



LONDON COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE SURVEY: WEEK THIRTY/THIRTY ONE

FIELDWORK 2nd – 11th November 2020

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Community Response Survey

The 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.

This week's survey collected data over two weeks.

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 more than 360 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 114 organisations responded in full or in part to the questions, which were live between Monday 2nd and Wednesday 11th November.

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.

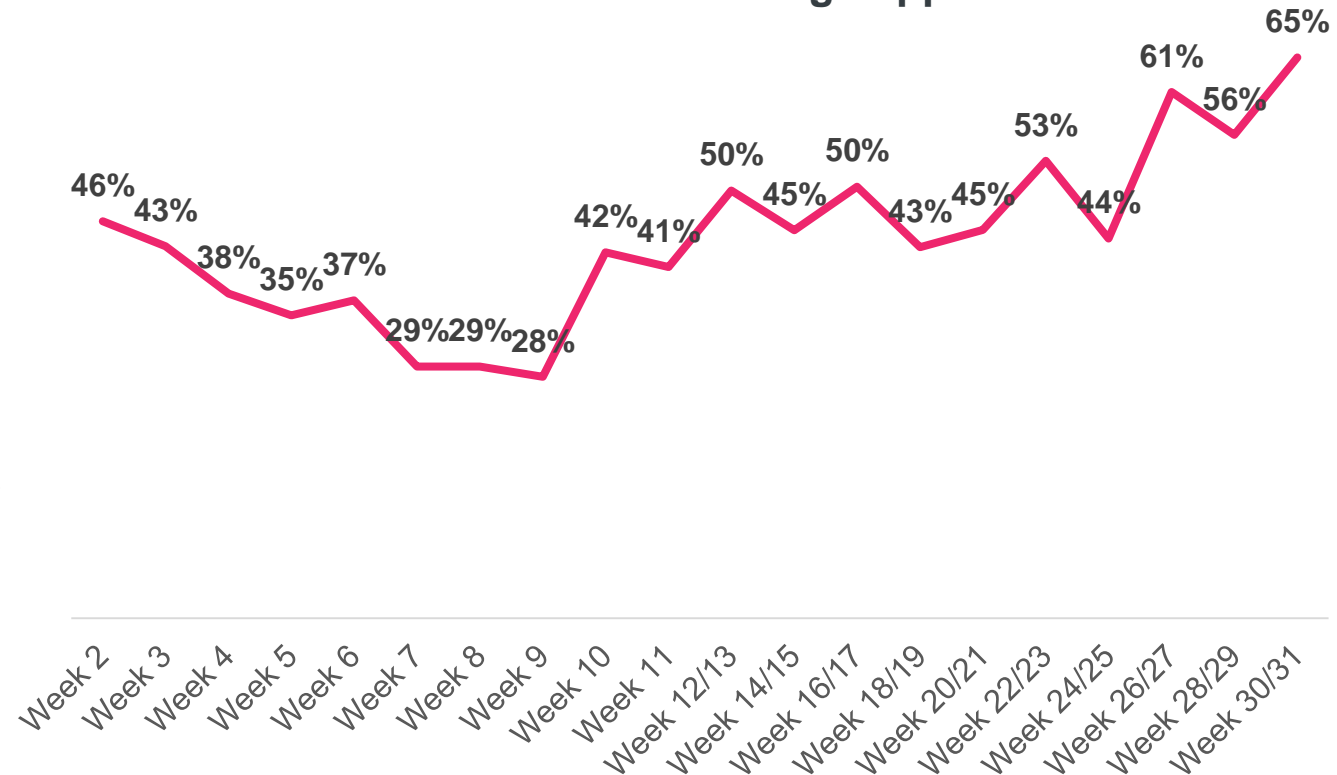
CHANGE IN NUMBER OF PEOPLE SEEKING SUPPORT

This week 65 per cent of responding organisations (74) saw an increase in the number of people seeking support in the last two weeks. This is the highest percentage since the survey began in April.

35 reported little change in numbers and 5 reported a decrease.

Organisations working with BAME Londoners were more likely to report increased need at 71%. Organisation working with older young people were in line with the cohort average at 67%.

Increase in numbers seeking support



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. The issues with the highest proportion reporting higher demand are mental health, isolation and loneliness and poverty. This week we have seen a noticeable (>10pp) increase in organisations experiencing an increase in demand around mental health, digital connectivity and capacity building support.

Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses	Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses
Mental health	73%	74	Debt issues	44%	53
Isolation and loneliness	62%	67	Fundraising support	43%	43
Poverty	60%	62	NRPF	42%	35
Access to food	59%	75	Access to social care	40%	51
Housing	58%	52	Domestic violence	40%	42
Employment	58%	61	Immigration issues	38%	46
Digital connectivity	58%	63	Childcare or Parenting	31%	42
Homelessness	57%	44	Discrimination	29%	38
Physical health	51%	52	Youth violence	27%	29
Access to benefits	50%	62	Victim support	26%	30
Capacity Building	49%	51	Hate crime	23%	35
Education	46%	54	Sexual exploitation	20%	30
Access to health	45%	51	Substance misuse	19%	32
Grief/bereavement	45%	45	Child abuse	8%	31

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 in the last two weeks. The top challenges in week 30/31 were Capacity to meet demand, planning for delivery over the next 6 months and delivering services whilst following social distancing guidelines.

