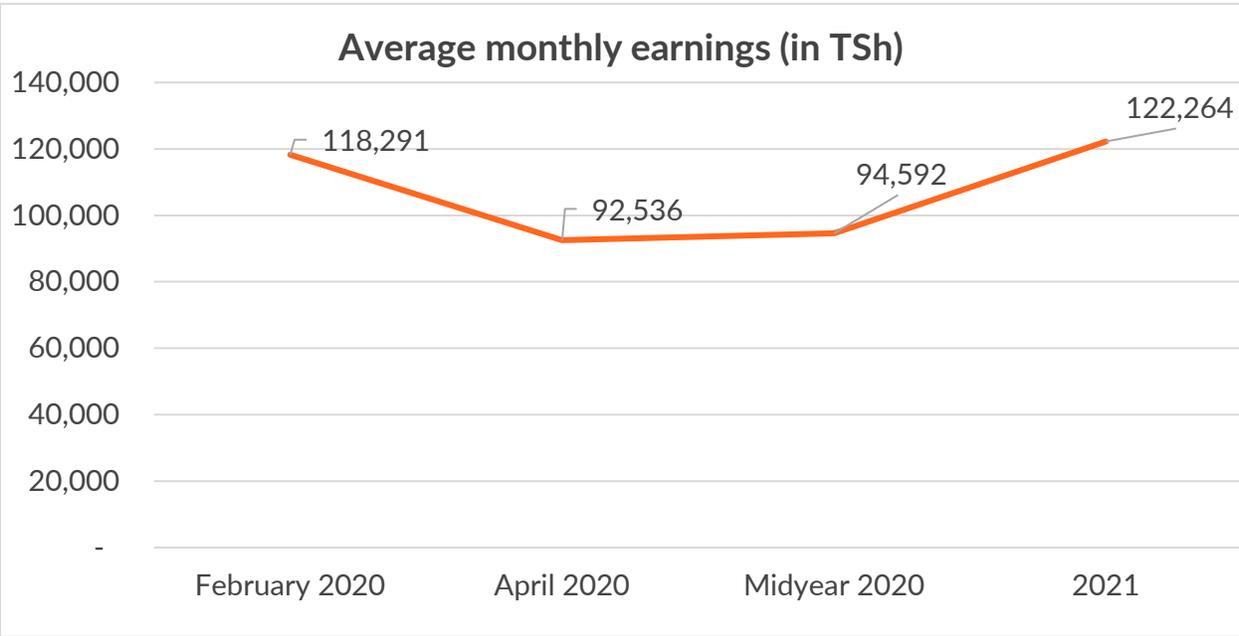
¹⁰ Interviews with key informant conducted in May 2021

¹¹All earnings data includes R1 respondents who have stopped working entirely and/or respondents who were not working in the previous month, whose days of work and earnings are set to 0. All earnings data is reported as gross earnings and do not account for costs of purchasing stocks or other inputs.

¹²World Bank (2021) Tanzania Has an Opportunity to Ignite Inclusive Economic Growth by Transforming Its Tourism Sector, Press Release

¹³United Republic of Tanzania Ministry of Labor and Employment, Notice to the Public: New Minimum Wages to the Private Sectors, available at:

<http://www.hat-tz.org/hattzorg/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/NEW-MINIMUM-WAGES-FOR-PRIVATE-SECTORS-14-06-2013.pdf>



Distinct pathways of impact

Prior to the pandemic, live-in domestic workers faced greater disadvantages in Tanzania, as they worked longer hours and had to be available to work at any hour of the day. Moreover, the Employment and Labour Relations Act allowed employers to pay live-in domestic workers up to 68% of their salary in in-kind payment¹⁴. The pandemic exacerbated live-in domestic workers’ vulnerabilities. Live-in domestic workers were on average earning 77% of the amount live-out domestic workers were earning. This gap in earnings between live-in and live-out domestic workers has intensified since the onset of COVID-19, as before the pandemic live-in domestic workers were on average earning 96% of the amount live-out domestic workers were earning. Although receiving a lower monthly salary, live-in domestic workers were working on average almost every day per week, more so than live-out domestic workers (6.7 days per week for live-in comparison to 5.8 days for live-out).

Moreover, the work routine of live-in domestic workers was hit harder than that of live-out domestic workers. Live-in domestic workers were 1.6 times more likely than live-out domestic workers to report working longer hours (61% of live-in domestic workers compared to 39% of live-out).

