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# Kore Lavi Safety Net Beneficiary Resilience Assessment



**Listening, reflecting and learning on  
resilience and food security**

CARE Haiti, June 2019

This study is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of the authors and CARE Haiti and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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# Introduction

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I would like to thank here the leadership and team members who contributed to the generation of new contextualized knowledge on resilience and food security that will be useful to support the most vulnerable Haitian population beyond the end of the Kore Lavi program.

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- Lauree Antoine, Program Coordinator and Focal Point for this study, was in charge of coordinating and operationalizing this process. With his critical and constructive eye and deep knowledge of the Haitian context and subject matter, he contributed to the continuous improvement of the quality of the study design and this report. His focus on solution and commitment to this process made it possible to overcome multiple challenges during all phases of the process.
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- And overall, the 790 program participants who shared their experiences, reflections and insights to get a better understanding about resilience and food security of the most vulnerable people in Haiti.

With gratefulness to count on the support and confidence of all these amazing and highly committed people, we are pleased to share the final result of this great teamwork.

Rita Muckenhirn, Systways,  
Consultant and Coordinator of this Resilience Assessment, June 2019

# Guiding you through this report

Considering the usefulness of the findings for various stakeholders, the report was written taking into account that it will be read both by users who are experts in the field as well as by those who have only some basic knowledge on the subject of resilience. The experts in resilience can skip the conceptual introductions. For those who are being introduced to the subject, we recommend them to read the concepts to facilitate a better understanding of the results.

The first chapter “**About the resilience assessment**” will give the reader an overview about the background and context of this assessment, the rationale of the study as well as its purpose and learning questions, the methodology that was used and a basic introduction to the Resilience Analytical Framework.

The main chapter “**Key findings**” displays the most important results based on the primary data collected from 790 respondents - who are also members of the Kore Lavi Social Safety Net. The findings are organized according to the components and elements of the Resilience Analytical Framework in the following sub-chapters:

- Whose voices we are listening to
- Shocks and stressors
- Pathways
- Wellbeing and sustainable development outcomes
- Coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies
- Access to and control over resources
- The future

In the “**Conclusions**” chapter you will find a summary of the key findings answering the main learning questions.

The findings provide information for the design of future programs of CARE Haiti, USAID and other Kore Lavi partners as well as the review and adoption of policies by the governmental institutions. This report will become worthwhile when its insights and “**Recommendations**” are being used by the different stakeholders.

CARE Haiti will be able to make further inquiry and take advantage of the existing database by crossing more variables, answering new questions that have been surfacing during the process and using the narratives to make people’s voices heard.

Enjoy exploring, reading, communicating and using the results we found!

Haiti and its most vulnerable population will appreciate it!



*Finalizing the SenseMaker facilitators’ training,  
Port au Prince, Haiti, April 2019*

# Executive Summary

## About the Resilience Assessment

As part of its mandate, the **Kore Lavi program** has developed and established a **food voucher-based social safety net model** for the poorest households in conjunction with the Haitian Government – through the **Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MAST)**. This Resilience Assessment contributes to a stronger understanding of the current **food security and resilience** situations of the most vulnerable program beneficiaries. It explores the impacts of the food voucher-based safety net activities on the living conditions of the poor households and identifies the added-value of the program's contribution on the lives of the targeted beneficiaries. That for, the complexity-aware **SenseMaker** approach was used combining **qualitative material (narratives) with a quantitative framework** and **visualizations of patterns**.

### Resilience...

*Goes beyond the ability to recover from shocks, and includes addressing the context that makes people vulnerable, including reducing the drivers of risk as those emissions that cause climate change.*

CARE

## What did we learn from listening to the people's voices?

The following key findings and conclusions are organized according to the main topics and learning questions that guided the entire resilience study process.

### Shock and stressors, resilience pathways trajectories and impact

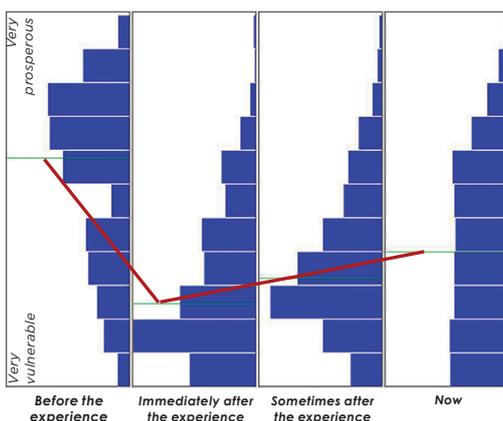
- Based upon the data collected, the social safety net members – which is considered as the study sampling universe – are mainly affected by **illness, death and drought**, respectively. The shocks are further disaggregated and categorized into health and death related events, climate-related shocks and stressors and natural disasters. Thus, 48% of the respondents said that they were affected by health and death related events – including accidents; 26% were affected by climate-related shocks and stressors and 9% were affected by natural disasters – including hurricanes.
- The **frequency and scope of droughts** are perceived as very high, which is confirmed by an analysis provided by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA) and other specialized organizations.
- 80%** of the 790 respondents followed **vulnerable pathway trajectories** and the recovery process after facing the difficult situation is very slow.
- The experiences shared by the respondents also revealed that they often face several types of shocks and stressors simultaneously.

*The most important shocks and stressors - according to the respondents - are:*

- *Illness (24%)*
- *Death (22%)*
- *Drought (19%)*
- *Hurricanes (7%)*

*65% of the respondents were affected by death, illness and drought.*

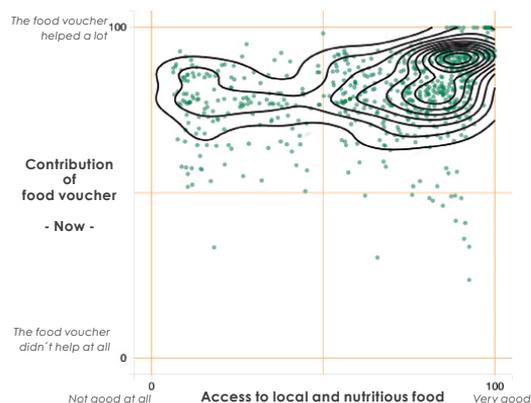
Figure 29: Pathway dynamic - ALL respondents



If people were not able to recover from one shock, once they are hit by another one, at the end, they will face a collapsing trajectory and end up more and more vulnerable.

- Despite the difficult situations, the respondents experienced **positive results** with regard to the **access to local and nutritious food** as well as **diversified food**. It can then be deduced that these results are mainly related to the food voucher.

Figure 35: Access to local and nutritious food and food voucher contribution



### Rather positive impact in participants' well-being with medians:

- Access to local and nutritious food (0.77)
- Mutual respect (0.75)
- Intra family relations (0.72)
- Access to diversified food (0.67)
- Social cohesion (0.68)

- However, the shocks and stressors mentioned by the respondents negatively affected other aspects of their development, such as **income** and the **ability to help others**. In addition, their **physical well-being** was valuated slightly negative.
- The high incidence of illness and death related shocks is also caused by **poor public health policies**. Numerous stories refer to the impossibility to **pay the hospital fees and medicine**. The economic costs to face illness or to appropriately bury their deceased family member often implies that the respondents are not able to pay their **school fees** that is absorbed indirectly by the food voucher. The gap between the highly vulnerable population and those who have more opportunities will become deeper and deeper and will raise more inequities and likely more social conflicts.
- These challenges should be approached not only by international humanitarian aid programs, but through reforms of **public health and education policies** and their incremental implementation. For example, establishing new priorities in the annual public budget and addressing the problem of corruption at all levels. It is clear that it will be a huge challenge for any government of such an impoverished<sup>1</sup> country - along its history - to assume its role as a duty bearer<sup>2</sup>, but it is crucial in the advancement of sustainable development.
- Additionally, the increasing influence of **climate change** has to be taken into account. According to the Global Peace Index 2019<sup>3</sup>, *climate change "amplifies the risks of breakdowns in peacefulness by acting as a threat multiplier.... climate pressures adversely impact resource availability, affect population dynamics, and strain societal institutions, which affect socioeconomic and political stability"*.

*Poor public education, health and food security policies increase inequities and compromises the country's future.*

### The food voucher

- had a very positive impact in family's lives,
- contributed indirectly to education, health, savings and livelihoods.

## Contribution and added value of the Kore Lavi food voucher

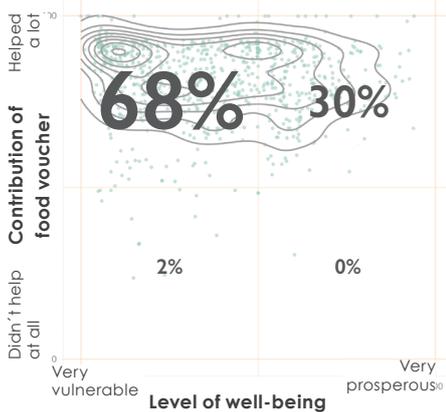
- The food voucher had a very **positive impact** and helped a lot during each key moment: before the shock or stressor affected the respondent, immediately after, sometime after and now.
- In the different stories that were shared, a certain number of respondents mentioned that they have no other means to ensure their food security - other than the Kore Lavi food vouchers.
- The food voucher has been especially important at the present moment as the recovery process from the shock or stressor is very slow.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Human Development Index 2018, Haiti held position number 168 from 189.

<sup>2</sup> See also Articles 19 and 20 of the Haitian amended Constitution (1987) about the right to health, education and food.

<sup>3</sup> Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Peace Index 2019. <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2019/06/GPI-2019-web003.pdf>

**Figure 47:**  
Level of well-being and food voucher contribution in % - Now



- 98% of the respondents said that the food vouchers currently help them rather a lot.
- With regard to the food vouchers **indirect contribution**, it is important to highlight that 59% of respondents used the money they saved to **pay school fees** and 28% to pay **medical fees**. 36% save it in their **Village Saving and Loans Association (VSLA)**. Yet, there is also an emerging group that used the money to **invest in agricultural endeavors** and **start-up income generating activities**.

The food vouchers contribute indirectly to:

- Payment of school fees
- Payment of medical fees

“More than 2.6 million Haitians in rural areas are now food insecure and the prospects for the coming months are not favorable.”

OCHA, June 2019

- The urgent need of programs like Kore Lavi was recently confirmed by OCHA as they estimate that more than 2.6 million Haitians in rural areas are now food insecure.

## Resources, coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies

With regard to the personal, social, physical and financial resources as well as the ecosystem services that were helpful for the respondents to cope with the shocks and stressors they faced, the study found the following:

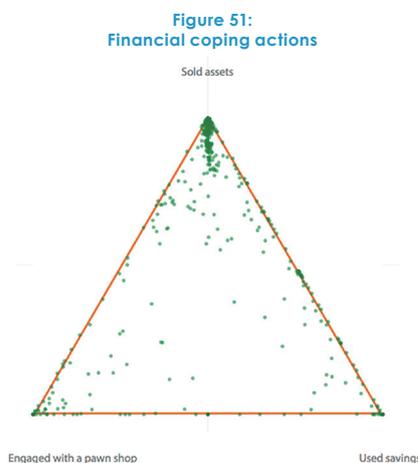
- When comparing the three main types of assets (personal, social and physical-financial resources), it could be observed that especially vulnerable respondents tended to rely on **social resources**.
- The support of **Kore Lavi partners** has been highly appreciated, followed by **family** and **community** support, while the support provided by governmental institutions and other local and international organizational was not perceived as helpful. The assessment revealed that the Kore Lavi program has been a very important resource for the respondents in overcoming the difficult situations they faced. At the same time, these results raise the question about people’s food security once the Kore Lavi program ends.
- The most helpful **financial resources** to cope with the shocks and stressors that the respondents faced were the food vouchers (88%) and informal loans (41%).
- The **ecosystem services** that have been more helpful to cope were timber, firewood or fiber in 48% of the cases, but also freshwater (26%) and medicinal plants (21%).
- About the relative usefulness of three key elements of **human agency** - (1) dreams, (2) attitudes and (3) knowledge and skills - the majority of the respondents found the use of knowledge and skills very helpful. Based on literature about psychological resilience, it can be deduced that a combination of the three elements should be addressed to increase people’s resilience.

The Kore Lavi program was a very important resource to cope with shocks and stressors:

- Kore Lavi partners were the most selected social actors and their support highly appreciated.
- 88% of respondents selected the food voucher as the most helpful financial resource.
- 48% of respondents used timber, firewood or fiber to cope.

The assessment also identified the **actions** that the respondents took to **cope**, **adapt**, and **transform** their realities that are shaped by shocks and stressors.

- Generally, the respondents used more **negative coping mechanisms** that compromise their food security like eating less or less preferred meals per day (58%), reducing expenditures related to household needs (32%), producing charcoal (33%), reducing agriculture production area (20%) and livestock (19%) or selling assets. It was observed that the majority of respondents used coping actions that are related to the **reduction of food consumption**. These negative coping methods further stresses the high food insecurity, **re-enforcing the vicious circle of vulnerability**, as it affects their capacity to work, their health and their opportunities to generate income.
- 60% of the 790 respondents used at least one of the three coping actions: engaging with a pawn shop, **selling assets** and using savings. It can be observed in the graph, that a high number of respondents sold their assets to cope. This compromises their livelihoods because with each new shock or stressor they are losing more and more assets and they do not have the possibility to recover quickly enough to restock their assets.
- However, there are also **emerging positive practices** related to water harvesting practices, (25%), planting new crops (7%) or engaging in collective marketing (5%), among others that show up an increasing demand of agriculture and income-generating activities.
- 11% of the respondents mentioned **charcoal production** as their main income source, 33% used it to cope and/or adapt after facing the shock or stressor and 48% used timber, firewood or fiber.



**Several negative coping mechanisms compromise people’s food security and livelihoods.**

**Emerging practices related to water harvesting practices and livelihood.**

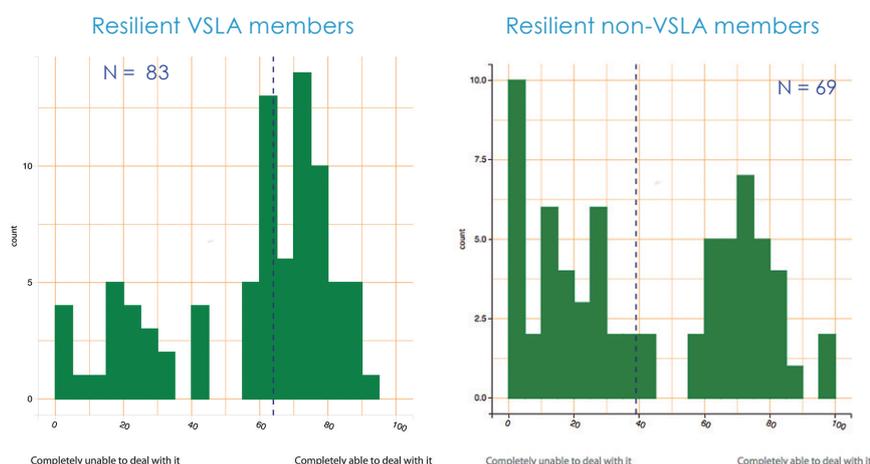
**Charcoal production was the most used coping action.**

Considering the urgent challenge to mitigate climate change, it is advisable to identify interventions that addresses people’s immediate needs **and** strategic long-term solutions based on a sustainable development perspective.

## Difference between VSLA and non-VSLA members

All the components and elements of the resilience analytical framework were compared to identify the difference between Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) and non-VSLA members.

**Figure 91: Preparedness for the future of resilient VSLA and non-VSLA members**



**Resilient VSLA members feel much better prepared to deal with similar situations in the future, than resilient non-VSLA members.**

**Median:**

- Resilient VSLA: 64.44
- Resilient non-VSLA: 39.29

- The study identified that 22% of VSLA members followed resilient pathways versus 16% of non VSLA respondents. In almost all the signifier questions, there were found **small differences between both groups**, but not as much as it was initially expected by the Kore Lavi team.
- Nevertheless, we found **important differences between resilient and vulnerable VSLA and non VSLA respondents**, which confirms the relevance of these type of saving groups.
- The **motivations to participate or not participate in VSLA** give important insights to be considered for the methodology of future interventions. Those who are members said that they can address other household needs (56%), improve their income (51%), have access to other program benefits (46%) or have unprecedented access to credits (29%). Those beneficiaries who do not participate mentioned as main reasons that they believe that their income does not allow them to do savings (62%) and 19% do not want to be bothered when they cannot pay.

---

*Participating in a VSLA makes a difference.*

*Resilient and vulnerable respondents who participate in a VSLA feel better prepared to deal with similar situations in the future.*

---

## Support demanded for the final program phase

For the transition phase of the Kore Lavi program (June - September 2019), 71% of respondents prefer **small grants to start-up income-generating activities** and 69% want to continue receiving the **food voucher**.

17% would like to join the VSLA and 15% prefer being provided with agricultural inputs.

---

*The most demanded support for the final program phase:*

- *Small grants to start-up income-generating activities (71%)*
  - *Food vouchers (69%)*
  - *Integration in VSLA (17%)*
- 

## General conclusions

In addition to the previous reflections based on the findings and the narratives, the following can be deduced:

- The Kore Lavi program addresses a highly vulnerable part of the population in the 5 departments.
- The interventions - mainly regarding the food voucher - signified a very important contribution to the respondents' food security and the end of the program is even perceived a "major shock" because the people are still not able to guarantee the basic food security on their own. The respondents expressed a high uncertainty about what might happen after Kore Lavi ends.
- The food voucher directly contributed to food security and indirectly contributed to education and health; which should have been assumed by the government. These are human rights also integrated into the Haitian Constitution. Not attending to these basic needs and rights affects the current situation of an important part of Haiti's population and compromises as well the future of the country.
- Women are more vulnerable than men; respondents with a higher educational level tend to be more resilient. Revising all types of coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies and the differences between women/men, VSLA/non-VSLA members as well as resilient/vulnerable respondents will allow CARE and USAID to design more customized and adaptable interventions in the future.
- Haiti faces multiple shocks and stressors - mainly man-made - which means that there is a very high likelihood that the population segment of very vulnerable people will increase, as was mentioned in the recent report from OCHA.

# Recommendations

Considering that Haiti is the poorest country of the Western hemisphere and one of the most exposed to natural disasters and climate change related events, there are multiple challenges to face. Before the recommendations will be posed, it is important to connect resilience with sustainable development.

*“Sustainable development is defined as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (UNGA, 1987: 43).*

*Resilient development enables people, socioeconomic and environmental systems to ‘cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation’ (IPCC, 2014a: 1,772).*

*Development needs to include both; it cannot be sustainable if it is not resilient”<sup>4</sup> (UNDP, May 2019)*

---

**Development needs to include both - sustainable and resilient development -; it cannot be sustainable if it is not resilient.**

**And interventions to build resilience need to be sustainable.**

---

Resilience with all its dimensions - physical, psychological, economic, social and ecological - need to be taken into account in development programs. At the same time interventions to build resilience must be sustainable.

Based on the results of this resilience assessment, some general recommendations are for future program design and implementation.

- **Livelihoods** need to be built and/or strengthened. It has been a constant demand and it seems to be a more effective way to achieve sustainable results related to food security. The way to build livelihoods and to foster income-generating activities should be designed according to the capabilities and characteristics of different segments of the vulnerable population.
- **VSLA** are important to cope and adapt. Their scope and impact can be improved even more, for example, taking into consideration the insights about motivations and constraints related to VSLA participation. At the individual level, it means, for example, to foster income generation but also to approach the belief system related to certain values or paradigms such as “I don’t have enough money to save.”
- Considering the Haitian political context, it is important to foster practices related to **inclusive dialogue, conflict transformation, transparency, participation and democratic practices** starting with program interventions like the **VSLA** and as well as fostering **advocacy** in alliance with other stakeholders and **including the vulnerable people’s voices**.
- Building resilience must consider the recovery and sustainability of unpriced **ecosystem services** and create awareness and acknowledgment of humans’ dependence on the ecosystems’ support. Haiti’s vulnerable population better preparation to manage **long-lasting droughts** with **water harvesting practices**, drought-resistant crops, alternative income-generating sources, soil and watershed restoration. The charcoal production challenge should be approached in a sustainable way.
- Development programs that include a resilience approach need to **distinguish** between **negative and positive coping and adaptive mechanisms**. Some coping actions or adaptive responses may be short-term and/or individual “solutions,” but will increase the problem from a **long-term, cross-scale and sustainable development perspective**.

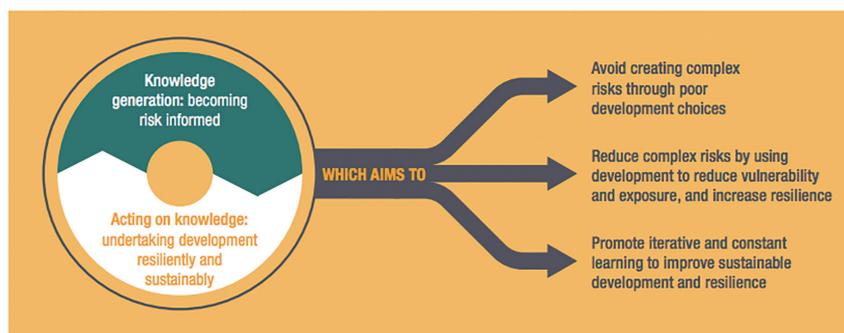
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4 See Literature and other sources: UNDP, May 2019

- **Resilience and sustainability** have to **go hand-in-hand**. Each kind of development programs needs to be aware of this relationship and choose carefully the interventions to be implemented.
- People may cope and remain resilient up to a certain  **tipping point**. What might happen beyond this threshold in terms of abrupt changes and regime shift is unpredictable. The main shocks and stressors need to be addressed urgently; otherwise, the current unsustainable situation might trigger even more instability and conflicts in the future.
- Navigating in such a complex world where development organizations have to face a combination of influences of exogenous shocks and endogenous changes requires a high level of **adaptive governance** at all levels and in all sectors. This is often the hardest task to achieve and at the same time one of the most important ones.
- Successful implementation requires **Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) thinking** which is defined as “a mental model or world view that views Social-Ecological Systems (SES) as CAS and appreciates the resulting implications for management.”<sup>5</sup> Future programs should continue to strengthen the capacities of adaptive governance at multiple scales.
- This resilience assessment gives us many insights, some of which confirm our assumptions, others which surprise and raise new learning questions and additional “black boxes” that need to be explored further. As Biggs, et al., remarks, “knowledge of social-ecological systems is always partial and incomplete.” Enhancing resilience of social-ecological systems with emphasis on the most vulnerable populations must be supported by **continuous learning processes** that include: processes of experimentation and monitoring, knowledge co-production and collaboration, long-term monitoring including slow variables and feedbacks, diverse participation, appropriate facilitation, sufficient financial and human resources and social networking.

The figure<sup>6</sup> below summarizes the opportunities and challenges of a risk-informed development that approaches resilience and sustainability based on appropriate knowledge generation.

**Figure 96: Risk-informed development and its core aims**



Source: © Nadin and Opitz-Stapleton.

*Combine the people’s immediate needs to face shocks and stressors with strategic long-term solutions based on a sustainable development perspective.*

*Food security programming in general should go beyond assistance to contribute to sustainable and resilience development combining:*

- *Humanitarian assistance (food vouchers)*
- *Saving groups like VSLA*
- *Sustainable livelihood strategies*
- *Inclusive dialogue and conflict transformation*
- *Advocacy and capacity building related to public policies which include sustainability and resilience.*

Last but not least, we would like to encourage CARE and its partners to **spread the 790 voices** to which we had the opportunity to listen. Each story is an important entry point to **broaden the understanding of food security and resilience of the most vulnerable populations in Haiti**. They deserve the **use of the knowledge** built on the experiences they shared with us.

5 Biggs, Reinette; Schlüter, Maja; Schoon, Michael L.; *Principles for Building Resilience. Sustaining Ecosystem Services in Social-Ecological Systems.* Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom; 2015.

6 UNDP: Sarah Opitz-Stapleton, Rebecca Nadin, Jan Kellelt, Margherita Calderone, Adriana Quevedo, Katie Peters and Leigh Mayhew; *Risk-informed development. From crisis to resilience;* May 2019

# 1. About the resilience assessment



# 1.1. Background and context of this assessment

This resilience assessment of the Kore Lavi program is based on the following background and context<sup>1</sup>.

Several **development organizations** like CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Oxfam, Cordaid, Rikolto and others increasingly recognize the **complexity of the contexts** in which they operate and the needs to better understand the experiences of project participants as means to improve project design, implementation and outcomes.

Recent publications (Anderson et al, 2012; Barder, 2014; Blum, 2014; Watts et al, 2003; World Bank, 2014) have emphasized the need for a fundamental transformation in the way that development organizations deliver aid in a complex context. Ramalingam (2013) argues for a **more systemic, adaptive, networked and dynamic approach** requiring those engaged in the delivery of aid to **listen, learn, and adapt** their thinking thereby enabling the emergence of co-created interventions and solutions.

In addition, **USAID** recognizes that **complexity-aware monitoring** is distinct from performance monitoring as practiced by the agency, and is intended to complement performance monitoring when used for complex aspects of projects and strategies, and that its consideration may strengthen practice.

Complex aspects of strategies or projects are those where cause and effect relationships are poorly understood, thereby making it difficult to identify solutions and draft detailed implementation plans in advance. Expected results may also require refinement and revision as strategies and projects unfold. Projects (or parts of projects) that rely heavily on adaptive management to effectively steer in dynamic contexts, and projects that seek to influence social change or innovate to discover solutions are likely candidates for complexity-aware monitoring (USAID, 2016). Also, topics like resilience, behavior change, gender and governance are highly complex topics that need to be understood.

As part of its mandate, the **Kore Lavi program** has developed and established a **voucher-based social safety net model** in close collaboration with the Haitian Government – through the **Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MAST)**. That safety net model targets the bottom 10% of the poorest households of the program's intervention areas that were identified via a rigorous targeting process using the HDVI (Household Deprivation and Vulnerability Index) tool. The social safety net members benefit – on a monthly basis – a \$25 USD voucher value that allows them to get access to local and nutritious food.

The program also placed a special emphasis on linking safety net beneficiaries to complementary services via **Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA)**. Because of this, around 50% of the social safety net beneficiaries have participated in integrated VSLA activities – allowing them to get access to low-rate credit. Integrated VSLA activities combine savings and income generation to build financial resiliency and financial opportunity. A considerable percentage of those beneficiaries are now shareholders of VSLAs that have emerged into profitable collective enterprises.

At this stage, the program strives to understand how the safety net participants cope with unexpected shocks and stressors as a result of the program's assistance and how the program may or may not have had an impact on household choices, decisions, and use of resources.

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## Development requires

- *Systemic, adaptive, networked and dynamic approach*
  - *Listening, learning, adapting*
  - *Complexity-aware monitoring*
  - *Emergence of co-created interventions and solutions.*
- 

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## Kore Lavi program includes:

- *Voucher-based social safety net model*
  - *Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA)*
  - *Institutionalization*
- 

<sup>1</sup> Based on the Terms of Reference provided by CARE Haiti.

## 1.2. Rationale of the study<sup>2</sup>

The rationale of the resilience study is

- to **explore the impacts of the food voucher safety net activities on the living conditions of the poor households** and
- to better **understand the added-value of the program's contribution** on the lives of the targeted beneficiaries.

Given the ambitious nature of the Kore Lavi program to **increase the resilience to shocks among rural and vulnerable households** – especially at time of phase-out transition – it is desirable to understand more about how the program has had an **impact on the beneficiaries**, particularly the most vulnerable among them.

This is a very complicated task and therefore requires robust and rigorous methods. For the sake of transparency, objectivity, and reliability, the resilience assessment was led by an independent consultant with proven experiences in similar endeavors.

A complexity-aware and narrative-based research tool called SenseMaker that comes with software packages for design, collection and analysis is proposed to be used for the study. According to experts in the field of evaluation, "this method recognizes that narratives may allow better access to contextualized knowledge and interpretation by enabling respondents to analyze and give meaning to their own narratives" (Snowden & Boone, 2010). SenseMaker is one of a few emerging M&E options to deal with complex situations and interventions, that are non-linear, multi-actor, unpredictable, and long-term (Gujit, 2016).

The study was coordinated by a SenseMaker experienced consultant team and the process in the field was conducted by Haitian facilitators who have been trained on the SenseMaker methodology which differs from the traditional M&E tools like surveys or focus groups. The collection phase was coordinated by the Kore Lavi team and the primary analysis and interpretation of data and narratives was developed together with the consultant.

The **Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MAST)** and the **National Food Security Coordination (CNSA)** have been involved during the process since the beginning.

### Rationale of the study

- *Impact of the food voucher safety net*
- *Added-value of the program's contribution*



### Kore Lavi partners

- *Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MAST)*
- *National Food Security Coordination (CNSA)*

<sup>2</sup> Based on the Terms of Reference provided by CARE Haiti.

# 1.3. Purpose and learning questions

## Purpose

The main purposes of this study are:

1. A stronger understanding of the **current resilience and food security situations of the most vulnerable program beneficiaries** with a particular focus on those not participating in VSLA with an emphasis on learning more about their coping strategies.
2. **Introduce government counterparts to SenseMaker** and build their understanding of an innovative complexity-aware M&E tool.

## Learning questions

CARE/Kore Lavi expects that the following learning questions will be addressed as a result of the assessment:

1. What are the most important **shocks and stressors** that program participants are facing, and **how does it affect their abilities, opportunities, and capacities** to move towards **well-being and sustainable individual development**?
2. What **resources** do the households have to deal with these shocks and stresses?
3. How has Kore Lavi's **food voucher impacted** the household's coping strategies with these shocks and stressors?
4. What is the **difference having participated or not in the VSLA**?

Based on the discussions during the preparation and design phase, the Kore Lavi team added new questions to deepen the understanding about the topic of the assessment:

- Which **added value** did the **food voucher** bring to the participants' living conditions?
- What did they do with the money they saved receiving the voucher?
- How did they **cope with the shocks and stressors** and what might be useful strategies for the transition process and the future?
- What's the **difference in having participated or not in the VSLA**?
  - VSLA participants are more resilient than non-participants?
  - Compare the resources, coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies both groups used to face the shocks and stressors.
  - What are the **reasons** that the non-VSLA participants decided **not to participate in VSLA**?
- What would be the best intervention, the **best package to facilitate a smooth transition** and to enable participants to continue on their own? What would be useful for them? What would be the best way to provide the package?
- How to **combine the different components** (voucher, legalizing VSLA, advocacy...)?

---

### **Purpose:**

**Stronger understanding of:**

- **Resilience**
  - **Food security**
  - **Difference between Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA) participants and non participants.**
-

## 1.4. Methodology

As also suggested by Care Haiti, the consultancy team used the SenseMaker approach to facilitate this assessment. Thus, this is the **first Resilience Assessment** known for **using the SenseMaker approach in Haiti**.

### SenseMaker approach

SenseMaker represents an **approach to narrative research** and incorporates elements of a scientific and conceptual background that is **rooted in complexity, cognitive science as well as in the natural and social sciences**.

Narrative research allows for capturing data on key actors in a social system, such as **behaviors, perceptions, attitudes and relationships** and allows for the identification of seemingly insignificant **patterns that can potentially contribute to disproportionate changes and effects**.

The SenseMaker approach **combines qualitative material (narratives) with a quantitative framework** while also offering methods common to conventional surveys, such as representative sampling and hypothesis testing. Its focus is on **common high-level patterns**, as well as **weak signals** of threats and successes. A shift in these patterns and signals indicates a shift in the patterns of individual behaviors, as well as in the structure of the system governing these behaviors and, hence, a transformation in the normative context and formal and informal systems and structures associated with them.

**Narrative research** holds that the best way to understand the perspectives, beliefs and dispositions influencing decision-making and well-being is to understand the actual decisions being made, not merely the trends surrounding them. SenseMaker captures large volumes of these decisions in the form of narratives. Unlike more traditional qualitative methods, this approach helps to deal with sensitive topics by avoiding direct questions.

It also goes beyond the usual qualitative interview approach, which relies on researcher interpretation, by **allowing respondents to code (signify) their own narratives**. This helps unpack the cultural, social and even political elements of the issue without the overlay of researcher subjectivity. In a short conversation, SenseMaker also generates quantitative data that can be statistically analyzed.

*“SenseMaker has **powerful features** that make it different from other research, monitoring and evaluation methods because it uses a **story about a specific and real experience as an entry point** and **enables respondents to interpret their own experiences with a so-called “self-signification” process** which reduces external evaluator or researcher intermediation. That requires from respondents to employ **nuanced thought processes** and promotes at the same time **reflection about their own experiences**.*

*It allows inclusion of many **voices at scale** and facilitates exploratory analysis through **visual data patterns** that makes it possible to examine **strong patterns** as well as **weak signals** and even go back to the narratives themselves to enable a better interpretation and contextualization of the observed patterns.*

*Additionally, SenseMaker enables **in-depth structured analysis** for deeper investigation. Instead of narrow, predefined targets, stories can help generate more grounded and nuanced indicators of success.”<sup>3</sup>*

This innovative approach has been used with a wide range of respondents in a wide and diverse range of settings.

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### SenseMaker...

#### **the learning power of listening**

*SenseMaker is a powerful way to hear directly from project participants, revealing the world through their eyes.*

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### SenseMaker features:

- **Combines qualitative and quantitative data.**
  - **Visualizes strong patterns and weak signals.**
  - **Uses a story as an entry point and enables respondents to interpret their own experiences with a “self-signification” process.**
  - **Respondents employ nuanced thought process.**
  - **Allows to listen to many voices at scale.**
  - **Enables in-depth structured analysis.**
  - **Helps to generate more grounded and nuanced indicators of success.**
- 

3 *Guijt, Irene, Gottret, María Verónica; Hanchar, Anna; Deprez, Steff; Muckenhirn, Rita. The learning power of listening: Sensemaker in practice. Handbook for social change practitioners. CRS-OXFAM. Forthcoming in 2019.*

## SenseMaker® instrument

A SenseMaker instrument is a result of careful design efforts that incorporates:

- Existing knowledge and evidence about a topic (academic publication, theoretical frameworks);
- Organizational knowledge and expertise (theory of change, previous studies, knowledge and experience);
- Stakeholder theory and expectations.

The collection tool, often referred to as a '**signification framework**', contains a prompt question, a set of signification questions (triads, sliders, stones, multiple choice questions), a demographic section, and a section completed by collectors before and/or after the interview.

A typical data capture process includes the following steps:

- Step 1. Respondents' memory is triggered to situate respondents in an experience they or someone they know have had, seen, or heard about and that relates to the field of interest;
- Step 2. Respondents share a narrative associated with that experience, thus bringing it into working memory;
- Step 3. After the narrative is shared respondents are asked to code (add meaning, self- signify) their narratives by responding to several predefined closed-end questions. Some of the questions require respondents to situate the meaning of the story within a specific shape (e.g., triangle). This categorizes meaning and takes away the need to manually code data. Respondents are then asked to respond to several multiple-choice questions, including questions about themselves (demographics) and about their narrative.

In Sensemaker, **narratives** are evoked by a predesigned, open-ended question called a prompt question. In this evaluation, narratives captured respondents' experiences (past and present) and their perceptions of their experiences and current situation. To prompt respondents to share, they were all asked the same open-ended question, the so-called **prompt question**:

*"Think of a difficult situation that has affected your well-being - relating to the possibility of acquiring food or goods during the last three years.*

*Tell us what happened? Why did this happen? What did this mean for you? What did you do? What were the results? "*

Narratives were collected by facilitators through direct interviews in each project location, carried out in a quiet setting selected by the beneficiaries themselves for security and privacy reasons. Before each collection process began, facilitators explained that the data collection was voluntary, anonymous and that confidentiality would be maintained.

After respondents had shared their narratives, they provided additional information and insights by answering predesigned follow-up questions about the story they had shared. These questions are called signifiers. This self-signification process is a way for people to make sense of their own experiences, reducing evaluator or researcher intermediation, a feature of many qualitative methods. By using these signifiers, respondents themselves interpret and make sense of their own experiences. In other words, respondents decide what the experience means to them, providing a primary interpretation of the story and coding it.

The four types of **signifiers** used to facilitate the self-interpretation of the **narratives** encourage participants to reflect before responding—a substantial difference from conventional polls or surveys.

The four types of signifiers are:

- **Slider:** A type of signifier or follow-up question in which respondents are asked to signify what happened in the experience they shared by indicating where that experience falls along a continuum between two extremes.

---

**The self-signification process** is a way for people to make sense of their own experiences, reducing evaluator or researcher intermediation.

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### **Prompt question:**

**Think of a difficult situation that has affected your well-being - related to the possibility of acquiring food or goods during the last three years.**

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- **Slider with stones:** A type of signifier or follow-up question in which respondents position 'stones', representing different elements, perspectives or options, along a continuum between two extremes. By doing so, they make a comparative assessment of the different elements or perspectives.
- **Triad:** A type of follow-up question in which respondents signify the relative importance of three predefined elements in their experience by indicating where in a triangle their experience lies in relation to the three elements.
- **Canvas with stones:** A type of signifier in which respondents place different 'stones' representing different elements, perspectives or options, on a two-way matrix of interrelated continuums, representing different dimensions of a concept, belief or outcome. By doing so, they can compare various elements in two dimensions.

---

#### Signification framework:

- *Prompt question*
  - *Signifier MCQ*
  - *Sliders*
  - *Sliders with stones*
  - *Canvas or field with stones*
  - *Triads*
  - *Social demographic MCQ*
- 

This approach lends itself to the **Kore Lavi program assessment** process because it is uniquely geared to provide insights about **resilience, behavior related to food security**, while also probing perspectives on **specific interventions**.

For data visualization purposes, demographics and other multiple-choice questions serve as tags and enable color coding and **filtering of data** (e.g. by gender, age, or role of other parties in the stories shared) for deeper analysis and better understanding of issues and meaning for specific subsets of the population.

Narratives can also be analyzed using **text analysis**, and such analysis can surface and help to explain dominant and minority viewpoints amongst key populations.

Stories and self-signification will be facilitated with interactive exercises and collected on tablets with the help of a collector/facilitator. **Collection** was made offline and synchronized with the server automatically once the collection device is back online. Data is then securely stored on a Cognitive Edge server and can be accessed, downloaded in .csv and .sms (SenseMaker® software) formats, imported into third party software for statistical analysis and visualization, or analyzed in real time if needed. Using the above signifiers, the evaluation facilitated the self-interpretation of the narratives on the actions that respondents took to cope with their situation, their responses to adapt, and their strategies to integrate into host communities.

## Sample

The study population was defined as the Kore Lavi safety net beneficiaries, the most vulnerable population, who receive support by the safety net component in the five departments mentioned below (n=16,997).

These beneficiaries are distributed across five (5) different **geographic zones** called **departments**: Southeast, Centre, Upper Artibonite, Northwest, West (La Gonave Island). It was important to include all of them as they may face different types of shocks and stressors and also use different coping strategies to face them. A random sample of the beneficiary list was taken.

**Table 1: Beneficiaries and sample size by department**

Department	Active beneficiaries	Sample list (6%)
South-East	3,472	208
Center	4,904	294
North-West	4,017	241
Artibonite	2,959	178
West	1,645	99
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,997</b>	<b>1,020</b>

As with any method, SenseMaker as well requires a standard sampling procedure based on the desired confidence level and the accepted error margin. For this study, a 6% sample size was used - which was representative enough - to allow us to make inferences to the population with a 95% level of confidence and an error margin of 3.5%. The final sample was made up of 790 respondents.

# 1.5. Resilience Analytical Framework

## The sciences behind resilience

Resilience is an interdisciplinary and holistic concept that has been addressed by different sciences.

- material resilience (physical)
- physical resilience (health)
- economic resilience
- psychological and emotional resilience,
- social resilience (sociology, anthropology, politics)
- ecological resilience.

Often these approaches had been treated separately, but resilience is a very complex topic and any assessment or intervention should consider all of them in a holistic way.

In recent years, resilience has emerged as being closely linked to climate change as climate-related events are increasing, but socio-political conflicts have also received special attention.

## Resilience concepts from different perspectives

The following concepts give us an idea of the approach to resilience from different angles and its evolution over the past few years.

