



# LONDON COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE SURVEY: WEEK FIVE QUESTIONS

FIELDWORK 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> MAY 2020

# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose of the Community Response Survey

The weekly COVID-19 Community Response Survey asks civil society organisations who work in London, a small number of questions to understand the impact of COVID-19 and associated policy measures, such as social distancing, on vulnerable populations in the capital.

The first week of the survey focused on asking baseline questions to capture organisational profiles, and included a small number of questions relating to the immediate impact post-lockdown of COVID-19.

Surveys from week two onwards are shorter, and ask organisations a number of questions about changes they have seen in the last week.

We aim to increase the size of the cohort and will continue to ask new joiners the week one baseline questions.

Results from the survey are shared with responding organisations and with decision-makers supporting the pan-London response to COVID-19.

## Cohort details

The questions were sent to 247 Civil Society organisations who have agreed to take part. The organisations were recruited through existing contacts and mailing lists held by the GLA Community Engagement and Equality & Fairness teams.

In addition, larger organisations and infrastructure providers were asked to cascade the invitation down to their networks.

A total of 113 organisations responded in full or in part to the week four questions, which were live between Monday 11<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Note: due to the relatively small sample size and the targeted way in which recruitment was conducted, it is important not to extrapolate from any findings in the weekly survey to all civil society organisations in London or any particular population of Londoners. Results from the weekly survey should be used alongside other sources of intelligence to understand the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable communities.

# CHANGE IN NUMBER OF PEOPLE SEEKING SUPPORT

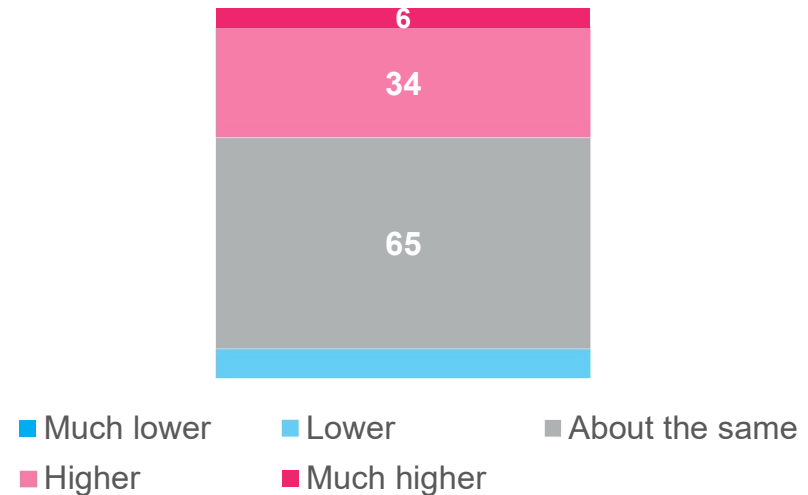
**This week more organisations have seen little change (65) than an increase (40) in the number of people seeking support.**

Relatively few organisations (just 9) are seeing a fall in the number of people seeking support.

The proportion of organisations seeing an increase in numbers seeking support has declined over the last three weeks, from 46 per cent three weeks ago to 35 per cent in the most recent week.

Organisations that work with BAME Londoners, and those who work with socially excluded people are more likely to have seen an increase in demand (52 and 45 per cent respectively) than those organisations that work with young people (24 per cent) or the general public (31 per cent).

Change in numbers seeking support (number of organisations)



# CHANGE IN NUMBERS SEEKING SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC ISSUES

We asked responding organisations to tell us whether the number of people seeking support for a range of specific issues was higher, the same or lower compared to last week. We asked them to only answer if they deal with and have seen each of the issues. Capacity building has risen as an issue in the latest week data, compared to last weeks.

Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses	Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses
Isolation and loneliness	64%	72	Physical health	39%	51
Mental health	58%	81	Grief bereavement	39%	44
Digital connectivity	57%	65	Childcare or Parenting	36%	42
Poverty	56%	52	Access to food	32%	68
Debt issues	48%	52	Access to health	29%	58
Housing	47%	57	Access to care	28%	50
Capacity Building	47%	51	Immigration issues	27%	41
Domestic violence	45%	47	Discrimination	26%	39
Employment	44%	52	Victim support	22%	36
Access to benefits	44%	62			

# WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOUR ORGANISATION IS FACING THIS WEEK?

We asked responding organisations to tell us the three biggest challenges they were facing last week. By far the most common challenges were around longer-term funding and recovery planning

Challenge	Number of organisations	Issue	Number of organisations
Planning for recovery/easing of lockdown	43	Personal Protective Equipment	11
Funding - sustainability beyond the crisis	36	Capacity - due to staff working from home	10
Maintaining contact with beneficiaries	21	Digital skills or training	10
Staff wellbeing and mental health	21	Difficulty in delivering services online	<10
Digital or tech equipment	18	Working with local authorities	<10
Funding - general	18	Capacity - due to furloughed staff	<10
Capacity - due to increased demand	17	Capacity - general	<10
Need to provide new/changed services	17	Funding - relationship with existing funders	<10
Reaching vulnerable groups	16	Advice/training on supporting vulnerable	<10
Social distancing in delivery	13	Capacity - due to reduction in volunteers	<10
Funding - access to urgent funds	12		

Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey

CITY INTELLIGENCE

# WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOUR BENEFICIARIES ARE FACING THIS WEEK?

We asked responding organisations to tell us the three biggest challenges their beneficiaries were facing in the last week. A slightly greater number of organisations are reporting issues around mental health, isolation and digital exclusion than issues such as job loss, low incomes and access to food and essentials.

Challenge	Number of organisations	Issue	Number of organisations
Mental health	43	Inadequate accommodation	10
Digital exclusion	41	Access to local authority support	<10
Social Isolation	35	Family tension	<10
Jobs/employment	21	Domestic violence	<10
Access to food and essentials	19	No recourse to public funds	<10
Social distancing rules	18	Bereavement	<10
Low income	17	Multi-lingual support	<10
Access to benefits	13	Eviction	<10

# BENEFICIARY CHALLENGES BY BENEFICIARY GROUP

**Do biggest beneficiary challenges vary by the main groups of beneficiaries organisations work with?**

**Organisations working with young people** were particularly likely to mention mental health issues (38 per cent of organisations).

**Organisations working with BAME Londoners** were particularly likely to mention issues around employment (43 per cent of organisations), digital exclusion (48 per cent of organisations)

**Organisations working with socially excluded/vulnerable Londoners** were more likely to mention access to benefits (30 per cent of organisations)

**Organisations working with the general public** were more likely to mention digital exclusion (45 per cent of organisations) and mental health issues (38 per cent of organisations)

## Groups whose needs are not being met by the current support available in response to COVID-19

42 groups responded to this question. The most commonly occurring groups were:

- NRPF (10)
- Digitally excluded (9)
- Young people (6)

*“Same as previous weeks - young people and particularly certain groups of young people (young refugees, LGBT young people, young women, those affected by serious youth violence).”*



# New or growing issues

37 groups highlighted new or growing issues. Below are some of the issues that have not already been captured in the analysis:

- Digital exclusion - incl. children missing out on education/activities (6)
- Lack of clear guidance on social distancing (5)
- Impact on mental health (5)

*“1. Definite increase in the amount of older people suffering from depression from isolation. Three referrals to adult mental health services today. 2. People who are on the shielding list but who have not registered on the national hub this means they don't get a food box. For people who don't have access to the internet, and no community support, this puts them in a really vulnerable position.”*

## Any other issues to flag

There were fewer clear patterns in the data this week, but the rising levels of anxiety linked to the lack of clarity on what people can/should do was a strong pattern.

*“The loosening of shut in coupled with fear of virus loss of income rise in food prices and bills starting to come in is almost a perfect storm of disaster for many families who were financially independent. People are finding it upsetting and incomprehensible that they are in this situation. It is damaging people physically and mentally.”*

# NEXT STEPS

**Week six survey in the field between 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May.**

**Results available on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May**

**Cohort has now increased to 256 and ongoing recruitment will continue to grow the cohort**