Almost all live-in and live-out domestic workers were responsible for cooking (97% live-in and 90% live-out) and cleaning (94% live-in and 99% live-out) as part of their daily tasks. However, live-in domestic workers were more likely than live-out to also take on childcare responsibilities (81% live-in domestic workers compared to 52% of live-out domestic workers), while live-out domestic workers were more likely to take care of shopping (67% of live-in domestic workers compared to 78% of live out).

¹⁴ ILO (2021) Making decent work a reality for domestic workers

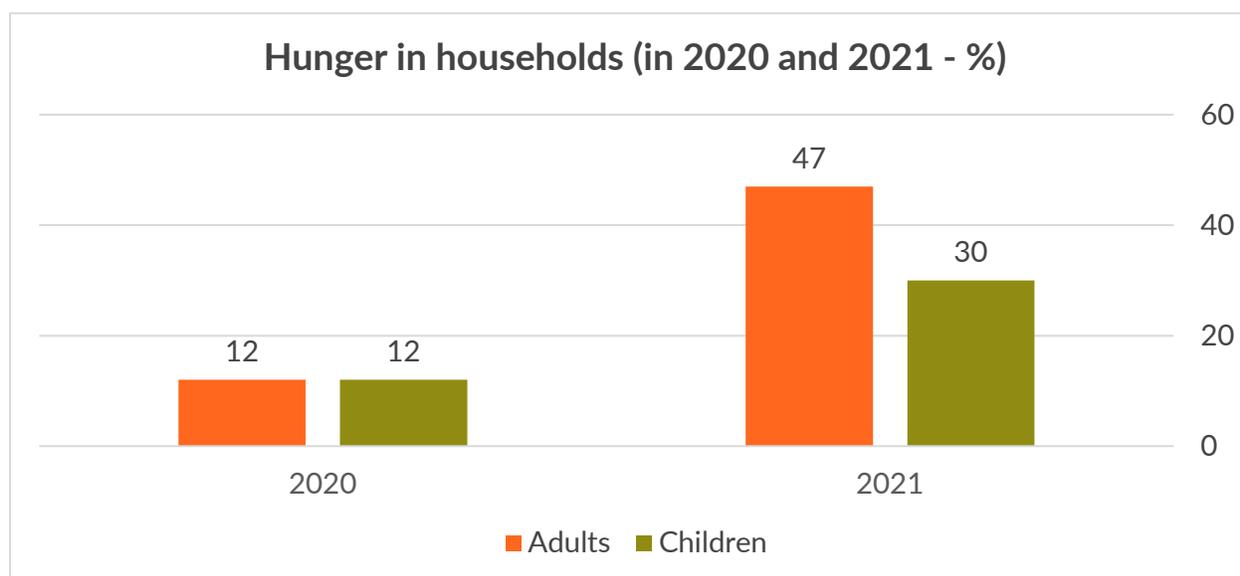
Food Security

While on average respondents' earnings have recovered to their pre-COVID-19 levels, soaring prices of food including maize, sorghum, and other cereals in Tanzania threatened workers' food security.¹⁵

Almost half of respondents (47%) reported hunger¹⁶ among adults in their household, and almost a third (30%) of respondents who had children under 16 in their households reported hunger among children. This is a significant increase from a year ago during Round 1 when 12% of respondents reported hunger among adults and children.

Furthermore, most respondents (73%) reported that they or someone in their households had to skip a meal or eat a smaller variety of food in the month.

Live-in domestic workers were more likely than live-out domestic workers to report that they or someone in their households had to skip a meal or eat a smaller variety of food in the month (79% of live-in domestic workers compared to 70% of live-out domestic workers).



Food Security

"The cost of living was high, especially food shortages." – Woman Domestic Worker