*The ability of individuals, households, communities, countries and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in a way that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth. (USAID)*

*Resilience is the ability of individuals, communities or systems facing disasters or crises to withstand damage and recover quickly. (FAO)*

*Resilience goes beyond the ability to recover from shocks, and includes addressing the context that makes people vulnerable, including reducing the drivers of risks such as those emissions that cause climate change. (CARE)*

*Resilience is defined as “the ability of individuals, households, communities and higher-level systems to plan, cope, learn to adapt and transform their systems and structures in response to shocks and stresses in order to follow resilient and prosperous paths that contribute to integral human development”. (CRS, 2016)*

*The “capacity that insures stressors and negative shocks does not have adverse long-term consequences for development” (Costas et al., 2014a, p. 6).*

*Resilience can be considered as “a capacity that prevents individuals, households and communities from falling below a normative level defined for a given development outcome (e. g. food security, poverty level, well-being)” after a shock or stress. (Ibid., p. 7).*

*“The ability of a system - whether a forest, a city or an economy - to cope with change and to continue to develop; to withstand shocks and disruptions (such as climate change or financial crises) and to use these events to catalyze renewal and innovation. (Stockholm Resilience Centre).*

*“Resilience is the ability to cope with change and to continue to develop.”*

*“The ability to adapt to changing circumstances, either by maintaining a global form (self-regulation) or by self-organization in a new form.” (Embracing complexity)*

---

### Resilience:

*The ability of individuals, households, communities, countries and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in a way that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.*

USAID

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---

### Resilience...

*Goes beyond the ability to recover from shocks, and includes addressing the context that makes people vulnerable, including reducing the drivers of risk as those emissions that cause climate change.*

CARE

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### Resilience:

*The ability of a system - whether a forest, a city or an economy - to cope with change and to continue to develop; to withstand shocks and disruptions (such as climate change or financial crises) and to use these events to catalyze renewal and innovation.*

Stockholm Resilience Centre

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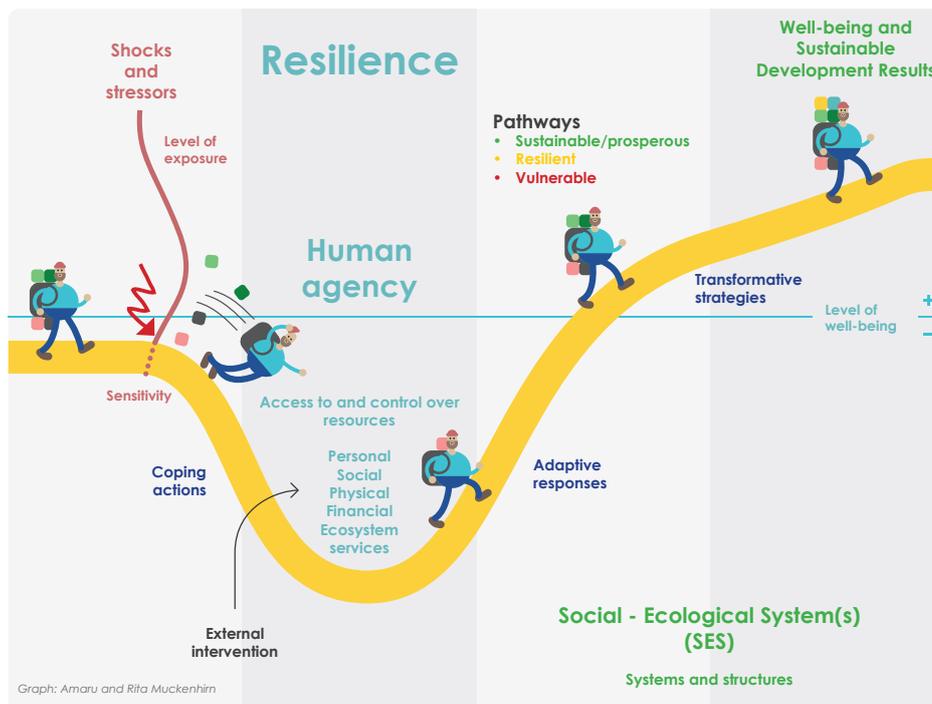
In order to study and/or evaluate the concept of resilience, we dissected and unpacked it in its different components and elements. These provide us with the content for the framework questions of meaning.

The specific concepts will be introduced as the results are going to be presented.

## Components

The below graph unpacks the concept of resilience and describes in details the different resilience pathways.

**Figure 1: Resilience Analytical Framework**



Once a **shock or stressor** hits a person, household or community, their **well-being** depends on the **level of exposure** (frequency, magnitude or duration) and their **sensitivity**. These components influence how much they will be affected by the event and how steep they will fall.

Immediately after the shock, people try to **cope** with the shock, which may mean just taking action to survive and/or to overcome the difficult situation. Sometime after, once people begin to recover some stability, they start to **adapt** themselves to the new situation.

In order to get better prepared for the future, the households, but also communities and institutions need to implement **transformative strategies** with a long-term sustainability approach.

During this process people tend to follow different **pathways**, some of them are **resilient** ones, which means that people recover at least at the same level as before or do even better. Alternatively, they could withstand the shock without being affected and continue well and stable or even progressing.

Other people, depending on the type of shock, the level of exposure, their sensitivity and the **access to and control over resources** follow **vulnerable** pathways. Resources may be personal, social, physical or financial assets as well as ecosystem services. To understand people's resilience we need to identify the resources they already count on and which type of **external intervention** from governmental institutions, local or international NGO, etc. is needed and more effective.

The shocks or stressors and the actions people undertake influences their **well-being and sustainable development outcomes**.

People are also part of **social-ecological systems** that include formal **structures** like institutions, but also their **value and belief systems**.

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*The components of this Resilience Analytical Framework represent the foundation to design the data collection tool.*

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The collection tool was designed based on this analytical framework that has been continuously updated with new insights from literature and experiences gathered with other studies (see the corresponding references at the chapter "Literature and other sources").

The key findings presented in the following chapter are based on these components.

According to one of the institutional key documents<sup>4</sup>, CARE approaches resilience in the following way:

*"CARE and partners aim to strengthen especially women producers' capacities to deal with shocks and stresses, manage risks, and transform their lives in response to new hazards and opportunities. Simultaneously, CARE seeks with the programmatic framework "She feeds the World" to address the **underlying causes of vulnerability** of different groups of people, and **improve the social, economic and ecological systems and structures that support them.***

CARE's Resilience Guidance Note outlines how resilience goes beyond the ability to recover from shocks, and includes **addressing the context that makes people vulnerable**, including reducing the **drivers of risks such as those emissions that cause climate change.**

This includes four key capacities, for communities:

- **Anticipatory Capacity:** Increasing capacity to plan and adapt to shocks/stressors, through Community Based Adaptation approaches, including Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP);
- **Adaptive Capacity:** Improving adaptive capacity in climate resilient agriculture, and improving nonagricultural livelihood options to improve coping, both in the short term and long term;
- **Absorptive Capacity:** Building savings, stocks and using shock responsive agriculture (i.e. short cycle crops) to help households & communities absorb shocks;
- **Transformative Capacity:** Functional government safety-nets that provide opportunities for graduation, empowerment and more durable reduction in vulnerability."

Although the Resilience Analytical Framework uses some different terms, the concepts and elements are similar and had been included in the collection tool according to the specific Kore Lavi context.

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<sup>4</sup> CARE. She Feeds the World (SFTW): CARE's Programmatic Framework for Food & Nutrition Security; 4 June 2018

## 2. Key findings



## 2.1. Whose voices we are listening to

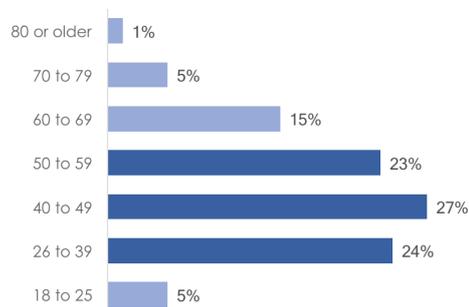
In order to better understand the voices behind the experiences to which we are listening, we will present the main **socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents**.

### 2.1.1. Gender, age and main household providers

It is worth noting that the Kore Lavi program mainly targets women. Thus, the study strived to understand the differences between men and women related to the way they cope, adapt and transform when facing shocks and stressors; as well as the outcomes of these events. This exercise has the potential to inform the design of future gender-sensitive programs and/or interventions.

790 program beneficiaries (including 571 women (72%) and 219 men (28%) participated in this assessment. From now on we will refer to them as **respondents**.

**Figure 2: Respondents by age range - All**



Related to the **age** range of respondents, we found the following: 74% of all 790 respondents are between 26 and 59 years old; only 5% are young people between 18 and 25 and 21% are 60 and older.

62% of women are between 26 and 59 years old, 6% are younger than 26 and 17% are 60 and older.

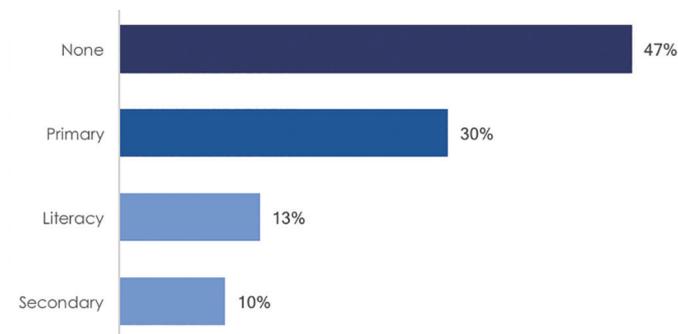
In the case of male respondents, it was found a very high percentage of men who are 60 and older: 33%

51% of 790 process respondents mentioned that a man is the **main household provider**.

### 2.1.2. Education

Generally speaking, the respondents' formal education level is very low.

**Figure 3: Respondents by education**



Respondents with some primary school level who have not attended any formal education since more than one decade can be considered under the category of functional illiteracy. Thus, it can be assumed that 90% of the respondents are illiterate and/or do not count on any formal education level: 47% of respondents with none formal education level, those who only write and read (13%) and those who attended some degree of primary school (30%).

#### **Respondents by gender**

- **72% women**
- **28% men**

#### **Respondents by age and gender**

- **33% of men**
  - **17% of women**
- are 60 or older**

#### **Households' main providers**

- **51% male main providers**
- **49% female main providers**

**60% of respondents have no formal education, which means that they do not go to school at all.**

- **63% of women**
- **53% of men**

Only one respondent counts on vocational education and none of them on university level.

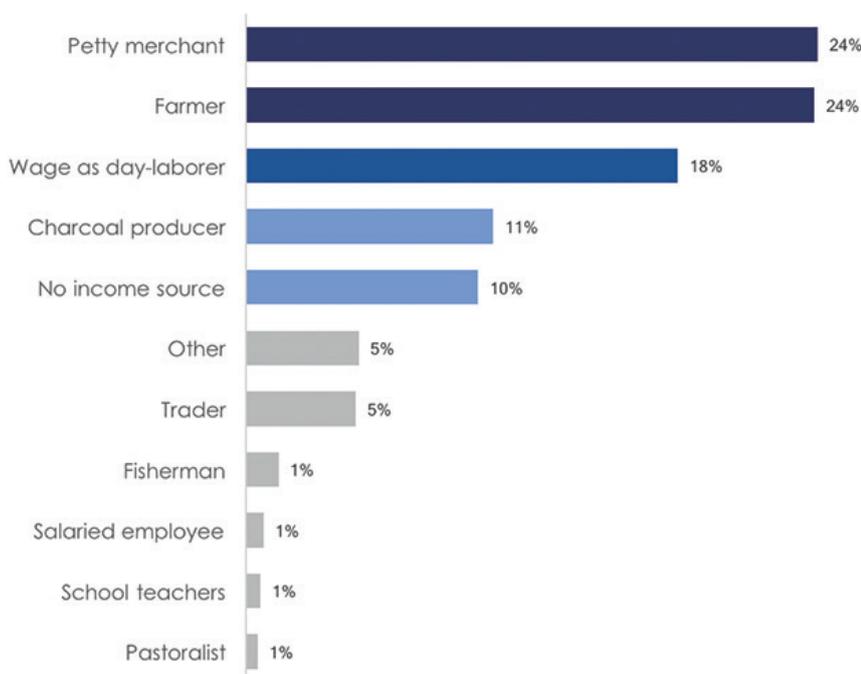
Compared with the national illiteracy rate that is nearly 40%, the extremely vulnerable populations have even higher rates, further hindering their development opportunities.

Programs that address this target group may need to consider interventions and methodologies that facilitate the participation of illiterate people, for example, at VSLA or other program components, and advocate for a deeper reform of the national education system.

### 2.1.3. Main income source

Related to the main income source, the 790 respondents indicated the

Figure 4: Respondents by main income source



**Farming as main income source for only 24% of respondents is relatively low considering that 80% of the respondents are living in rural areas.**

following:

In comparison with other mainly rural contexts, the percentage of petty merchant is quite high (24%) and even at the same level as the respondents who mentioned farming as the main income source.

18% of respondents are day-laborers and 11% mentioned the charcoal production as their main income source.

It also draws our attention that 10% of respondents chose "no income source".

It was also found in 38 entries marked "Others". It is important for future studies to consider other occupations the respondents mentioned: laundry (7), handicraft and carpentry (6), ironwork (4), masonry and painting (4), seamstress (2), motorcycle taxi (2). The study identified a huge variety of other income sources related to occupations like mining, florist, sailor, mechanic, guitarist, DJ, livestock breeding, radio host, saltshaker, weeding, and prostitution.

## 2.1.4. Geographic area

Despite the difficult political situation, the data collection process was conducted and completed within the defined timeframe.

The repartition of the sample (790) was based upon the department size and was organized as follows:

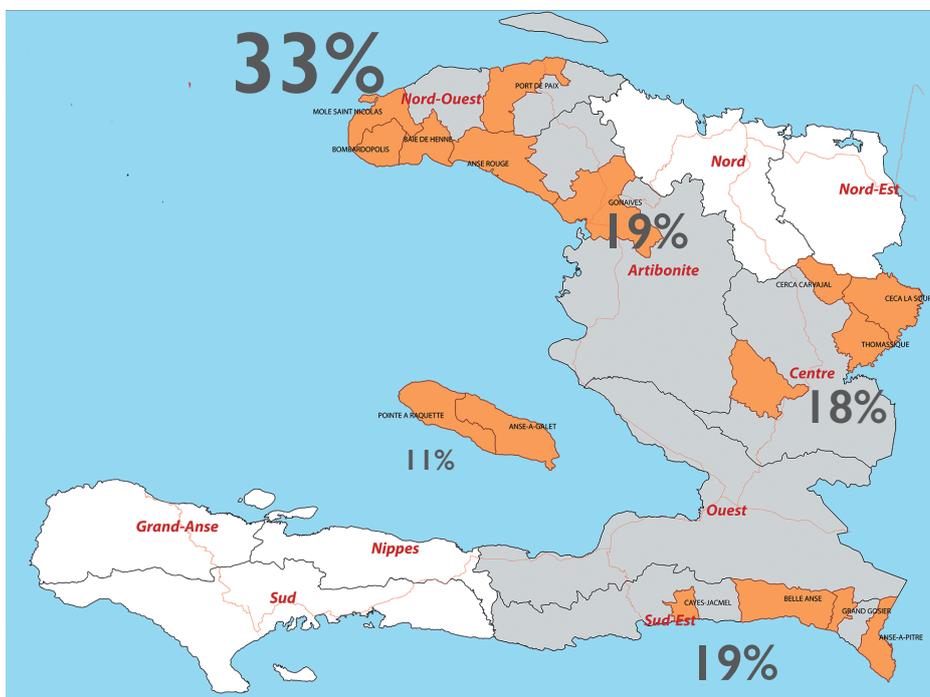
- 33% North-West (N=257)
- 19% South-East (N=152)
- 19% Upper Artibonite (N=150)
- 18% Center (N=141)
- 11% West: Island La Gonâve (N=90)

80% of respondents live in the rural areas and 20% in urban zones.

The below map visually describes the repartition of the simple. The orange spots represent the areas covered by the Kore Lavi Program.

**80% of respondents are living in rural areas**

Figure 5: Respondents by department



## 2.2. Shocks and stressors

The section summarizes the **concepts** of shocks and stressors and **key findings** about the type of **shocks and stressors**, the **level of exposure** the respondents had experienced and their degree of **sensitivity**.

### 2.2.1. Concepts

**Stressors** are long-term trends or pressures that undermine the stability of a system and increase vulnerability within it. Climate change or social conflicts are common examples of stressors. While **shocks** are external short-term deviations from long-term trends that have substantial negative effects on people's current state of well-being, level of assets, livelihoods, or safety, or their ability to withstand future shocks. For example a shock related to climate change may be an unpredictable or erratic rainfall, for a social conflict it can be a physical aggression by others or even death.

Examples for stressors:

- *Ecological stressors: climate change, prolonged drought, land degradation, watershed degradation, pest and diseases, deforestation, water contamination, water scarcity*
- *Economical stressors: price and market fluctuations, economic crisis, market variability, building in illegal and dangerous places, not complying with building codes*
- *Social stressors: social, religious or ethnic conflicts, insecurity*
- *Political stressors: poor governance, politics of vulnerability and disasters, governmental/political indifference, no support to relocate people, inability to respond/prepare/mitigate*

Examples for shocks:

*Drought, flood, cyclone, hurricane/typhoon, earthquake, tsunami, volcano eruption, price crisis, pest or disease, illness, accident, physical or emotional aggression, violent outbreaks, war, etc.*

---

*Stressors are long-term trends or pressures that undermine the stability of a system increasing the vulnerability within it.*

*Shocks are external short-term deviations from long-term trends with substantial negative effects people.*

---

### 2.2.2. Shocks and stressors faced by respondents

It was discovered that all the respondents faced a particular shock or stressor in their experiences. Further findings show that the most important shocks experienced by the respondents are categorized as follow:

- Illness (24%)
- Death (22%)
- Drought (19%)
- Hurricanes (7%)

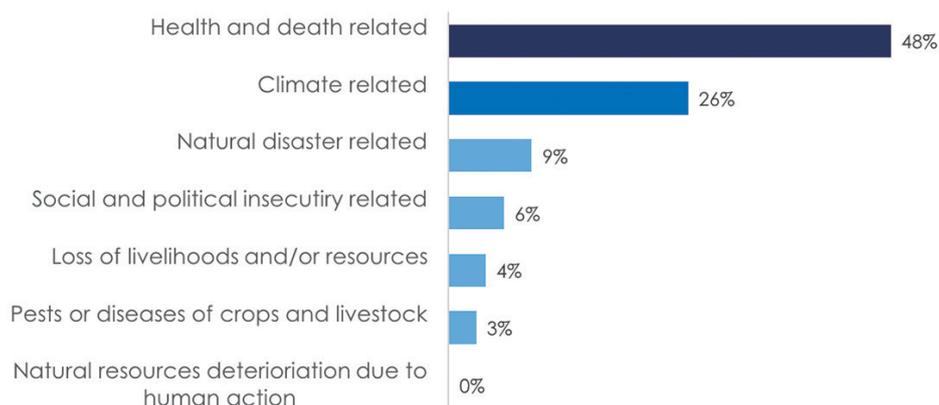
The shocks and stressors were grouped in the following categories:

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*The three most mentioned shocks - death, illness and drought - affected 65% of respondents.*

---

**Figure 6: Selected shocks and stressors per category**



**Health and death related** shocks and stressors affected **48%** of respondents.

- Illness (24%)
- Death (22%)
- Accident (3%)

**Climate related** shocks and stressors were the trigger of difficult situations for **26%** of respondents.

- Drought (19%)
- Floods (3%)
- Strong winds (3%)
- Unpredictable and erratic rainfalls (1%)
- Fire (1%)

**9%** of the 790 respondents mentioned **natural disaster** related shocks like:

- Hurricanes (7%)
- Earthquakes (2%)

**Social and political insecurity related** shocks and stressors were mentioned by **6%** of respondents:

- Family disintegration (4%)
- Earthquakes (2%)
- Insecurity, theft or other personal violence (1%)

Domestic violence, sexual abuse or violence, physical or emotional aggression by a third party, social conflict and country shutdown were not mentioned at all!

The following shocks were only mentioned by very few respondents: riots (4), political instability (2), armed conflict (2) and land ownership battle (1).

Only **4%** of respondents mentioned shocks related to the **loss of livelihoods and/or resources**:

- Loss of financial resources and/or physical goods (3%)
- Job loss (1%)

The following shocks were mentioned only by a few respondents: price volatility on the market (3) and inflation (1).

**3%** of respondents faced shocks related to **pests or diseases of crops and livestock**.

- Crop pests or diseases (2%)
- Livestock diseases (1%)

Crop damaged by animals and post-harvest losses were only mentioned by 1 participant respectively. Crop damaged by weeds was not selected.

**Natural resources deterioration due to human action** was only mentioned by 2 respondents related to the soil degradation.

Despite the national context, which has worsened social insecurity and political instability as well as the economic situation, the shocks and stressors related to these two categories - combined - represent only 10%. A reasonable explanation might be that the protests had been more focused in Port au Prince and the main cities of the country while the rural areas are not directly affected. Nevertheless, the economic impact increases the pressure especially for vulnerable respondents. It is important to keep in mind that the political conflict and gang violence are also reaching other departments. Programs should consider this reality when designing other interventions, for example, how to foster citizen's participation, dialogue and democratic practices through VSLA and/or other spaces about topics like food security and resilience.

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*Shocks and stressors per category:*

- *Health and death related: 48%*
  - *Climate related: 26%*
  - *Natural disaster related: 9%*
  - *Social and political insecurity related: 6%*
  - *Loss of livelihoods and/or resources: 4%*
  - *Pests or diseases of crops and livestock: 3%*
  - *Natural resources deterioration due to human action: 0%*
- 

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*It is also important to analyze why some types of shocks and stressors were not mentioned at all, like:*

- *Domestic violence*
  - *Sexual violence or violence*
  - *Physical or emotional aggression by a third party*
  - *Social conflict*
  - *Country shutdown*
-

The analysis of the **shocks by gender** shows that women are more affected by illness (27%) and death (24%) than men (16% respectively). However, men (33%) are more affected by droughts than women (14%). In the case of hurricanes, women are a little bit more affected (8%) than men (5%).

The following table disaggregates the **shocks and stressors by department**:

**Table 2: Shock incidence by department**

	Center N = 141 18%	North - West N = 257 33%	South-West N = 152 19%	Upper Artibonite N = 150 19%	West (Island La Gonâve) N = 90 11%
<b>Illness</b> N = 189 (24%)	<b>28%</b>	16%	23%	<b>30%</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Death</b> N = 172 (22%)	26%	<b>24%</b>	<b>26%</b>	12%	19%
<b>Drought</b> N = 152 (19%)	14%	21%	16%	27%	16%
<b>Hurricane</b> N = 56 (7%)	3%	16%	4%	2%	2%
<b>Other shocks</b> N = 221 (28%)	29%	23%	31%	29%	31%
<b>Total</b> N = 790 (100%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In addition to that, the study revealed the incidence of shocks and stressors in each department.

It was found that the respondents who faced death (35% of all), drought (35%) and hurricane (73%) in their experiences are more concentrated in the North-West. This department is much more affected by hurricanes than the others.

The respondents affected by illness were rather distributed in all departments except the Island Gonâve (15%): Upper Artibonite (24%), North-West (22%), Center (21%) and South-East (19%). Nevertheless North-West seems to be less affected by illness (22%) related to the proportion of respondents (33%) who participated in this study.

80% of respondents who faced death are living in Center (22%), North-West (35%) and South-East (23%).

62% of respondents who selected drought as the most important event they had to cope with are concentrated in two departments: North-West (35%) and Upper Artibonite (27%).

Below are some of the stories that are inspired by the challenging experiences that certain respondents faced:

- *Women are more affected by illness and death.*
- *Men are more affected by droughts*

- *Respondents from Center, Upper Artibonite and Island La Gonâve mentioned illness as the most important shock.*
- *Participants from North-West and South-East told more stories related to death.*

- *80% of respondents who faced death are concentrated in Center, North-West and South-East.*
- *The respondents who selected illness as a shock were rather distributed in all departments except the Island Gonâve.*
- *62% of participants affected by drought are living in North-West (35%) and Upper Artibonite (27%).*
- *73% of participants who mentioned hurricanes as their main shock are living in North-West.*

## Death-related shock

### A miserable life

"In 2016 we had experienced two great moments of upheaval in our family. Following an abdominal pain after leaving school, my older brother passed away. All the family's resources had been spent during this period. We had found help from my uncle who lives in the USA; we also have an aunt who helped us with the organization of the funeral. Through the principle of good neighborhoods that animates the rural space, we had received support and/or collaboration from some members of the locality. Two months after this suffering, Hurricane Mathew has worsened our living conditions, bringing us to our knees as he took away my father's few cattle heads and completely broke our house. We had spent more than a year staying in the kitchen and were hit by a great famine a few weeks later.

During this period my father as the main provider of the household was in a situation where he would multiply his activities to help us overcome these painful moments. At first he was fishing, but it was not enough because he used to spend a whole week there without catching a fish in his hook, it was the most dramatic event we have actually experienced. After the event, he thought it might be better to use the trees that had been cut down by this hurricane for charcoal production.

Also despite the drought, he had sown a few bean pots as usual and planted a few cassava cuttings given its resistance to the drought. The coupons had also helped us to get through this difficult situation without which we might have spent several days at a given time without eating anything.

Thanks to these efforts, we feel better now - compared to when the two painful events took place. I hope that Kore Lavi's managers will continue to help us because this coupon is a real relief for us and for the poor people in the community."  
(Narrative code 833)

## Illness-related shock

### The misery

"For several years I have been unable to help myself with any illness due to repeated economic and other problems. **I can't go to a doctor because I don't have any money.** If it wasn't for my sons, I wouldn't know what to do with my life. I can't live despite the state of my health and aging. There is nothing I can do; nothing I can do to meet my needs. Above all, I can't walk to pay for my services. I feel paralyzed for the rest of my life. I would prefer rather not to find food but I have a perfect or robust health. I can't go to the hospital to find relief because of the lack of money so I can't buy either the drugs or the shots. I mean, I have a lot of problems in my life."  
(Narrative code 405)

## Drought-related shock or stressor

### The situation is difficult

"For the past three years, me and my family had been going through some difficult times. The drought and the high cost of living had put us in such critical situations where even feeding ourselves had been extremely difficult. Our land is no longer productive. Sometimes we had to try early harvests that unfortunately were wasted because of the aridity of the soil. Our children lived in Port-au-Prince and we also had to support them by all means. One of the strategies we used was to significantly reduce our daily food ration to extend the days with at least one meal - despite everything, we've had days without taking anything. Thank God the Kore Lavi program came to our aid along the way.

On the other hand, we had persevered in the cultivation of the land the day it finally rained. We had also tried with the small business that had not really brought in much; because of the lack of transportation means to get them from Port-au-Prince in time our goods had run into losses. The activities of VSLA (tipa-tipa) of the Kore Lavi program had helped us a lot. Thanks to these savings and credit activities we had been able to overcome this painful period. We have had money at our disposal to be able to undertake multiple profitable activities." (Narrative code 302)

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Even if the participants had to choose the most important challenge, the stories shared illustrates that they may face more than one shock or stressor at the same time and/or consecutively.

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Illness and death - related experiences are often related to the lack of or limited access to health services which means that the government does not assume its social responsibility.

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Drought

Aridity of soil

Our land no longer produced

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How respondents coped with drought: "The activities of VSLA of the Kore Lavi program had helped us a lot. Thanks to these savings and credit activities we had been able to overcome this painful period. We have had money at our disposal to be able to undertake multiple activities."

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## Hurricane-related shock

### Life has some surprises in store for us

"Hurricane Matthew took everything from me. I lived in a small fishing village by the sea. So the hurricane destroyed my house and everything inside, including my small trade stock. My husband's fishing gear was also lost. During the hurricane, we had to spend eight days in a nearby cave. Afterwards we went to live in a neighboring house until we repaired our own.

During this period the coupons of "Kore Lavi" were essential to us. When the food from it was finished, we would buy it on credit. We had lived in this situation until my husband resumed fishing activities. Thanks to the savings we had saved in "Tipa Tipa" (VSLA) I was able to start again with my small business. Little by little our situation has improved." (Narrative code 940)

"Hurricane Matthew took everything from me."

## 2.2.3. Level of exposure

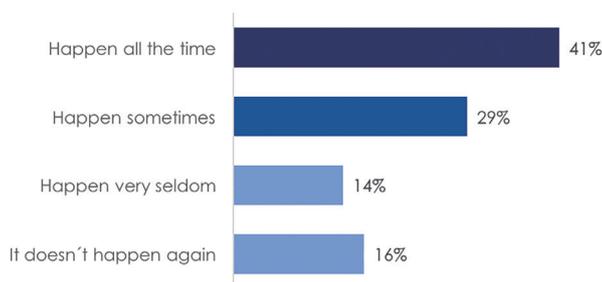
Exposure is a function of the **magnitude, frequency, and duration of a shock or stressor**. Some shocks come on quickly, with little or no advanced warning and are over with quickly while others may be so slow to progress that their duration can be marked in years. Duration only refers to the actual shock itself, not the resulting impact, which may be short- or long-term.

The **level of exposure** was investigated with a signifier Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) focusing on the frequency of the shock identified by the respondents. The 790 respondents assessed the frequency of their shocks in the following way:

### Level of exposure of a shock or stressor depending on:

- Frequency
- Magnitude
- Duration

Figure 7: Level of exposure



Most shocks and stressors selected by respondents seem to happen with a rather important frequency (41%). Yet, we also need to explore if there are differences according to the type of shocks and stressors.

Below are the different frequencies of the shocks that were identified by the respondents. Please note that they are also disaggregated by the number of respondents who selected a particular shock.

### Illness (189 choices):

- 93 (49%) it happens all the time,
- 24 (13%) it happens sometimes,
- 40 (21%) it happens very seldom, and
- 32 (17%) it does not happen again.

### Droughts (152 choices):

- 100 (66%) said that it happens all the time,
- 49 (32%) estimated that it happens very seldom and
- 3 (2%) thought that it does not happen again.

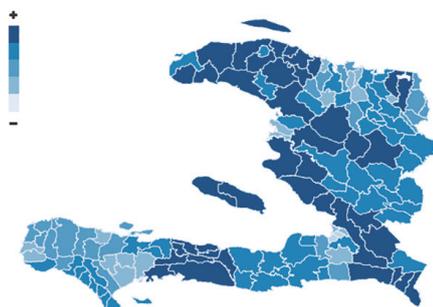
### Hurricanes (56 choices):

- 17 (30%) say that hurricanes happen all the time,
- 5 (9%) they happen sometimes,
- 27 (48%) they happen very seldom,
- 7 (13%) they do not happen again.

Even if death and hurricanes may have a strong and long-lasting impact, these shocks are less frequent than droughts (66%) and illness (49%). While in the case of droughts, we are facing a long-lasting phenomenon as we can observe in the narratives that the respondents shared. Something similar may happen also in the case of illness. Death seem to be often the result of illness. Future programs should especially pay attention to these two types of shocks: **illness and drought**. In the case of illness, it might be important to know more about its root causes. The respondents mentioned malnutrition and hunger, but very frequently they referred to the lack of access to health services and/or the fact that these have to be paid.

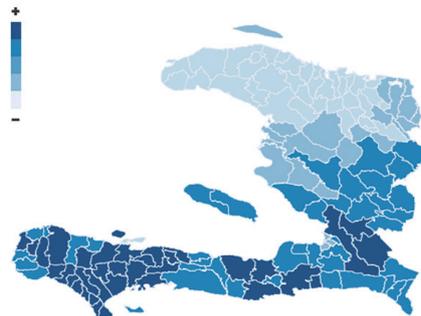
The maps for drought and hurricanes provide additional information about the probability of droughts and hurricanes (OCHA 2019) which confirms the need to get households and communities better prepared for these two types of shocks.

**Figure 8: Vulnerability to drought**



Source: OCHA 2019

**Figure 9: Vulnerability to hurricanes**



Source: OCHA 2019

*High frequency of the most important shocks and stressors according to the respondents who faced the corresponding shock thinking that it happens all the time:*

- 66% in the case of droughts
- 49% of respondents affected by illness.
- 30% of respondents who faced hurricanes,
- 17% of respondents who faced a death related shock.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the damage and loss in agriculture by climate-related disasters is estimated to be 83% in the case of drought versus 23% by storm and 17% by flood. Future programs need to consider this and integrate much more sustainable adaptive responses and transformative strategies to enable people to face droughts that will be part of their daily lives.

## 2.2.4. Sensitivity

Another aspect that determines the individual consequences after facing a shock or stressor is sensitivity.

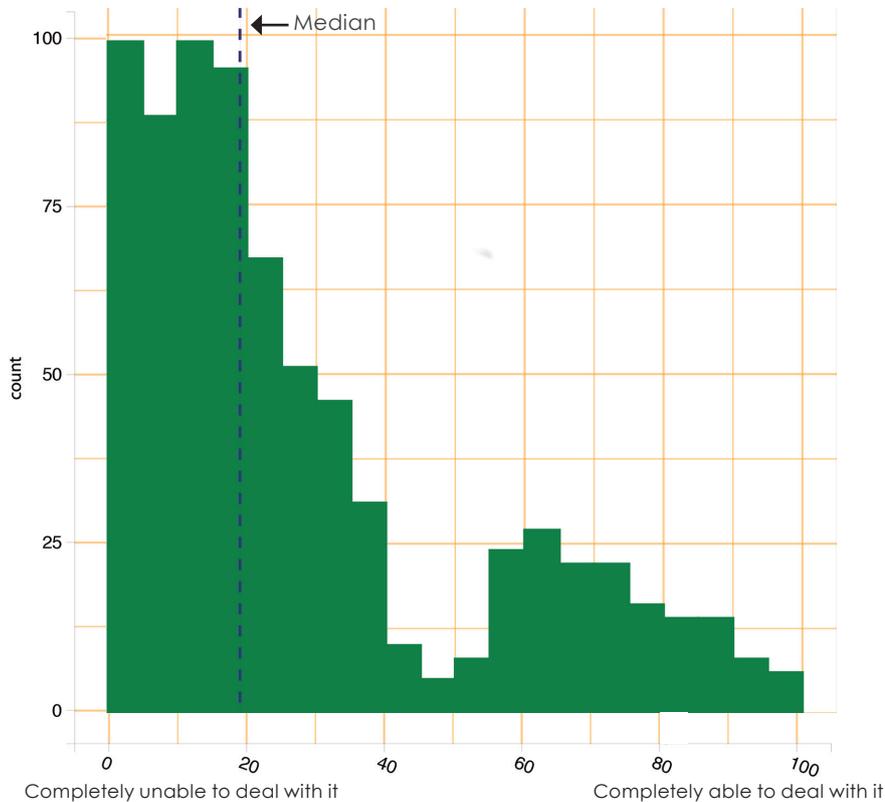
**Sensitivity** refers to the extent to which an individual, household, community or higher-level system will be affected by a given shock or stress.

The degree of sensitivity depends on:

- Physical, economic, emotional, collective, organizational and institutional preparation
- Individual preparedness for shocks and stressors
- Degree of collective preparedness for shocks and stressors
- Number of shocks and stressors they face at the same time or in a very short period of time
- Results (positive and/or negative) of past shocks and stressors

788 from 790 respondents answered the question about their ability to deal with the difficult situations they faced in their experiences. As it can be observed in the following graph, 50% of 788 respondents placed their answer at the left side of the median which means that they felt quite very unable or even completely unable to deal with the shock and stressor during and after its occurrence.

**Figure 10: Sensitivity of all respondents (N = 788)**



**Degree of sensitivity**

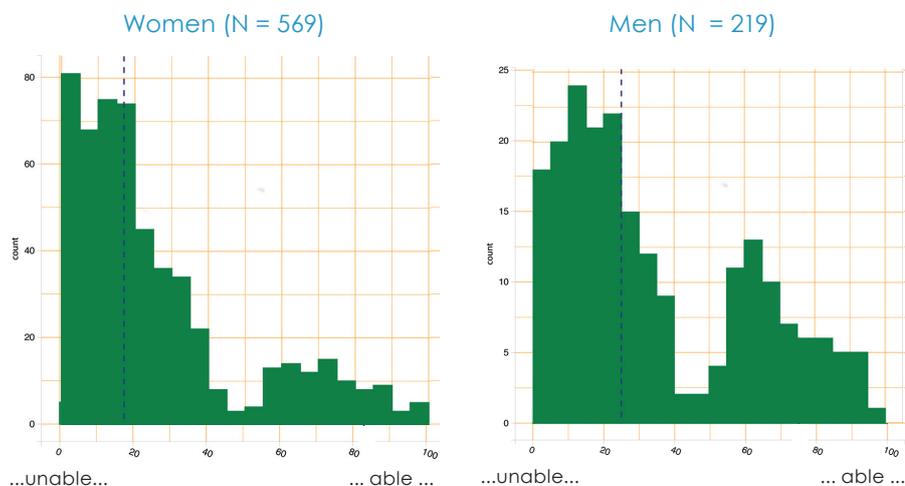
Regarding to the scale from 0 (completely unable to deal with the shock) and 100 (completely able to deal with the shock), the study identified the following medians:

- All participants: 19.01
- Women: 17.46
- Men: 24.89

Women felt less able to deal with the shocks and stressors than men.

Regarding the degree of sensitivity – between men and women – related to shocks, the study found the following:

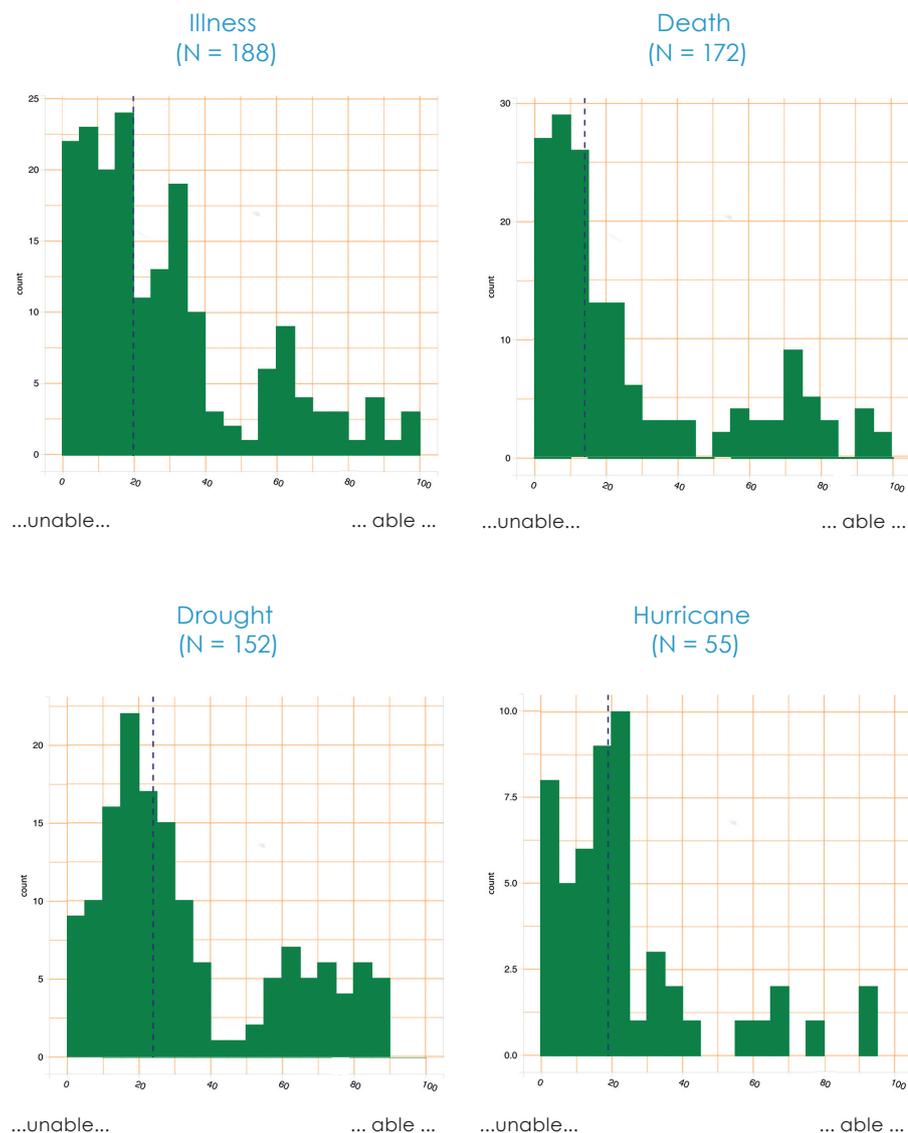
**Figure 11: Sensitivity of women and men**



Comparing both graphs, women felt much more unable (median = 17.46) to deal with the difficult situation they faced in their experiences than men (median = 24.89).

In the case of sensitivity, it is important to explore a little bit more about the differences according to the **type of shocks**.

**Figure 12: Sensitivity by type of shocks and stressors**



**Degree of sensitivity**

Related to the most important shocks and stressors, the study identified the following medians:

- Death: 14.06
- Hurricane: 18.64
- Illness: 19.72
- Drought: 24.30

Respondents felt less able to deal with death, hurricanes and illness than with drought.

For the respondents who faced death-related shocks (median 14.06) it was more difficult to deal with it than for respondents who faced illness (median 19.72). Although the difference is not very big, it's remarkable.

Respondents felt less able to deal with hurricanes (median 18.64) than with droughts (24.30).

One explanation might be that shocks that are surfacing suddenly and/or unexpected may be more difficult to deal with than slowly ongoing or long-lasting shocks.

The study did not reveal remarkable differences related to sensitivity neither between VSLA and non-VSLA members, nor between respondents who followed resilient and vulnerable pathways. .

