


Monitoring the state of statistical operations under the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Asia-Pacific region


Highlights from a global COVID-19 survey of National Statistical Offices


This report presents a summary of the Asia-Pacific results of the global survey on impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the NSOs. The survey lunched on 5 May 2020, it is the first wave of a global survey to assess the impacts of the pandemic on the operation of NSOs, their responses, and the ensuing needs of financial and technical support. The global survey was carried out under the aegis of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division (UNSD), in partnership with World Bank's Development Data Group and in coordination with the UN Regional Commissions (<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/covid19-response/covid19-nso-survey-report.pdf>).

July 2020


Key findings:

 40 percent of the headquarter offices of NSOs in Asia-Pacific were fully or partially closed, and more than half of them completely stopped field data collection involving face-to-face interviews. This compares to about 65 percent globally fully or partly closed and 96 percent globally who fully or partially stopped face-to-face data collection.

 Nearly 75 percent of NSOs in Asia-Pacific had to postpone fieldwork for planned censuses, and surveys were affected in one-third of NSOs in Asia-Pacific.

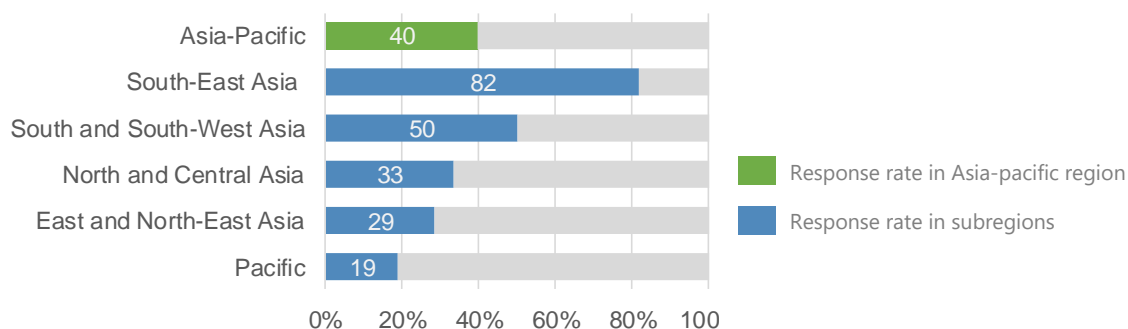
 The top challenges faced by NSOs in Asia-Pacific are mobility and transportation restrictions, followed by office IT not being suitable for remote work and funding limitations.

 The majority of NSOs in Asia-Pacific are willing to adopt new modes of data collection or use alternative data sources.

 Despite more than half of the NSOs in Asia-Pacific needing support to face the challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis, only a quarter of them have received technical or financial supports.

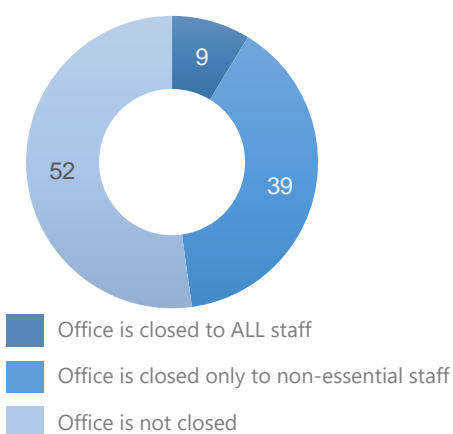


The web-based survey was e-mailed to 218 National Statistical Offices. Of these, 122 responded. Only 23 of the responses came from countries in the Asia-Pacific region, a regional response rate of 40 percent with a diverse response rate across subregions.¹

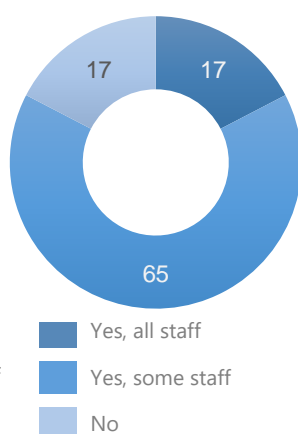


- Nearly 50 percent of NSOs in Asia-Pacific were fully or partially closed.
- 82 percent have instructed some or all of their staff to work from home.
- More than half have completely stopped field data collection involving face-to-face interviews.