"My household members had difficulty finding food." – Woman Domestic Worker

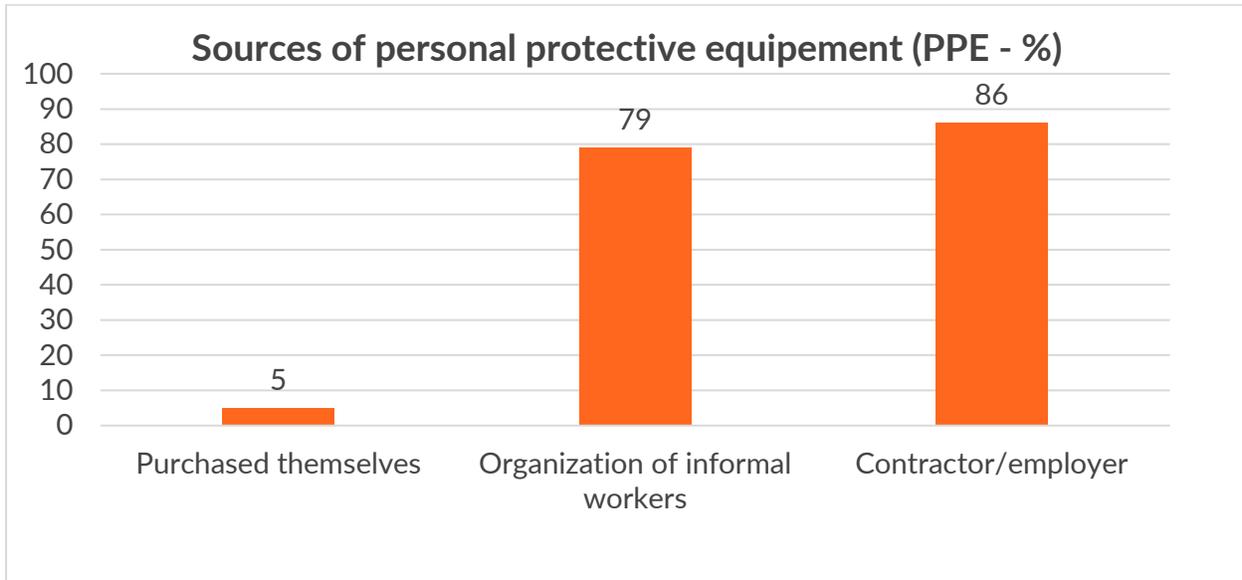
¹⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Drought is pushing food prices up sharply in East Africa, available at: <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/drought-pushing-food-prices-sharply-east-africa>

¹⁶ Respondents were asked whether in the last calendar month of 2021, any adults or children in their households "go hungry because there wasn't enough food?"

Health and Safety

Occupational risks and challenges

In mid-2021, among domestic workers who were working during the previous month, all reported using personal protective equipment (PPE). They were mostly provided by their employer (86% of domestic workers) or by CHODAWU (79% of domestic workers).



Despite most domestic workers using PPE, they reported increased occupational risks threatening their health and safety compared to before the pandemic. While the Occupational Health and Safety Act in Tanzania serves to ensure safe workplaces that do not endanger the health and safety of employees, the ambiguity of the definition of an employee and a workplace has isolated domestic workers from this act.

One in every five (19%) reported an increase in harassment/threats from employer, 17% reported increased isolation, 17% reported increased heavier physical labor, and 12% reported increased exposure to COVID-19. Moreover, during the interviews, workers frequently reported increased feelings of isolation, fear, and stigmatization as important impacts of the pandemic.

Live-in domestic workers were especially likely to report occupational and safety risks in their daily routine. Live-in domestic workers were almost twice as likely as live-out domestic workers to report increased exposure to COVID-19 (19% of live in domestic workers compared to 10% of live-out), 1.6 times as likely to report working on heavier physical labor (23% of live in domestic workers compared to 14% of live-out), and 1.3 times more likely to report increased harassment and threats from employers (23% of live-in domestic workers compared to 18% of live-out). A live-in domestic worker reported in the interviews that limited rest had impacted her mental wellbeing. “[I suffered from] depression, due to lack of time to rest and fear of this disease,” she said. Others reported negative feelings associated with being isolated from their families; a live-in domestic worker reported that she was “forced to go live with an employer and leave [her] family,” while another one reported having been “forbidden from meeting families and siblings.”

These risks and challenges could be underestimated for live-in domestic workers, as they might have not felt comfortable reporting this while conducting the interview in their employers' house.

On the other hand, live-out domestic workers were especially likely to experience the repercussions of the pandemic restrictions on living and commute costs. They frequently reported increased living costs and commute challenges as important impacts of the pandemic. "The cost of living rises, and travel is difficult, as well as living in fear due to illness," said one live-out domestic worker.

Respondents' increased occupational risks and challenges seem to have culminated in increased stress and strains to workers' mental and emotional wellbeing. More than a quarter of respondents (27%) reported that their mental and psychological stress has increased compared to pre-COVID-19. In surveys, the second most cited impact of the pandemic was stress and anxiety.