## 2.3. Pathways

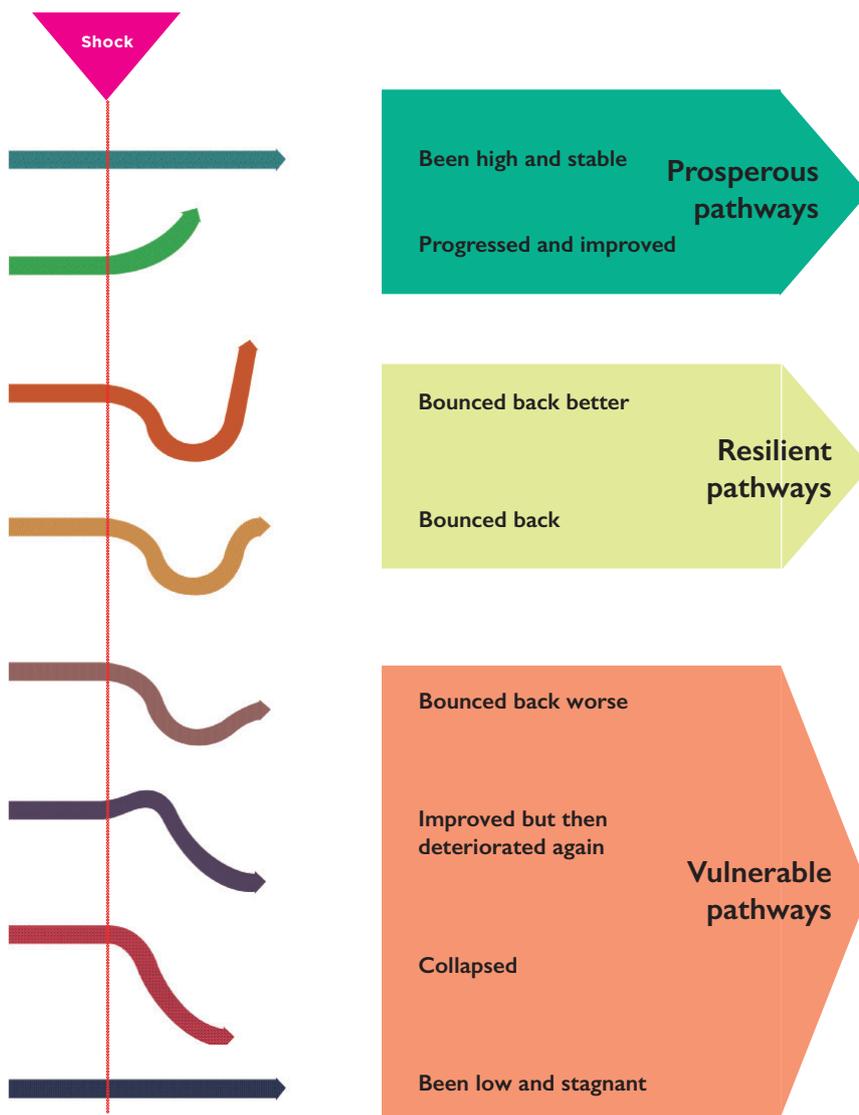
To answer the learning questions and to get a better understanding about resilience, it's important to observe the pathways that result as a reaction to shocks and stressors. This explains the reasons why a critical look is taken at the resilience-related pathway concept in this section. It will inform the readers of the **pathway trajectories** that the respondents followed and what are the differences related to the **characteristics** of people who followed resilient or vulnerable pathways. It will also allow the identification of **pathways dynamics** associated with their **level of well-being** that the respondents experienced during several key moments.

### 2.3.1. Concept of pathways

The term '**pathways**' underscores the idea that prosperity, resilience and vulnerability are properly viewed as processes rather than static states. Thus, refer to the process followed by individuals, households, communities or higher-level systems in reaction to stressors or shocks, given their access and control to assets, and the coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies taken, which determine their degree of sensitivity.<sup>5</sup> With previous resilience studies, the following pathway trajectories could be identified:

*The term '**pathways**' underscores the idea that prosperity/sustainability, resilience and vulnerability are properly viewed as processes rather than static states. (CRS)*

**Figure 13: Pathway categories**

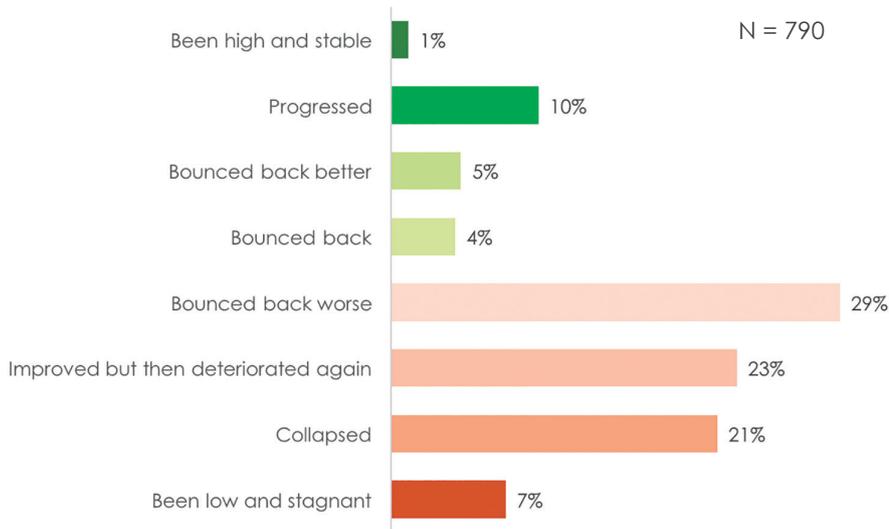


Graph source: Gottret, CRS

## 2.3.2. Pathway trajectories

The ways people are recovering after shocks cover many pathways. The trajectories identified by the respondents during this study - related to their experiences - are as follow:

Figure 14: Pathways - ALL respondents



### Pathways

#### Pathways to prosperity:

- high and stable
- progress

#### Resilient pathways:

- bounce back better,
- bounce back

#### Vulnerable pathways:

- bounce back worse,
- vulnerable,
- collapse,
- low and stagnant

When grouping the pathways in the three main categories, it is found out that:

- 11% followed **prosperous** pathways,
- 9% followed **resilient** pathways, and
- 80% followed **vulnerable** pathways.

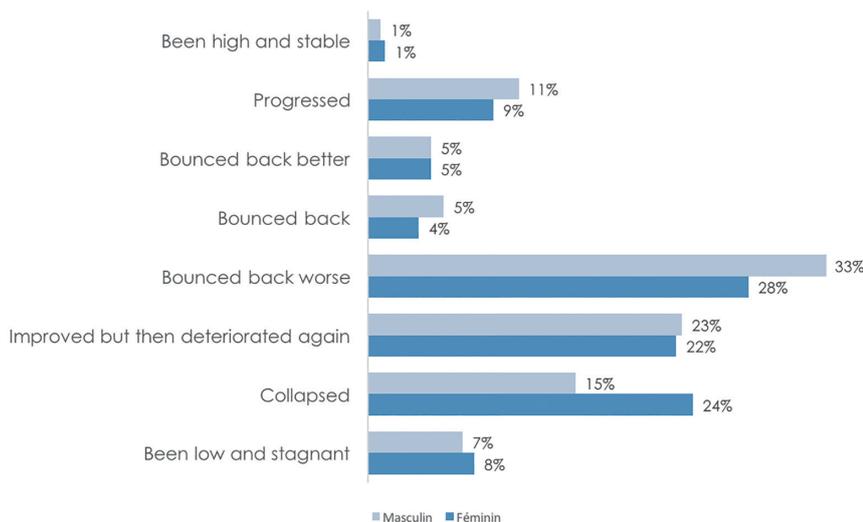
For further analysis, the pathway trajectories were post-categorized in two main groups: **resilient** - including prosperous and resilient pathways - and **vulnerable** ones.

The study also explored the nuances of the pathways from a **gender - sensitive perspective**.

### Pathways followed by 790 participants:

- 11% prosperous / sustainable
- 9% resilient
- 80% vulnerable

Figure 15: Pathways - Differences between women and men



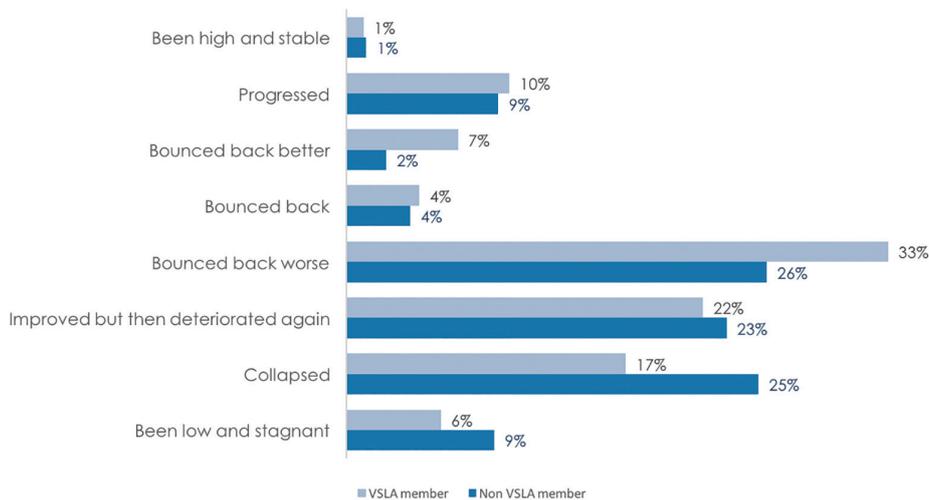
As it can be observed in the aforementioned graph:

- 10% of the 571 of female respondents and 12% of the 219 male respondents followed a prosperous trajectory;
- 9% of female respondents and 10% of male respondents experienced a resilient pathway;
- 81% of female respondents and 78% of male respondents followed vulnerable pathways.

Apparently, there is **not a strong difference between women and men** except in the case of the “collapsing” trajectory where the percentage of women is much higher (24%) than the men’s one (15%). On the other side there is a higher proportion of men who bounced back worse (33%) than women (28%).

Another learning question is related to the **differences between VSLA and non VSLA members**. With regard to the perception of respondents about the pathway trajectories they followed during their recovery process, we found

**Figure 16: Pathways - Differences between VSLA and non VSLA members**



the following:

- 11% of VSLA members followed **prosperous pathways** versus 10% of non VSLA members;
- 11% of VSLA members followed **resilient** pathways versus 6% of non VSLA members;
- 78% of VSLA members followed **vulnerable** pathways versus 83% of non VSLA members.

Within the three main categories it is observed that the **VSLA members are slightly better positioned**. When looking more closely at the vulnerable pathways, it is realized that the **worst three trajectories are followed by 57% of non VSLA members and 45% of VSLA MEMBERS**.

It is thus safe to deduct that the VSLA members are likely to follow a more resilient pathway than the non-VSLA members.

Many factors may explain these pathways - as it can be seen further in the document – when analyzing coping actions, adaptive responses, transformative strategies the access and control to personal, social, physical and financial assets as well as the use of ecosystem services.

**Pathways from gender perspective:**

- 24% of women collapsed versus 15% of men
- 33% of men bounced back worse versus 28% of women.

**With regards to VSLA membership:**

- 22% of VSLA members versus 16% of non VSLA followed **resilient pathways**
- 78% of VSLA members versus 83% of non VSLA followed **vulnerable pathways**

### 2.3.3. Differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents

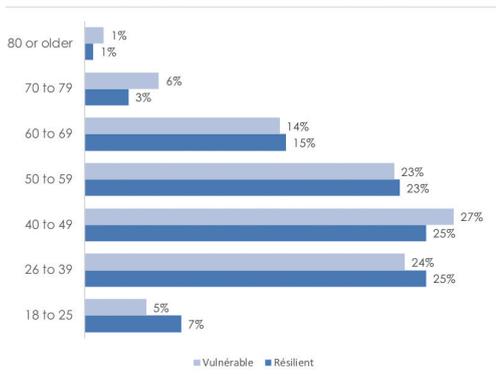
To facilitate the analysis, the different pathway trajectories are grouped in two distinct categories: resilient and vulnerable pathways. After the post-categorization of the pathway trajectories, the study will also distinguish the differences between respondents who followed resilient or vulnerable pathways.

#### Gender

From the 571 female respondents, 19% follow resilient pathways and 81% follow vulnerable pathways. 22% of the 219 male respondents follow a resilient pathway - whereas 78% followed a vulnerable pathway. Although there is not a huge difference, it can be deduced that men are more resilient than women. This explains why more women-held households were enrolled in the social safety net than men.

#### Age

**Figure 17:**  
Resilient and vulnerable respondents by age range



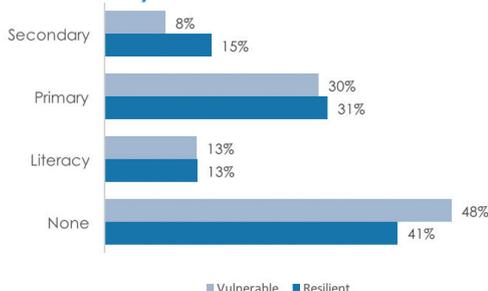
With regards to age range, it is found out that younger respondents (18-25 years) seem to be more resilient than elderly people above 70.

There is also a very slight difference in the age range from 40 to 49 years. 27% of respondents followed vulnerable pathways versus 25% of resilient beneficiaries.

#### Education

From a literacy standpoint, there is no significant difference between people who follow resilient pathways and those who follow vulnerable pathways.

**Figure 18:**  
Resilient and vulnerable participants by level of education



Nevertheless, it is worth noting that 48% of the vulnerable respondents have no formal education against 41% of the resilient respondents.

It is also interesting to note that 15% of the resilient respondents achieved some level of secondary school level versus 8% of vulnerable respondents.

That justifies even more the need to guarantee the access to education if Haiti wants to increase the resilience of the most vulnerable population.

#### Post-categorization of pathways

##### Resilient pathways:

- high and stable,
- progress,
- bounce back better,
- bounce back

##### Vulnerable pathways:

- bounce back worse,
- vulnerable,
- collapse,
- low and stagnant

##### Resilient versus vulnerable:

- Men are more resilient (22%) than women (19%).
- Secondary education makes a difference: resilient respondents (15%) versus vulnerable respondents (8%).
- Age doesn't make a big difference, only if the respondents are older than 70 (more vulnerable) or younger than 26 (more resilient).

## Main household provider

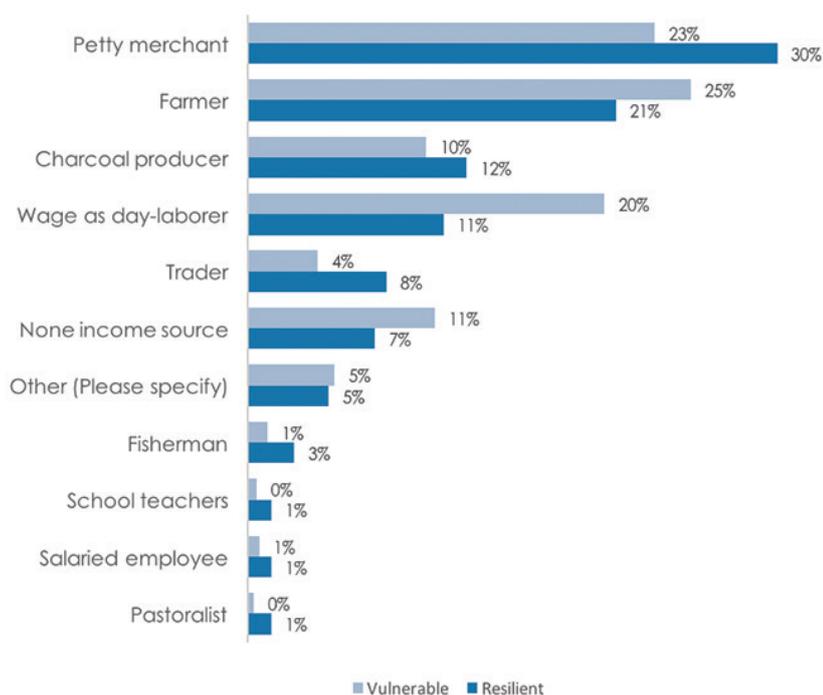
The study did not observe an important difference regarding the pathway category followed by female and male main household providers:

- 19% of the 391 households whose main provider is female followed a resilient pathway;
- 20% of the 399 households with a male main provider also followed a resilient pathway.

## Main income source

The graph below presents various responses provided by all the 790 respondents with regards to main income source:

**Figure 19: Resilient and vulnerable respondents by main income source**



The respondents whose main income derive from petty merchandising and trading tend to be more resilient. On the other hand, the respondents whose main income comes from a day-laborer tend to be more vulnerable.

## Rural versus urban area

Among the total respondents, it was found that 631 respondents are living in rural areas and 159 in urban areas. 82% of the rural respondents follow vulnerable pathway; compared to 76% of those urban respondents.

## Departments

With regard to the proportion of resilient and vulnerable respondents by department, the study found the following:

**Table 3: Resilient and vulnerable respondents by department**

	Centre N = 141	Nord - Ouest N = 257	Sud-Est N = 152	Haut Artibonite N = 150	Ouest (Île La Gonâve) N = 90
<b>Resilient</b> N = 154	18%	14%	26%	16%	30%
<b>Vulnerable</b> N = 636	82%	86%	74%	84%	70%

### Main income sources of resilient respondents:

1. Petty merchant or trader (38%).
2. Farmer (21%)
3. Charcoal producer (12%)
4. Wage as day-laborer (11%)
5. None income source (7%)

### Main income sources of vulnerable respondents:

1. Petty merchant or trader (27%)
2. Farmer (25%)
3. Wage as day-laborer (20%)
4. None income source (11%)
5. Charcoal producer (10%)

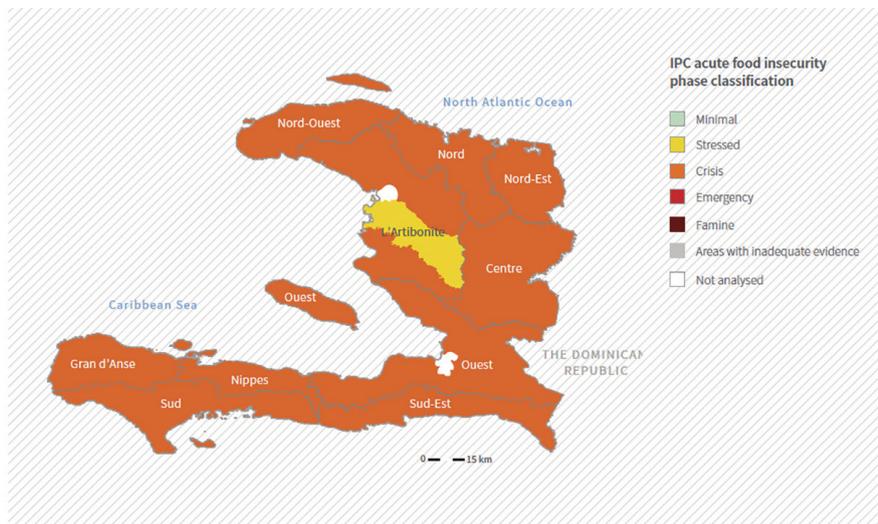
### Resilient versus vulnerable:

- *Urban participants are more resilient (24%) than rural ones (18%).*

Based on the shared experiences, 30% of Island of Gonave respondents and 26% of the South-East department respondents followed resilient pathways. In the North-West department, we found less respondents who followed resilient pathways (14%) followed very closely by Upper Artibonite (16%) and the Centre Department (18%).

It might be interesting to contextualize this information, especially as the crisis map provided by FAO (2019) is much more general.

**Figure 20: Projected food insecurity situation (March-June 2019); FAO**



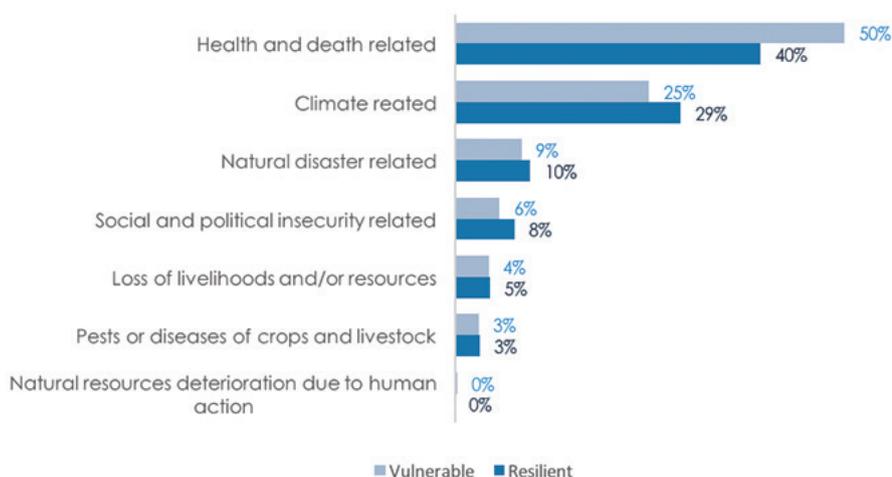
Source: IPC, December 2018

To increase the resilience of the most vulnerable population it is important to contextualize much more and to identify the differences between the departments related to types of shocks and stressors, coping actions and access to resources.

## Shocks and stressors

The study also explored the association between the type and categories of shocks and the pathways followed by the respondents:

**Figure 21: Resilient and vulnerable respondents by shock and stressor category**



The graph above indicates that 50% of the 636 respondents who followed a vulnerable pathway faced health or death related shocks. Vulnerable respondents faced more death-related events than resilient ones. Even when 29% of the resilient respondents selected climate-related shocks and stressors, only 16% mentioned drought versus 20% of vulnerable respondents.

### Resilient versus vulnerable:

- Participants from the **Gonave Island (30%)** and **South-East (26%)** are more resilient versus participants from **North-West (14%)**, **Upper Artibonite (16%)** and **Center (18%)**.

According to the last Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis (December 2018), about **2.6 million Haitians** were expected to be food insecure during the lean season (March–June 2019) – **twice as many people** compared with the 2018 lean season. This figure represents about 38 percent of the rural population.

Source: FAO, 2019

### Shocks selected by resilient participants:

- Illness (22%)
- Death (16%)
- Drought (16%)
- Hurricane (8%)
- Strong winds (6%)
- Flood (5%)
- Family disintegration (5%)

### Shocks selected by vulnerable participants:

- Illness (24%)
- Death (23%)
- Drought (20%)
- Hurricane (7%)
- Family disintegration (3%)
- Loss of physical or financial assets (3%)

## 2.3.4. Examples of the narratives and signification given by respondents with different pathways

### A VSLA member following a high and stable pathway

This is a story shared by a woman from the rural area of the Southeast department. She is between 26 and 39 years old and achieved some secondary school level. The main provider of her household is a man and her main income source comes from her occupation as a trader.

#### A solitary moment

“Besides the death of my husband recently, I did not have any particular problem that happened to me. After his death, I was compelled to return to my parent’s home seeking support. During that time, the Kore Lavi vouchers helped me a lot. Shortly after, I also integrated the Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA) so that I could have access to loan. Nowadays, I have my own business – which allows me to generate enough incomes to be able to stand on my own after the end of the Kore Lavi program. I could even affirm that I feel much better than before.”

“Nowadays, I have my own business – which allows me to generate enough incomes to be able to stand on my own after the end of the Kore Lavi program.”

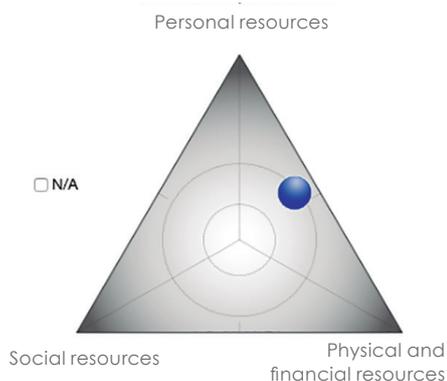
#### Some meanings she gave her story

The shock she selected was illness, but she said that it happens very seldom. The coping actions she used to face the shock were taking loans from the informal saving groups including VSLA and commerce. The financial resources that helped her to overcome the difficult situation were the food vouchers, savings and informal loans. The transformative strategies related to her behavioral change that she adopted with regard on her experience were:

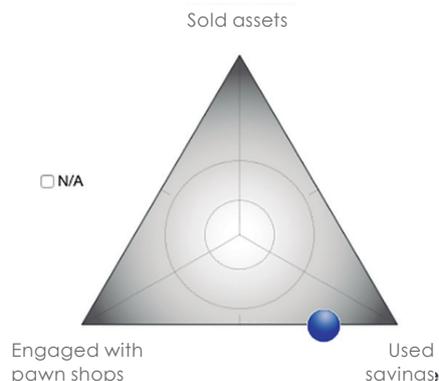
- Accepting food for voucher redemption that is locally grown.
- Reducing the amount of non-nutritious food
- Establishing a balanced diet
- Consuming a plant-based diet

The following resources and coping actions helped her to face the difficult situation:

**Figure 22: Resources Prosperous VSLA member**



**Figure 23: Financial coping actions Prosperous VSLA member**



About the usefulness of the VSLA if she would face a similar situation in the future, she thinks:

**Figure 24: Usefulness of VSLA - Prosperous VSLA member**



Even if she follows a high and stable pathway, she perceives her story was a negative one. The reason why she became a VSLA member is because she can access to other program benefits and she is able to address other household needs.

The food voucher’s indirect contribution addressed the payment of school fees, the integration of VSLA activities and launching of income generating activities.

For the transition phase, she prefers as support from Kore Lavi the food vouchers and small grants to start-up income-generating activities.

**A VSLA member who bounced back better**

This is a story shared by a woman from the urban area of the Upper Artibonite department. She is between 50 and 59 years old. She has no formal education. The main provider of her family is a woman and her main income source comes from her occupation as a petty merchant.

**Natural disaster**

“Following a flood, a part of my house was destroyed. I had contacted a professional mason to repair the house; but he made things worse by digging a big hole. I have begged to my neighbors and thankfully they had helped me somehow to fix the house. However, I could not make the roof in concrete because I did not have the financial means to procure iron bar (that costs HTG 7,500) – as I have three kids to take care of.

After my integration within the Kore Lavi social safety net, I stopped begging. I felt like a “rich women” as I had the capacity to purchase local and nutritious foods (such as, meat, vegetables etc.). I used woods to prepare my meals. Now that the program is coming to an end, I feel worried because I was dependent on the voucher.”

**Some meanings she gave her story**

The shock she faced was a flood, which according to her happens very seldom. The coping actions she used to face the shock were seeking support from family, relatives or friends and begging. The financial resources that helped her to overcome the difficult situation were the food vouchers and cash.

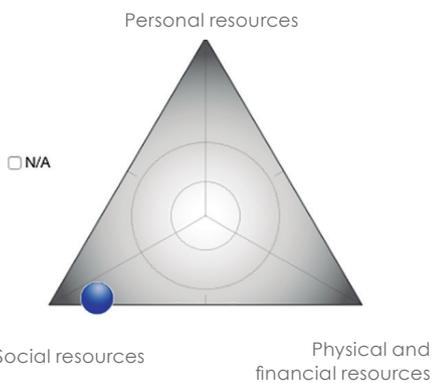
The transformative strategies related to her behavior change she adopted with regard on her experience were:

- Accepting food for voucher redemption that is locally grown.
- Distributing food equitably throughout the household

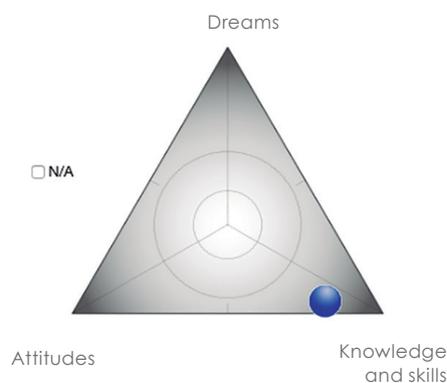
The following elements helped her to cope with the shock she faced:

“After my integration within the Kore Lavi social safety net, I stopped begging. I felt that a “rich women” as I had the capacity to purchase local and nutritious foods such as, meat, vegetables etc.”

**Figure 25: Resources Resilient VSLA member**



**Figure 26: Human Agency Resilient VSLA member**



She followed a resilient pathway - she bounced back better - and perceived her story as a positive one. She joined the VSLA because she wanted to be able to improve and increase her incomes.

About her preparedness if she would face a similar situation in the future, she feels rather not capable to cope with it:

**Figure 27: Preparedness - Resilient VSLA member**



With the food voucher’s indirect contribution she could increase her savings in the VSLA. For the transition phase, she only mentioned the food voucher.

## **A non VSLA member who bounced back better**

This is a story shared by a woman from the urban area of the Upper Artibonite department. She is between 18 and 25 years old and achieved some secondary school level. The main provider of her family is a man and the household's main income source comes from her father's occupation as a salt maker.

### **A bad circumstance**

"In May 2017, there was heavy rain. My father was a salt maker and had a salt mine. During that rainy period, he had lost everything; because the salts had melted. It was our main source of income; and the main income-generating activity for the family. At that time, I had to pay my school fees in order to get access to the exams. But my father did not have the financial means to meet my school's requirements. He couldn't even take care of the house anymore; and as a result of that we even suffered a little bit from hunger. But Kore Lavi came to our aid for food security.

My father had to borrow money from a friend to pay for the school's fees. And a few days later, his friend came to claim his money but my father didn't have it yet. He insulted my father, humiliated him and threatened him. That unfortunate situation affected me really bad. My father had to make a lot of efforts to find the money and suddenly his mother (my grandmother) had died. He was then obliged to spend the money to organize the burial of my grandmother – as he had no one else to help him out. Finally, to get himself out of the situation, he sold his car to pay off the debt. After paying off his debt, everything was back to the way it was before and even better. Because he had resumed his salt activity."

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*"At that time, I had to pay my school fees in order to get access to the exams. But my father did not have the financial means to meet my school's requirements. He couldn't even take care of the house anymore; and as a result of that we even suffered a little bit from hunger. But Kore Lavi came to our aid for food security."*

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### **Some meanings she gave her story**

The shock she selected was the loss of assets due to the flood and she thinks it won't happen anymore.

The coping actions she used to face the shock were:

- Eating less or less preferred meals per day
- Reducing diet diversity
- Reducing expenditures related to the households needs
- Selling nonproductive assets
- Receiving money transfer from family in Haiti
- Receiving money transfer from abroad
- Getting loans from family or friends
- Buying on credit in stores and with sellers in the community

She did not use any adaptive response related to food production or income generating activities. The financial resources that helped her to overcome the difficult situation were stored food or produce, vouchers, savings and informal loans. The ecosystem services that provided her some help to overcome the difficult situation were medical plants and nature as a spiritual space

The transformative strategies related to her behavior change she adopted with regard on her experience were:

- Accepting food for voucher redemption that is locally grown.
- Reducing food waste

She bounced back even better after the shock she faced and she perceives her story as a neutral one. She is not a VSLA member. The reason why she is not any more part of a group is, "I was part of it, but the person in charge had stolen the money and left with it."

The food voucher's indirect contribution addressed the payment of school fees and medical fees. For the transition phase, she prefers as support from Kore Lavi the food vouchers and small grants to start-up income-generating activities.

## **A VSLA member who bounced back worse**

This woman lives in the rural area of the Center department. She is between 40 and 49 years old and has attended primary school. The main provider of the household is a man and the main source of income of her household is farming. She is member of a VSLA.

### **Humiliation**

“These last few years I’ve been going through difficult times. My husband lived in Saint Dominic and came back sick. I took him to the hospital in Cerca Lassource. Being in Cerca I was given a memo to go with him to Hinche for surgery because he was prostatic. I only had 7000 gourdes to do all the procedures. I was told to go home to pick up my children to give blood for the operation. I had no money left; we couldn’t operate on my husband because I needed 10200 gourdes. I had only one ox and I sold it. Despite all this, we couldn’t do the operation and we could not purchase his medicine. I have suffered a lot of humiliation seeking life for my children. I am in a difficult situation because my husband is sick again.” (Narrative code 1307)

### **Some meanings she gave her story**

The shock she was hit by was illness that happens with some frequency. The financial resources she used to cope were the food vouchers, cash and livestock.

To cope with the difficult situation she undertook the following actions:

- Eating less or less preferred meals per day
- Reducing diet diversity
- Selling livestock
- Receiving money transfer from family in Haiti
- Asking for loans from the informal saving groups including VSLA

Related to food production and income generating activities, she used rather negative coping mechanisms:

- Reduce of agriculture production area
- Reduce livestock

The behaviors she changed based on the experience were:

- To accept food for voucher redemption that is locally grown
- To reject junk food
- To consume a plant-based diet

The money she saved receiving the food voucher was used to paying the school fees. However, it also was used partially by another family member.

After the experience, she bounced back worse. Her wellbeing is not any more at the same level as before.

She decided to participate in the VSLA because:

- She can have access to other benefits from the program.
- She can be able to address other household needs (such as school fees, medical fees, clothing fees etc.)
- She wants to be able to improve/increase your incomes
- She likes to participate in activities with other people

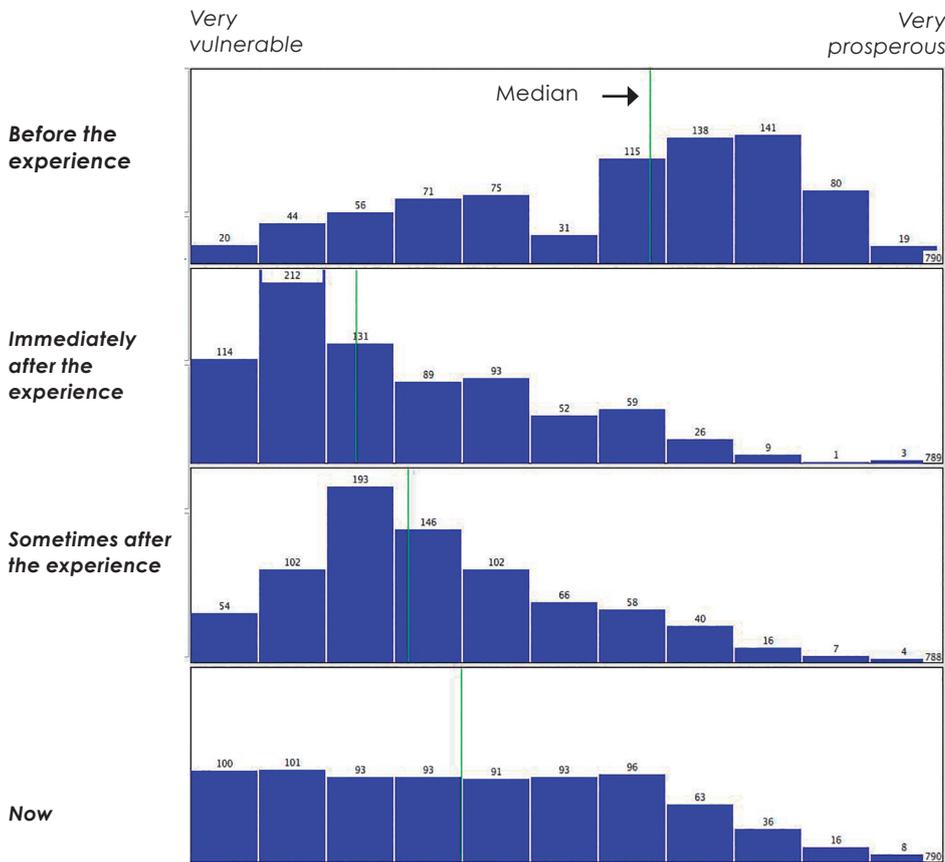
For the transition phase she prefers receiving the food voucher and small grants to start-up income-generating activities:

## 2.3.5. Pathway dynamics

The pathways followed by the different respondents are analyzed before, immediately after, sometime after and at present with respect to the shocks that they experienced. The logic behind this idea is to capture the level of well-being and the relative effectiveness of local coping strategies.

The following results are generated from the respondent's answers:

**Figure 28: Respondents' wellbeing at each key moment**



### Wellbeing at each key moment:

- A little bit prosperous before the shock
- Highly vulnerable immediately after
- Started moving back slowly to the prosperous pathway sometime after
- At the present, the participants still haven't recovered to the same level as before

The responses gathered from the respondents related to their well-being are presented in the above histograms based upon specific time frame. As it can be noticed, the responses are placed within a continuum with two extremes being very prosperous or very vulnerable.

As indicated in the graphs, before the experience occurred, the respondents felt quite prosperous (median = 0.60). They then became highly vulnerable immediately after the shocks affected them (median = 0.21). Some times after the shock occurred they started to recover slowly (median = 0.28) and as of now, they feel rather vulnerable (median = 0.35).

Noteworthy that the respondents' own personal, social, physical and financial resources as well as the Kore Lavi interventions - providing mainly the food vouchers - contributed to the recovery process.

By rotating the graphs, it can be observed that the programs' respondents had a deep fall when the shocks occurred and are having a hard time bouncing back to the same level as before.

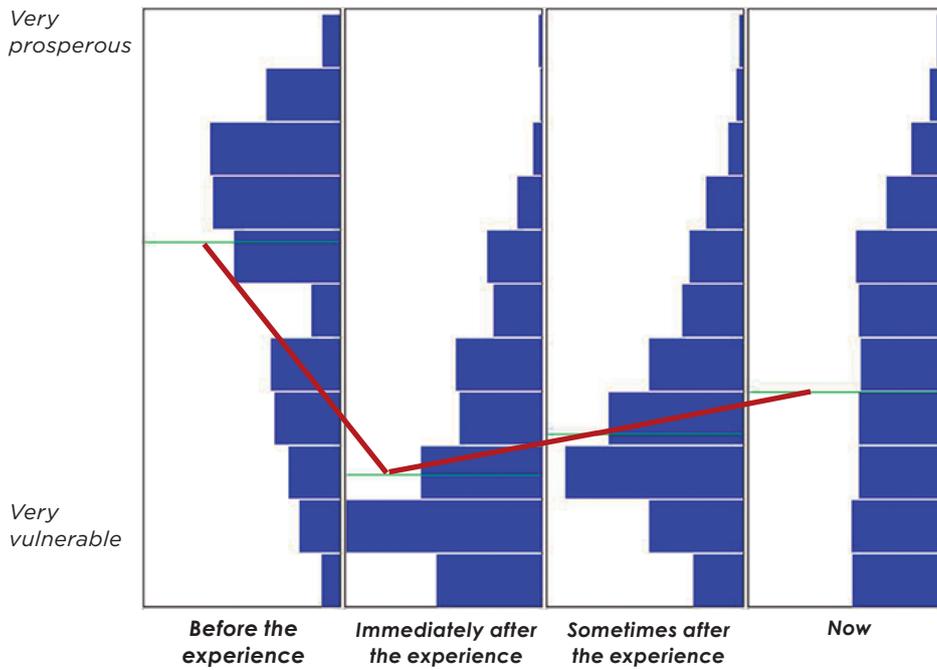
Recovery is moving forward quite slowly and the well-being is still at a very low level, which may imply insufficient response capacity from within and outside of the household and community.

### Pathway dynamic by median:

The median indicates that the 50% of respondents are placed at the left side and the other half at the right side of the green line along the continuum which indicates the level of well-being: very vulnerable versus very prosperous:

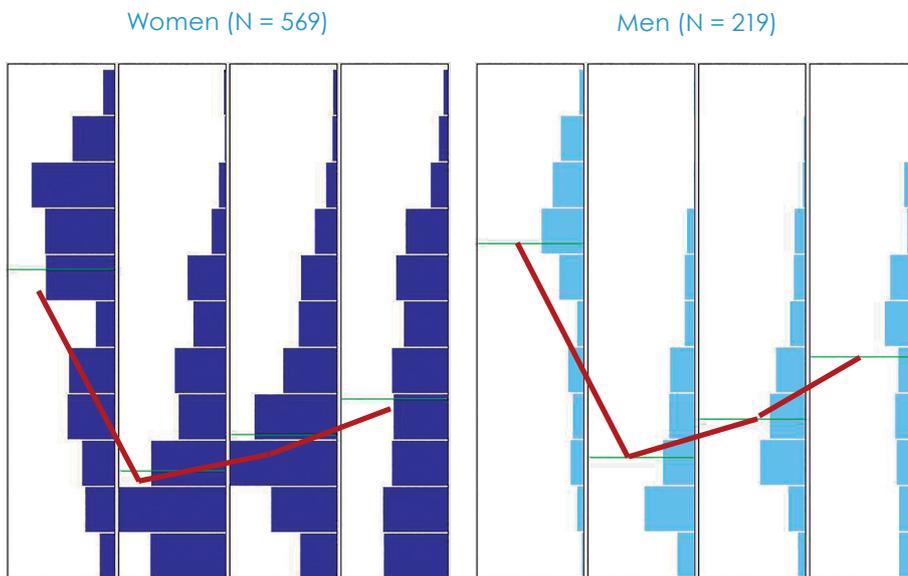
- Before the shock: 0.60
- Immediately after: 0.21
- Sometime after: 0.28
- Now: 0.35

**Figure 29: Pathway dynamic - ALL respondents (N=790)**



The graph below describes the pathway dynamic from a **gender perspective**:

**Figure 30: Pathway dynamics of women and men**

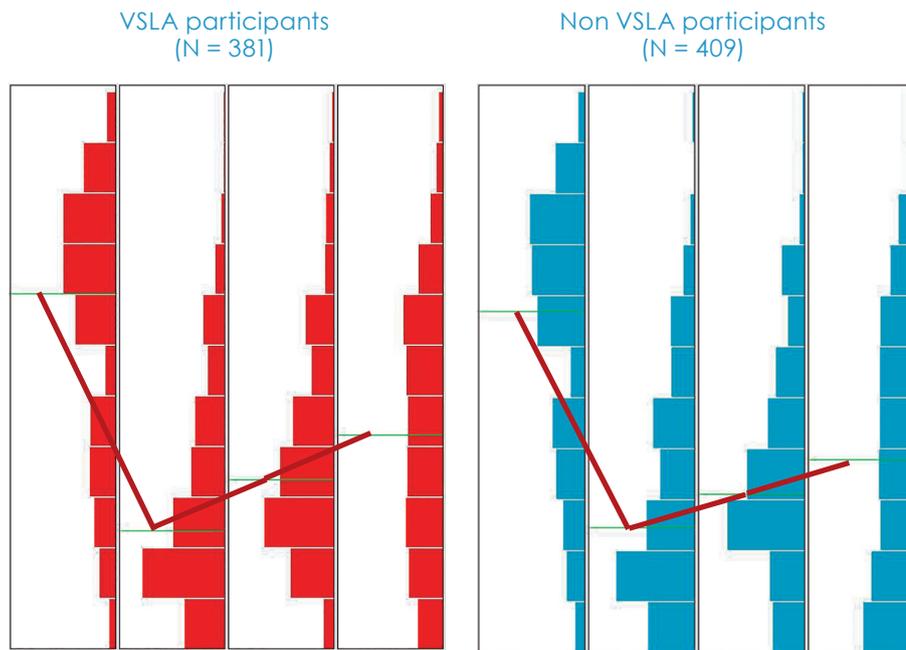


**Pathway dynamic with gender-lenses:**

- *Men started from a more prosperous position before the shock.*
- *The fall was very similar.*
- *Men have been recovering a little bit faster than women who are still at a rather vulnerable level.*

From looking at the above graphs, it can be deduced that compared to women, man had a more prosperous starting point and therefore recovered faster from shocks.