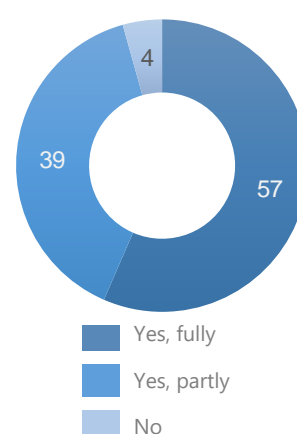
Is your main office currently closed?



Are staff instructed to stay and work from home?



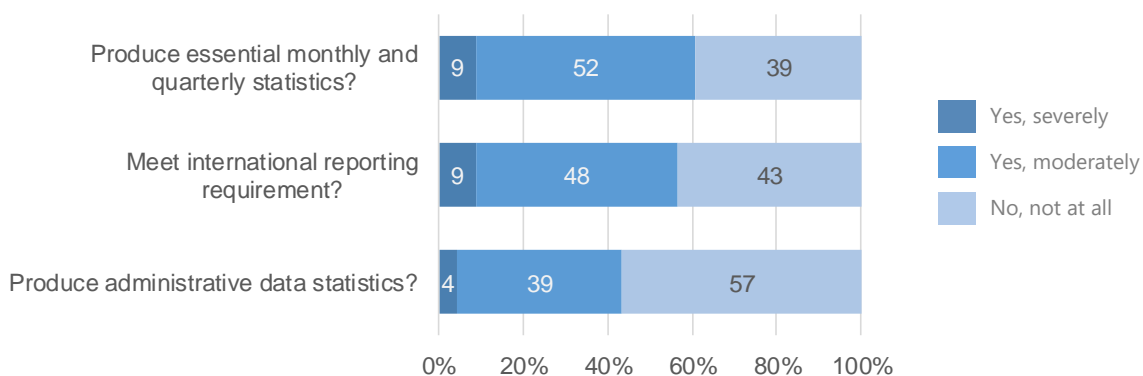
Have you stopped field data collection involving face-to-face interviews?



¹ The figures in this report are based on data from NSOs in the Asia-Pacific region that responded to each question as a percentage of all NSOs in the Asia-Pacific region. The denominator for each graph may vary slightly due to non-response for individual questions.



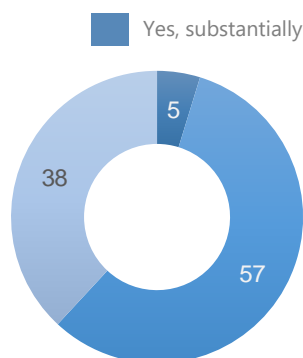
- Production of essential monthly and quarterly statistics are moderately affected in more than 50 percent of NSOs in Asia-Pacific.
- Production of administrative data was more resilient to COVID-19 impact yet they were moderately or severely affected in more than 40 percent of NSOs in Asia-Pacific.



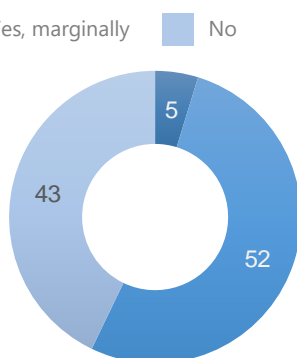
Approximately 60 percent of NSOs in Asia-Pacific had to alter their scheduled calendar of publications or data dissemination as a result of the pandemic.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, did you have to alter:

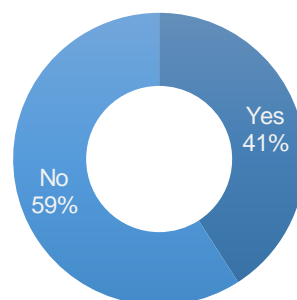
The scheduled calendar of publications?



The schedule of data dissemination?