Challenge	Number of organisations
Capacity to meet demand	48
Planning for delivery over the next 6 months	39
Delivering services whilst following social distancing guidelines	36
Funding sustainability beyond the crisis	32
Funding until March 2021	28
Staff wellbeing and mental health	26
Need to provide new or changed services	22
Reaching vulnerable groups	21
Maintaining engagement and contact with beneficiary groups	12
Fall in public donations (including food)	9

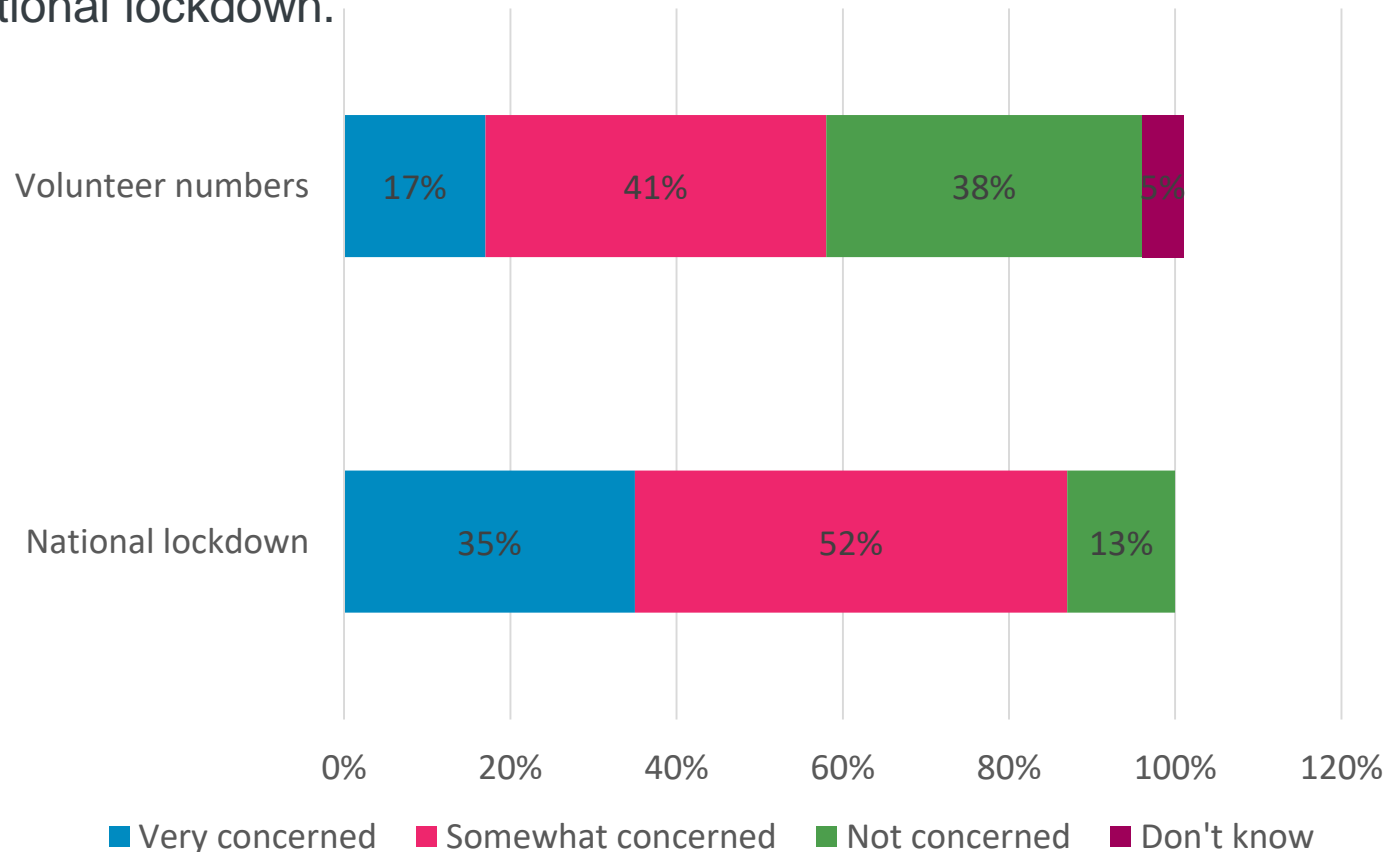
WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE LONDONERS ARE FACING THIS WEEK?

We asked responding organisations to tell us the three biggest challenges their beneficiaries were facing in the last week. This week the top issues were mental health, loss of jobs or lack of employment opportunities and social isolation, financial insecurity.