**Figure 31: Pathway dynamics of VSLA and non VSLA members**



When comparing the pathway dynamic of VSLA and non-VSLA members, we found no major differences. Nevertheless, it is observed that the VSLA members felt slightly more prosperous before the shocks occurred – as opposed to the non-VSLA members. VSLA members also recover slightly faster than the non-VSLA members.

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**Pathway dynamic of VSLA participants and non participants:**

- *VSLA members recover slightly faster than the non VSLA members.*
-

## 2.4. Well-being and sustainable development outcomes

### 2.4.1. The outcomes

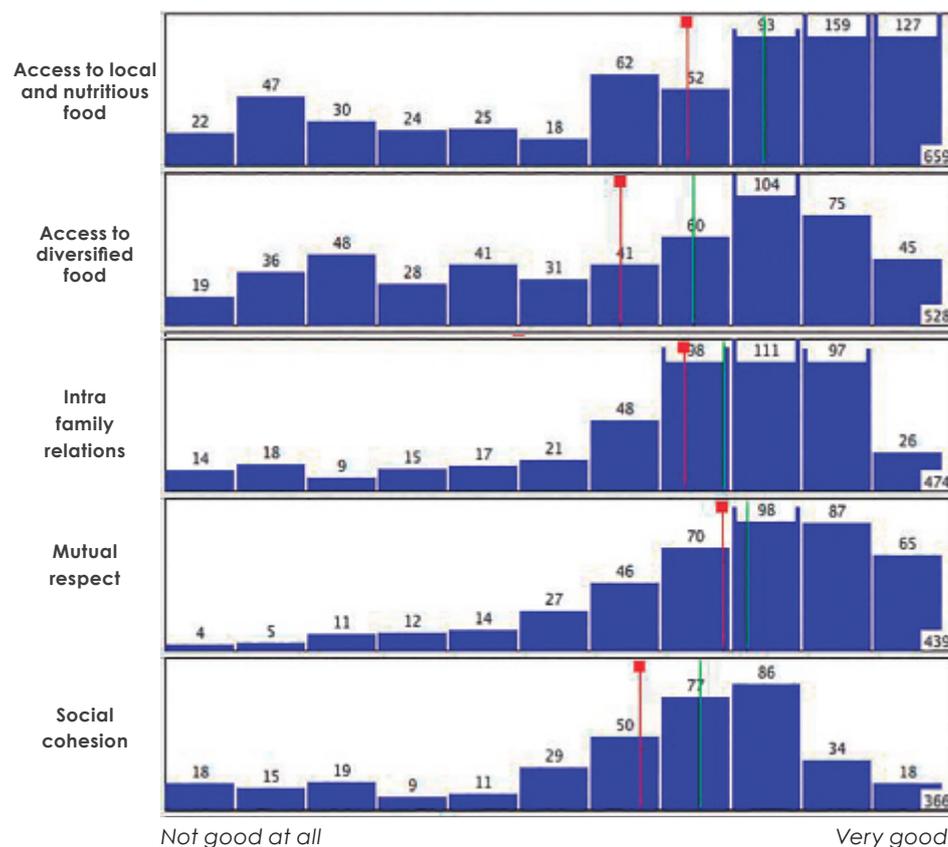
Livelihood, well-being or sustainable **development** outcomes are the **result of sustainable coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies** that individuals, households, communities and higher-level systems develop. The primary livelihood outcome sought in the case of the Kore Lavi project is food security, but at the same time other aspects of well-being and sustainable development such as physical well-being, income, social cohesion, mutual respect, inter family relations are being addressed by the interventions.

The respondents evaluated the positive or negative changes that happened in their living conditions - through the experiences that they shared.

In the following graph, the rather positive changes can be observed. The red lines represent the mean and the green ones the median.

With regard to all respondents, it can be seen that they experienced rather **positive changes** related to the following aspects of human well-being:

Figure 32: Positive sustainable development outcomes



Rather positive impact in participants' well-being with medians:

- Access to local and nutritious food (0.77)
- Mutual respect (0.75)
- Intra family relations (0.72)
- Access to diversified food (0.67)
- Social cohesion (0.68)

The following story is an example related to **social cohesion** as a positively evaluated outcome.

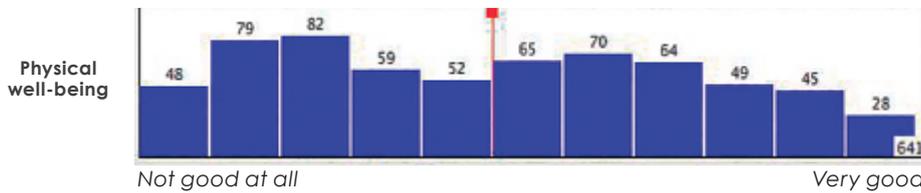
*This story was shared by a man from the rural area of Upper Artibonite. He is between 50 and 59 years old, has some level of primary school. His main income source derives from farming. He selected social cohesion as an outcome and valued it as a very good result based on his experience.*

**A bad circumstance**

“During the past three (3) years, I have been ill - I suffered from wool hernia. I couldn’t heal myself because I didn’t have any money. I couldn’t work either because of the illness. My wife had to go to the market to sell to take care of the children and me. It wasn’t easy. Then a cousin of mine who saw my suffering had helped me pay for the hospital expenses, a lot of money had been spent, and finally I had undergone surgery. After the surgery, I spent six months without work and my wife continued to take care of us with the help of her family. She tried to feed us, clothe us and help the children to continue their studies. After my recovery, I had to take over. I had to use my physical and financial resources (hoe and machete) to go to work. I am a farmer. When the rainy season comes, I work half of the time on the land I have used. Sometimes I go to work in a friend’s fields and then I get paid for the day. Since then, this is how I live with it in order to support my family.”  
(Narrative code 1922)

The physical well-being is almost in between of both extremes with a **very slight tendency towards the more negative** area of the slider (median = 0.45).

**Figure 33: Neutral sustainable development outcomes**

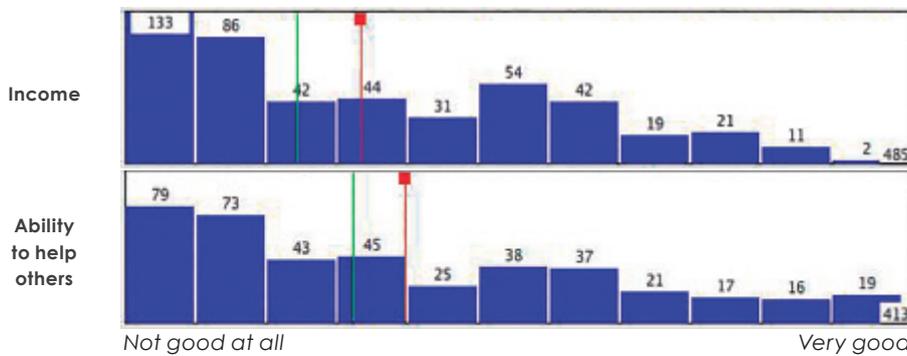


**Very slight tendency towards a negative impact in participants’ well-being:**

- Physical well-being (0.45)

The aspects that have been **affected negatively** as a result of the experience the respondents shared are:

**Figure 34: Negative sustainable development outcomes**



**Rather negative impact in participants’ well-being:**

- Income (0.23)
- Ability to help others (0.29)

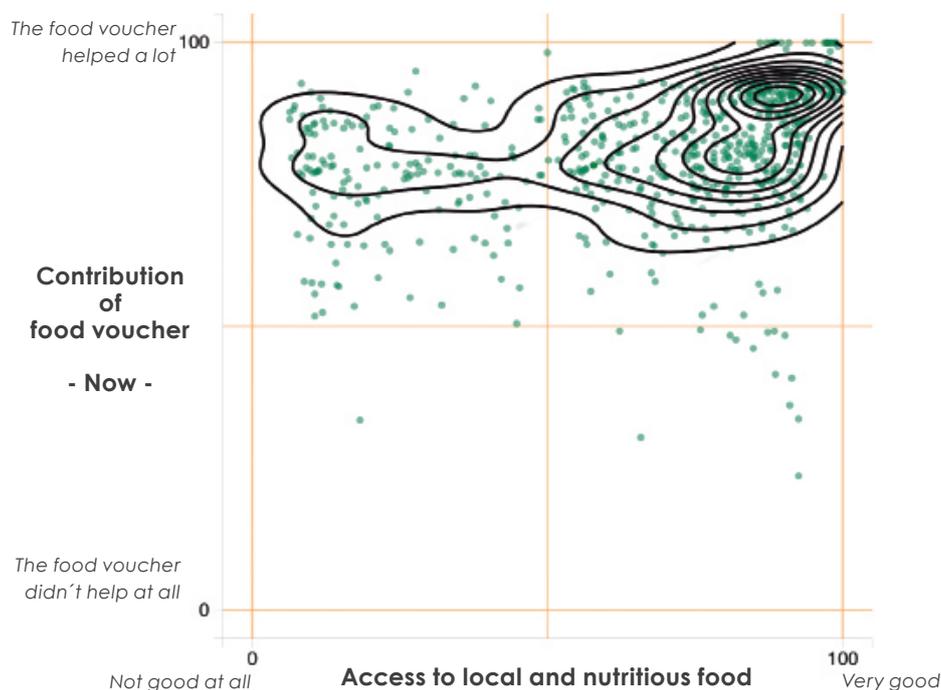
## 2.4.2. Outcomes and the contribution of food vouchers

In the following graphs, the outcomes of the experiences of the respondents are being associated with the contribution of the Kore Lavi food voucher.

The percentages that will be presented refer to all the experiences in one of the four specific fields of the canvas. This way, general trends can be identified, but with the contour map we can become even more precise in which part of the correspondent field the strongest pattern can be found or if there is no specific pattern at all. The closer the lines of the contour maps the higher is the concentration of experiences in this area.

This first graph is bigger than the following in order to present the labels of both axis, but the size does not mean that this outcome is more important than the others.

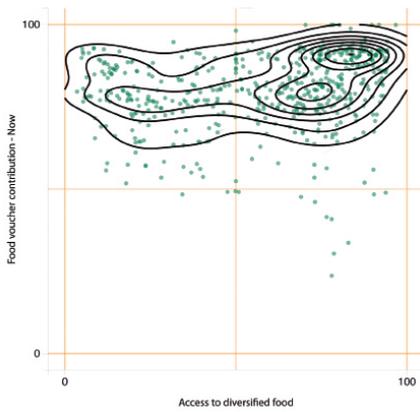
**Figure 35: Access to local and nutritious food and food voucher contribution**



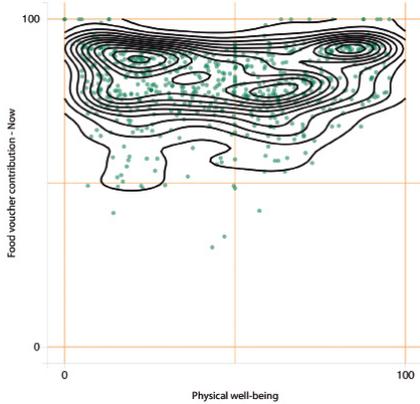
When looking at the above graph, one can observe that **74%** of the 659 respondents who selected “**access to local and nutritious food**” as an outcome of the experience, are concentrated in the upper right corner valuating it as a rather **positive change**. This confirms the fact that the respondents had access to local and nutritious food largely **because of the Kore Lavi food vouchers**.

The upper left corner regroups **24%** of the respondents that said that their access to local and nutritious food has not been improved; but at the same time recognized the contribution of Kore Lavi food vouchers.

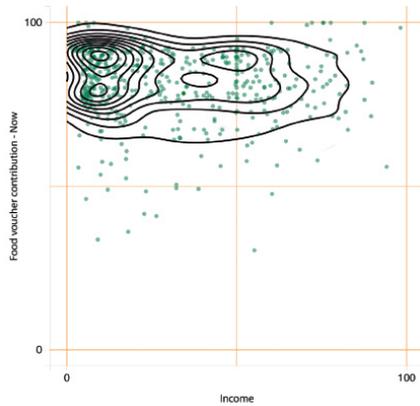
**Figure 36: Access to diversified food and food voucher contribution**



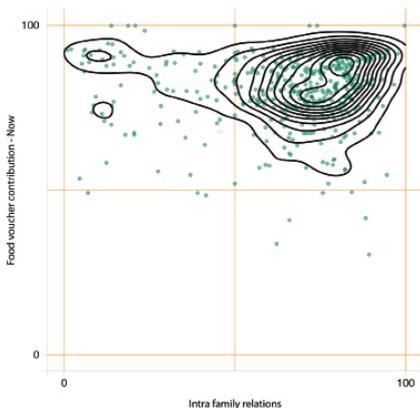
**Figure 37: Physical well-being and food voucher contribution**



**Figure 38: Income and food voucher contribution**



**Figure 39: Intra family relations and food voucher contribution**



With regards to access to diversified food, the following statistics are generated:

- **62%** of 528 respondents who selected this outcome, confirmed to have had access to diversified food and that the Kore Lavi food vouchers were quite helpful.
- **35%** still do not have a good access to local and nutritious food; but admit that the Kore Lavi food vouchers are very helpful.
- **2%** said that their access to local and nutritious food has improved; but not because of the Kore Lavi food vouchers..

In the case of **physical well-being** – as indicated in the graph – two strong patterns are found in both the upper right and left corners.

- **43%** against 55% from 641 respondents said that as a result of their difficult experience, their wellbeing was positive and all of them concurred that the Kore Lavi food vouchers offered a valuable contribution.

As the study revealed before, the impact on **income** was rather negative for the respondents and their households.

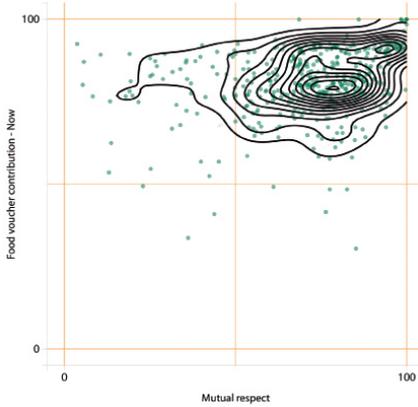
- **76%** of the 485 respondents mentioned that the **income deteriorated** quite a lot.
- Only **22%** perceived the changes a little bit **more positively**.

For all of them, the food voucher contribution was rather very positive.

The experiences strengthened the intra family relations, probably due to the need to cope with the shock.

- **80%** of the 474 respondents experienced rather positive changes with respect to the intra family relations and valued the contribution of food vouchers as also as very helpful.
- The 18% of respondents in the upper left corner experienced a rather negative impact in their intra family relations and appreciated the contribution of the food voucher.

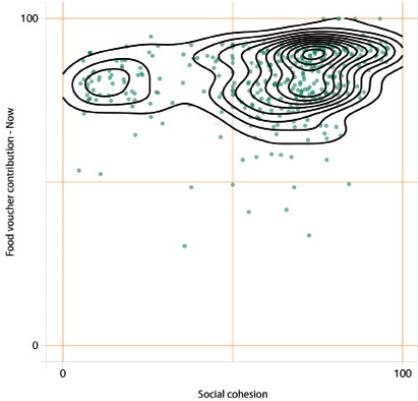
**Figure 40: Mutual respect and food voucher contribution**



The pattern related to mutual respect is very similar to the one we observed in the case of intra family relations.

- **85%** of 439 respondents who identified mutual respect as a result of the experience, are concentrated in the upper right field.
- Only **13%** of the respondents who selected this outcome perceived rather negative experiences and found the food voucher very helpful to face the situation.

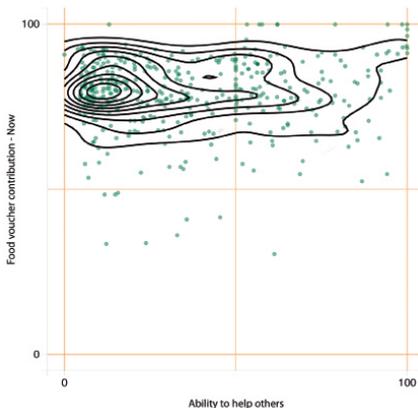
**Figure 41: Social cohesion and food voucher contribution**



In the case of social cohesion, **73%** from the 366 respondents who identified changes with regards to this aspect, highlights quite positive outcomes of the experiences they went through. They also expressed that the food voucher was helpful to face the difficult situation.

At the left upper corner, there can be observed a smaller pattern of respondent who experienced negative results with regards to social cohesion, but appreciated the food voucher as quite helpful.

**Figure 42: Ability to help others and food voucher contribution**



413 respondents mentioned that their ability to help others experienced changes due to the difficult situations they faced.

- **68%** perceived their ability as negatively affected and valued the contribution of the food voucher as rather helpful.
- The experiences of the remaining **30%** in the upper right corner had a positive impact in the ability to help others. The contribution of the food vouchers was very helpful.

Resilience is a complex nonlinear process. We saw before that the shocks that affected more respondents are related to **illness and death**. 55% from 641 respondents mentioned that their **physical well-being** was rather slightly negatively impacted. In addition to the negative impact on income, new illnesses (shocks) can be triggered. This can become a trend which will be reinforced and might provoke a **vicious circle** for an important group of beneficiaries leading them to a collapsing pathway trajectory. That means more food insecurity and an even higher illness and death rate.

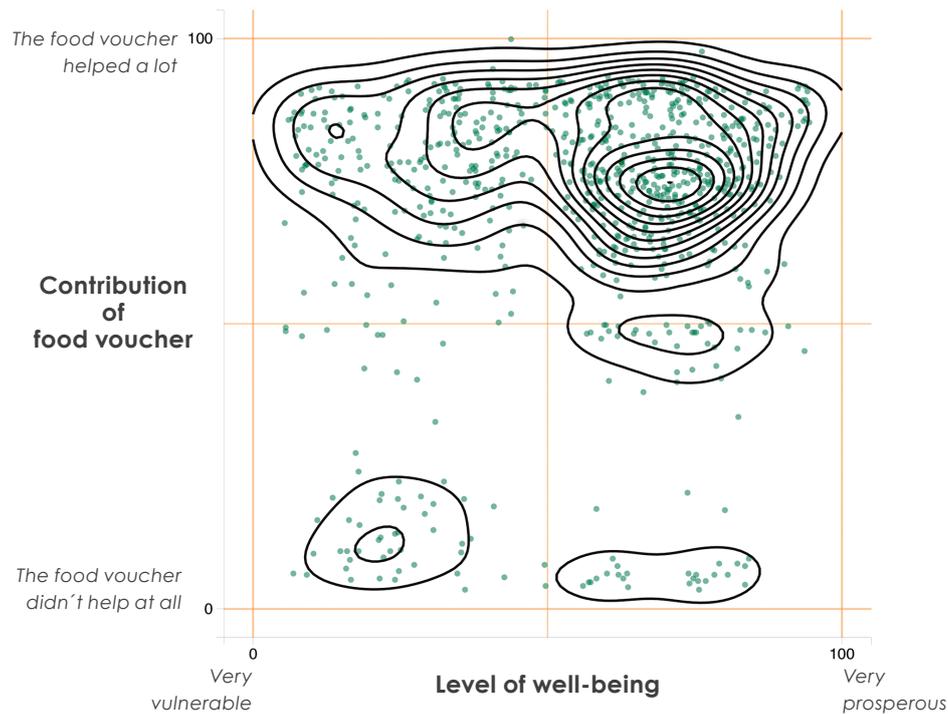
### 2.4.3. Level of well-being along the pathway and food voucher contribution

The respondents were asked to evaluate their general **wellbeing** at each of the following moments of the experience they shared: before the experience, immediately after, sometime after and now.

At the same time they appreciated the **external intervention** by Kore Lavi specifically related to the degree of the **food voucher's contribution**.

The combination of both variables provides the following patterns:

**Figure 43: Level of well-being and food voucher contribution - before**



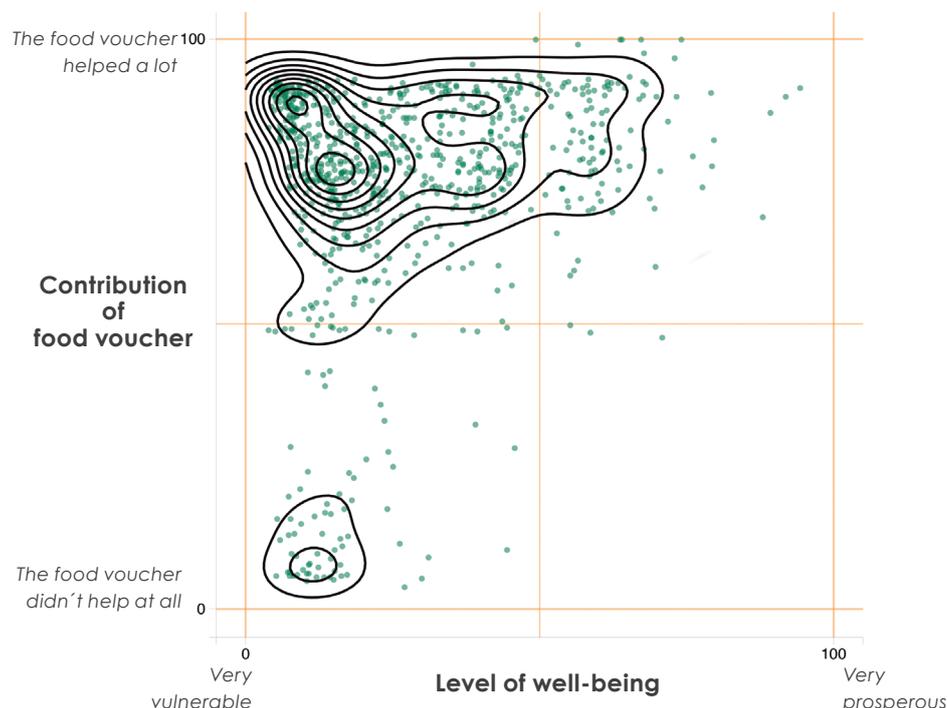
Before the shock or stressor occurred we can see a strong pattern which shows that:

- participants felt quite prosperous and
- the food voucher helped them rather a lot.

At the same time there is an important group that felt rather vulnerable and the food voucher helped them to survive.

Two minor groups say that the food voucher didn't help or only very little. Some of them felt vulnerable and others prosperous.

**Figure 44: Level of well-being and food voucher contribution - immediately after**

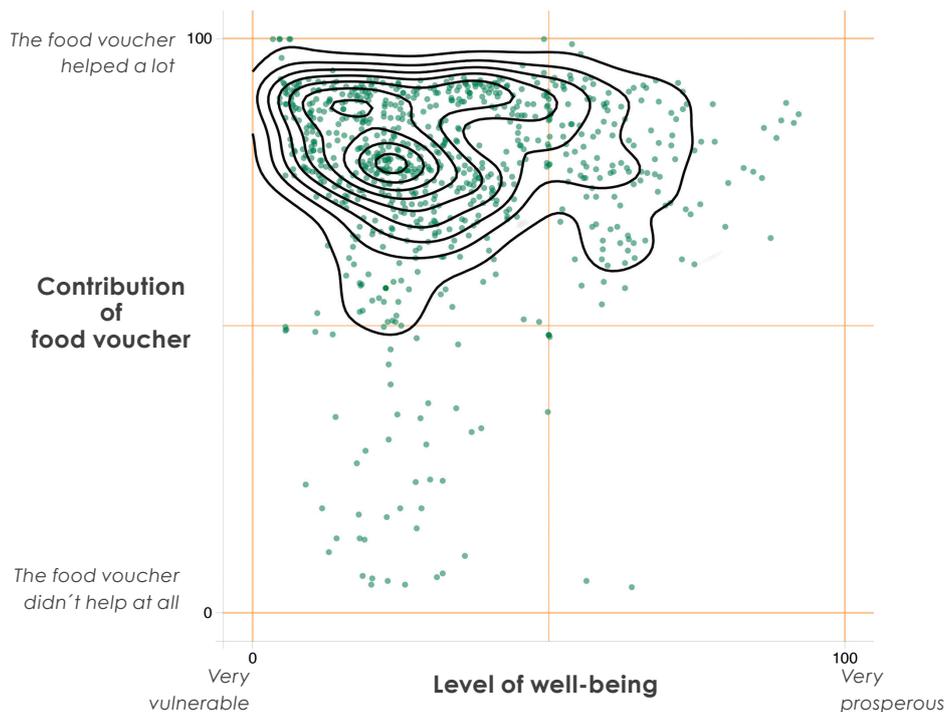


Immediately after the shock or stressor occurred, we identify a new pattern:

- participants felt rather very vulnerable and
- the food voucher continued helping them rather a lot.

There is one group that says that they felt very vulnerable but even so the food voucher helped them only very little.

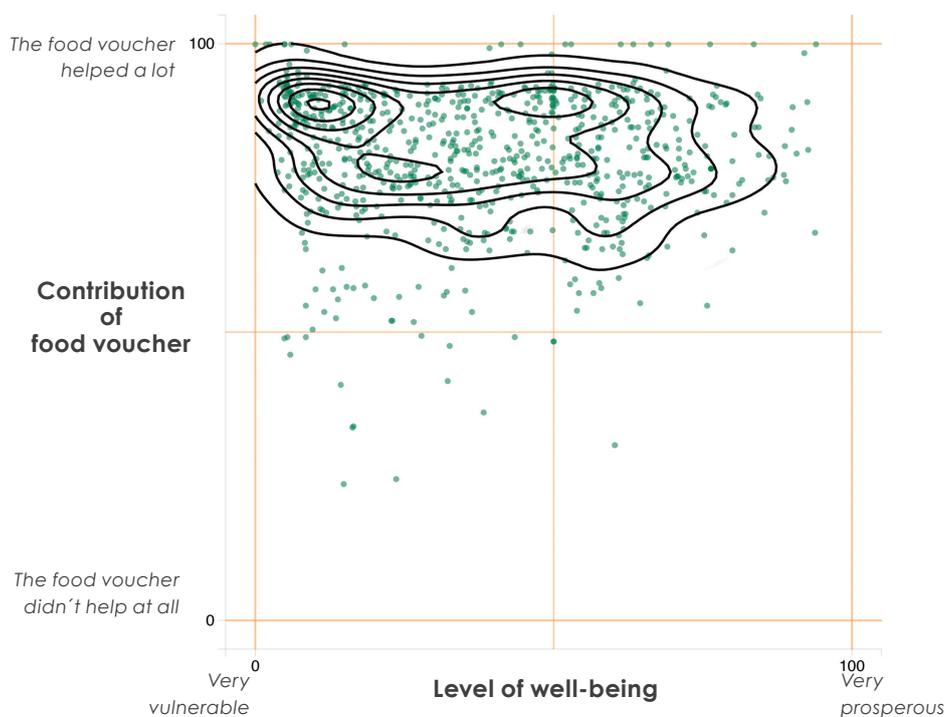
**Figure 45: Level of well-being and food voucher contribution - some time after**



Sometime after the shock or stressor occurred the pattern still remains in the same area, but the people begin to recover

The previous group in the left bottom corner got dissolved and the contribution of the food voucher seem to be more important for them at this stage.

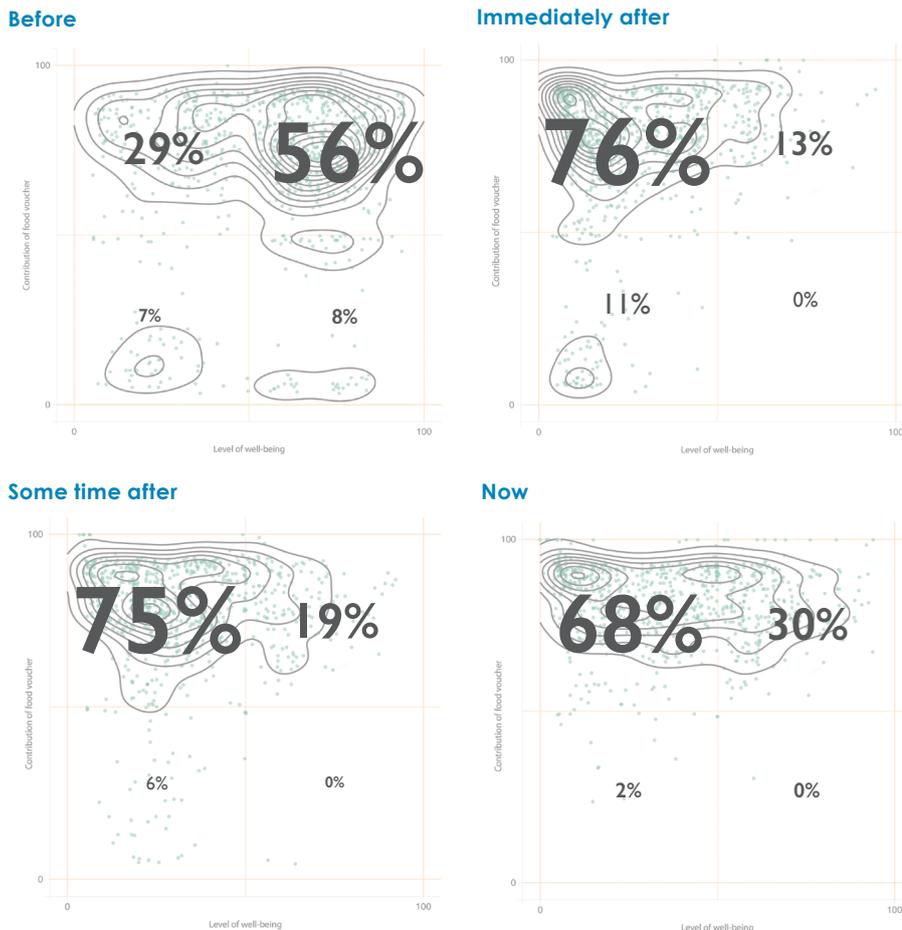
**Figure 46: Level of well-being and food voucher contribution - now**



Even when recovery has begun, there is still an important group at the left top corner that remains stuck in a quite vulnerable stage.

More and more participants give the contribution of food voucher a higher relevance.

**Figure 47:**  
**Level of well-being and food voucher contribution at the four key moments in %**



**Before** the shock or stressor provoked the difficult situation, 56% felt rather prosperous and evaluated that the food voucher helped a lot.

29% of the respondents found themselves in a more vulnerable situation; but still value the contribution of the food voucher.

There were two groups for those the voucher's contribution was very few, one of them felt rather prosperous (8%), the other one rather vulnerable (7%).

**Immediately after** the shock, 41% of respondents moved towards the upper left field where the study found 76% of respondents who perceived themselves rather vulnerable and considering the food voucher contribution quite important.

In addition, the group that felt quite prosperous before, even with only a little help provided by the food vouchers (8%), moved towards the both left fields where the respondents felt more vulnerable than prosperous. That might be a reason why the group in the lower left corner increased from 7% to 11%.

**Sometime after** the shock, 75% still remains in the upper left corner moving very slightly towards a little bit more prosperous state. The group at the more prosperous side of the canvas increased from 13% to 19%.

5% of respondents that valued before the food vouchers contribution as very little moved towards the upper fields which means that they appreciated the voucher support received at this moment more than before.

At the **present moment**, a very important group of 68% still feels rather vulnerable than prosperous and valuating the contribution of the vouchers as quite important. At the same time the group of respondents at the more prosperous field increased from 19% to 30%. 98% of participants perceived at the moment of the data collection that the food voucher helped them rather a lot. Only 2% remains in the lower left corner.

#### Level of well-being

The participants perceived their well-being after the shock occurred rather vulnerable:

- 36% before the experience
- 87% immediately after
- 81% some time after
- 70% now.

At the present moment, 70% of the 790 participants feel highly vulnerable. The end of the Kore Lavi program means an important challenge for them.

#### Contribution of food voucher

The participants evaluated that the food voucher helped them a lot during the 4 moments in the following way:

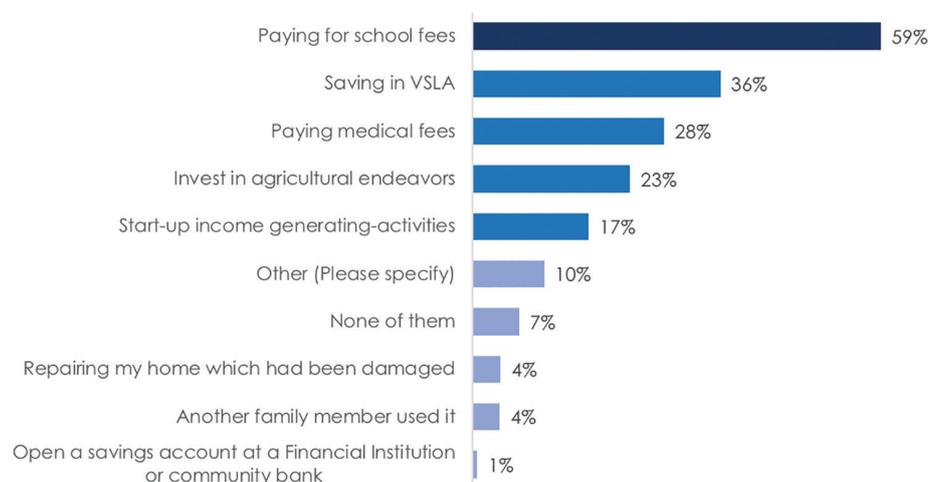
- 85% before the experience
- 89% immediately after
- 94% some time after
- 98% now.

The contribution of the food voucher is perceived as very important by participants.

## 2.4.4. Indirect contribution of the food voucher

One of the learning questions of the study aimed at understanding the indirect contribution of the food voucher on the living conditions of the social safety net beneficiaries. The program wanted to find out how the money saved by the beneficiaries – thanks to the food vouchers – are spent.

**Figure 48: Indirect contribution of the food voucher**



As per the aforementioned graph, 59% of the 790 respondents used their saving to pay school fees. It is therefore obvious that “education” is one of the top priorities of the program’s beneficiaries and Kore Lavi indirectly contributes to that. It has been mentioned in various narratives that certain shocks and stressors have significantly affected the capacities of the parents to send their kids to school. This is basically coherent to the current status of the education in Haiti – described in the text below.

“Between 1990 and 2015, Haiti experienced modest improvement of 20.8% in the country’s Human Development Index (HDI), increasing life expectancy at birth from 54.6 years to 63.1 years and mean years of schooling from 2.7 years to 5.2 years.<sup>6</sup> Despite these improvements, Haiti currently ranks as 168 out of 189 countries on the HDI with three-quarters of Haitians living on less than USD \$2 per day, and half of the population earning less than USD \$1 per day.

Poverty cripples’ everyday life for most Haitians as people do not have ready access to food, water, sanitation, healthcare or quality education. Haiti’s illiteracy rate is nearly 40% and the country suffers from one of the highest levels of chronic food insecurity in the world, with more than half of its total population continually facing hunger and 22% of children chronically malnourished.

Underlying causes of this situation include frequent natural disasters and extreme poverty. Haiti ranks fourth among the countries most affected by extreme weather events in the 2019 Climate Risk Index.<sup>7</sup> Haiti’s long history of political turmoil, under-investment in social services, continuing exchange rate volatility, stagnant economic growth, lack of economic opportunities, and gender inequality have led to a declining gross national income per capita. Despite improvements in enrollment, access to quality education remains limited. More than 85% of primary schools are privately managed by non-governmental organizations (NGO), churches, communities, or for-profit operators.

**Kore Lavi contributes indirectly to one of the household’s main priority: education.**

**Chronic food security, health, education and climate risk are highly interrelated and affects the general development of the country.**

6 USAID. 2017. USAID/Haiti Strategic Framework, 2018–2020; pg 3.

7 Global Climate Risk Index: <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/16046>

Primary school enrollment is estimated at 75% and the average Haitian aged 25 or older has fewer than 5 years of schooling. Approximately 75% of children cannot read two words of connected text by the end of first grade.

Teacher absenteeism is a major issue due to inconsistent payment of salaries, which places an economic burden on teachers who frequently go long periods without payment.

The national budget allocated to education is insufficient, supporting the schooling of only 30% of children. This leads to limited resources allocated by Government of Haiti (GoH) for relevant and high-quality school materials, including textbooks and other reading resources.

Most children enter school at 7.8 years (legal compulsory age is 6). Most schools do not track dropouts or have dropout prevention systems. Only 58% of children who enroll in first grade will reach sixth grade and only 29% will reach the final year of upper secondary. About 10% of children repeat and between two and six percent drop out of each primary grade. While the 2017 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) showed increases in enrollment rates from 50% in 2006 to 83% in 2012, exclusion remains strong and 320,000 children aged 6–15 were still out of school in 2015. Around 4% of primary school students (958,707) in 2014/15 were considered at risk of dropping out of school." (see all sources at the Literature chapter)

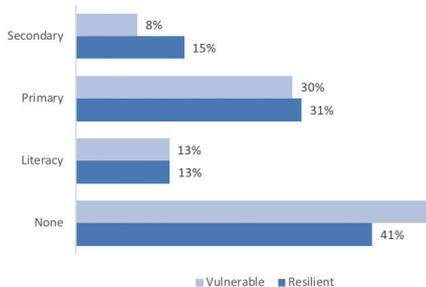
The average household size is 5.5 according to Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatique (IHSI). If we assume in each household lives at least one child at school-age, then we could deduce that Kore Lavi has been contributing at least to the education of 10,028. children (59%. of 16,997 active beneficiaries).

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**Low governmental investment in education vs. high contribution and dependency on private stakeholders**

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**Figure 49:**  
**Difference between resilient and vulnerable respondents respect their level of education**



Education also seems to make a difference between respondents who follow resilient or vulnerable pathways as you can see in the following graph. 46% of respondents who followed resilient pathways have attended primary or secondary education versus 38% of people who followed vulnerable pathways. 41% resilient respondents said that they have no formal education versus 48% of vulnerable people.

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**Access to education makes a difference:**

- 46% of resilient participants versus 38% of vulnerable respondents have attended either primary or secondary school level.
  - 15% of resilient respondents versus 8% of vulnerable ones achieved some level of secondary education.
- 

Education is an important topic that should be addressed by the different stakeholders - governmental institutions, Kore Lavi partners and other organizations. Access to education would also contribute to people’s resilience in the long term. This is important to be considered at the level of public policies.

Here a woman’s voice. The shock affected her possibility to send the children to school. Thanks to the food voucher, she invested the money she could save to pay the school fees. This way the food voucher contributed to cope with the difficult situation she shared in her story:

**Drought**

*“Since the end of 2018, it has not rained. Because of this situation, farmers could not work. I am a merchant and after this drought, I found nothing to buy and sell. We were hungry; I could not pay for school for the children. We could not live well. Sometimes I buy on credit to feed the family and Kore Lavi helped me a lot, because every month - thanks to this help - I could save a few gourdes. As there is rain now, it is better.” (Narrative code : I338)*

Another important indirect contribution of the food voucher is related to the habit to **save money in the VSLA groups (36%)**, so it fosters as well a new culture related to the management of money and strengthens the safety net at the community level.

28% of the beneficiaries used the saving to **pay medical fees**. Considering the high incidence of health- and death- related shocks and stressors, Kore Lavi indirectly compensates and mitigates the lack of the public health system through the food voucher system.

At the same time the indirect contribution fosters the **development of the local economy** as 23% of the beneficiaries invested in agricultural endeavors and 17% in start-up income generating activities.

---

### **Main indirect food voucher contributions:**

- *Payment of school fees (59%)*
  - *Saving money in the VSLA (36%)*
  - *Payment of medical fees (28%)*
  - *Investment in agricultural endeavors (23%)*
  - *Start-up income generating activities (17%)*
- 

### **Food voucher contribution to education and economy**

*The following story is told by a woman between 40 and 49 years old who achieved some level of primary school. The main household provider is a woman and her main income source derives from petty merchandizing. She's living in the rural area of Upper Artibonite.*

*She mentioned as indirect contributions of the food voucher:*

- *Paying for school fees.*
- *Start-up incoming generating activities*

#### **A complicated period**

*"Last year was hard for us because we had a serious rain deficit - which negatively affected our agricultural activities. There had been no harvest possible. We did not invest in agriculture by fear of losing money. Access to fresh water was so difficult that we could not shower regularly. My husband was paralyzed ten years ago. I didn't have anyone to count on during these times of hardness. I assumed both the mother and father roles. I have five children who had to - among others - be fed and sent to school, etc... I did not have the necessary means.*

*Added to that, I lost a brother in the same year. Since then I had the feeling of losing my brain. We had suffered a lot from hunger. But thanks to Kore Lavi it was less serious. This program has helped us a lot. Sometimes we had to get three of us inside the house (my children and I) to put our financial resources together to be able to cook. For that my children had to sell chickens that they received as gifts. I myself had to take out loans from my friends to start selling drinking water per bag (unit). By doing this, I had a positive result. The money invested got multiplied." (Narrative code 2019)*

## 2.5. Coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies

In the previous chapters, the reader could observe the shocks and stressors that triggered the difficult situations, which pathways the respondents followed as a consequence of these events and which positive and/or negative changes they faced. In this section, the **actions** the respondents took to **cope** with these events, to **adapt** and to **transform** their realities will be analyzed.