Live-out domestic workers were especially likely to report increased strains on their mental health, with 35% reporting this.

Health and Safety Concerns

"Difficulty with commuting, I'm afraid that my children will be infected from COVID."
– Woman Domestic Worker

"Living in isolation living with fear over illness." – Woman Domestic Worker

"Most of them have challenges and harassment. There are those who have been suspended from work: for example, a certain woman was suspended from work, she has been working for ten years, she has never taken any leave, so at the end of the day she was suspended without any reason. So, she informed me about the matter, I took her to the union offices and the union helped her to get her rights." – MBO Key Informant

Vaccination

In June 2021, four months after countries around the world began receiving shipments of free vaccines through COVAX –a global initiative aimed at equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, Tanzania joined the initiative.¹⁷ As part of it, Tanzania received the first consignment of over one million doses of COVID-19 vaccines in July 2021 from the United States.¹⁸ Accordingly, by the time the survey was administered in June, vaccine roll out had not yet started in Tanzania, and none of the workers had been vaccinated. The Minister of Health announced that health workers, people above the age of 50, and those with underlying health conditions would be prioritized to receive vaccines. Trade Unions of Tanzania including CHODAWU have been involved in

¹⁷ Mohammed, Omar (2021) Tanzania poised to join COVAX vaccine-sharing facility – WHO, Reuters

¹⁸ Vuzo, Stella (2021) Tanzania receives first COVID-19 vaccine batch, UN Africa Renewal

conversations with the new government and CHODAWU advocating for administering vaccinations to domestic workers.

Relief Measures

By Government

The government of Tanzania has not introduced any social safety measures, such as cash transfers, to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic since the start of the crisis. Accordingly, none of the interviewed workers had received relief at the time of the survey.

However, in June 2021, the new Tanzanian administration announced plans to spend USD470 million buying vaccines and supporting economic sectors hit hard by the coronavirus. It was announced that half of the cash will be spent on vaccines, protective gear, and other medical equipment, while the rest will be spent to stimulate sectors that were affected by the crisis.¹⁹ Moreover, in September 2021, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved USD567 million in emergency support for Tanzania to help it finance its COVID-19 vaccination campaign and meet the health and social costs of the pandemic.²⁰ It is however unclear which sectors will be targeted by relief measures, and whether domestic workers will benefit from any assistance.

By Informal Worker Organizations

In the absence of social safety measures from the government, membership-based organizations and unions played an important role in providing workers with relief. More than three quarters of respondents (77%) reported receiving relief from CHODAWU, mainly food and protective equipment. Some also reported receiving training to protect themselves against the pandemic.

Key informants from member-based organizations, reported that they provided services to help members protect and claim their rights, including their right to be paid. For instance, when domestic workers are suspended from work without being paid, the organizations would stand with them till they secure their right to payment.

Only one domestic worker interviewed reported having benefited from this service. “It [CHODAWU] has helped me to get a salary increase due to increased travel costs,” said one domestic worker.

MBO Support

“It has helped members to get their rights when they get problems at their workplaces for example those who have been suspended from work without payment, my MBO has taken the chance to stand with them until they get their rights.” – MBO Key Informant

¹⁹Reuters (2021) Tanzania to spend \$470 million on vaccines, coronavirus-damaged economy

²⁰Al Jazeera (2021) Tanzania secures nearly \$600M from IMF for COVID relief

Adaptation and Coping Strategies

Workers' lack of social safety net meant that some had to resort to alternative coping and adaptation strategies to survive the crisis. More than one-third of respondents (35%) adopted one or more coping strategies to help their households survive the crisis in the last 12 months. Respondents mainly reported drawing down their savings in the last 12 months (28%), and a few respondents borrowed money from friends and family, formal or informal institutions (6%), and/or reduced non-food consumption (4%).

Live-out domestic workers were more likely than live-in domestic workers to report adopting a coping strategy (38% of live-out domestic workers compared to 24% of live-in domestic workers).



** Respondents could select more than one response*

Of those respondents who drew down their savings since the start of COVID-19, more than half (55%) reported that they have not replaced these savings, 40% reported that they replaced half or less, and only 5% reported that they replaced more than half.

One in every 10 respondents (10%) also resorted to other work apart from their main occupation in 2021, mainly vending merchandise (73%). Domestic workers who were able to take on additional income generating activities were live-out.