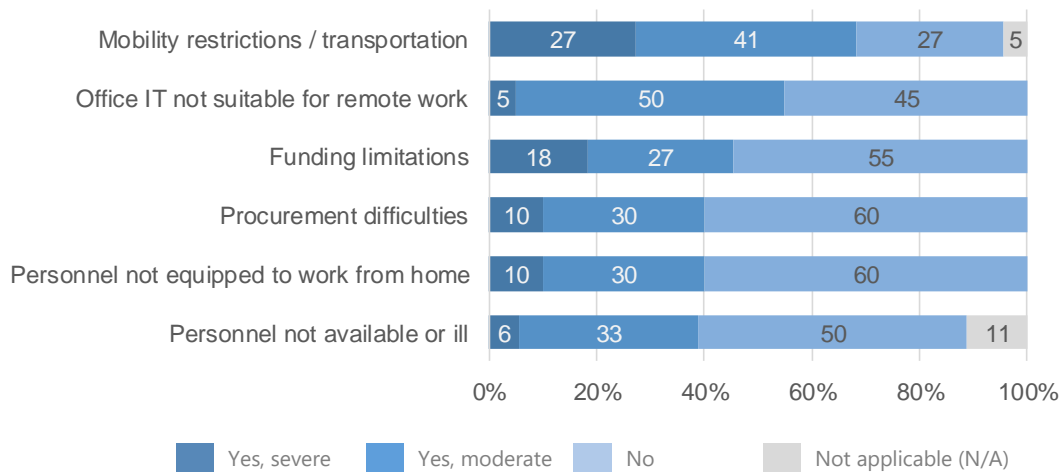


Was any legislation/regulation, specific to statistical activities, issued to respond/adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic?



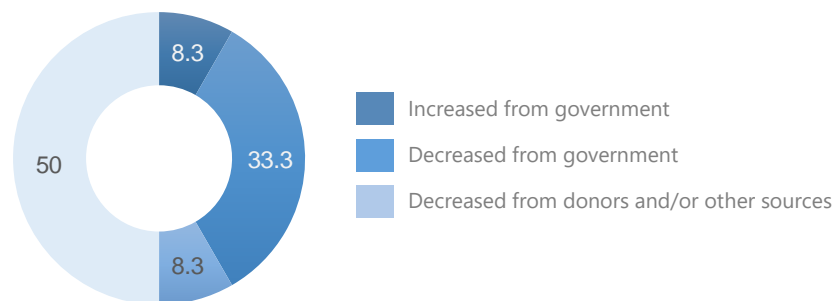
As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, mobility and transportation restrictions are particularly challenging for NSOs in Asia-Pacific, followed by office IT not being suitable for remote work and funding limitations.

Are you facing difficulties in operating due to:



42 percent of the NSOs in Asia-Pacific experienced budget decreases due to COVID-19.

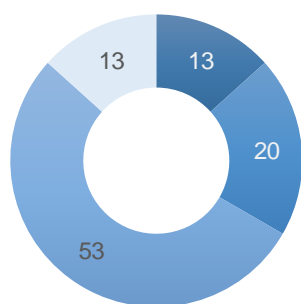
Has your funding been affected due to the current COVID-19 pandemic?



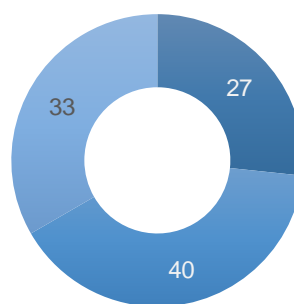
- 67 percent of NSOs in Asia-Pacific had to postpone or cancel some or all preparatory activities for planned censuses.
- In 73 percent of NSOs, fieldwork for planned censuses had to be postponed to later in 2020 or 2021 and beyond.
- Population and housing census are most affected.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, did you have to stop or postpone...

Preparatory activities for planned census?



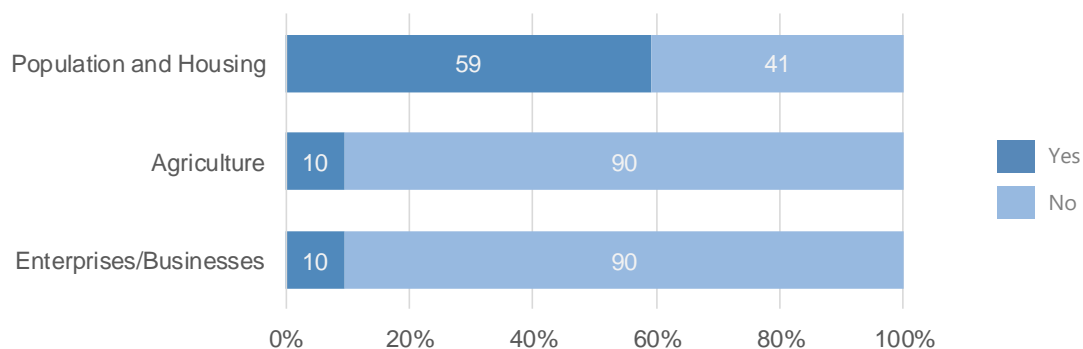
Field work of planned census?