### 2.5.1. Concepts

#### Coping actions

**Coping actions** refer to the actions taken by individuals, households, communities or higher-level systems to immediately minimize the exposure to stressors and shocks and to recover quickly from their effects.

Below some examples of coping actions:

- Protection actions: find a safe place; evacuate; ask for psychological support; work to get goods, services or cash; migrate temporarily; get a temporary shelter; get a semi-permanent shelter; access clean water.
- Collective actions: ask for support from family, relatives and friends; ask for support from governmental, religious or civil society organizations; get organized to coordinate and work with governmental, religious or civil society organizations; get organized to engage in advocacy processes.
- Assets' use actions: use savings; eat less meals per day; reduce diet diversity; sell assets; reduce expenditures; borrow money; reduce mobilization

#### Adaptive responses

**Adaptive responses** refer to the proactive and informed responses taken by individuals, households, communities and higher-level systems to adapt to longer-term trends and changing conditions in order to minimize negative consequences of stressors and shocks, or to exploit positive opportunities.

You are doing something to cope with the same challenging situations in the future, for example:

- Planting some cacao to replace coffee (diversifying)
- Building a house that is resistant to earthquakes.

Prevention responses: early warning; learning from past experience; establishment and enforcement of prevention measures; establishing safety nets.

Risk management responses: water harvesting; plant drought/flooding resistant crops; plant drought/pest/diseases resistant seed varieties; restore soils; restore water sources; develop long-term market relations; build social networks.

Changes in livelihood strategies responses: agriculture intensification; increase or decrease of agriculture production areas; diversify agriculture production; engage in collective marketing or new markets; add value to primary production; develop agro-entrepreneurial initiatives; diversify to nonagricultural activities; get off-farm paid employment; migrate permanently; return from migration.

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*Coping actions refer to the actions taken by individuals, households, communities or higher-level systems to immediately minimize the exposure to stressors and shocks and to recover quickly from their effects.*

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*Adaptive responses refer to the proactive and informed responses taken by individuals, households, communities and higher-level systems to adapt to longer-term trends and changing conditions in order to minimize negative consequences of stressors and shocks, or to exploit positive opportunities.*

---

For this study had been prioritized two groups of coping actions and adaptive responses related to:

- consumption, finances, social support and migration,
- agriculture production and income generative activities.

The respondents were asked to select the coping actions and adaptive responses they used in their experience and to valuate each one.

## Transformative strategies

The capacity to progress or to overcome shocks and stressors can also be divided in three stages:

- First I change myself, I change my individual behavior (how I change... my human agency.
- Second level of change: if I change together with others (how we change the way we relate)
- Third level: we change our organizations, people get changed (how we change the way we are organized and influence others)

Implementing transformative strategies means also to be better prepared as a group and to be able to influence the private and public sector and/or other civil society organizations.

**Transformative strategies** refer to the implemented strategies to create an enabling environment through investment in good governance, infrastructure, formal and informal social protection mechanisms, basic service delivery, and policies/regulations that constitute the conditions necessary for systemic change.

Here some examples related to transformations on different levels:

Transformation in **individual behaviors**:

How program participants, family members or other people's attitudes and behaviors change to be better prepared in the long-term to face shocks and stressors.

Transformation in **collective cultural beliefs, values and practices**:

- Practice of adequate hygiene behaviors
- Practice of adequate nutritional behaviors
- Practice of prevention behaviors
- Restoration and protection of natural resources
- Agriculture practices
- Development of life skills

For example: The belief that humans are co-responsible for climate change and being aware that it is not an issue related to destiny, the way we manage - peacefully or by repression - our conflicts; the predominance of traditional, conventional and/or sustainable agriculture practices; the belief that we are able to influence others; the practice of corruption is not seen as "normal" any more, etc.; but also the transformation of beliefs that may establish some barriers for change like negative social norms related to nutrition, production or witchcraft, etc.

Collective cultural beliefs, values and practices have a very strong influence on individual behaviors.

Other areas of transformation are related to:

- religious and spiritual values and beliefs
- social and organizational norms and practices
- civil society practices
- private business practices:
- public support, policies and practices:
- donor practices.

**This study** explored **individual behavior changes** related to **food consumption**.

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*Transformative strategies refer to the implemented strategies to create an enabling environment through investment in good governance, infrastructure, formal and informal social protection mechanisms, basic service delivery, and policies/regulations that constitute the conditions necessary for systemic change.*

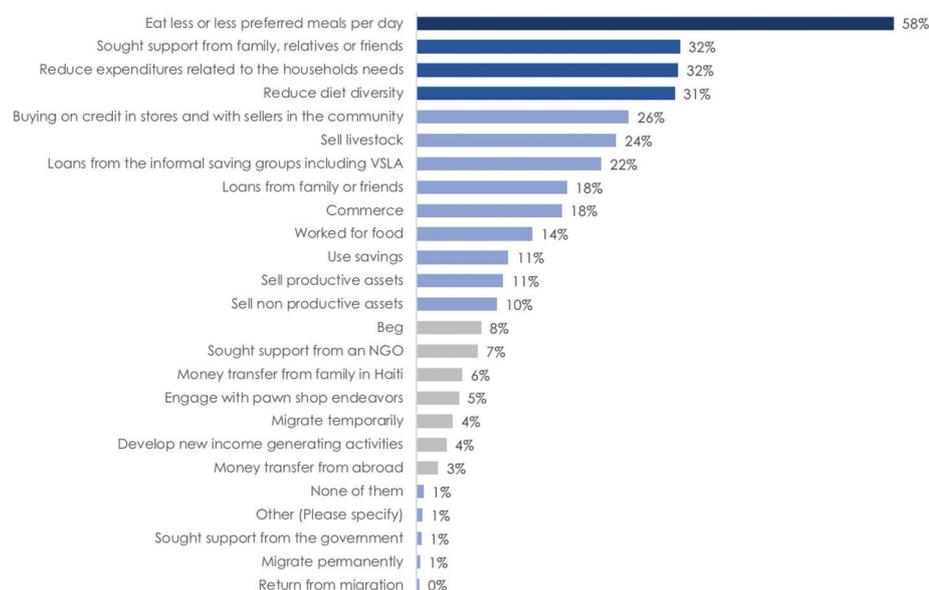
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## 2.5.2. Coping actions and adaptive responses

### Consumption, finances, social support and migration

The following graph shows the coping action and adaptive responses that the respondents adopted after facing the shocks and stressors in their experiences:

**Figure 50: Coping actions and adaptive responses related to consumption, finances, social support and migration**



**58%** of the 790 respondents **eat less or less preferred meals per day** in order to cope with the shock or stressor that they faced. On one hand, this implies a huge **impact on household members' food security, nutrition and health** and on the other hand, it confirms the **relevance of the food voucher system provided by Kore Lavi** to mitigate the negative impact on people's lives. Furthermore, from those 58%, the study found out that 212 reduced their diet diversity, 213 reduced expenditures related to other household needs and 124 (16% of all respondents) used the three coping actions related to reduction of consumption.

The second most mentioned coping action "seeking support from family, relatives or friends" confirms the **relevance of intra family relations and social cohesion**. This highlights the significance of family and community members for the most vulnerable people as part of their safety net.

With regards to other stakeholders, the study identified that only 7% of the respondents sought support from NGO and just 1% asked the government for support. Further inquiries should be done to identify what influences such a low response related to the governmental support of government.

Another important group of coping actions is related to **loans and credits**: buying on credit in stores and buying from sellers in the community (24%), taking loans from the informal saving groups including VSLA (22%), loans from family or friends (18%) and engaging with pawn shop endeavors (5%). The **use of savings** was selected by 11% of the respondents to manage the challenging situation that they faced.

Another group of coping actions is related to the **sale of assets**: livestock (24%), productive assets (11%) and nonproductive assets (10%). The risk of these actions consists in the **loss of livelihoods** that are essential for the households' subsistence. It might be a **coping action that resolves in a short term**, but taking into account the reality of the Kore Lavi program's beneficiaries, generally they don't count on sufficient assets to be able to sell assets and restock them quickly.

#### Reduction of consumption

Three of the four most used coping actions are related to reduction of consumption:

- Eat less or less preferred meals per day (58%)
- Reduce expenditures related to the household needs (32%)
- Reduce diet diversity (31%)

124 ate less, reduced diet diversity AND expenditures (16% of all)

#### Important coping action areas:

- Support from family, relatives and friends
- Loans and credits
- Sale of assets

#### Negative coping mechanisms:

- According to the FAO, 55.2% of the population has adopted negative coping mechanisms (2019)
- The respondents used mainly negative coping mechanisms.

The more shocks and stressors families face, the higher the probability that they will not be able to recover and restock their assets.

It is also interesting to observe the actions related to **remittances**: money transfer from family in Haiti and money transfer from abroad (3%) are quite low. **Migration** also does not seem to be an important option for the Kore Lavi beneficiaries: temporary migration (4%) and permanent migration (1%). A reasonable explanation may be that the respondents are in such a bad economic condition that they do not even have the means to migrate or the family members who already migrated are as well fighting to survive abroad. As migration in general is a huge challenge, it might be interesting to explore information provided by other studies to understand the migration and remittances patterns. Who migrates and who does not and what does this mean for the Haiti's future?

We can also identify some **promising adaptive responses: commerce (18%)** and the development of **new income generating activities (4%)** can be considered as **emerging practices** that should be explored further.

#### Adaptive responses:

- **Commerce (18%)**
- **New income generating activities (4%)**

## Women and men cope differently

The following table shows the differences and similarities between women and men to get a better understanding with regard to their preferences and opportunities to cope from a gender sensitive perspective.

**Table 4:**  
**Coping actions and adaptive responses related to consumption, finances, social support and migration - differences between women and men**

Coping actions and adaptive responses	Women	Men	Difference
Eat less or less preferred meals per day	56%	61%	-5%
Reduce diet diversity	29%	37%	-7%
Reduce expenditures related to the households needs	29%	38%	-9%
Sell productive assets	9%	15%	-6%
Sell livestock	20%	34%	-13%
Sell non productive assets	11%	7%	3%
Use savings	10%	14%	-4%
Sought support from family, relatives or friends	34%	26%	9%
Money transfer from family in Haiti	6%	5%	1%
Money transfer from abroad	3%	2%	1%
Loans from family or friends	18%	18%	0%
Engage with pawn shop endeavors	5%	7%	-2%
Buying on credit in stores and with sellers in the community	27%	22%	5%
Loans from the informal saving groups including VSLA	21%	26%	-5%
Sought support from an NGO	7%	9%	-2%
Sought support from the government	0%	2%	-2%
Worked for food	14%	13%	1%
Beg	9%	5%	4%
Develop new income generating activities	3%	6%	-3%
Commerce	20%	12%	8%
Migrate temporarily	3%	8%	-5%
Migrate permanently	1%	0%	0%
Return from migration	0%	1%	-1%
None of them	1%	1%	0%
Other (Please specify)	1%	1%	0%

#### Women and men cope differently:

- *More men reduced food consumption and expenditures*
- *More men sold livestock and productive assets; more women sold non productive assets.*
- *Women sought more the support from family, relatives or friends.*
- *Women rely more on commerce than men.*
- *Men tend to migrate temporarily to cope.*
- *More men used loans from saving groups while more women bought on credit.*
- *More women than men used to beg.*

The study identified some surprising differences between women and men with regard to the way they cope with the different shocks and stressors they faced in their experiences.

More men reduced **expenditures** related to the household needs in general (+9%), but also **food consumption**: eating less and less preferred meals (+5%) and reducing food diversity (+7%).

The differences related to the **sale of assets** pose new questions about the control over assets and the decision-making dynamics in the households. Much more men sold livestock (+13%) and productive assets (+6%) than women while more women sold nonproductive assets (+3%). Below some assumptions that should be explored and contextualized by the Kore Lavi team:

- Women seem to have less control over productive assets and livestock than men.
- Women are more aware about the relevance of productive assets and livestock and try to maintain them even in difficult situations.
- Women have less decision-making power on the use of productive assets and livestock, especially to sell these to get cash.

Women relied more on seeking support from family, relatives or friends (+9%) and begged more (+4%) than men. One explanation might be that it's more difficult for men to approach others as they are considered as the household providers so seeking the support from others can be considered as an indicator that they have failed in their socially constructed "role as men".

What moves a woman to take the decision to sell her livestock? This is one story which illustrates some reasons:

#### Poverty

*"My husband was seriously ill. I took him to the Ennery Hospital to treat him, thinking he was going to recover. Despite all my efforts, unfortunately in December 2017 he died. I had to sell everything I had - our little cattle - to bury him.*

*For the moment, I live in poverty with my children. It's my family that gives me a helping hand. I live with them at my mother's house. I send the children to a local community school in the area. I managed to sell water in bags through the streets of the city.*

*I'm not doing too well. It has been nine days since one of my children had a surgery on one of her breasts. She had been cared for by people at the Cuban hospital. We didn't spend much. A cousin helped me to buy the drugs.*

*For the time being, it is thanks to Kore Lavi's program that I live, otherwise me and the children would starve to death." (Narrative code 1917)*

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#### Sale of assets:

- *Increases the vulnerability to face future shocks and stressors of men and women.*
  - *Less women sold assets.*
  - *Further exploration and interventions with regard on control over assets and decision-making dynamics with a gender-sensitive approach are recommended.*
-

## Differences between VSLA and non VSLA members

The table below shows the differences between VSLA and non VSLA members with regard to the coping actions and adaptive responses they used.

**Table 5:**  
**Coping actions and adaptive responses related to consumption and finances**  
**- differences between VSLA and non VSLA members**

Coping actions and adaptive responses	VSLA	Non VSLA	Difference
Eat less or less preferred meals per day	55%	60%	-5%
Reduce diet diversity	30%	32%	-2%
Reduce expenditures related to the households needs	31%	32%	0%
Sell productive assets	10%	11%	0%
Sell livestock	24%	24%	0%
Sell non productive assets	10%	10%	0%
Use savings	12%	11%	1%
Sought support from family, relatives or friends	31%	33%	-1%
Money transfer from family in Haiti	5%	6%	-2%
Money transfer from abroad	2%	3%	-1%
Loans from family or friends	13%	23%	-9%
Engage with pawn shop endeavors	6%	5%	1%
Buying on credit in stores and with sellers in the community	24%	27%	-3%
Loans from the informal saving groups including VSLA	43%	3%	<b>40%</b>
Sought support from an NGO	6%	9%	-3%
Sought support from the government	1%	0%	1%
Worked for food	15%	13%	2%
Beg	6%	10%	-4%
Develop new income generating activities	5%	3%	2%
Commerce	22%	14%	8%
Migrate temporarily	3%	6%	-3%
Migrate permanently	1%	0%	0%
Return from migration	0%	0%	0%
None of them	0%	2%	-2%
Other (Please specify)	1%	1%	0%

In the case of VSLA and non VSLA members, the study found a few very remarkable differences regarding the coping actions that they used.

**43%** of the 381 **VSLA members took loans from the informal saving groups including VSLA**. Even if this huge difference with non VSLA members (3%) was expected, it is quite low considering the assumption that a VSLA member might take advantage of having access to loans from the VSLA in order to cope better with the difficult situation.

This finding raises new questions for further inquiry: How useful the informal saving groups like the VSLA are to cope with the shocks and stressors the respondents faced? Or perhaps the shocks occurred before the respondents joined the VSLA and it rather might have been a trigger to participate?

VSLA members practice more commerce activities to cope (+8%) while they use less loans from family or friends (-9%) than non VSLA respondents.

Non VSLA members used more the reduction of food consumption and begging as coping actions (+ 5% and +4% more than VSLA members) which makes them more vulnerable.

### VSLA members rely more on:

1. Loans from informal saving groups including VSLA (+40%)
2. Commerce (+8%)

### Non VSLA members cope more using the following:

1. Loans from family or friends (+9%)
2. Eating less or less preferred meals per day (+5%)
3. Begging (+4%)

## Differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents

Related to the differences between respondents who followed resilient pathway trajectories and those who followed vulnerable ones, the study identified the following results:

**Table 6:**  
**Coping actions and adaptive responses related to consumption and finances**  
**- differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents**

Coping actions and adaptive responses	Resilient N = 154	Vulnerable N = 636	Difference
Eat less or less preferred meals per day	47%	60%	<b>-14%</b>
Reduce diet diversity	32%	31%	1%
Reduce expenditures related to the households needs	30%	32%	-2%
Sell productive assets	8%	11%	<b>-3%</b>
Sell livestock	20%	25%	<b>-5%</b>
Sell non productive assets	10%	10%	0%
Use savings	8%	12%	<b>-4%</b>
Sought support from family, relatives or friends	23%	34%	<b>-11%</b>
Money transfer from family in Haiti	5%	6%	-1%
Money transfer from abroad	4%	2%	2%
Loans from family or friends	15%	19%	<b>-4%</b>
Engage with pawn shop endeavors	4%	6%	-2%
Buying on credit in stores and with sellers in the community	18%	28%	<b>-10%</b>
Loans from the informal saving groups including VSLA	20%	23%	<b>-3%</b>
Sought support from a NGO	13%	6%	<b>7%</b>
Sought support from the government	1%	1%	0%
Worked for food	8%	15%	<b>-7%</b>
Beg	6%	8%	-2%
Develop new income generating activities	4%	4%	0%
Commerce	21%	17%	<b>5%</b>
Migrate temporarily	6%	4%	<b>3%</b>
Migrate permanently	1%	0%	0%
Return from migration	1%	0%	0%
None of them	0%	1%	-1%
Other (Please specify)	0%	0%	0%

**Resilient participants used less negative coping mechanisms than vulnerable participants:**

1. Eating less or less preferred meals per day (-14%)
2. Buying on credit in stores and from sellers in the community (-10%)
3. Working for food (-7%)
4. Selling livestock (-5%)

**Resilient participants used more positive coping mechanisms than vulnerable participants:**

1. Seeking support from a NGO (+7%)
2. Doing commerce (+5%)

**Vulnerable participants relied much more than resilient ones on**

1. Seeking the support from family, relatives or friends (+11%)

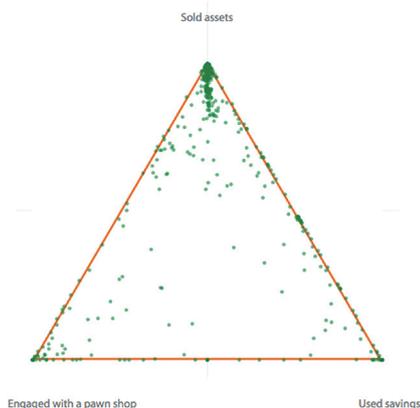
Regarding to coping actions and adaptive responses, it is very important to identify and to be aware which of them are negative or positive coping mechanisms.

Sometimes a coping action can be positive for some people and negative for others depending on the context, the assets and capabilities of the household and other factors.

## Relative importance of financial coping actions

The following triad was designed to identify the relative importance of the three financial coping actions:

**Figure 51:**  
**Financial coping actions**

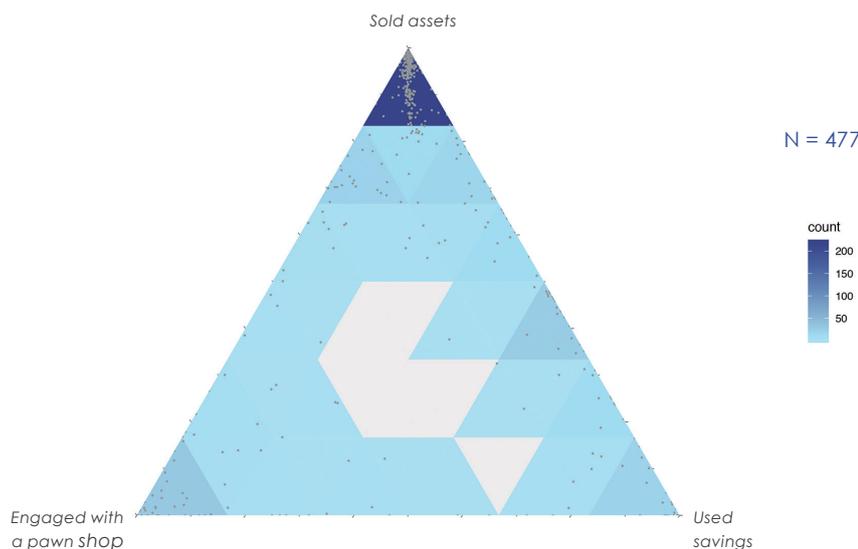


477 (60%) of the 790 respondents answered this question which means that they used at least one of the three coping actions:

- engaging with a pawn shop,
- selling assets and/or
- using savings.

The following graphs help to identify the frequencies of experiences in different areas of the triad. The darker the blue, the higher is the number of dots placed by the respondents at a specific area of the triad.

**Figure 52: Relative importance of financial coping actions**



It can be observed a very **strong pattern** in the corner of “**sold assets**” which has been a very important coping action for a considerable number of beneficiaries. It can also be seen that another group **combined the sale of assets with the use of savings and/or engaging with pawn shops**.

There are also two quite strong groups of respondents who **used mainly their savings or preferred to engage with pawn shops**.

In between **selling assets and using savings** there is another group that **combined both** coping actions more or less equally.

Based on the experience of Kore Lavi staff, engaging with pawn shops generally leads to loss of assets. Selling assets might be a good coping action if respondents would count on enough assets and might have the possibility to restock them quickly. But taking in consideration, the negative effects of the shocks and stressors on income and the fact that - generally spoken - people are facing several shocks at the same time or at least in a short period of time, the probability that they are losing more and more assets and that they do not have the possibility to recover is very high.

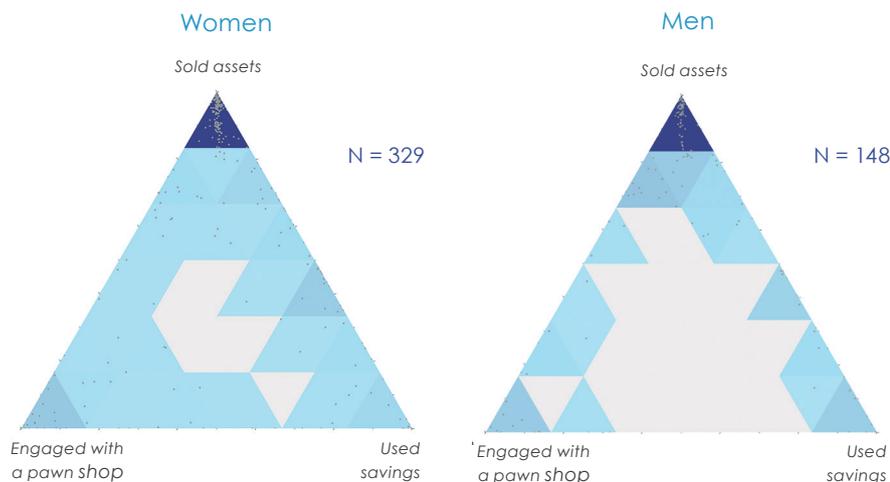
### Financial coping actions:

- *Selling assets is a very important coping action.*
- *People have preferences and rarely combine the three coping actions more or less equally.*
- *40% of the 790 respondents did not use any of these three coping actions.*

## Financial coping actions from gender perspective

The following figure compares financial coping actions of women and men:

**Figure 53: Financial coping actions by gender**



329 (58%) of all female respondents and 148 (68%) of all male respondents reported using at least one of the three coping actions in the experiences they shared.

Both genders show a strong tendency to use sale of assets as a single coping action, and do not seem to be using a combination of strategies. Using savings is the least used strategy for both genders.

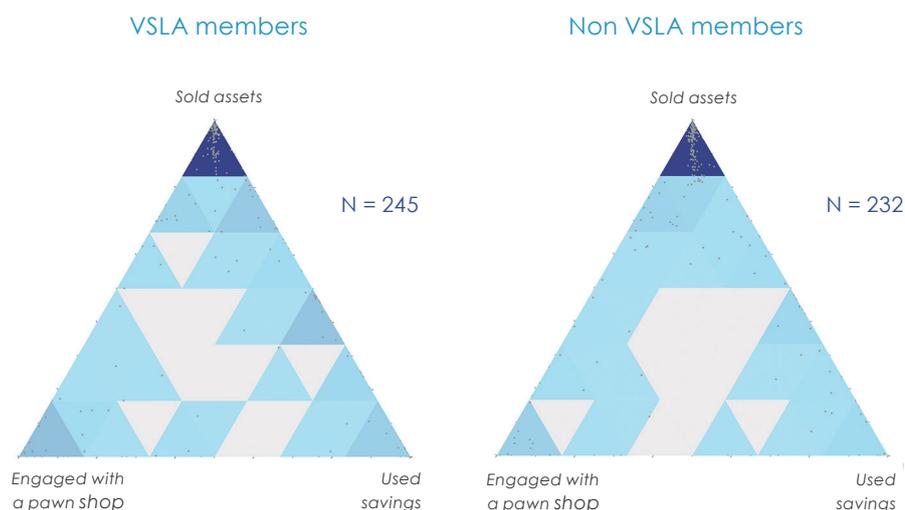
### Financial coping actions by gender:

- 58% of female respondents versus 68% of male respondents used at least one of these three financial coping actions.

## Financial coping actions used by VSLA and non VSLA members

The below figure compares financial coping strategies of VSLA and non VSLA members:

**Figure 54: Financial coping actions by VSLA and non VSLA members**



245 (64%) of VSLA members and 232 (57%) of non VSLA respondents used at least one of the three coping actions in the experiences they shared.

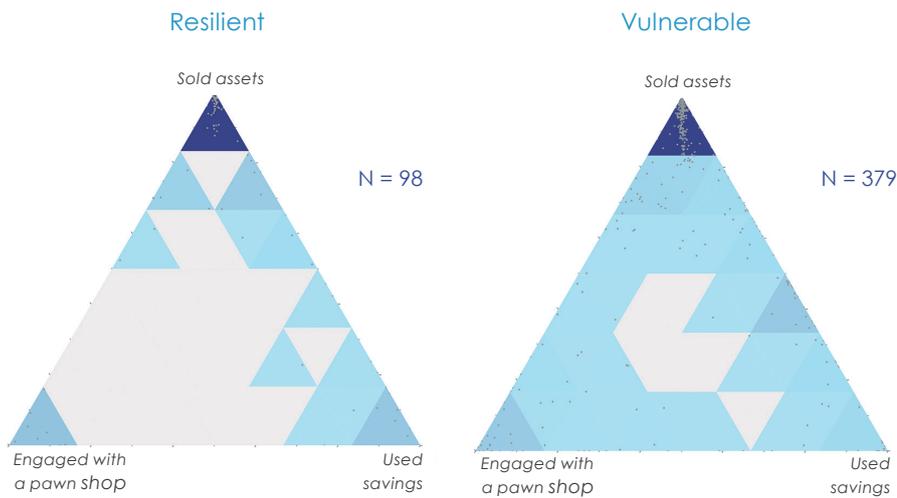
Both groups tend to mostly rely on selling assets as a single coping strategy. At the same time, engaging with a pawn shop and using savings has been reported slightly more by VSLA members.

### Financial coping actions by VSLA and non VSLA members:

- 64% of VSLA members versus 57% of non VSLA members used at least one of these three financial coping actions.

The following figure compares financial coping actions of resilient and vulnerable respondents.

**Figure 55: Financial coping actions by resilient and vulnerable pathways**



98 (64%) of resilient respondents and 379 (60%) of vulnerable respondents provided information about the relative importance of these three coping actions.

Fewer resilient respondents reported using a combination of actions, compared to vulnerable respondents; and more vulnerable respondents tend to engage with a pawn shop or use their savings or a combination of both.

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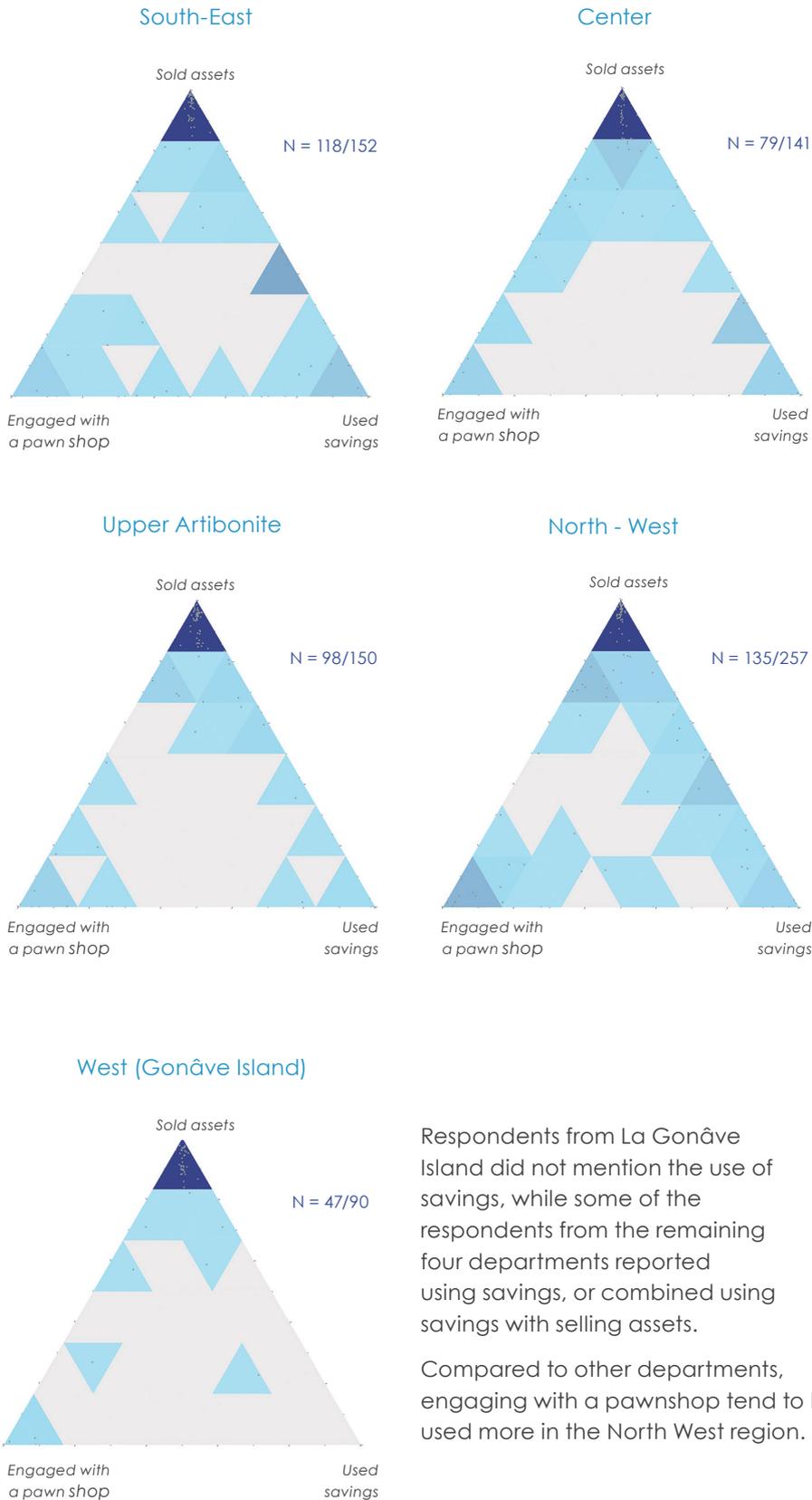
**Financial coping actions by resilient and vulnerable respondents:**

- 64% of resilient respondents and 60% of vulnerable respondents used at least one of these three financial coping actions.
-

## Financial coping actions used by department

Regional cultures often have an impact on the belief systems and behaviors of population. The below figure shows the pattern of responses across the five departments.

**Figure 56: Financial coping actions by department**



Respondents from La Gonave Island did not mention the use of savings, while some of the respondents from the remaining four departments reported using savings, or combined using savings with selling assets.

Compared to other departments, engaging with a pawnshop tend to be used more in the North West region.

**Participants using at least one of these three coping actions by department:**

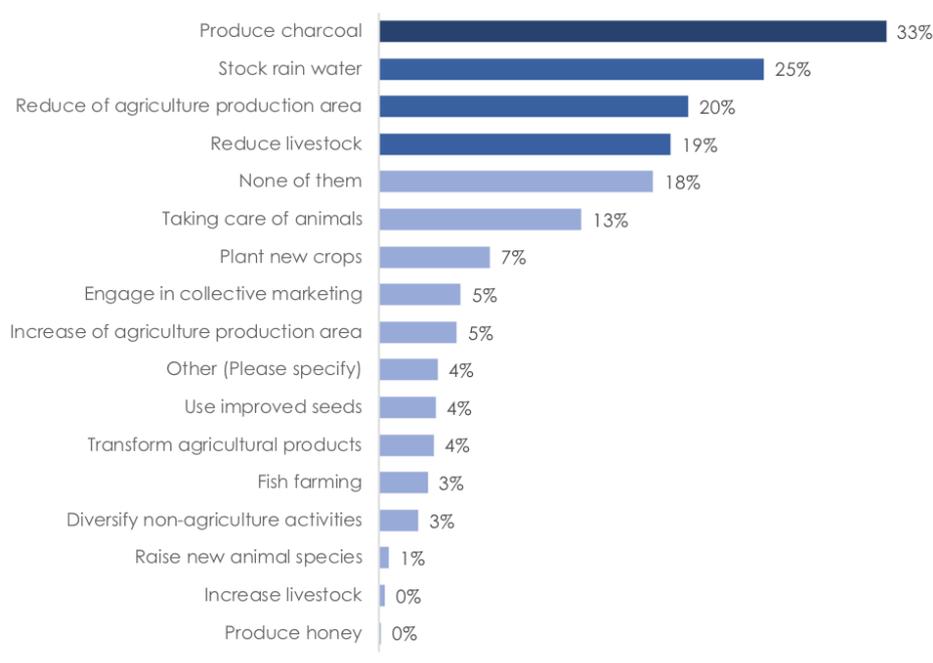
- 78% from South-East's participants
- 56% from Centre
- 65% from Upper Artibonite,
- 53% from North-West,
- 52% from La Gonave Island

The remaining respondents did not use any of these three financial coping actions.

## Adaptive responses related to food production and income generation

The study revealed which of the adaptive responses helped the respondents to deal with the difficult situation:

**Figure 57: Adaptive responses related to food production and income generation**



The relevance of **charcoal production** for the Haitian economy is very well known as the second most important economic sector. Although only 11% of 790 respondents mentioned charcoal production as their main income source, 33% of all respondents rely on it as a coping action to overcome the difficult situation or an adaptive response. At the same time, charcoal production has a negative impact on the local eco-system and climate.

The questions that should be discussed with regards to future interventions are:

- What are the potential impacts of charcoal production on the people, the eco-systems, the country and the climate in a long-term? For example in terms of production of trees for charcoal, but also, how big is the charcoal carbon footprint and which other fuel alternatives should be fostered?
- Which alternative economic activities could be promoted that help the people to cope and adapt?
- What does this mean in terms of building and strengthening livelihoods?

25% of all respondents reported **stocking rain water** as an adaptive response, which is likely to be related to severe and long lasting droughts respondents faced in several departments. The team mentioned several examples related to building of dams, etc. Taking into consideration that droughts happen more frequently than before, future programs should consider promoting and/or facilitating water production and water harvesting practices.

While the top three most frequently chosen responses are **negative coping and adaptive mechanisms** some of the **positive adaptive responses** are also emerging: planting new crops (7%), engaging in collective marketing (5%), using improved seeds (4%), transforming agricultural products (4%), fish farming (3%) and diversifying non-agricultural activities (3%).

In the Haitian context, increasing production area (5%) is also considered as a positive adaptive response. There is enough land that can be restored with good agricultural and environmental practices.

### Negative coping and adaptive mechanisms:

- Charcoal production (33%)
- Reducing agriculture production area (20%)
- Reducing livestock (19%)

### Positive coping and adaptive mechanisms:

- Stocking rain water (25%)
- Planting new crops (7%)
- Engaging in collective marketing (5%)
- Increasing agriculture production area (5%)
- Using improved seeds (4%)
- Transforming agricultural products (4%)
- Fish farming (3%)
- Diversify non-agriculture activities (1%)

18% of all respondents did not use any of the listed coping and adaptive mechanisms. It is possible that, these respondents **do not count on the livelihoods to produce their own food** and do not undertake their own business or income-generating activity. This, in turn, may indicate a **need to invest in the construction and strengthening of livelihoods** in a differentiated manner.

Future programs that aim at a sustainable impact on the lives of this part of the Haitian population should consider the **combination of different strategies to strengthen their safety net and to (re)build and improve their livelihoods taking into account different characteristics, capabilities and limitations.**

## Differences between women and men

The below table shows percentage differences between women and men in using coping actions and adaptive responses focused on food production and income generating activities.

**Table 7: Adaptive responses related to food production and income generation - differences between women and men**

Coping actions and adaptive responses	Women N = 571	Men N = 219	Difference
Stock rain water	25%	26%	-1%
Use improved seeds	4%	3%	1%
Increase of agriculture production area	3%	9%	<b>-6%</b>
Reduce of agriculture production area	17%	27%	<b>-10%</b>
Increase livestock	0%	0%	0%
Reduce livestock	15%	29%	<b>-14%</b>
Plant new crops	6%	11%	<b>-5%</b>
Raise new animal species	0%	1%	-1%
Produce honey	0%	0%	0%
Fish farming	3%	4%	-1%
Taking care of animals	12%	16%	<b>-4%</b>
Transform agricultural products	3%	4%	-1%
Produce charcoal	29%	43%	<b>-14%</b>
Engage in collective marketing	6%	2%	<b>4%</b>
Diversify non-agriculture activities	2%	3%	0%
None of them	21%	10%	<b>11%</b>
Other	4%	3%	1%

The main differences between women and men are related to the production of charcoal (used more by men, +14%), the reduction of livestock (used more by men, +14%) and the reduction of agriculture production area (used more by men, +10%).

11% more women chose a "None of them" response option. This may indicate that women count less on livelihoods to produce food or to implement income-generating activities, compared to men.

### Women use less:

- Producing charcoal (-14%)
- Reducing livestock (-14%)
- Reducing agriculture production area (-10%)

### Women use more:

- None of these actions related to food production and income generation (11%)
- Engaging in collective marketing (4%)

## Differences between VSLA and Non VSLA respondents

The table below shows percentage differences in responses between VSLA and non VSLA respondents.

**Table 8: Adaptive responses related to food production and income generation - differences between VSLA and non VSLA members**

Coping actions and adaptive responses	VSLA	Non VSLA	Difference
Stock rain water	26%	24%	2%
Use improved seeds	2%	5%	-3%
Increase of agriculture production area	5%	5%	0%
Reduce of agriculture production area	20%	20%	0%
Increase livestock	0%	1%	-1%
Reduce livestock	21%	16%	<b>5%</b>
Plant new crops	6%	9%	-3%
Raise new animal species	1%	1%	0%
Produce honey	0%	0%	0%
Fish farming	3%	3%	0%
Taking care of animals	11%	16%	<b>-5%</b>
Transform agricultural products	2%	5%	-3%
Produce charcoal	27%	39%	<b>-12%</b>
Engage in collective marketing	4%	7%	-3%
Diversify non-agriculture activities	1%	4%	-3%
None of them	22%	13%	<b>9%</b>
Other	6%	2%	4%

The major difference between VSLA and non VSLA members' responses is related to **charcoal production**. Only 27% of VSLA members used this activity as a coping action or adaptive response versus 39% of **non VSLA members**.

**9% more VSLA members compared to non-VSLA respondents, chose "None of them"**. This may mean that these respondents do not count on livelihoods to produce food or to generate income and instead used the money they save receiving the food voucher for the VSLA activities. The characteristics of VSLA members should be explored further to precise future interventions.

### VSLA members use less:

- Producing charcoal (-12%)
- Taking care of animals (-5%)

### VSLA members use more:

- None of these actions related to food production and income generation (+9%)
- Reducing livestock (+5%)

## Differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents

The following table shows percentage differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents.

**Table 9: Adaptive responses related to food production and income generation - differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents**

Coping actions and adaptive responses	Resilient	Vulnerable	Difference
Stock rain water	24%	25%	-1%
Use improved seeds	4%	4%	0%
Increase of agriculture production area	7%	4%	3%
Reduce of agriculture production area	16%	21%	-5%
Increase livestock	0%	0%	0%
Reduce livestock	21%	19%	2%
Plant new crops	8%	7%	1%
Raise new animal species	1%	0%	1%
Produce honey	0%	0%	0%
Fish farming	3%	3%	0%
Taking care of animals	12%	13%	-1%
Transform agricultural products	3%	4%	0%
Produce charcoal	27%	35%	-8%
Engage in collective marketing	5%	6%	-1%
Diversify non-agriculture activities	0%	3%	-3%
None of them	15%	19%	-4%
Other	8%	3%	5%

### Resilient participants use less:

- Producing charcoal (-8%)
- Reducing of agriculture production area (-5%)
- None of these actions related to food production and income generation (-4%)

### Resilient participants use more:

- Others (+5%)
- Increasing of agriculture production area (+3%)

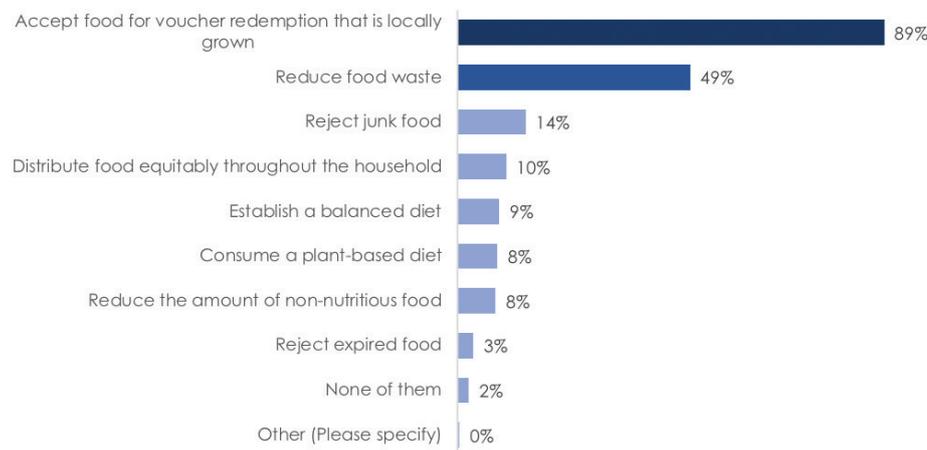
The biggest differences are related to charcoal production and to the reduction of agriculture production areas (both are used more by vulnerable respondents).