Recovery and Beyond: Informal Worker Needs and Demands

When asked in the interview what their sector needs to recover, the respondents voiced needs or demands primarily covering longer term improvement of their work conditions, more so than short term relief measures. Demands were predominantly targeted at legal support and policy changes that would improve their work circumstances, followed by need for business capital and information.

Improvement of work conditions

Most workers reported that their employment conditions needed to be improved through three main channels:

- 1. Improvement of the Tanzanian legal framework to cover domestic workers more efficiently through setting specific working hours, protections, and a better minimum wage.**

Addressing the ambiguity in the existing legal frameworks will be critical to account for and efficiently cover the specific workplace, living arrangements and circumstances of domestic workers. The legal framework should set specific working hours, and guarantee health insurance coverage and protection against economic exploitation and harassment for domestic workers. Moreover, while the minimum wage of domestic workers is currently set by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, it is lower than the minimum wage set for other occupations in the domestic and hospitality services, and it is in fact the lowest amongst all sectors covered by the minimum wage law. Accordingly, the domestic workers' minimum wage could be reconsidered.

To ensure optimal protection of domestic workers, Tanzania should also ratify ILO Convention No. 189.

- 2. Enforcement of employment laws and employment contracts to protect domestic workers' work conditions.**

Improving the legal framework should be coupled with promoting and enforcing compliance to ensure respect of the protections covered by the legal acts. Enforcement of employment contracts will be especially important to provide domestic workers with full information on their terms and conditions of employment.

- 3. Receipt of legal support that would enable them to claim and safeguard their rights.**

Considering that domestic workers are exposed to threats and harassment by their employers, legal support to claim and protect their rights is essential. While currently, MBOs in Tanzania have been working on providing domestic workers with legal support, this needs to be institutionalized to make it more effective and widespread.

4. Receipt of trainings that guide domestic workers and familiarize them with their rights.

The need for trainings and information was also frequently mentioned, particularly trainings that would familiarize domestic workers with their rights and provide them with guidance on how to increase their earnings. In fact, low levels of awareness among domestic workers of their rights, legal limits and applicable wages contribute to the limited enforcement of laws and protections. Accordingly, training on their rights is essential to ensure domestic workers benefit from the protections they are entitled to.

5. Provision of business capital.

Workers also reported needing financial support or loans to secure more earnings and cover the cost of their everyday needs. Some workers reported needing capital to start another alternative business.

Workers' Demands

"The government should give us legal support in our work and our salaries should be increased."

– Domestic Worker

"Salaries should be increased, most of us are paid less money we cannot afford basic needs."

– Domestic Worker

"The government should improve the law so that they have a chance to rest." – Interviewer

"Job contracts and normal working hours should be arranged so that we can have time to rest and care for the family." – Domestic Worker

"Laws should be created for the benefit of all." – Domestic Worker

"The government needs to provide financial assistance and regulate the rights of domestic workers."

– Domestic Worker

"The government should provide education on workers' rights." – Domestic Worker

COVID-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy is a collaboration between the global network Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and local partner organizations representing informal workers in 12 cities: Accra, Ghana; Ahmedabad, India; Bangkok, Thailand; Dakar, Senegal; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Delhi, India; Durban, South Africa; Lima, Peru; Mexico City, Mexico; New York City, USA; Pleven, Bulgaria; and Tiruppur, India, with support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC/CRDI), Canada. The mixed-methods longitudinal study includes survey questionnaires of informal workers and semi-structured interviews with informal worker leaders and other key informants, all conducted by phone. For more information, visit

wiego.org/COVID-19-Global-Impact-Study.

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) is a global network focused on empowering the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy to secure their livelihoods. We believe all workers should have equal economic opportunities, rights, protection, and voice. WIEGO promotes change by improving statistics and expanding knowledge on the informal economy, building networks and capacity among informal worker organizations and, jointly with the networks and organizations, influencing local, national, and international policies.

Visit www.wiego.org.

CHODAWU, the Tanzanian Conservation, Hotels, Domestic, Social Services and Consultancy Workers Union, has been working in the defense of domestic workers and other sectors since 1996. The union provides training and counselling and offers legal assistance to settle disputes with employers; it also works to raise awareness among domestic workers and employers about their rights. CHODAWU is currently advocating for Tanzania's adoption/ratification of Domestic Workers Convention C189.

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