Challenge	Number of organisations
Mental health	50
Loss of jobs or lack of employment opportunities	47
Social Isolation	47
Financial insecurity	44
Access to food and essentials	24
Digital exclusion	18
Concern about Covid (including access to tests, fear of infection and confidence to leave home)	13
Access to benefits	10
Social distancing rules	10
Homelessness	9
Education or training	8

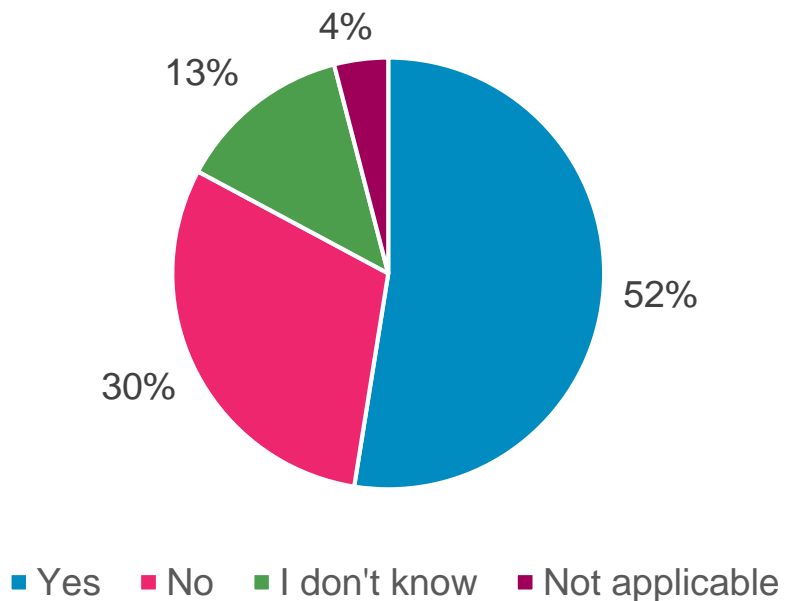
CONCERN ABOUT ORGANISATION'S ABILITY TO DELIVER AGAINST OBJECTIVES

We asked organisations how concerned they were about a range of issues affecting their ability to deliver against their objectives. 58% of organisations were concerned about volunteer numbers and 87% about the national lockdown.



EMERGENCY FUNDING NEEDS TO SUPPORT LONDONERS THROUGH LOCKDOWN

52% of respondents need emergency funding to support Londoners through lockdown.



The greatest area of funding needs identified were to increase provision of advice and support, and to meet the urgent needs of Londoners.

Funding need	Number of organisations
To increase provision of advice and support	31
To meet urgent needs of Londoners (such as food and essentials)	30
Delivering differently (e.g. through digital channels)	25
Staffing (including supporting volunteers)	24
Increased running costs of your organisation	15

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TO HELP ORGANISATIONS SUPPORT LONDONERS

We asked organisations what additional support would help them meet the needs of Londoners through a second lockdown. The two most common responses by far were funding (52%) and digital equipment (43%). This was followed by opportunities to collaborate and public health guidance in accessible format, both at 23% of respondents. 19% of organisations needed more volunteers.

Support	Number of organisations
Additional financial resources	60
Digital/tech equipment	50
Opportunities to partner/collaborate with other charities	26
Public health guidance available in accessible formats and/or translations	26
More volunteers	22
Clarity over social distancing requirements	17
We do not need any additional support	6

ANY OTHER ISSUES

A range of issues were raised this week by respondents. Mental health (8) and digital exclusion (6) were the two most common issues raised this week. There was an acute risk highlighted by a range of different providers about the needs and experiences of asylum seeker currently placed in hotels with little support.

“Very concerned about adult SEND learners and their families who struggle to cope in lockdown which increases mental health problems, care responsibilities/activities and also disrupts learning.”

Mental health

"The impact of loneliness and social isolation is having a huge affect on the people we are working with. There is a fear there will be more suicides and people in desperate despair as we approach winter."

Experiences of Asylum Seekers

“The suffering of asylum seeking people placed in hotels is going unnoticed and commented on. The quality and nutritional value of food is awful and whole families are stuffed into one room. The number of people needing help is overwhelming. Many are without any money at all and have had their phones and belongings confiscated by immigration. They don't know how to register for schools and GPs or find solicitors. They have no money fro travel. They are isolated which the lockdown exasperates. “

“Real concerns about the mental health of the asylum seekers which are being held in a hotel in Hillingdon. Normally these clients would be dispersed across the UK and given help locally. Currently we have 680 people all in one hotel, including children, who have no mental health support. They have numerous mental health conditions including PTSD, trauma, depression and anxiety.”

“Mental health support urgently needed for asylum seekers and refugees who are experiencing considerable levels of social and economic exclusion.”



NEXT STEPS

The next survey will cover two weeks, being in the field between 16th – 25th November.

Results available on Monday 30th November.