## 2.5.3. Transformative strategies

### Behavior changes related to food consumption

As part of this study, the respondents were also asked about behavior changes related to food consumption that are considered to be transformative strategies.

Figure 58: Transformative strategies



The above figure shows that the acceptance of the **food voucher based on locally grown produces** is very high (89%). This is likely to be based on the need, but can also be a good sign that people do not reject national products.

**Reduction of food waste** (49%) is a very important transformative practice, not only at the individual level, but also at the national level. While in this case this strategy stems from the need to do so, the practice should be sustained long-term, even if the respondents' living conditions improve over time.

The consumption of a **plant-based diet** (8%) is a good practice in terms of carbon emissions reduction. However, for the respondents it is likely to be caused by a lack of access to protein sources, resulting in poor health and slowing children's growth. Therefore, the challenge for future projects is finding the way to help people **access enough proteins in a sustainable way**.

Only 10% of all respondents reported that the **food is distributed equitably throughout the household**. From a gender- and adultism perspective, there is a lot of work to do in future programs. The challenge is not only about the acceptance of the food voucher based on locally grown food, it is also about promoting equal and fair distribution of food in the household.

Practices focused on **quality and safety of food consumption** still needed to be further developed. These include rejecting junk food (14%), establishing a balanced diet (9%), reducing the amount of non-nutritious food (8%) and rejecting expired food (3%). Considering the **relevance of food for health**, it is important to focus on this link, especially when it's about raising **awareness and fostering actions at the governmental level**.

#### Most used transformative practices:

- *Accepting food for voucher based on locally grown produces (89%)*
- *Reducing food waste (49%)*

#### Less used transformative practices:

- *Rejecting junk food (14%)*
- *Establishing a balanced diet (9%)*
- *Reducing the amount of non-nutritious food (8%)*
- *Rejecting expired food (3%)*

#### Gender- and adultism perspective:

*The internal equitable distribution of food (10%) needs to be fostered.*

## Differences between women and men

The below table shows percentage differences in the use of transformative strategies between men and women.

**Table 10: Transformative strategies - differences between women and men**

Transformative strategies	Women	Men	Difference
Accept food for voucher redemption that is locally grown	89%	90%	-1%
Reject junk food	13%	17%	-4%
Reduce food waste	46%	57%	-11%
Reduce the amount of non-nutritious food	8%	7%	1%
Establish a balanced diet	8%	11%	-3%
Reject expired food	3%	4%	-1%
Distribute food equitably throughout the household	10%	11%	-1%
Consume a plant-based diet	8%	8%	1%
None of them	2%	2%	0%
Other (Please specify)	0%	0%	0%

### Men practice more...

- Reducing food waste (+11%)
- Rejecting junk food (+4%)

57% of men reported engagement in the practice of food waste reduction compared to women (46%) the practice of food waste reduction, as well as rejecting junk food (4% more men).

## Differences between VSLA and Non-VSLA respondents

The following table shows differences between VSLA and non-VSLA respondents.

**Table 11: Transformative strategies - differences between VSLA and Non-VSLA members**

Transformative strategies	VSLA	Non-VSLA	Difference
Accept food for voucher redemption that is locally grown	84%	89%	-5%
Reject junk food	15%	12%	3%
Reduce food waste	49%	46%	3%
Reduce the amount of non-nutritious food	6%	9%	-3%
Establish a balanced diet	9%	8%	1%
Reject expired food	3%	3%	0%
Distribute food equitably throughout the household	10%	10%	0%
Consume a plant-based diet	5%	10%	-5%
None of them	1%	3%	-2%
Other (Please specify)	0%	0%	0%

More non-VSLA members reported accepting food for voucher redemption that is locally grown (+5%), and consuming a plant-based diet.

We can also observe a slight increase in the reduction of food waste and rejection of junk food in the case of VSLA respondents (+3%).

### Non-VSLA members practice more...

- Accepting food for voucher redemption that is locally grown (+5%)
- Consuming a plant-based diet (+5%)

## Differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents

The below table shows percentage differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents:

**Table 12: Transformative strategies: Differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents**

Transformative strategies	Resilient N = 154	Vulnerable N = 636	Difference
Accept food for voucher redemption that is locally grown	92%	89%	3%
Reject junk food	17%	13%	4%
Reduce food waste	36%	52%	-16%
Reduce the amount of non-nutritious food	11%	7%	4%
Establish a balanced diet	16%	7%	9%
Reject expired food	3%	3%	0%
Distribute food equitably throughout the household	5%	11%	-6%
Consume a plant-based diet	12%	7%	5%
None of them	1%	3%	-2%
Other (Please specify)	1%	0%	0%

### Resilient participants use less:

- Reducing food waste (-16%)
- Distributing food equitably throughout the household (-6%)

### Resilient participants use more:

- Establishing a balanced diet (+9%)
- Consuming a plant-based diet (+5%)
- Rejecting junk food (4%)
- Reducing the amount of non-nutritious food (+4%)

More vulnerable respondents reported reducing food waste (16% more compared to resilient) and distributing food equitably throughout the household (6% more compared to resilient). At the same time, more resilient respondents said that in their experiences they established a balanced diet (9% more compared to vulnerable).

## General recommendation regarding coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies

For further analysis and future program design it is advisable to review all types of coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies at multiple levels (individual, household, community, governmental institutions). This is important from a **longer-term and broader sustainability perspective** and **the way it can be conciliated with the immediate needs of the most vulnerable population**.

## 2.6. Access to and control over assets

### 2.6.1. Concepts

#### Access and control over assets<sup>8</sup>

The tangible and intangible **assets or resources** allow individuals, households, organizations and communities to develop their livelihoods and cope with stressors and shocks. Livelihoods security depends on a sustainable combination of six assets: financial, physical, human, social, political and natural. But shocks and stressors often may affect assets in a negative way.

Looking at **access to and control over assets** helps to better understand the role of gender, caste, class, wealth, age, origins, and other aspects of social identity.

The **use of assets** depends on the **human agency or capability** to cope with shocks and stressors, as well as to implement adaptive responses and to foster transformative strategies.

Especially **vulnerable people need** some **external support** to get **access to different types of assets** and to be able to take decisions about their use of these resources. Therefore, the respondents were asked to evaluate different assets in relation to external intervention.

#### Ecosystem services<sup>9</sup>

The condition of natural resources like water, soil, forest and biodiversity affects directly the **ecosystem services** defined “as the benefits people obtain from their interaction with nature” (Ernstson 2013; Reyers et al. 2013; Huntsinger and Oviedo 2014). There is a wide variety of eco-system based goods and functions that underpin a range of basic human needs like nutrition, health and security, as well as important cultural and spiritual meaning that people obtain from their relationship and interaction with ecosystems. The Millenium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) identified three core categories:

- **Provisioning services:** food, freshwater, wood and fiber, fuel, others.
- **Regulating services:** climate regulation, regulation of pests and diseases, water purification, etc.
- **Cultural services:** aesthetic, spiritual, educational, recreational.

These influences the well-being of the people and the ability to cope with shocks and stressors, as well as to adapt and to transform.

In the project departments, the natural environment is quite degraded and dilapidated: primary forest almost does not exist anymore, mainly due to charcoal production, soils are highly exposed to erosion by runoff water and the unclear land-ownership conditions situation hinder reforestation efforts, etc.

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#### Assets to cope with shocks and stressors

- *Personal assets*
  - *Social and political assets*
  - *Physical assets*
  - *Financial assets*
  - *Ecosystem services*
- 

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#### Access to and control over assets depend on:

- *Decision-making power*
  - *Negotiation power*
  - *Opportunities*
- 

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#### Ecosystem services:

*“... the benefits people obtain from their interaction with nature”.*

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#### Core categories of ecosystem services:

- *Provisioning services*
  - *Regulating services*
  - *Cultural services*
- 

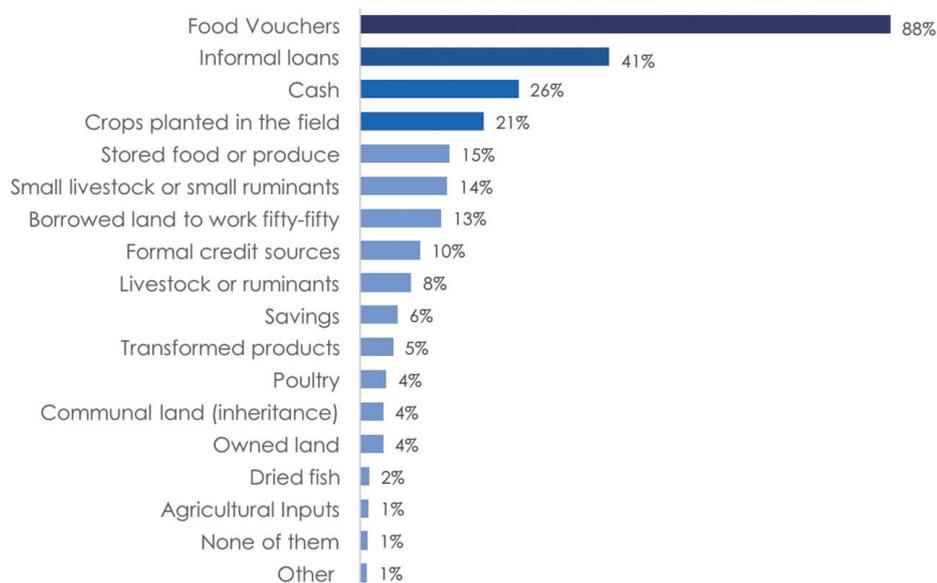
<sup>8</sup> Based on: CRS. *Resilience Glossary*. 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Biggs, Reinette; Schlüter, Maja; Schoon, Michael L.; *Principles for Building Resilience. Sustaining Ecosystem Services in Social-Ecological Systems*. Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom; 2015.

## 2.6.2. Financial resources

The below graph show the financial resources used by the respondents to cope with the difficult situation they faced:

**Figure 59: Financial resources**



It can be observed that food vouchers (88%) were identified as the main financial resource to cope with the shock or stressor. The second most important financial resource are informal loans (41%). Formal credit sources (10%) do not seem to be an option to be accessed by Kore Lavi's highly vulnerable target group.

Cash (26%) and savings (8%) were less mentioned than informal loans (41%) and formal credit sources (10%).

Respondents relied also on some resources that indicates that they count on livelihoods for food production: crops planted in the field (21%), stored food or produce (15%), small livestock or small ruminants (14%), livestock or ruminants (8%), transformed products (5%) and poultry (4%).

Respondents mentioned in their stories the benefits provided by the food voucher and at the same time their concern about the end of the Kore Lavi program. This indicates again that interventions need to build and strengthen **livelihoods**.

Future programs should **reinforce the access to and control over financial resources that foster positive coping mechanisms** like: savings, planting crops, storage of food or produce, all type of livestock and ruminants, poultry and transformation of products.

### **Main financial assets used to cope:**

- Food vouchers (88%)
- Informal loans (41%)

### **Recommendation for future external interventions:**

*Combine food voucher, VSLA and livelihood components.*

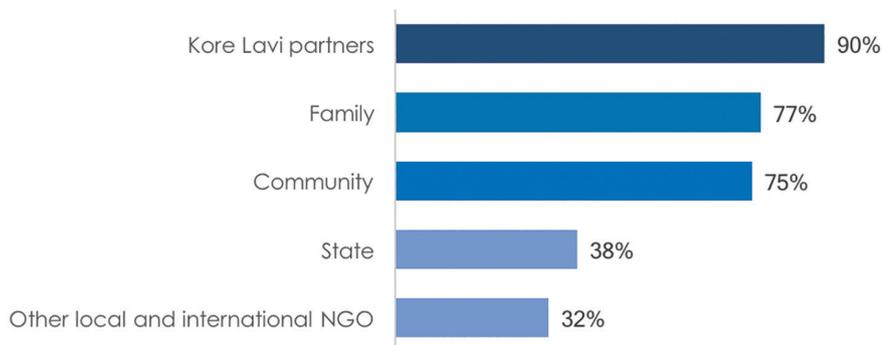
*Reinforce access and control over resources that foster positive coping mechanisms such as:*

- Savings
- Seeds and means to plant crops
- Livestock, ruminants, poultry
- Storage of food or produce
- Transformation of products

### 2.6.3. Social resources

The below figure shows the social actors that tried to help the respondents after the shocks or stressors they faced:

Figure 60: Social resources



Social actors that intervened more to cope with the shock or stressor:

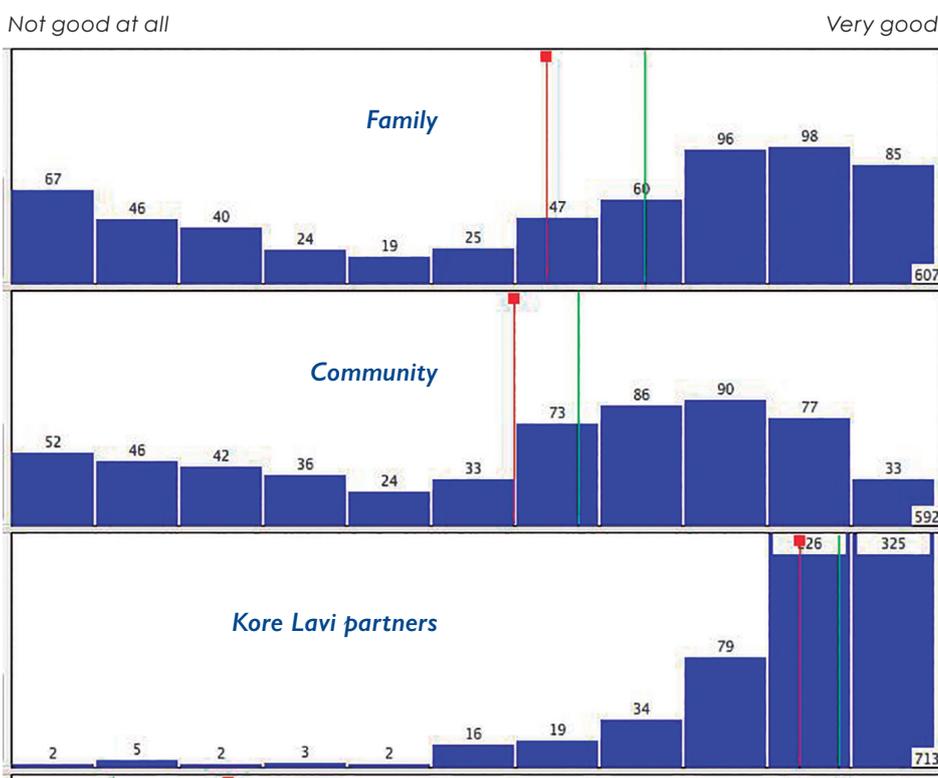
- Kore Lavi partners (90%)
- Family (77%)
- Community (75%)

Social actors that intervened less to cope with the shock or stressor:

- State (38%)
- Other local and international NGO (32%)

The study whether or not the support had a positive or a negative impact. The following figure shows the social actors whose role and performance were positively evaluated:

Figure 61: Social resources whose support was positively valued



The median (0.88) shows that 50% of 731 respondents found the **support of Kore Lavi partners very positive**. The graph shows that the main part of respondents was satisfied with the performance of the Kore Lavi program.

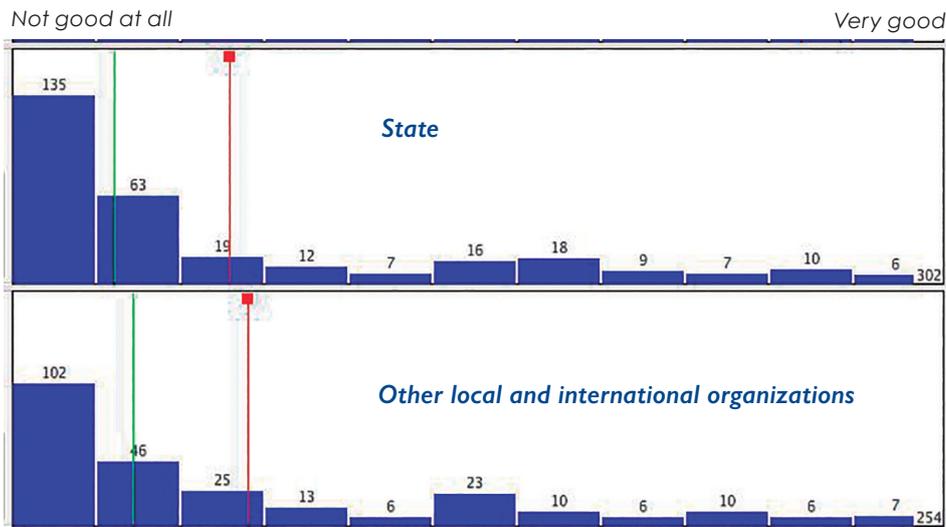
The support from family (0.67) and community (0.61) was also mostly positive, but there can be seen also important numbers of respondents who said that they received support, but its outcome was rather negative.

Family and community are the social resources people count on during and immediately after a shock or stressor occurs. The above result poses questions about the **intra family dynamics** and the **social cohesion** when families and communities are facing shocks and stressors and how can external interventions strengthen their capacities to steer their support in a positive direction.

The participants evaluate the support of Kore Lavi's partners as mostly very good, followed by the family and the community.

The below figure indicates the social actors who tried to help after the difficult event occurred, but whose support was negatively valued by the respondents:

**Figure 62: Social resources whose support was negatively valued**



38% of all respondents reported that the Haitian State tried to help, but the support was very negatively evaluated (median = 0.1). A very similar result was found with regard to the support from other national or international NGO.

**A woman who valued the State support as very negative**

This woman from the rural area of the Northwest department is between 40 and 49 years old and can only read and write. Her husband seems to be the main provider of the household and the main income source is charcoal production.

**Difficulties in life**

“I had a very sick son who had a terrible fever. At that moment, I had no money and I had to give him tea, give him a leaf bath in order to find a solution, but it was in vain. I only had 100 gourdes when I decided to take him to the hospital. When I arrived at the hospital, the nurse told me that my money was not sufficient to afford the medicine, so I had to go home. No longer wanting to stand idly by, I had to carry my son to another hospital. He was a big boy and I had to walk for miles with him, but I had to. When we arrived at the hospital, the nurse sold us drugs on credit and gave me an appointment to reimburse it. I had to find a relative who had agreed to borrow funds from his business to reimburse the hospital and then my husband and I worked together to reimburse our relative.” (Narrative code 217)

**Some meanings she gave her story**

The shock she faced was illness and the coping actions and adaptive responses she used to face her difficult situation were:

- Eat less or less preferred meals per day
- Reduce diet diversity
- Reduce expenditures related to the households needs
- Sought support from family, relatives or friends
- Loans from family or friends
- Engage with pawnshop endeavors
- Buying on credit in stores and with sellers in the community
- Taking care of animals
- Produce charcoal

In the scale from 0 (not good at all) to 1 (very good), she valued the State’s support with 0.11 and the help she received from local and international NGO with 0.08. Also the family’ help was perceived rather negatively with 0.21.

Evaluation of the support from each social actor expressed by median:

- Kore Lavi partners: 0.88
- Family: 0.67
- Community: 0.61
- Other local and international organizations 0.13
- State: 0.10

The support of governmental institutions as well as from local and other international organizations was rather negatively evaluated.

This women faced the illness of her son and the main challenge was regarding the payment of medicine.

She used mainly negative coping mechanisms and valued the support from the main social actors in the following way:

- Kore Lavi partners: 0.93
- Community: 0.86
- Family: 0.21
- State: 0.11
- Other local and international organizations 0.08

## Differences between women and men

The following table shows percentage differences between female and male respondents with regards to the support received by the different social actors.

**Table 13:**  
**Social actors that gave support - differences between women and men**

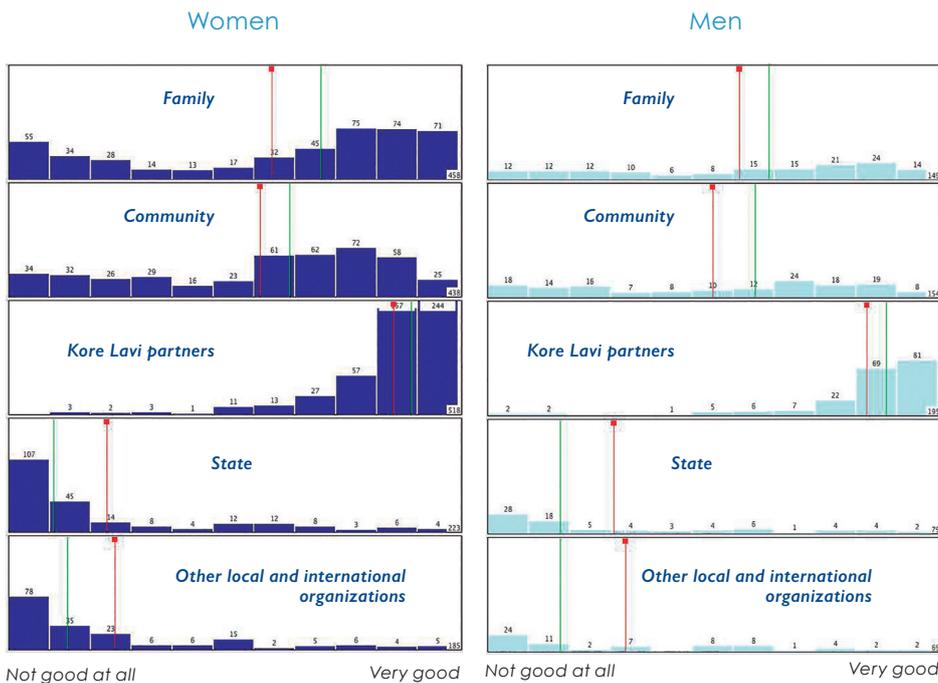
Social actors	Women (N=571)	Men (N=219)	Difference
Family	80%	68%	12%
Community	55%	70%	-15%
Kore Lavi partners	66%	89%	-23%
State	28%	36%	-8%
Other local and international NGO	23%	32%	-8%

Women seem to rely much more on their family than men (+12%). Male respondents tend more to look for support in the community, with Kore Lavi partners as well as with governmental institutions and other local and international NGO.

Analyzing the quality of the support given by the different social actors from a **gender perspective**, there can be seen some small differences.

*Women received more support from their families (+12%) and relied less than men on Kore Lavi partners (-23%), community (-15%), State (-8%) and other local and international NGO (-8%).*

**Figure 63: Evaluation of social resources' support by gender**



Women's perception about the help they received tended to be a little bit more positive with regard to family, community and Kore Lavi partners than men's.

The median of the women who evaluated the support of the State and other local and international organizations is a little bit more negative than reported by male respondents.

*Female respondents valued the support from governmental institutions, local and international institutions more negatively than men.*

## Differences between VSLA and non VSLA members

The below table reveals the percentage differences between VSLA and non-VSLA members with regards to the support received by the different social actors.

**Table 14:**  
Social actors that gave support - differences between VSLA and non-VSLA

Social actors	VSLA members	Non-VSLA members	Difference
Family	76%	78%	-2%
Community	77%	73%	5%
Kore Lavi partners	92%	89%	4%
State	40%	36%	4%
Other local and international NGO	34%	31%	3%

VSLA members seem to seek or to rely more on the support of the community (+5%), Kore Lavi partners (+4%), the State (+4%) as well as from other local and international NG (+3%) than non-VSLA members. These rely a little bit more (2%) on their families' help than VSLA members.

The following figure shows how VSLA members and non-VSLA members valued the support they received from the different social actors.

**Figure 64:**  
Evaluation of social resources' support by VSLA and non-VSLA members



In the case of **VSLA and non-VSLA members** there cannot be observed major differences related to the median. The way the support from different stakeholders has been evaluated is very similar.

In the case of governmental support the perception of non-VSLA members is a little bit more negative.

*VSLA members seem to seek and/or rely more on support from different social actors than non-VSLA members.*

*The perception of VSLA members and non-VSLA members about the support received is very similar.*

## Differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents

The below table shows the differences in percentage between respondents who followed resilient and vulnerable pathways.

**Table 15:**  
**Social actors that gave support - differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents**

Social actors	Resilient (N=154)	Vulnerable (N=636)	Difference
Family	69%	79%	-9%
Community	71%	76%	-4%
Kore Lavi partners	94%	89%	4%
State	48%	36%	12%
Other local and international NGO	48%	28%	20%

Resilient respondents had more access to help from state and other NGO.

Resilient respondents seem to be more proactive looking for options with the State (+20%) and other local and international NGO, while they rely less on their families (-9%).

### **A man who valued the support from State and other government very positively**

*This man followed a resilient pathway. He lives in the rural area in the Southeast department and is between 60 and 69 years old. He is illiterate and the main source of income in his household is farming.*

#### **Disaster**

*“The difficult situation I had experienced goes back to Hurricane Matthew. That day, the weather was fine during the day. It was in the evening around midnight that everything started to happen. It had rained a lot until the flood arrived. Everyone was affected in one way or another. Those who lived in a safe place could withstand the flood better than those who lived in vulnerable areas, they had to evacuate the area quickly with their families. On my side I had lost a cousin; she was pregnant too. Her husband and young child had not survived either. They did not live near me, so I could not save them. I was able to escape. But by the time I got back to get them it was too late. I could not get the bodies back. It affected me a lot. When you lose a loved one in such a condition it is almost difficult to feel comfortable and to recover easily. In addition, I had lost everything, my livestock, my garden and other resources. There was nothing I could do to face the challenge. I had no garden and no cattle. If I did not lose them, I could have sold them and made some money that would have allowed the family to survive. But too bad. We had received help from the state and private individuals. Now we are sticking with the Kore Lavi program. I am still living in poverty because we are in the middle of a drought.” (Narrative code 1005)*

#### **Some meanings he gave his story**

*This man faced a flood provoked by Hurricane Matthew. With regards to the social actors’ support, he only mentioned other local and international NGO and the State. In a scale from 0 (not good at all) and 1 (very good), he valued the NGO with 0.92 and the State with 0.89.*

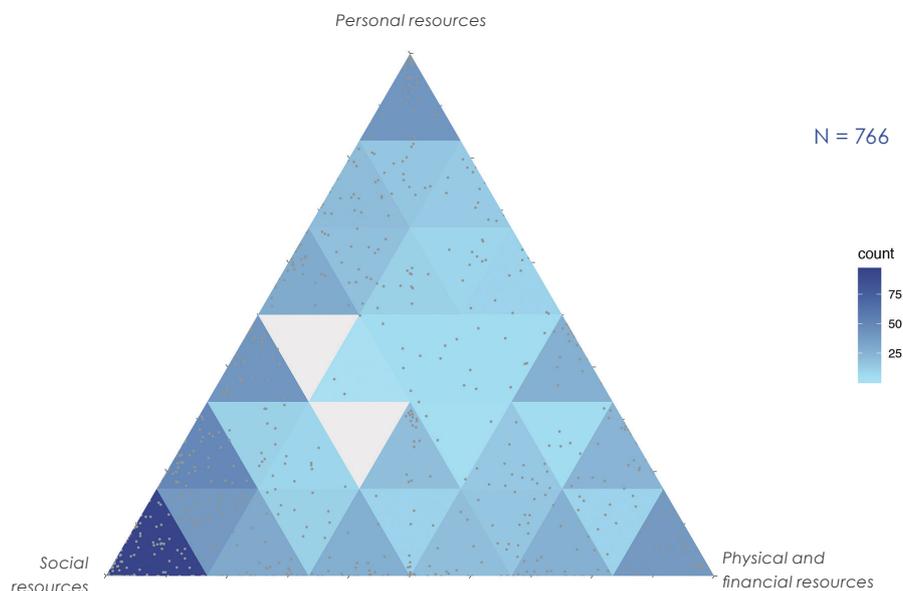
Several stories like this one leads to the assumption that the State and other NGO may provide a helpful support in situations like natural disasters, but are not able to help effectively in situations like illness, death and drought. This weak signal should be further explored to get insights about the governmental capacities that should be strengthened in order to provide a better support regarding the main shocks and stressors the respondents had been facing.

For future capacity building of State institutions and advocacy identify existing capacities and reinforce policies regarding to less attended shocks and stressors like illness, death and drought.

## 2.6.4. Relative usefulness of resources to cope

766 (97%) of all respondents evaluated the relative usefulness of the following three assets or resources to cope with shocks and stressors in the following manner:

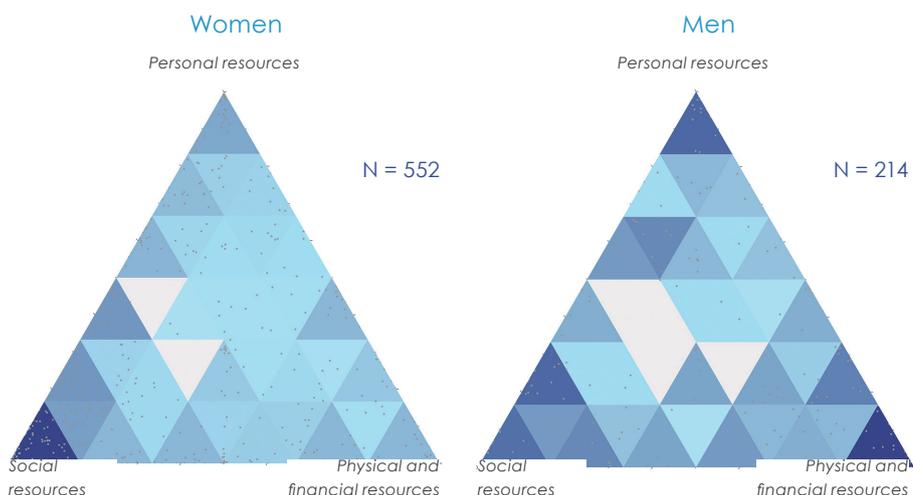
**Figure 65: Relative usefulness of resources to cope**



There is a high concentration of responses indicating the usefulness of social resources (bottom left corner), a weaker concentration of responses indicating the usefulness of a combination of personal, social, physical and financial resources.

Comparing **gender perspective** showed the following:

**Figure 66: Relative usefulness of resources to cope by gender**



97% of the female respondents and 98% of the male respondents answered this question.

More women than men found that social resources were useful to cope, while more male respondents indicated the usefulness of physical and financial resources, and of personal resources.

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*Social resources and/or a combination with personal, physical and financial seem to be very useful to cope.*

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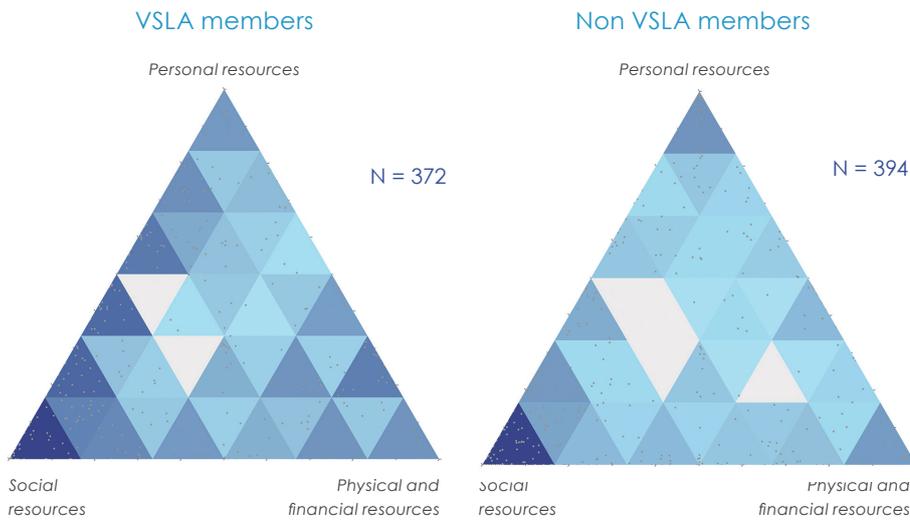
*Women seem to rely more on social relationships.*

*Men rely a little bit less on social resources and found more useful personal, physical and financial resources or combinations of the three.*

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98% of **VSLA members** and 97% of **non VSLA** respondents responded to the question about the usefulness of the three types of resources: personal resources, social resources, physical and financial resources.

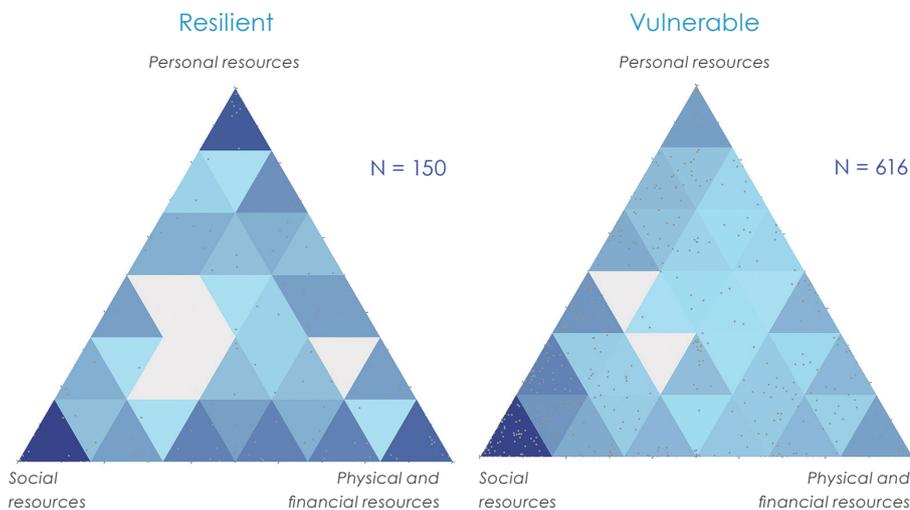
**Figure 67: Relative usefulness of resources to cope by VSLA and non VSLA**



VSLA members indicated a usefulness of a combination of different resources, while non VSLA members tend to find that individual resources, not a combination, are useful. Nevertheless, for both groups social resources seem to be the most important.

*More VSLA members tended more to combine social and personal resources than non VSLA members*

**Figure 68: Relative usefulness of resources to cope by pathway**



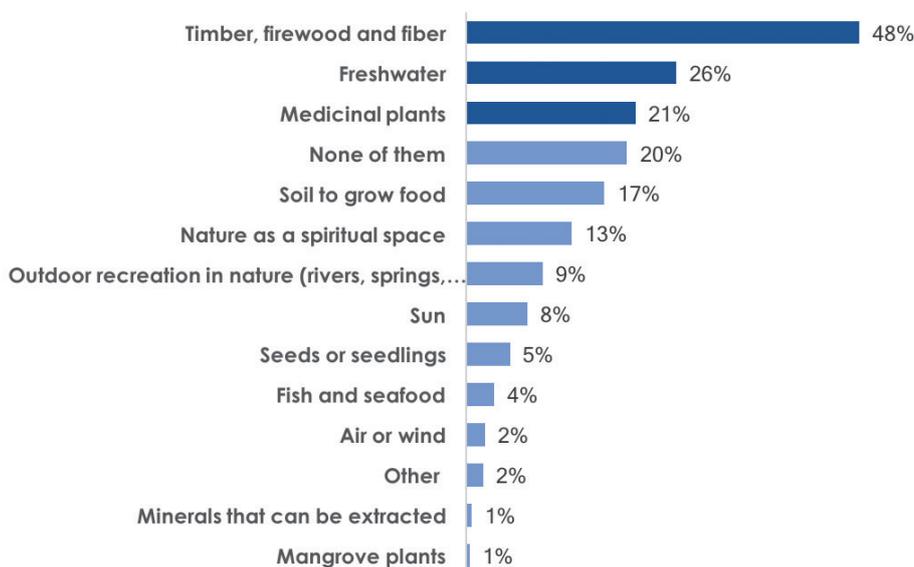
More resilient respondents, compared to vulnerable respondents, find that Personal resources are useful. The majority of vulnerable respondents rely very strongly on social resources.

An area to explore further is the combination of social and physical-financial resources especially taking in account the patterns identified for resilient respondents.

## 2.6.5. Ecosystem services

The 790 respondents were asked about the ecosystem services that helped to cope with the difficult situation they faced. Below are their responses:

Figure 69: Ecosystem services that helped to cope



The high use of timber, firewood and fiber (48%) is very consistent with the charcoal production that was reported by the respondents as one of the most important coping action and/or adaptive response.

However, freshwater has also played an important role to cope with the difficult situation.

21% of respondents used medical plants. Based on this result and several narratives that refer to the use of plants to face health and death related shocks, it can be assumed that due to the difficulties to access health services, medical plants are an important substitute.

Taking in consideration that charcoal production is the second most important economic sector in Haiti, future programs should consider sustainable interventions related to this sector.

---

### *The most used ecosystem services that helped to cope:*

- *Timber, firewood and fiber (48%)*
  - *Freshwater (26%)*
  - *Medical plants (21%)*
-

## 2.7. Human Agency

### 2.7.1. Concepts

Human agency refers to the capacity of human beings to make choices, make decisions, act and be held responsible for its decisions and actions, recognizing them as agents of their own development.

- Individual changes
- Changes in relations
- Changes in organizational processes
- Changes in social and ecological systems and structures

Related to individual changes, there are three very important elements:

- Knowledge and skills
- Good attitude (examples: work hard, be positive, be open for new challenges, take it with humor... )
- A clear vision of where I want to be (the dream, the purpose or an objective the person pursues)

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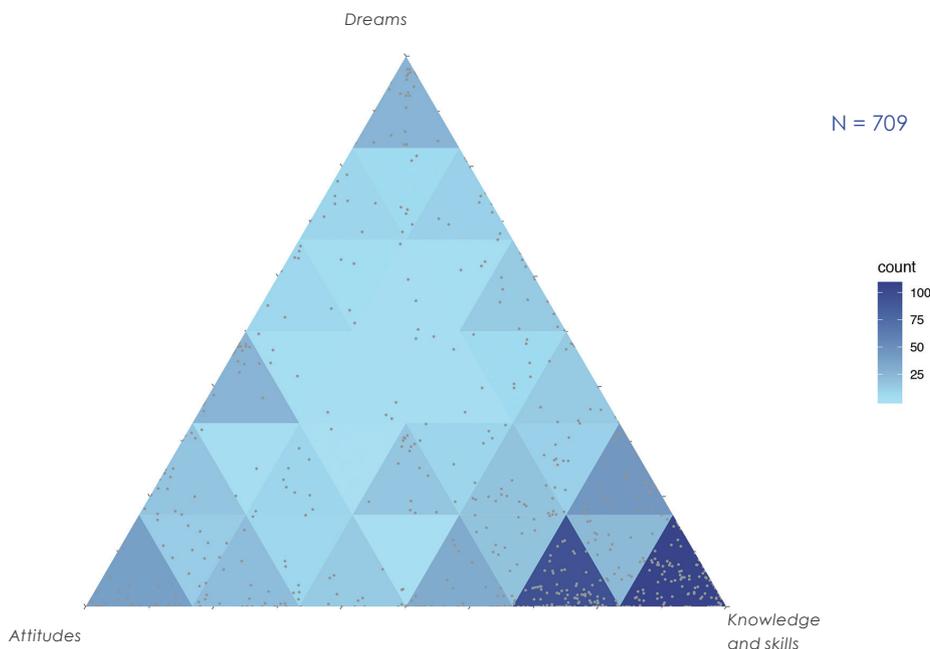
*Human agency refers to the capacity of human beings to make decisions, act and be held responsible for its decisions and actions, recognizing them as agents of their own development.*

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### 2.7.2. Human agency

The figure below shows the relative importance of three key elements of human agency that are helpful to cope with difficult situations:

Figure 70: Human Agency - All



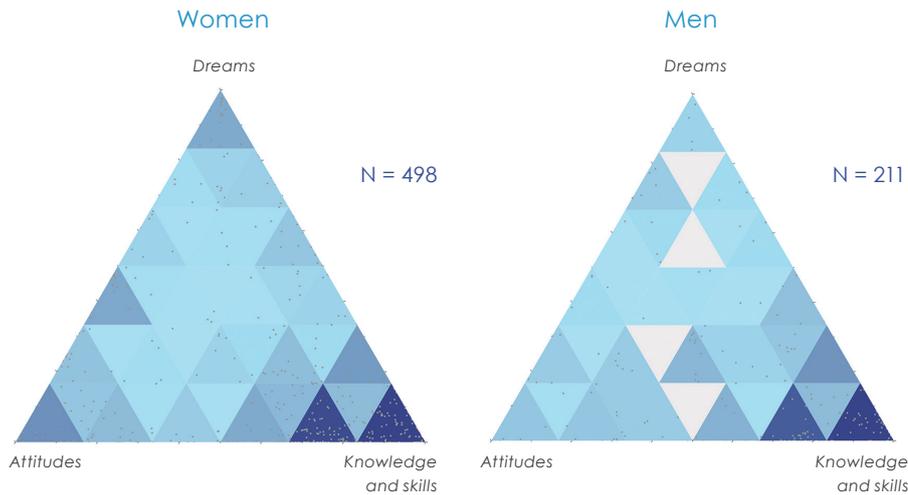
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*More respondents tended to use mainly their knowledge and skills to cope with the shocks and stressors.*

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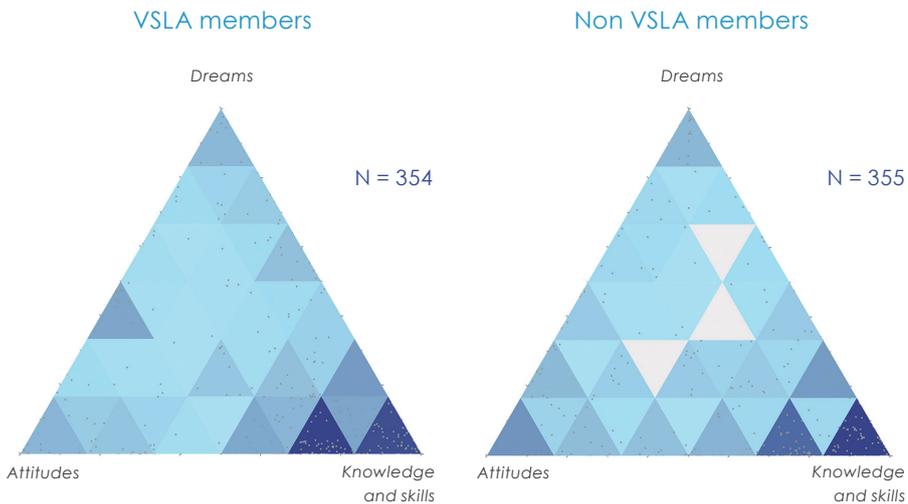
The majority of respondents tended to use mainly their knowledge and skills to cope with the shocks and stressors. The remaining experiences are quite distributed combining the three elements in very individual ways.