- No, have completed these activities before the COVID-19 arrival
- No, proceeded / will proceed with these activities in spite of the COVID-19
- Yes, had to postpone or cancel SOME preparatory activities
- Yes, had to postpone or cancel most/ALL of the preparatory activities

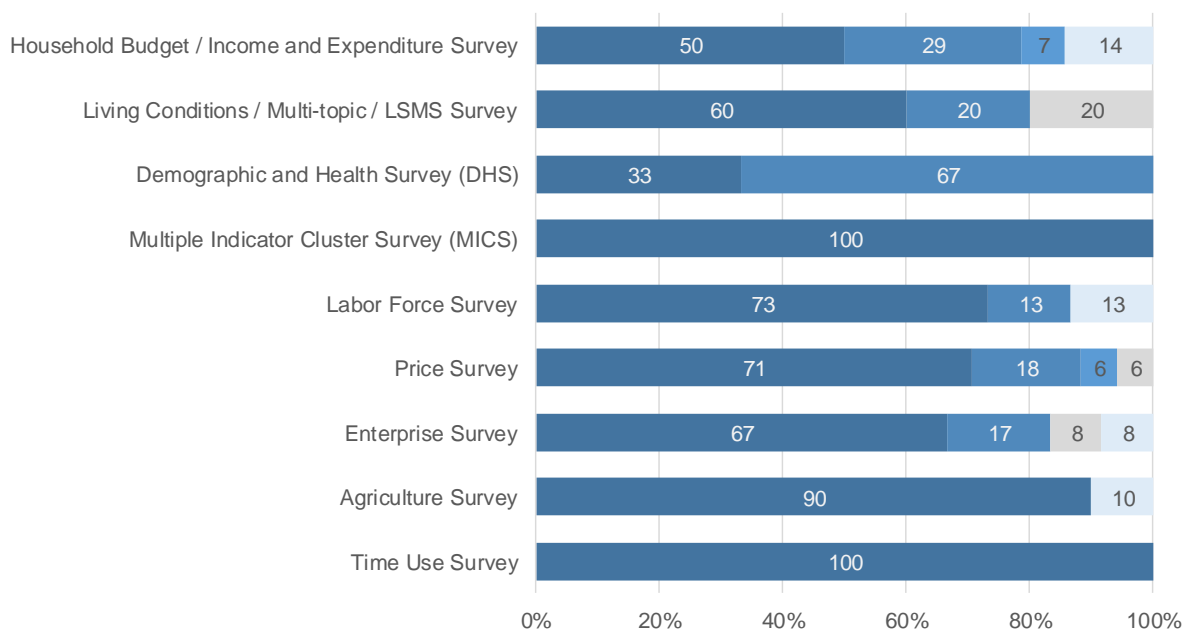
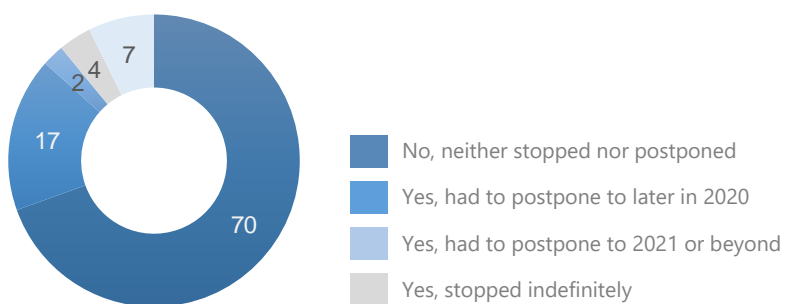
- No, neither stopped nor postponed
- Yes, had to postpone to later in 2020
- Yes, had to postpone to 2021 or beyond

Field work by type of census



- Surveys were affected in one-third of NSOs in Asia-Pacific.
- Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and Household budget/income and expenditure surveys were the most affected in the Asia-Pacific.

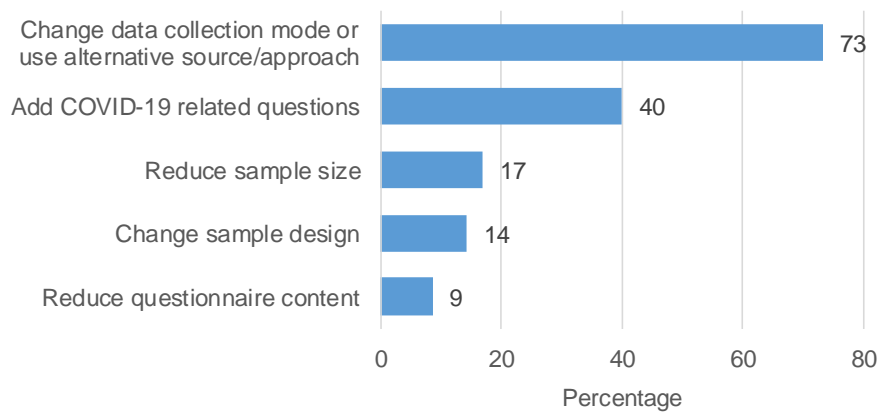
Due to COVID-19 pandemic, did you have to stop or postpone the field work of this survey?