**Figure 71: Human agency by gender**



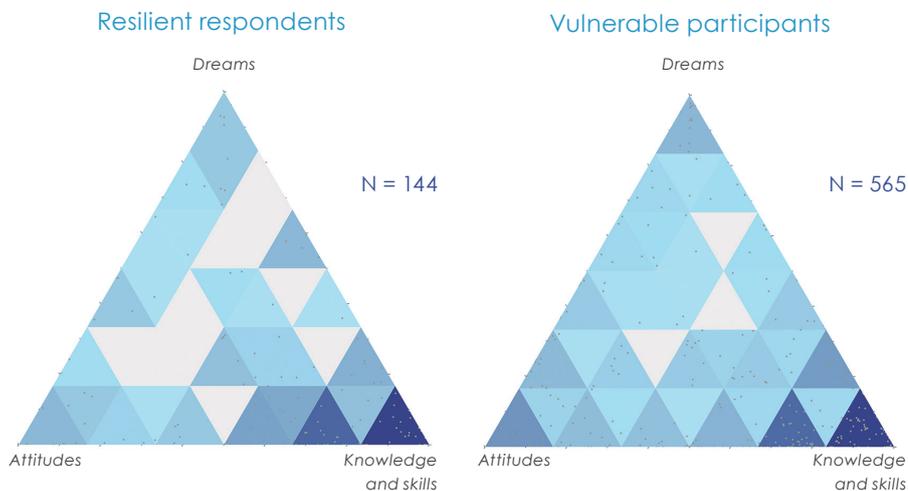
87% of **women** and 96% of **men** responded to this question. It can be seen that **knowledge and skills helped both** in the story they shared. Yet, there are also some groups of women who said that attitudes or dreams or a combination of both helped them.

**Figure 72: Human agency by VSLA and non VSLA members**



More **non VSLA** members, compared to **VSLA members** found Attitudes helpful to overcome the shocks and stressors.

**Figure 73: Human agency by pathways**



More **vulnerable respondents** compared to resilient respondents reported Dreams and Attitudes helpful, as well as a various combination of the options.

## 2.8. External intervention

### 2.8.1. Concepts

**External intervention** refers to any external support received from governmental or non-governmental organizations through different underlying institutional arrangements. External intervention mediates access to assets, influencing the possibilities to effectively respond to stressors and shocks and pursue sustainable development processes by affecting not only the endowment of assets, but also who is entitled to use these assets. This can be done by delivering assets directly, or by engaging the public and private sectors, or civil society and project participants themselves in order to influence changes in their behaviors, cultural norms, policies or practices that affect people's access to and control over assets.

In the case of this assessment, the main external interventions were provided by the **Kore Lavi** program and consisted in **food vouchers** and the **promotion of Village Saving and Loan Associations**. This chapter we will provide some further insights about the contribution of these interventions and the differences between VSLA and non VSLA members.

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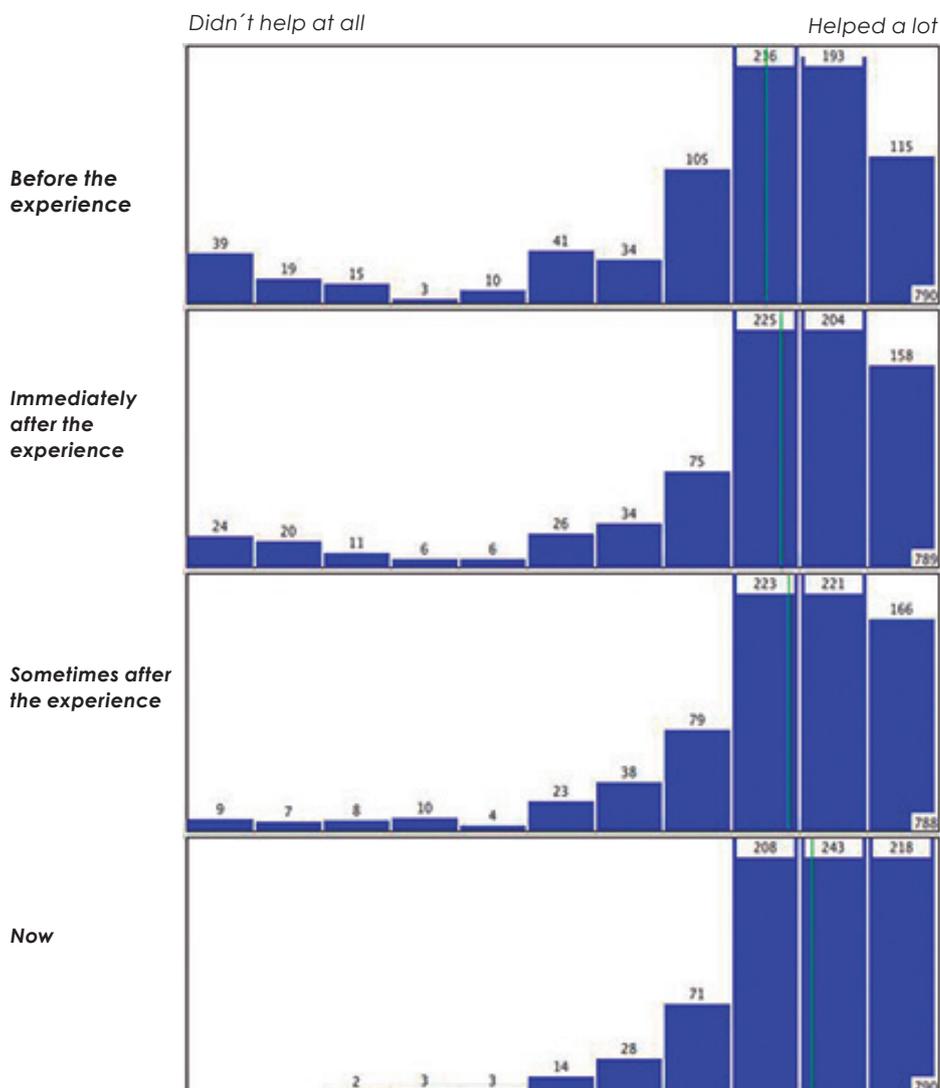
*External intervention refers to any external support received from governmental or non-governmental organizations.*

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### 2.8.2. Contribution of food vouchers

The following figure shows the contribution of the food voucher during the four key moments of the experiences.

**Figure 74: Contribution of food vouchers - ALL participants (N=790)**




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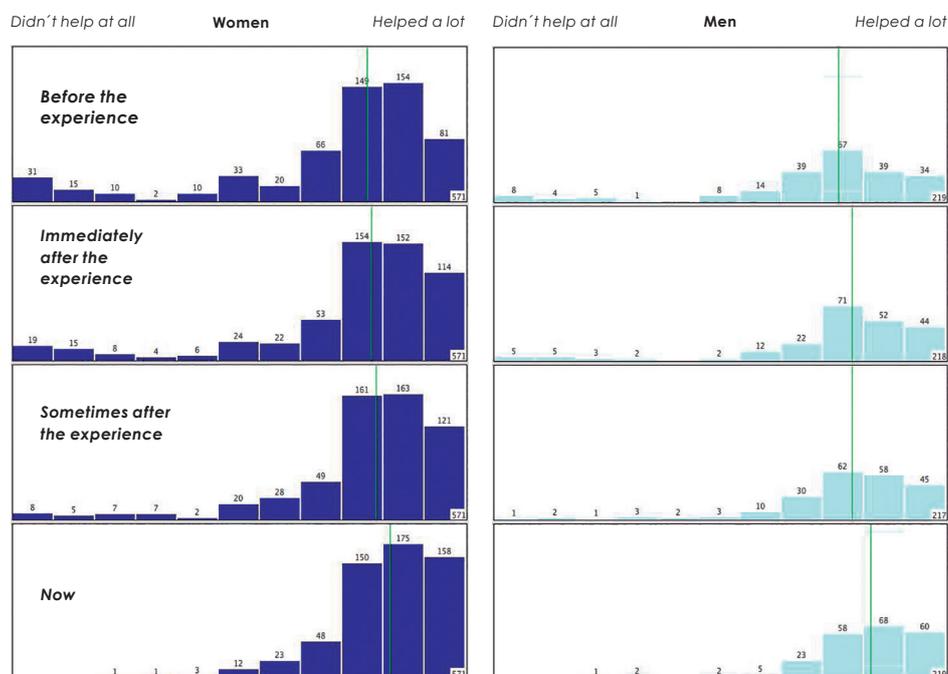
**Food voucher contribution by median:**

For most of the respondents the contribution of the food voucher was very important and even increased along the experience they shared:

- Before (0.77)
  - Immediately after (0.78)
  - Some time after (0.79)
  - Now (0.82)
-

The figure above as well as the medians show that a high percentage of respondents found the food voucher very helpful along the experience they shared. The respondents evaluated the contribution of the food voucher even a little bit more at the present than immediately after the shock. This may be associated with the very slow recovery after the shock as it could be observed in chapter 2.3.5.

**Figure 75:**  
Contribution of food vouchers - Differences by gender



For most male and female respondents, the food voucher was very helpful. Nevertheless, a slight difference is noted between men and women. Before the experience, the median for men is located a little bit more towards the left side (0.75) than the median of women (0.77). That means that there is a little bit higher proportion of men who found the food voucher less helpful before the shock or stressor occurred, but after the event the patterns are almost the same or at least very similar between both genders.

There were no major differences found between women and men by medians:

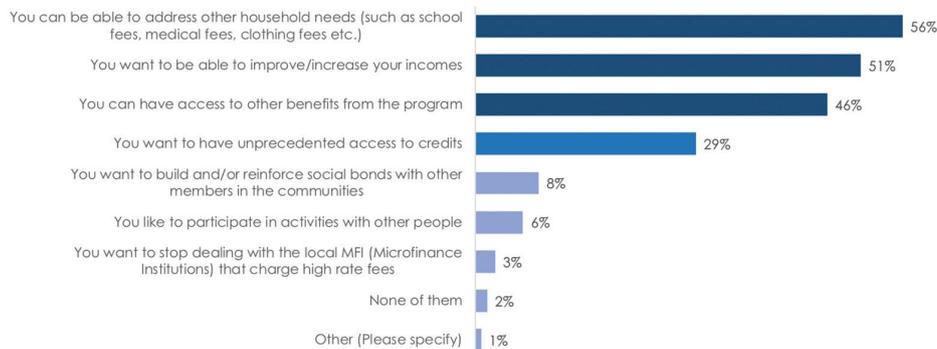
- Before: women (0.77) and men (0.75)
- Immediately after: women (0.79) and men (0.78)
- Some time after: women (0.80) and men (0.79)
- Now: women (0.82) and men (0.82)

### 2.8.3. Participation in the Village Saving and Loan Associations

One of the Kore Lavi key interventions for the most vulnerable population consists of promoting the Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA). From the 790 respondents, 381 (48%) are members of the VSLA and 409 (52%) are not.

The **VSLA members** reported the following reasons or **motivations** to join this activity:

**Figure 76: Reasons or motivations to join the VSLA**

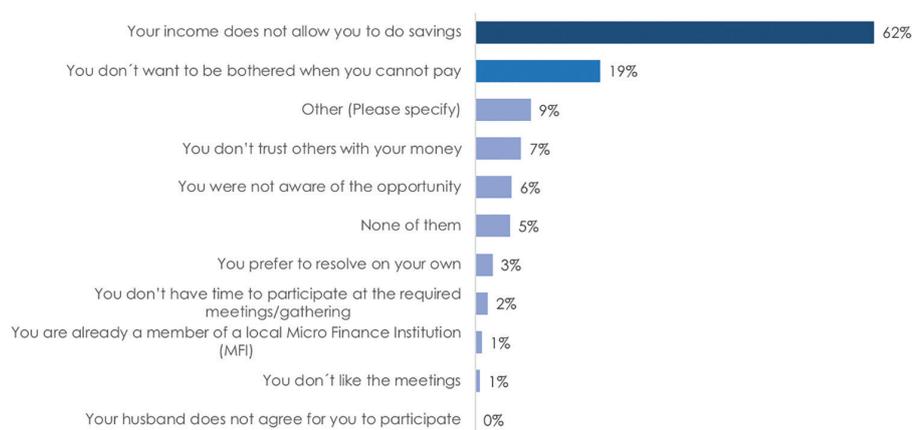


**Main motivations to join VSLA:**

- 56% to address other household needs
- 51% to improve their income
- 46% to have access to other program benefits
- 29% to have unprecedented access to credits

The **non-VSLA members** mentioned the following reasons that prevented them to participate in this activity:

**Figure 77: Reasons NOT to join the VSLA**



**Main reason NOT to join VSLA:**

- 62% believe that their income does not allow them to do savings
- 19% don't want to be bothered when they cannot pay

Future interventions should consider both types of reasons. On one hand, it is important to work with the main motivations that convinced the VSLA members to do this step. And on the other hand, it is important to take in account why so many beneficiaries do not participate in VSLA. There may be several possibilities. To illustrate, here an experience:

**A non VSLA member who bounced back worse**

*This experience was shared by a man between 40 and 49 years from the rural area of the Gonave Island who is illiterate. His main income source is the wage he gains as a day-laborer.*

**Disaster life**

*“Last year I got sick. I had to travel in search of healing closer to my parents. I was convinced that my case had required the intervention of an Ugan (Voodoo priest). I had spent almost everything I had. And that put me in a difficult situation. I couldn't afford to take care of my family. We suffered a lot of hunger. Because of the illness I had lost my physical power. I couldn't work like I used to. Facing this situation, the Kore Lavi program was really very useful to me.*

*In addition, while waiting for the distribution of food coupons, I had become a day laborer weeding the fields. It helped me to hold on.” (Narrative Code 2031)*

**Some meanings he gave his story**

*The coping actions and adaptive responses this non VSLA participant used were: eating less or less preferred meals per day, reducing diet diversity, reducing expenditures related to the households needs, selling productive assets, selling livestock, selling nonproductive assets, taking loans from family or friends, buying on credit in stores and with sellers in the community, stocking rain water, reducing agriculture production area and reducing livestock. He said that he did not participate in the VSLA because his “income does not allow him to do savings”.*

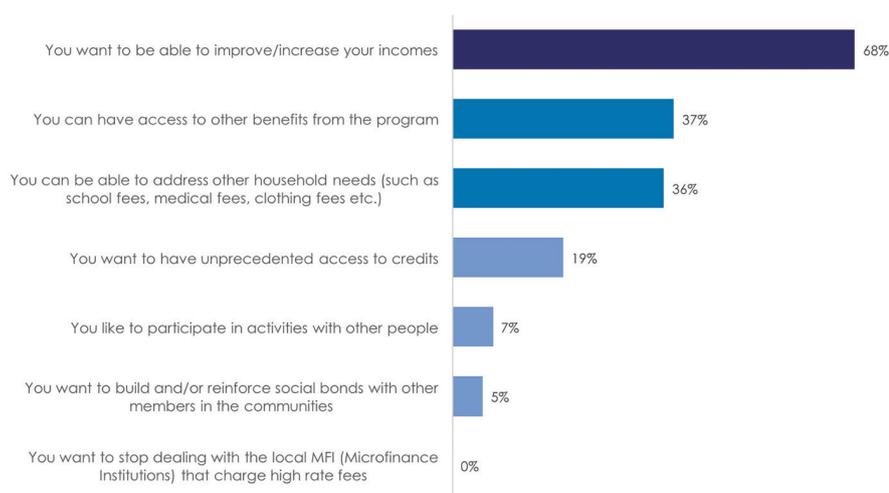
This story shows how due to the shock (illness), vulnerable respondents lose their livelihoods - selling their last assets - and even their labor force which makes them even more vulnerable in front of new shocks or stressors.

“Your income does not allow you to do savings” may indicate also a strong cultural belief that should be approached in future programs by fostering financial education addressing especially very vulnerable people.

Regarding future programs, it is advisable to design interventions that build and strengthen the basic livelihoods of vulnerable people to be able to generate income, join the VSLA and be better prepared for future shocks and stressors.

**Resilient VSLA respondents** selected the following reasons to join the VSLA:

**Figure 78: Reasons to join VSLA for resilient VSLA respondents**



This is an example from a resilient VSLA participant whose motivation was related to the **improvement of income**:

**Problem**

*“During the month of May 2014 my family and I had experienced the most painful moment of our lives. There was a violent wind that brought sadness to the entire community. It destroyed my house, killed my animals and devastated the crops in my fields. Immediately after this situation - as I was still alive -, I started working as a housemaid in the city in order to continue providing for my family. My husband himself had already died long before I had fallen into this difficult situation. As nobody provided us, the need forced me to work much harder to keep up with life. My children stayed in the rural area trying to revive the activities of cultivating the land. After some time, I had to return to my community to see my children and a great opportunity came to me to be integrated into Kore Lavi’s program as a coupon beneficiary and then integrating tipa-tipa (VSLA). From that moment on I had started to regain hope and since then I could say that it can be fine but not like before. Life strikes us a lot, but we still maintain our courage.”*

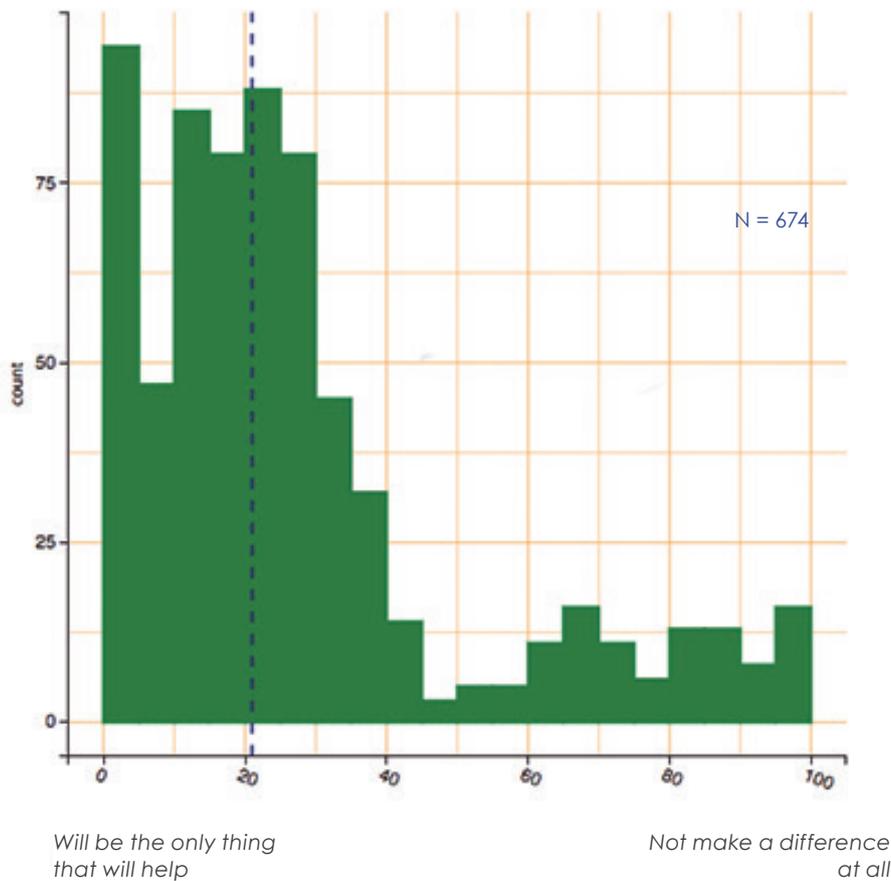
**Interventions to increase VSLA participation:**

- Re-enforce the motivators to join VSLA.
- De-construct belief systems that hinders VSLA participation.
- Build and strengthen livelihoods of the most vulnerable people
- Review the VSLA methodology: time for capacity building and accompaniment, communication skill of VSLA members in charge to collect money.

## 2.8.4. Usefulness of VSLA to face similar shocks and stressors in the future

The below figure shows how respondents think about the usefulness of VSLA if they would face a similar situation in the future:

Figure 79: Usefulness of VSLA - ALL



### Median of all respondents:

At a scale from 1 (VSLA will be the only thing that will help) to 100 (VSLA not make a difference at all), the median of all respondents is 21.44.

### Usefulness of VSLA:

More than 50% from 674 respondents think that VSLA would be very helpful or even the unique support that might help if they would have to face a similar situation in the future.

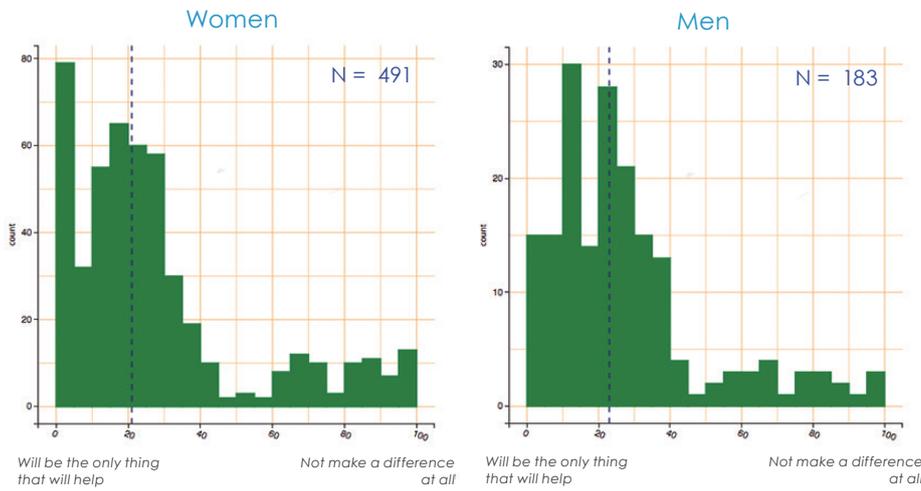
As it can be observed in the graph, 85% of all respondents answered this question. The median shows that 50% of the 674 respondents think that VSLA would be very helpful or even the unique aspect that might help if they would have to face a similar situation in the future. Even when the study did not identify a huge difference between VSLA and non VSLA members - as it was expected by the Kore Lavi team -, the respondents perceive that VSLA are useful facing similar shocks in the future.

### The VSLA will be the only thing that help

#### Too many problems

*“I am a mother of 4 children. My ordeal began with my husband’s illness. He is the main provider of the family. He meant everything to me. But at the end of the year, precisely in December 2018, he fell ill. It was quite complicated. He suffered from multiple ailments: from asthma, waist pain and indigestion. It was such that he fainted. He was sick for a month. And I had just given birth to our last child. It had been really difficult for me. My mother had put up with me all through that bad time. She had fed me and my children with the money she got from the stone breakage. It was very embarrassing to me. At this point it’s up to me to support my mother and take care of her. And now with my husband’s illness she had found herself at my family’s bedside. When she could no longer help me, I managed to resell some products that I sometimes bought on credit. My notebook of the VSLA group, sometimes ran out of money so much that I asked for loans. Fortunately, I had not had to spend any money on medical expenses since the Sisters’ Hospital in Port-de-Paix had provided my husband with free services. There are no great results in my life. Other than that, things tend to deteriorate.”*

**Figure 80: Usefulness of VSLA by gender**

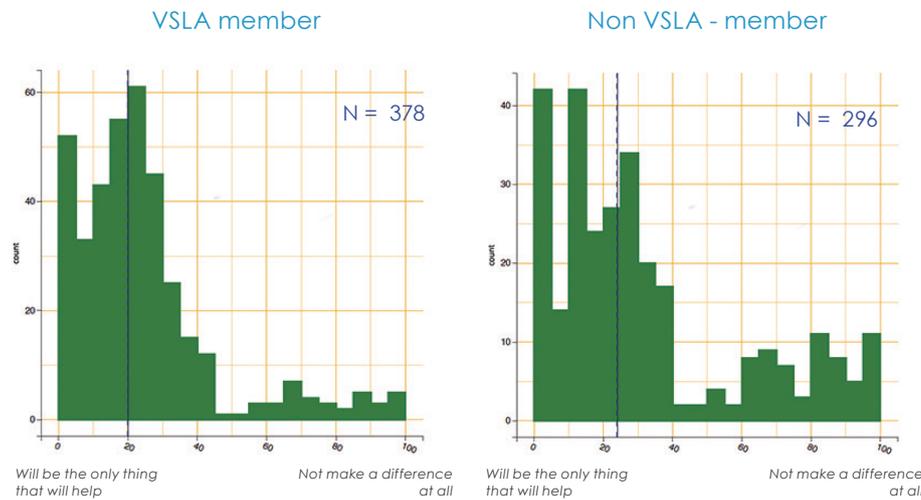


**Median by gender:**

- Women: 20.79
- Men: 22.92

VSLA seem to be slightly more useful for women than for men.

**Figure 81: Usefulness of VSLA by VSLA and non VSLA members**

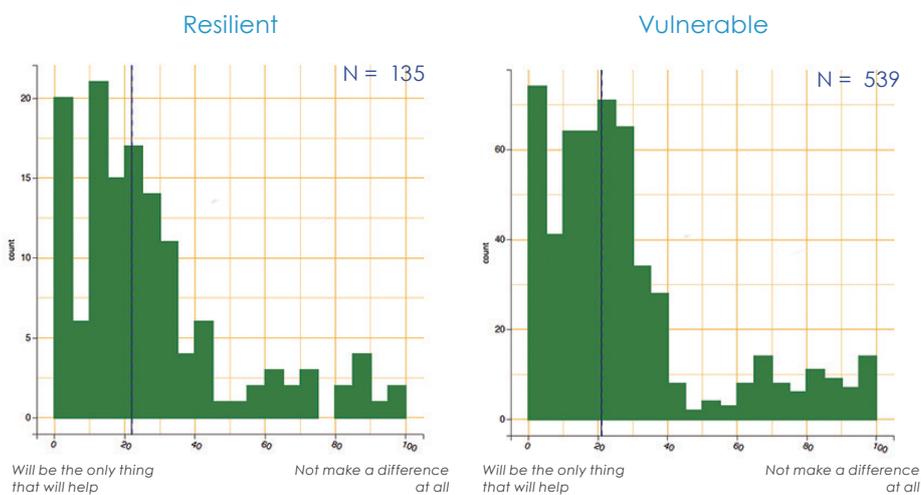


**Median by VSLA and non VSLA members:**

- VSLA: 21.34
- Non VSLA: 21.66

More VSLA members (99%) than non VSLA members (72%) think that this aspect of their safety net would help them to cope better with similar shocks and stressors in the future.

**Figure 82: Usefulness of VSLA by pathways**



**Median by pathways:**

- Resilient: 21.34
- Vulnerable: 21.66

**Usefulness of VSLA:**

*In general, there are no relevant differences between the perceptions of:*

- women and men
- VSLA and non VSLA members
- resilient and vulnerable respondents

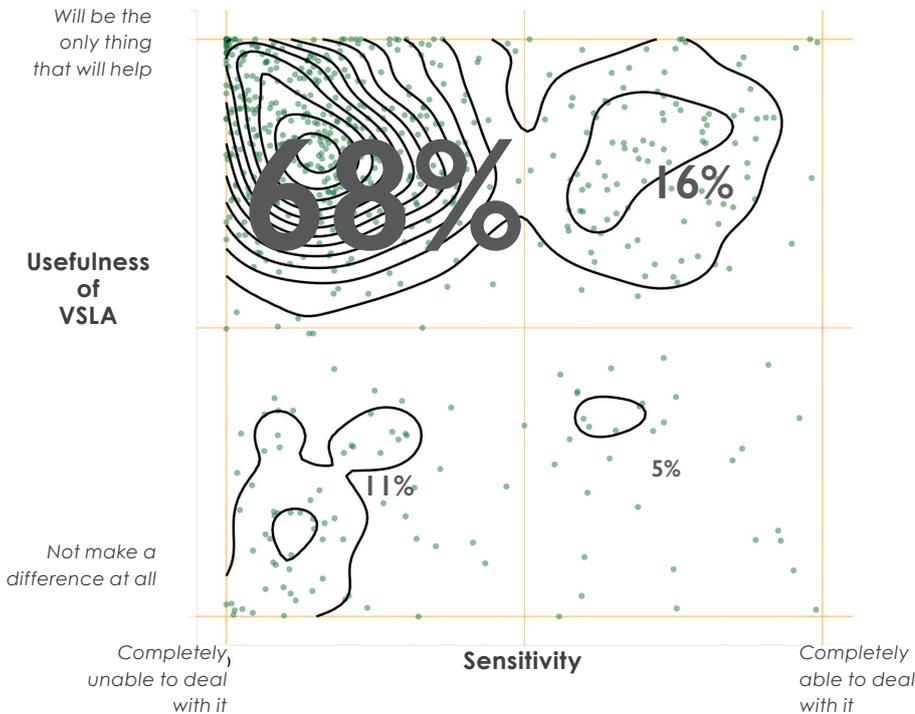
There is not a significant difference between respondents who followed resilient or vulnerable pathways.

## 2.8.5. Sensitivity of respondents and usefulness of VSLA

The study associated two dimensions: the **sensitivity** of respondents to the shocks and stressors they faced in their experiences and their perception about the **usefulness of VSLA** if similar shocks would occur in the future.

The following figure reveals the patterns that were found:

**Figure 83: Sensitivity of participants and usefulness of VSLA**



To simplify the wording of the interpretation of each field, will be used the extremes of the dimensions (unable - able; no difference - useful). Nevertheless, the reader should be aware about the numerous nuances in each field of the canvas.

673 (85%) from the 790 respondents answered both questions related to sensitivity and usefulness of VSLA.

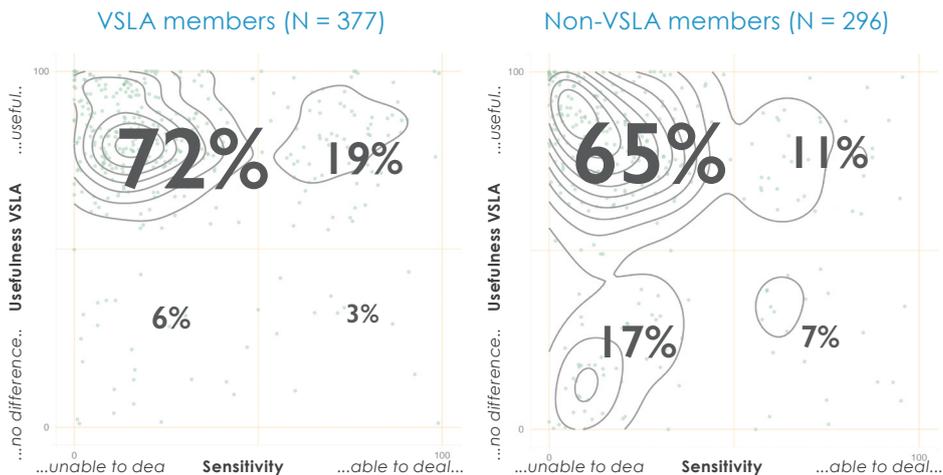
- It can be observed a strong pattern in the upper left corner. These respondents (68%) felt rather unable to deal with the shocks they faced in their experience and think that in future situations the VSLA may help them rather a lot.
- A second group (16%) in the upper right corner think as well that the VSLA might help rather a lot to face in similar shocks and stressors in the future, even if they felt in their past experiences rather able to deal with the difficult situations the faced.
- In the lower left corner, we found 11% of the respondents who felt rather less able to deal with the difficult situation in their experiences. With regards to similar shocks in the future, they think that the VSLA rather won't make a difference to cope with them.
- The fourth group represents 5% of the respondents (lower right field). They felt rather able to deal with the shocks and stressors they faced in their experiences and don't think that the VSLA might make a big difference to cope with similar shocks in the future.

### **Sensitivity in the past and usefulness of VSLA in the future:**

- *68% felt less capable to deal with the shocks in their experiences and think that VSLA might be helpful to cope with similar situations in the future.*
- *5% felt rather able to deal with the shocks and don't think that the VSLA might make a big difference in the future.*

The below figure shows the difference between VSLA and non-VSLA members:

**Figure 84: Sensitivity of participants and usefulness of VSLA by VSLA and non-VSLA members**



99% of the 381 VSLA members and 72% of non-VSLA members responded to the both signifier questions. The following percentages refer to all responses in the correspondent field.

- 72% of the 377 respondents who are VSLA members felt rather **unable to deal** with the shocks and stressors in their experiences and think that the VSLA might be **helpful** to cope with similar situations in the future versus 65% of the 296 non-VSLA members who answered both questions.
- 19% of the respondents who are VSLA members reported to feel quite **able to deal** with the shocks and stressors they faced in the experiences shared and think that the **VSLA** might be **helpful** to face similar situations in the future versus 11% of respondents who don't participate in VSLA.
- 6% of respondents who are VSLA members felt **unable to deal** with the shocks and stressors they faced in the experiences shared and think that the **VSLA** might be **less helpful** to face similar situations in the future versus 17% of respondents who don't participate in VSLA.
- 3% of respondents who are VSLA members felt **able to deal** with the shocks and stressors they faced in the experiences shared and think that the **VSLA** might be rather **helpful** to face similar situations in the future versus 7% of respondents who don't participate in VSLA.

Some interesting findings to take in consideration:

- 28% of the 409 non VSLA members did not answer both questions, which may mean that they do not even consider that the VSLA might be helpful in the future.
- Most of the 225 non-VSLA members (55%) who responded both questions think that the VSLA might be to some degree helpful to face similar shocks and stressors in the future.

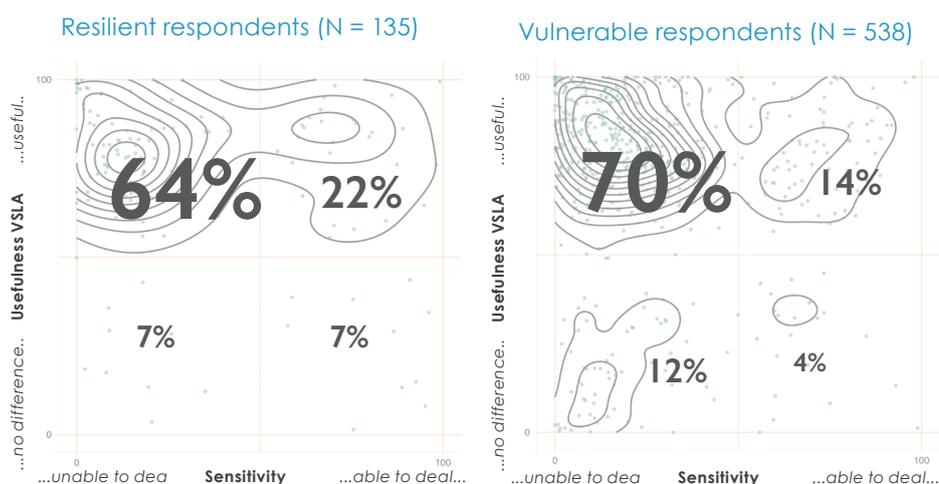
That means that in the group of the respondents who currently do not participate in the VSLA **the usefulness of VSLA is well known.**

*Most of the 55% non VSLA members think that the VSLA are helpful to face similar situations in the future.*

*65% of the 296 non VSLA members who reported both questions felt quite sensitive to face the shock and would appreciate the VSLA in the future.*

135 (88%) of 154 resilient respondents and 538 (85%) of vulnerable respondents reported to both signifier questions generating the following patterns:

**Figure 85: Sensitivity of participants and usefulness of VSLA by pathways**



- 64% of 135 respondents who followed resilient pathways felt **unable to deal** with the shocks and stressors in their experiences and think that the VSLA might be quite **helpful** to cope with similar situations in the future versus 70% of 538 respondents who followed vulnerable pathways in their experiences.
- 22% of the resilient respondents believe that they were **capable of dealing** with the shocks and stressors they faced in the experiences shared and think that the **VSLA** will be **helpful** to face similar situations in the future versus 14% of vulnerable respondents.
- 7% of resilient respondents felt **unable to deal** with the shocks and stressors they faced in the experiences shared and think that the **VSLA will not make a difference** to face similar situations in the future versus 12% of vulnerable respondents.
- 7% of resilient respondents felt rather **able to deal** with the shocks and stressors they faced in the experiences shared and think that the **VSLA might not make a difference** to face similar situations in the future versus 4% of vulnerable respondents.

#### Sensitivity in the past

29% of resilient and 18% of vulnerable respondents felt rather able to deal with the difficult situation they shared in their stories.

#### Usefulness of VSLA in the future

86% of resilient and 84% of vulnerable respondents think that the VSLA are rather useful to cope with similar situations in the future.

The following story was shared by a woman who faced a drought and made a positive experience taking a loan from a VSLA. She responded during the data collection that the VSLA is very useful to face similar shocks in the future.

#### Dealing with the shock and convinced about the VSLA usefulness

*This woman is between 26 and 39 years old. She is illiterate, lives in the rural area of Upper Artibonite and followed a vulnerable pathway.*

##### Drought

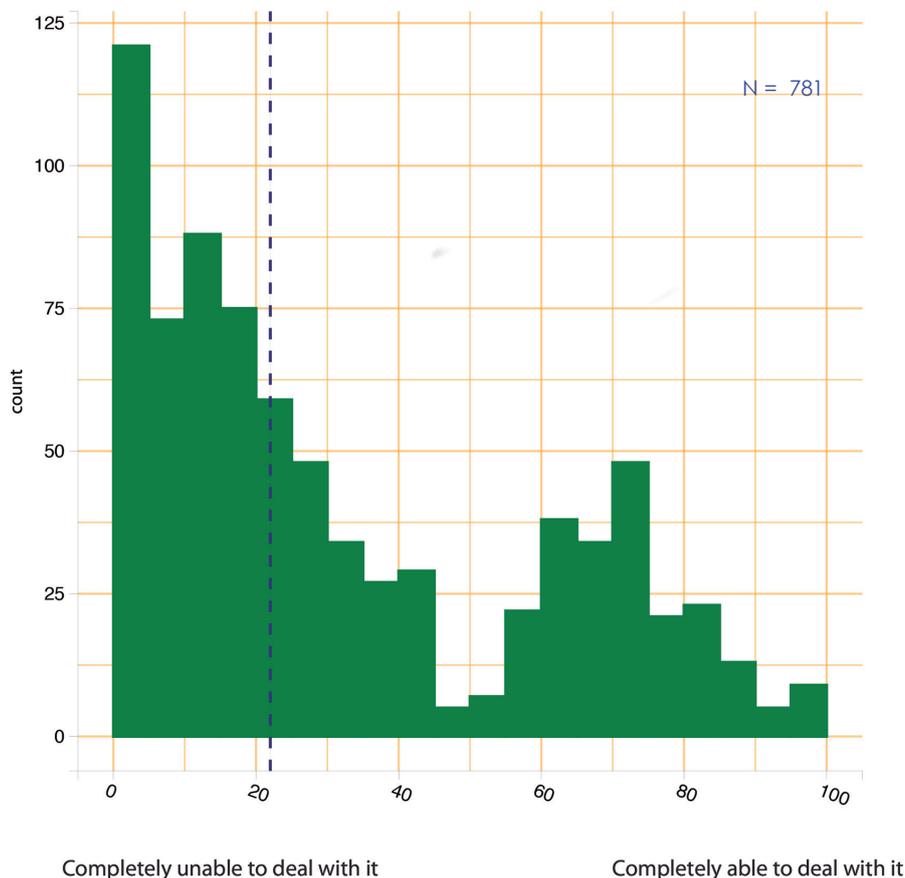
*“My husband and I used to cultivate the land. We had twins and usually we used to plant corn, sorghum and beans. We could no longer produce because of an endless drought caused by the lack of rain. This drought had affected my family’s livelihoods because what helped us were our crops as we were selling part of them at the market. The rest we used it in our household. Because rain rarely fell, it affected agriculture. In fact, I was struggling to survive with my children. Since I integrated tipa tipa’s activities, I had applied for a loan from VSLA to buy bags of charcoal that I sold in detail at the market and with the profit I made I could buy enough to feed my family. Currently I do not have the possibility to live, because I can no longer continue my coal trade.” (Narrative code 1415)*

## 2.9. The future

### 2.9.1. Preparedness for the future

The below figure shows how capable the respondents feel to manage similar situations in the future. 99% or all respondents answered this question.

Figure 86: Preparedness for the future - ALL respondents



It can be clearly observed that most of the respondents feel unable or even completely unable to deal with similar shocks or stressors in the future. Generally speaking, the **level of preparedness** of the respondents is **very low**. Taking in consideration that this population is living in a very complex context where multiple shocks are coming together and the frequency of occurrence is very high, it will be a huge challenge for the Kore Lavi program beneficiaries to rebound and even more difficult to bounce back better than before. The example below illustrates that quite well:

#### Facing several shocks and stressors

##### Bad life for the inhabitants

“Cyclone Jeanne washed everything away and this contributed to weaken our already precarious situation. So far, it is thanks to the Kore Lavi program that we are able to get back on our feet - although it pains us when we learn that the program is coming to an end. During the cyclone’s passage we suffered material losses; but also physical damage. One of my children hit an eye - wasn’t it the support of health centers - the situation would have been worse. We had to resort to plant sweet potatoes in extremely difficult situations and were producing charcoal - which gave me chronic back pain. Immediately after the cyclone we experienced a lack of rainfall - which made production almost impossible. In addition, my parcels of land are in the hills. So charcoal production is our main source of income. We have tried to raise poultry - but the disease has destroyed them.”

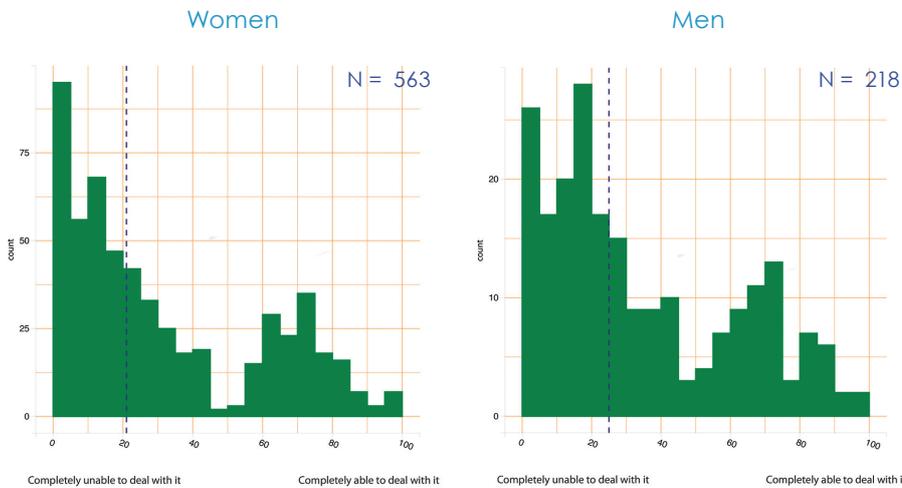
#### Low preparedness to deal with future shocks and stressors:

- 72% of the 781 respondents feel less capable or even unable to deal with similar situations in the future.
- Median for ALL respondents: 22.31

## Differences between women and men

The following graph shows the differences between women and men regarding their level of preparedness to face similar events in the future:

**Figure 87: Preparedness for the future by gender**



When observing the median of the histograms, a slight difference can be seen between men and women. Men seem to feel a bit better prepared (median = 24.62) than women (median = 21.23) when facing similar shocks and stressors.

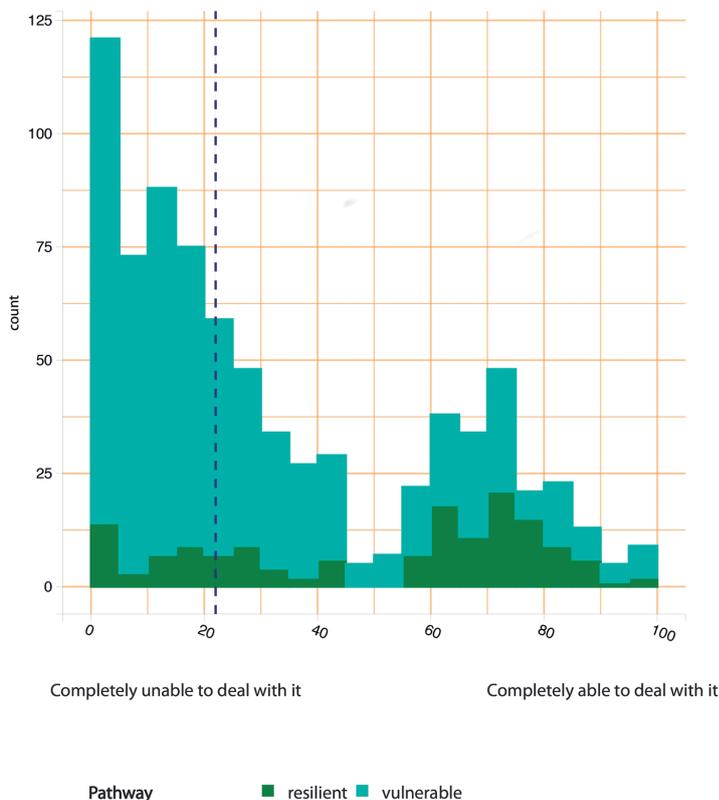
Comparing the patterns of both groups (women and men) in one graph, the following trend is generated:

*Female respondents feel less able or even unable to deal with similar situations in the future than men.*

**Median:**

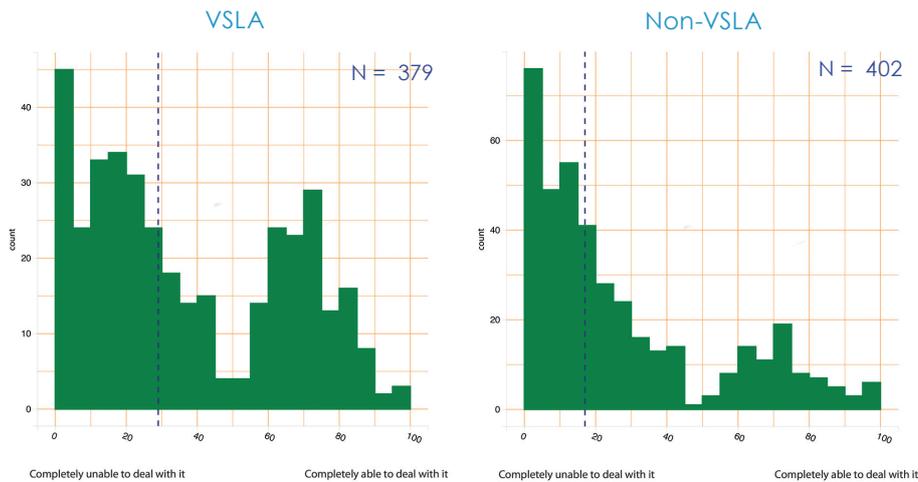
- Women: 21.23
- Men: 24.62

**Figure 88: Preparedness for the future - Women and men**



## Differences between VSLA and non VSLA members

Figure 89: Preparedness for the future by VSLA and non-VSLA members



*VSLA members feel also rather unable to deal with similar situations in the future, but seem to be in a better position compared to the non-VSLA members.*

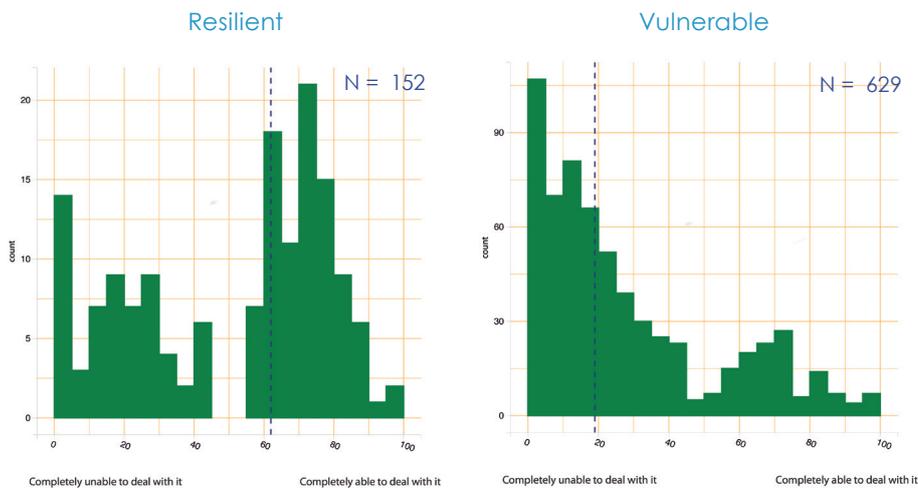
**Median:**

- VSLA: 29.08
- Non-VSLA: 17.19

Comparing VSLA and non-VSLA members, the study reveals an important difference between both groups. **VSLA members** perceive to be **better prepared** to cope with similar shocks and stressors in the future.

## Differences between resilient and vulnerable respondents

Figure 90: Preparedness for the future by pathways



*Resilient respondents feel considerably able to deal with similar situations in the future, and much better prepared than vulnerable respondents.*

**Median:**

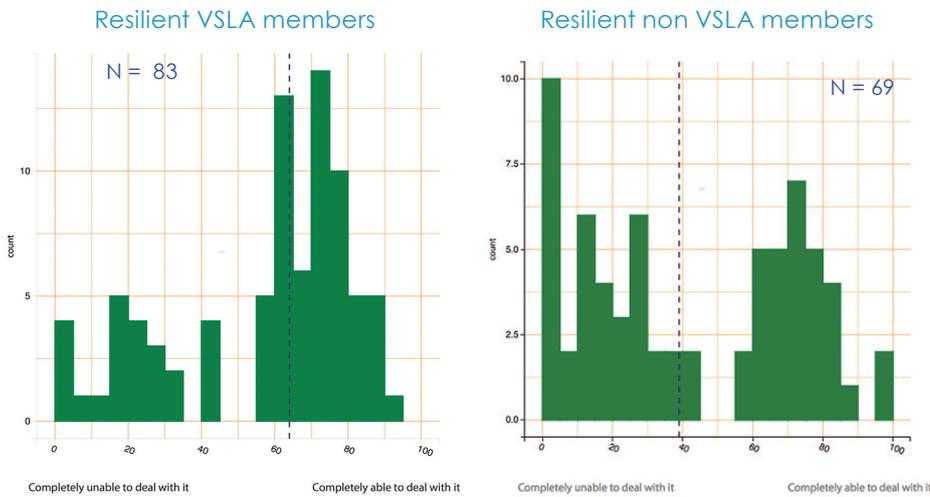
- Resilient: 62.07
- Vulnerable: 18.64

With regards to this variable, the study identified an enormous difference between both groups. Most of the **resilient** respondents feel rather able to deal with similar shocks and stressors in the future while the **vulnerable** respondents feel quite unable to cope and overcome this type of situations.

## Differences between resilient VSLA and non VSLA members

To get a better understanding of the differences between resilient respondents with respect to their participation in VSLA or not, the study inquired further and found out the following:

**Figure 91: Preparedness for the future of resilient VSLA and non VSLA members**



*Resilient VSLA members feel much better prepared to deal with similar situations in the future, than resilient non VSLA members.*

**Median:**

- Resilient VSLA: 64.44
- Resilient non VSLA: 39.29

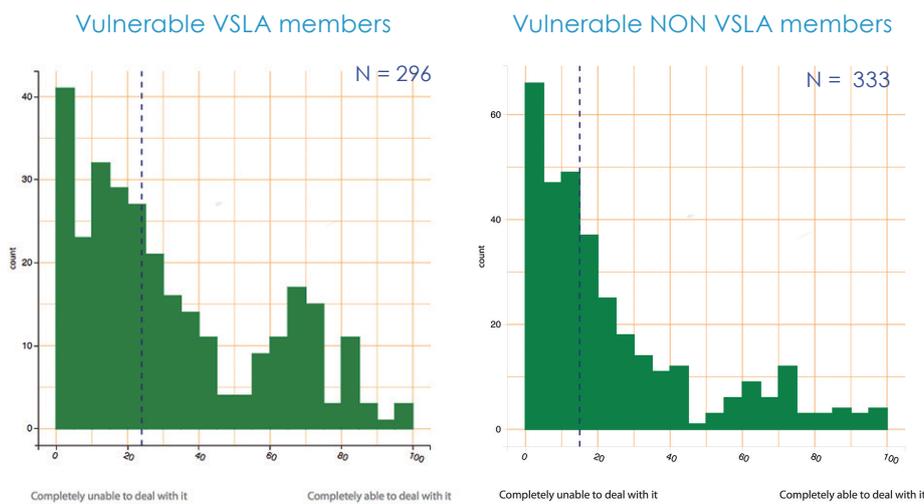
Let us note that 54% of resilient respondents are VSLA members and 45% are non-VSLA members.

The study reveals a huge difference between both groups, showing that being member of a VSLA contributes to the preparedness to face future shocks and stressors (+24.45%).

## Differences between vulnerable VSLA and non-VSLA members

The below figure shows the difference between vulnerable respondents that are VSLA and those that are non-VSLA members with regard to their preparedness to face similar shocks and stressors in the future.

**Figure 92: Preparedness for the future of vulnerable VSLA and non VSLA members**



*Vulnerable VSLA members feel better prepared to deal with similar situations in the future, than vulnerable non-VSLA members.*

**Median:**

- Vulnerable VSLA: 23.76
- Vulnerable non-VSLA: 14.87

47% of vulnerable respondents are VSLA members and 53% are non-VSLA members.

There is a difference between both groups. Vulnerable respondents who participate in VSLA are better prepared to deal with similar shocks and stressors in the future (+8.89).

**Being VSLA member makes a difference!!!**

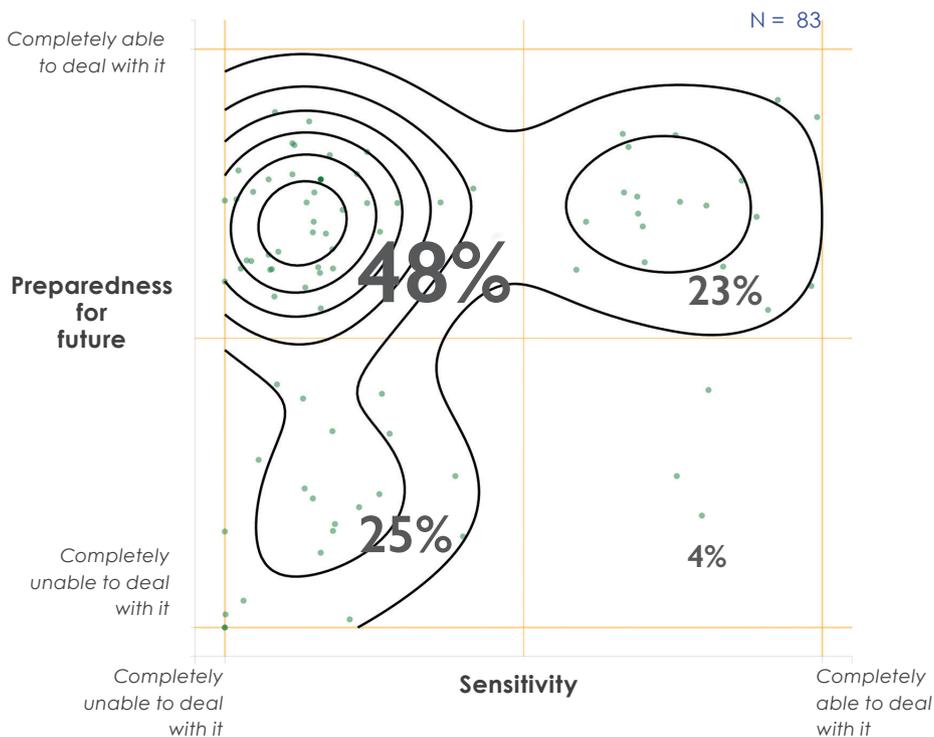
**Resilient and vulnerable VSLA members are better prepared to deal with similar situations in the future.**

## 2.9.2. Sensitivity in the past and preparedness for the future

In the previous section, the study revealed that resilient and vulnerable VSLA members feel better prepared for the future. This posed a new question with regard to the **correlation** between the **sensitivity in the past** and the **preparedness for the future**.

The below figure shows these two dimensions in the case of **resilient VSLA** members.

**Figure 93: Sensitivity in the past and preparedness for the future**  
Resilient VSLA members



11% of 779 respondents followed resilient pathways and are members of the Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLA). Most of them feel rather able to cope with similar shocks and stressors in the future.

48% of resilient VSLA members felt unable to deal with the shock or stressor they shared in their stories, but now they feel better prepared to face similar situations in the future.

23% of resilient VSLA members felt quite able to deal with the situations in the experiences they shared and also quite prepared in front of the future.

**It can be deduced that interventions like VSLA contribute to this preparedness as well as the learning process respondents are going through when they face new challenges** (see also section about "Type of experiences").

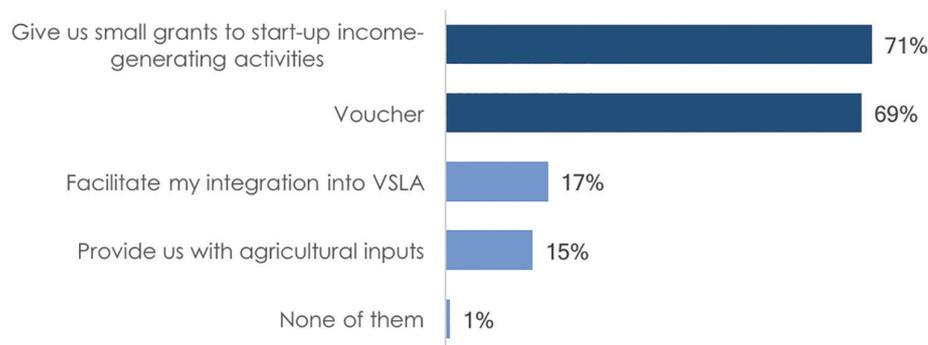
**48% of the resilient VSLA members felt unable to deal with the shocks and stressors they faced in their stories, but now they feel able to deal with similar shocks in the future.**

### 2.9.3. Support required for the transition phase

As Kore Lavi is in its final phase it is important to take decisions about the final support that the beneficiaries would prefer the most.

The following figure shows the type of support the respondents prefer:

**Figure 94: Support required for the transition phase**



71% of the 790 respondents demands “small grants to start-up-income-generating-activities” and 68% of respondents the “food vouchers”.

This confirms the need to include in future programs livelihood components. Even the most vulnerable people do not want to depend on external humanitarian aid, at the end they want to be able to generate their own income autonomously. At the same time, they still depend on the food voucher and the end of the program will be as some of them expressed during the collection phase “the most difficult shock”.

Considering the previous results regarding to the differences between VSLA and non VSLA members, it might be advisable to “facilitate the integration into VSLA” (17%).

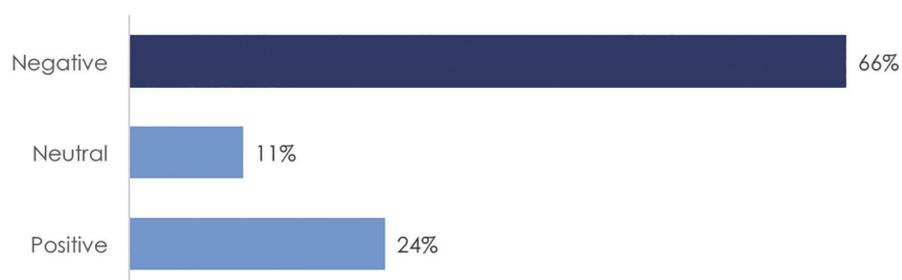
#### Support required for the transition phase:

- 71% of respondents prefer small grants to start-up income-generating activities
- 68% of respondents also demands the continuity of the food voucher
- 17% would like to integrate VSLA activities

### 2.9.4. Type of experience

At the end of the collection process, the respondents evaluated their experiences:

**Figure 95: Type of experience**



Even if all the 790 narratives were based on a shock or stressor which triggered a difficult situation, after reflecting about it, 24% of respondents valued their experiences as positive and 11% as neutral.

Generally, this may happen for different reasons:

- The support of the Kore Lavi program made an important difference to face the difficult situation they shared.
- The respondents become aware of the resources they count on and the learnings they take away for future events. Often they feel more empowered after sharing and reflecting about their experiences.
- Negative experiences may trigger decisions that lead to actions that may improve the living conditions in the end.

### 3. What did we learn from listening to people's voices?



## 3.1. Conclusions

In the chapter about the key findings, the respondents' voices and their reflections could be heard, strong patterns and weak signals were identified and promising practices emerged. The conclusions will be organized according to the learning questions that guided the entire this resilience study process.

They are based on key findings and enriched with the contributions, insights and reflections of Kore Lavi team members and other stakeholders including the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and the Food Security National Coordination (CNSA). The consultant will contribute additional reflections based on her experience and literature review making sense on the previous key findings in the current Haitian context.

### Learning question 1:

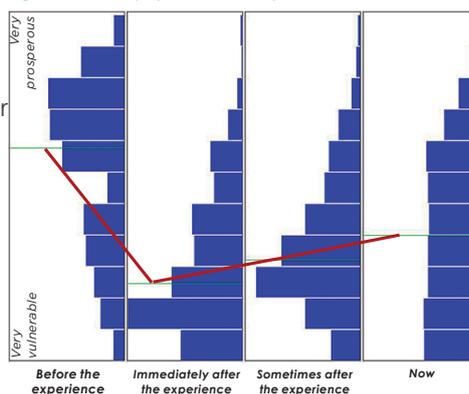
What are the most important **shocks and stressors** that program participants are facing, and how does it affect their **abilities, opportunities, and capacities** to move towards **well-being and sustainable individual development**?

The three most mentioned shocks that affect the respondents are: **illness, death and drought**. **48%** of the respondents mentioned **health and death related events**, including accidents, **26%** faced **climate** related shocks and stressors and 9% natural disasters (including 7% hurricanes). The frequency and scope of droughts is perceived as very high which is confirmed by analysis provided by United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA) and other specialized organizations.

**80%** of the respondents followed **vulnerable pathway trajectories** and the recovery process after facing the difficult situation is very slow.

The narratives also reveal that the respondents often face several types of shocks and stressors at the same time. If people were not able to recover from one shock, once they are hit by the next one, at the end they will be going through a collapsing trajectory and end up much more vulnerable as they had been after the shock occurred in the experience they shared.

Figure 29: Pathway dynamic - ALL respondents



The most important shocks and stressors - according to the respondents - are:

- Illness (24%)
- Death (22%)
- Drought (19%)
- Hurricanes (7%)

**65%** of the respondents were affected by death, illness and drought - whereas 39 shocks were identified during the design phase.

OCHA recently published its latest report and draw as one of the main conclusions that *“more than 2.6 million Haitians in rural areas are now food insecure and the prospects for the coming months are not favorable”*<sup>10</sup>. OCHA notes also that the economic situation has continued to deteriorate since 2018. The previous findings as well as the latest statistics confirm that Haiti is facing a huge humanitarian crisis that undermines its possibility to advance towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

<sup>10</sup> Le Nouvelliste. Rapport OCHA, Plus de 2,6 millions d’Haïtiens en milieu rural sont aujourd’hui en insécurité alimentaire; Port-au-Prince, Haïti. 26/06/2019. <https://lenouvelliste.com/article/203719/plus-de-26-millions-dhaitiens-en-milieu-rural-sont-aujourd’hui-en-insecurite-alimentaire>

Despite the difficult situations, the respondents experienced **positive results** with regard to the **access to local and nutritious food** as well as related to the access to **diversified food**.

It can be deduced that these results are mainly related to the food voucher. As the vulnerability increased after the difficult event, the respondents perceived the food voucher as even more helpful at the present than immediately after the shock or stressor occurred. Intra family relations, mutual respect and social cohesion improved as a result of the difficult situation the respondents faced. However, **income** and the **ability to help others** were **negatively affected**. The **physical well-being** slightly leans toward the negative side.

Most respondents used coping actions which are related to **reduction of food consumption**. This stresses even more the high food insecurity, **re-enforcing the vicious circle of vulnerability**, as it affects their capacity to work, their health and their opportunities to generate income. The high incidence of illness and death related shocks are also caused by the **poor public health policies** that do not take into consideration the high vulnerability of an important part of Haiti's population. Numerous stories refer to the impossibility to **pay the hospital fees and medicine**. The economic costs to face illness or to appropriately bury their family member often implies that the respondents could not pay the **school fees** that is absorbed indirectly by the food voucher. The gap between the highly vulnerable population and those who have more opportunities will become deeper and deeper and will raise more inequities and probably more social conflicts.

This should be approached not only by international humanitarian aid programs, but through reforms of **public health and education policies** and their incremental implementation, for example, establishing new priorities in the annual public budget. It is clear that it will be a huge challenge for any government of such an - along its history - impoverished<sup>11</sup> country to assume its role as a duty bearer<sup>12</sup>. Nevertheless there is a need to address the underlying causes of structural violence<sup>13</sup> and inequity, reduce corruption<sup>14</sup>, establish priorities conducting resources to the areas where it is needed and **foster an inclusive and constructive dialogue to develop and implement together with the different national and international stakeholders the National Strategic Development Plan** to support the country and achieve the SDG in 2030.

Additionally, the increasing influence of **climate change** has to be taken in account. According to the Global Peace Index 2019<sup>15</sup>, *climate change "amplifies the risks of breakdowns in peacefulness by acting as a threat multiplier.... climate pressures adversely impact resource availability, affect population dynamics, and strain societal institutions, which affect socioeconomic and political stability"*.

People may cope and remain resilient up to a certain **tipping point**. What might happen beyond this threshold in terms of abrupt changes and regime shift is unpredictable. The main shocks and stressors need to be addressed urgently; otherwise the current unsustainable situation might trigger even more instability and conflicts in the future.

---

*The food vouchers contribute indirectly to:*

- *Payment of school fees*
- *Payment of medical fees*

*Poor public education, health and food security policies increase inequities and compromises the country's future.*

---

---

*26% of shocks and stressors were climate-related and 7% of respondents were affected by hurricanes.*

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11 According to the Human Development Index 2018, Haiti held position number 168 from 189.

12 See also Articles 19 and 20 of the Haitian amended Constitution (1987) about the right to health, education and food.

13 For definitions of structural violence: Galtung, Johan. Farmer, Dr. Paul.

14 According to Transparency International, the Corruption Perception Index 2018 for Haiti is 20/100 while the world average is 43/100. It ranks on place 161 from 180. <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>

15 Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Peace Index 2019. <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2019/06/GPI-2019-web003.pdf>

## Learning question 2

What **resources** do the households have to deal with these shocks and stresses?

How did participants **cope with the shocks and stressors** and what might be useful strategies for the transition process and the future?

Comparing the three main types of assets (personal, social, physical and financial resources), it could be identified that specially vulnerable respondents tended to rely on **social resources**. The support of Kore Lavi partners has been highly appreciated, followed by family and community while the help provided by governmental institutions and other local and international organizational was perceived as quite negative.

Related to **financial resources**, the food vouchers helped 88% of respondents as well as informal loans (41%) to cope with the shocks and stressors they faced.

The assessment revealed that the Kore Lavi program has been a very important resource for the respondents to overcome the difficult situations they faced. At the same time, these results raise the question about people's food security once the Kore Lavi program will be finalized.

About the relative usefulness of three key elements of **human agency** - dreams, attitudes, knowledge and skills - most respondents found the use of knowledge and skills very helpful. Based on literature about psychological resilience, it can be deduced that a combination of the three elements should be addressed to increase people's resilience.

The **ecosystem services** which have been more helpful to cope were timber, firewood and fiber in 48% of the cases, but also freshwater (26%) and medicinal plants (21%).

Generally, the respondents used more **negative coping mechanisms** that compromise their food security like eating less or less preferred meals per day (58%), reducing expenditures related to household needs (32%), producing charcoal (33%), reducing agriculture production area (20%) and livestock (19%) or selling assets.

However, there are also **emerging practices** related to water harvesting practices, (25%), planting new crops (7%) or engaging in collective marketing (5%), among others that show up an increasing demand of agriculture and income-generating activities.

11% of respondents mentioned **charcoal production** as their main income source, 33% used it to cope and/or adapt after facing the shock or stressor and 48% used timber, firewood or fiber.

Charcoal production is the second-largest agricultural value chain in Haiti (World Bank Group, November 2018)<sup>16</sup>. Even if the National Assessment of Charcoal Production and Consumption Trends identified a tree coverage in Haiti at approximately 30 percent of the land surface which is much higher than the conventionally reported level of tree and/or forest cover, it also acknowledges the serious health impacts of household charcoal use and the need to investigate cleaner stoves and cooking practices using charcoal.

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*The Kore Lavi program was a very important resource to cope with shocks and stressors:*

- *Kore Lavi partners were the most selected social actors and their support highly appreciated.*
  - *88% of respondents selected the food voucher as the most helpful financial resource.*
- 

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*Several negative coping mechanisms compromise people's food security.*

---

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*Emerging practices related to water harvesting practices and livelihood.*

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*Charcoal production was the most used coping action.*

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<sup>16</sup> International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (The World Bank). Charcoal in Haiti. A National Assessment of Charcoal Production and Consumption Trends. November 2018.

It also suggests the “examination of prospects for long-term sustainability of different charcoal cultivation and harvest methods, in terms of soil nutrients and ground cover.” (Idem, p. 54).

Nevertheless, it does not take in account the carbon footprint of charcoal<sup>17</sup> and its comparison with other economically and culturally feasible fuel alternatives. Considering the urgent challenge to mitigate climate change, it is advisable to identify interventions that addresses people’s immediate needs **and** strategic long-term solutions based on a sustainable development perspective.

### Learning question 3

How has Kore Lavi's **food voucher impacted** the household's coping strategies with these shocks and stressors?

To what extent do the Kore Lavi **monthly social transfers** contribute to increased resilience among the safety net beneficiaries?

- Which **added value** did the **food voucher** bring to the participants’ living conditions?
- What did they do with the money they saved receiving the voucher?

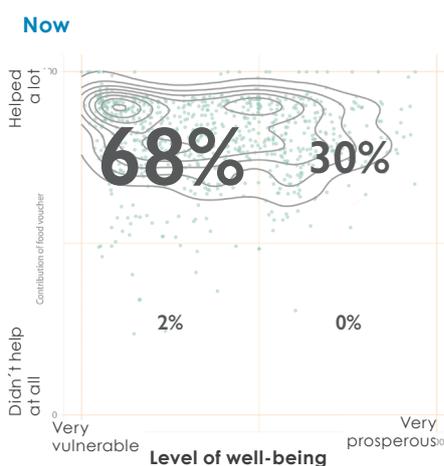
The food voucher had a very **positive impact** and helped a lot during each key moment:

- before the shock or stressor
- affected the participant,
- immediately after,
- sometime after and
- now.

The food voucher has been especially important at the present moment as the recovery process from the shock or stressor is going on very slowly.

In the different stories that were shared, certain number of respondents mentioned that – other than the Kore Lavi food vouchers – they have no other means to ensure their food security.

With regard to the food vouchers **indirect contribution**, it is important to highlight that 59% of respondents used the money they save to **pay school fees** and 28% to pay **medical fees**. 36% save it in their **VSLA**. But there is also an emerging group that used the money to **invest in agricultural endeavors** and **start-up income generating activities**.



#### The food voucher

- had a very positive impact in family’s lives,
- contributed indirectly to education, health, savings and livelihoods.

<sup>17</sup> “Assuming a 1:1 replacement ratio for green charcoal, CRI (Carbon Roots International) estimates that each ton of green charcoal consumed by Haitian households offsets 6.7 tons of wood harvested from live trees. Accordingly, CRI estimates that each ton of green charcoal represents 8.8 tons of CO2 emissions avoided.” See sources at literature section:

## Learning question 4

What is the **difference having participated or not in the VSLA**?

- Are the VSLA members more resilient than non-VSLA members?
- Compare the resources, coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies both groups used to face the shocks and stressors.
- What are the **reasons** that the non-VSLA participants decided **not to participate in VSLA**?

All the components and elements of the resilience analytical framework were compared to identify the difference between VSLA and non VSLA members. The study identified that 22% of VSLA members followed resilient pathways versus 16% of non VSLA respondents. In almost all significant questions, there were found **small differences between both groups**, but not as much as it was initially expected by the Kore Lavi team.

Nevertheless, we found **important differences between resilient and vulnerable VSLA and non VSLA respondents**, which confirms the relevance of these type of saving groups. At the same time, it is important to review and reflect about what can make the VSLA more effective and attractive for all beneficiaries.

The **motivations to participate or not in VSLA** give important insights to be considered for the methodology of future interventions. Those who are members said that they can address other household needs (56%), improve their income (51%), have access to other program benefits (46%) or have unprecedented access to credits (29%).

Those beneficiaries who do not participate mentioned as main reasons that they believe that their income does not allow them to do savings (62%) and 19% don't want to be bothered when they cannot pay.

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*Participating in a VSLA makes a difference.*

*Resilient and vulnerable respondents who participate in a VSLA feel better prepared to deal with similar situations in the future.*

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## Learning question 5

What would be the best intervention, the **best package to facilitate a smooth transition** and to enable participants to continue on their own?

- What would be useful for them?
- What would be the best way to provide the package?

How to **combine the different components** (voucher, legalizing VSLA, advocacy...)?

For the transition phase of the Kore Lavi program (June - September 2019), 71% of respondents prefer **small grants to start-up income-generating activities** and 69% wants to continue receiving the **food voucher**.

17% would like to join the VSLA and 15% prefer being provided with agricultural inputs.

The second sub-question will be responded in the section 3.2. Recommendations.

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*The most demanded support for the final program phase:*

- *Small grants to start-up income-generating activities (71%)*
  - *Food vouchers (69%)*
  - *Integration in VSLA (17%)*
-

## General conclusions

Additionally to the previous reflections related to the learning questions based on the findings and the narratives, it can be deduced the following:

- The Kore Lavi program addresses a highly vulnerable part of population in the 5 departments.
- The interventions - mainly regarding the food voucher - signified a very important contribution to the respondents' food security and the end of the program is even perceived as "the major shock" as the people are still not able to guarantee the basic food security on their own. The respondents expressed a high uncertainty about what might happen after Kore Lavi comes to an end.
- The food voucher contributed directly to food security and indirectly to education and health; which should have been assumed by the government. These are human rights also integrated in the Haitian Constitution. Not attending these basic needs and rights affects the current situation of an important part of Haiti's population and compromises as well the future of the country.
- Women are more vulnerable than men, respondents with a higher educational level tend to be more resilient. Revising all type of coping actions, adaptive responses and transformative strategies and the differences between women/men, VSLA/non-VSLA members as well as resilient/vulnerable respondents will allow CARE and USAID to design more customized and adaptable interventions in the future.
- Haiti faces multiple shocks and stressors - mainly man-made - which means that there is a very high likelihood that the population segment of very vulnerable people will increase, as it was mentioned in the recent report from OCHA.

## 3.2. Recommendations

Considering that Haiti is the poorest country of the Western hemisphere and one of the most exposed to natural disasters and climate change related events, there are multiple challenges to face. Before the recommendations will be posed, it is important to connect resilience with sustainable development.

*"Sustainable development is defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (UNGA, 1987: 43).*

*Resilient development enables people, socioeconomic and environmental systems to 'cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation' (IPCC, 2014a: 1,772).*

*Development needs to include both; it cannot be sustainable if it is not resilient."<sup>18</sup>*

Resilience with all its dimensions - physical, psychological, economic, social and ecological - need to be taken into account in development programs. At the same time interventions to build resilience need to be sustainable.

---

**Development needs to include both - sustainable and resilient development -; it cannot be sustainable if it is not resilient.**

**And interventions to build resilience need to be sustainable.**

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18 See *Literatura and other sources: UNDP, May 2019)*

Based on the results of this resilience assessment, there can be outlined some general recommendations for future program design and implementation.

- **Livelihoods** need to be built and/or strengthened. It has been a constant demand and it seems to be a more effective way to achieve sustainable results related to food security. The way to build livelihoods and to foster income-generating activities should be designed according to the capabilities and characteristics of different segments of the vulnerable population.

For example, some groups may be only able to advance during a first phase with "food for work" programs, others prefer farming on their own, others develop better in groups and some may have a high entrepreneurial spirit. So, it is important to think in different options taking in account the diversity of vulnerable respondents.

- **VSLA** are important to cope and adapt. Their scope and impact can be improved even more, for example, taking in consideration the insights about motivations and constraints related to VSLA participation. At the individual level it means, for example, to foster income generation but also to approach the belief system related to certain values or paradigms like "I don't have enough money to save".

Based on other experiences and social sciences, the time previewed to organize and accompany the VSLA is very short (one year). Generally, when we are talking about major organizational or social changes, 6 to 7 years are needed to get sustainable results. About 3-4 years to design and implement the change, in this case, the VSLA, and a second phase of 3 years to guarantee its adoption, that means that the VSLA and democratic practices are part of the social culture.

- Considering the Haitian political context, it is important to foster practices related to **inclusive dialogue, conflict transformation, transparency, participation and democratic practices** starting with program interventions like the **VSLA** and as well as fostering advocacy in alliance with other stakeholders and including the vulnerable people's voices.
- Building resilience needs to take in consideration as well the recovery and sustainability of unpriced **ecosystem services** and create awareness and acknowledgment of humans' dependence on the ecosystems' support. Haiti's vulnerable population requires to get better prepared with regards to **long-lasting droughts** with **water harvesting practices**, drought-resistant crops, alternative income-generating sources, soil and watershed restoration. The charcoal production challenge should be approached in a sustainable way.
- Development programs that include a resilience approach need to **distinguish** between **negative and positive coping and adaptive mechanisms**. Some coping actions or adaptive responses may be short-term and/or individual "solutions" but will increase the problem from a **long-term, cross-scale and sustainable development perspective**. Each kind of development programs need to be aware and choose carefully the interventions to be implemented. Resilience and sustainability have to go hand-in-hand.
- Navigating in such a complex world where development organizations have to face a combination of influences of exogenous shocks and endogenous changes requires a high level of **adaptive governance** at all levels and in all sectors. This is often the hardest task to achieve and at the same time one of the most important ones.

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*Food security programming in general should go beyond assistance to contribute to sustainable and resilience development combining:*

- *Humanitarian assistance (food vouchers)*
  - *Saving groups like VSLA*
  - *Sustainable livelihood strategies*
  - *Inclusive dialogue and conflict transformation*
  - *Advocacy and capacity building related to public policies which include sustainability and resilience.*
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*Combine the people's immediate needs to face shocks and stressors with strategic long-term solutions based on a sustainable development perspective.*

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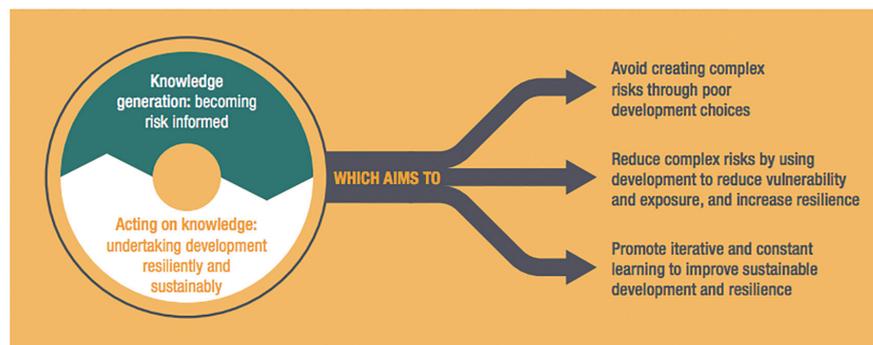
- This requires Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) thinking which is defined as “a mental model or worldview that views Social-Ecological Systems (SES) as CAS and appreciates the resulting implications for management”<sup>19</sup>.

Future programs should continue to strengthen the capacities of adaptive governance at multiple scales.

- This resilience assessment gives us a lot of insights, some of them confirming our assumptions, others are surprising and raise new learning questions and additional “black boxes” that need to be explored further. As Biggs et al. remarks “knowledge of social-ecological systems is always partial and incomplete”. Enhancing resilience of social-ecological systems with emphasis on the most vulnerable population must be supported by **continuous learning processes** which includes: processes of experimentation and monitoring, knowledge co-production and collaboration, long-term monitoring including slow variables and feedbacks, diverse participation, appropriate facilitation, sufficient financial and human resources and social networking.

The figure<sup>20</sup> below summarizes the opportunities and challenges of a risk-informed development that approaches resilience AND sustainability based on appropriate knowledge generation.

**Figure 96: Risk-informed development and its core aims**



Source: © Nadin and Opitz-Stapleton.

Last but not least, we would like to encourage CARE and its partners to **spread the 790 voices** to which we had the opportunity to listen. Each single story and the powerful patterns they visualize all together are an important entry point to **broaden the understanding about resilience and food security of the most vulnerable population in Haiti**. Now they deserve the **use of the knowledge** that could be built based on the experiences they shared with us.

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# KoreLavi

Appui au programme national de sécurité alimentaire et de nutrition