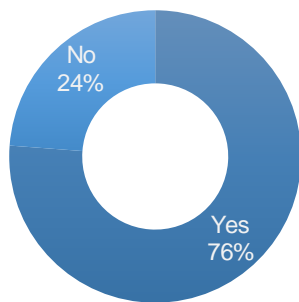
Majority of NSOs in Asia-Pacific ...

- Are willing to adopt new modes of data collection or using alternative data sources.
- Plan to conduct COVID-19 impact assessment survey.

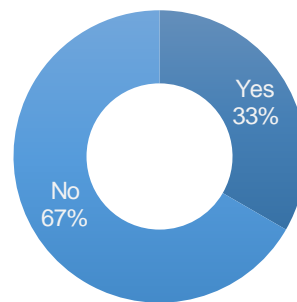
If you had to alter a planned survey, which changes did/will you introduce?



Has your institution planned any survey on COVID-19 and its impacts?

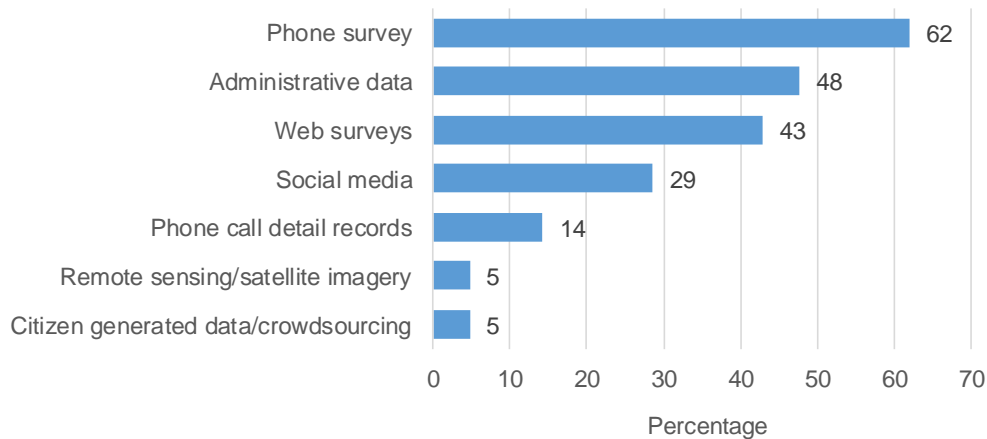


Are you currently setting up or planning to set up any national platform to respond to new data needs?



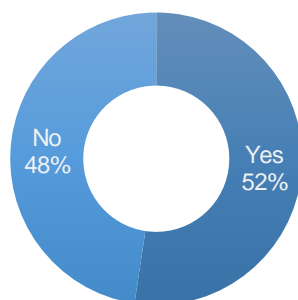
Majority of NSOs in Asia-Pacific are relying on phone surveys to assess COVID-19 impact.

Is your institution using non-traditional data sources/approaches to analyze or monitor aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic?

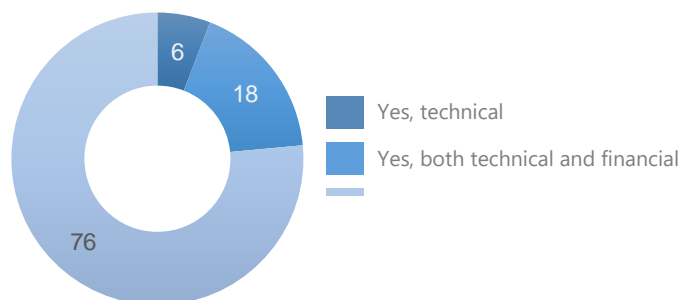


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- More than half of the NSOs in Asia-Pacific need support to face the challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis.
 - Only a quarter of NSOs have received technical or financial support.
-

Does your institution need additional external support to face the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic?



Has your institution received additional external support?



Technical assistance/capacity building is the most critical support needed by Asia-Pacific to respond to the pandemic.

Support priorities in respondent Asia-Pacific countries

