LONDON COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE SURVEY: WEEK SIX QUESTIONS

FIELDWORK 18th-21st MAY 2020

CITY INTELLIGENCE

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Community Response Survey

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

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

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

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

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

Cohort details

The questions were sent to 256 Civil Society organisations who have agreed to take part. The organisations were recruited through existing contacts and mailing lists held by the GLA Community Engagement and Equality & Fairness teams.

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

A total of 113 organisations responded in full or in part to the week six questions, which were live between Monday 18th and Thursday 21st May 2020.

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

CHANGE IN NUMBER OF PEOPLE SEEKING SUPPORT

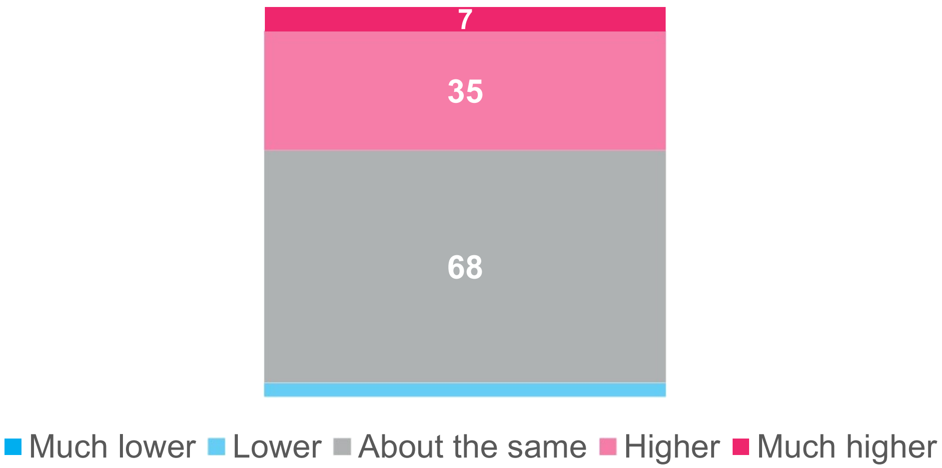
This week more organisations have seen little change (68) than an increase (42) in the number of people seeking support.

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

The proportion of organisations seeing an increase in numbers seeking support has stayed similar to last week, although over the last four weeks it has fallen from 46 per cent four weeks ago to 37 per cent in the most recent week.

More than half of organisations that work with BAME Londoners, those who work with socially excluded people and those who work with children have seen an increase in demand. This higher than among organisations who work with the general public (32 per cent) or young people (37 per cent).

Change in numbers seeking support (number of organisations)



Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey (n=114)

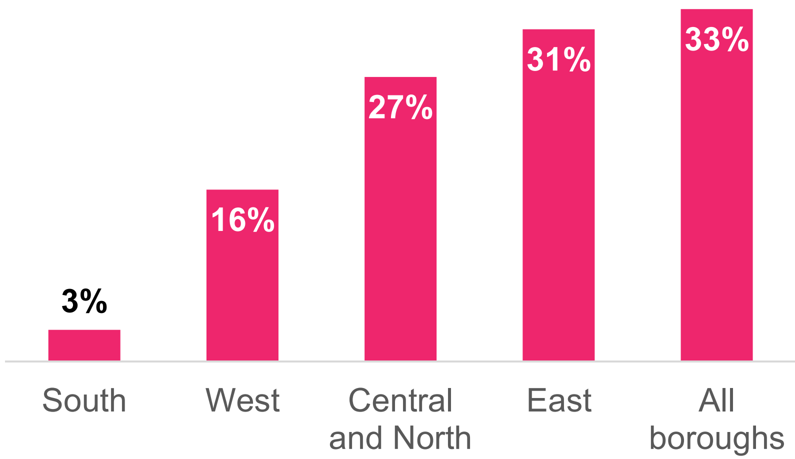
CHANGE IN NUMBER OF PEOPLE SEEKING SUPPORT BY GEOGRAPHY

Organisations working in the North, Central and East London sub-regions are more likely to report an increase in the number of people seeking support, compared to last week.

3 per cent of organisations working in the South, and 16 per cent of organisations working in the West, reported an increase in numbers seeking support, versus 27 per cent in the Central and North sub-regions, and 31 per cent in the East.

Organisations working across the whole of London were the most likely to report an increase in numbers seeking support (33 per cent).

Proportion of organisations seeking support by London sub-region



Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey (all sub-regions have a sample of at least 24)

CHANGE IN NUMBERS SEEKING SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC ISSUES

We asked responding organisations to tell us whether the number of people seeking support for a range of specific issues was higher, the same or lower compared to last week. We asked them to only answer if they deal with and have seen each of the issues.

Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses	Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	No. of responses
Mental health	65%	79	Capacity Building	38%	56
Digital connectivity	63%	75	Immigration issues	32%	41
Isolation and loneliness	62%	77	Access to health	31%	58
Poverty	52%	54	Physical health	31%	55
Employment	49%	61	Discrimination	28%	46
Housing	49%	57	Access to food	27%	67
Debt issues	45%	51	Grief bereavement	27%	45
Access to benefits	43%	67	Victim support	27%	30
Childcare or Parenting	43%	37	Access to care	27%	49
Domestic violence	40%	48			

Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey

CITY INTELLIGENCE

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

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

Challenge	Number of organisations	Issue	Number of organisations
Funding - sustainability beyond the crisis	44	Digital or tech equipment	11
Planning for recovery/easing of lockdown	40	Funding - relationship with existing funders	<10
Staff wellbeing and mental health	24	Working with local authorities	<10
Reaching vulnerable groups	21	Capacity - due to furloughed staff	<10
Capacity - due to increased demand	17	Capacity - due to staff working from home	<10
Funding - general	16	Difficulty in delivering services online	<10
Funding - access to urgent funding	15	Capacity - general	<10
Social distancing in delivery	14	Personal Protective Equipment	<10
Digital skills or training	14	Capacity - due to reduction in volunteers	<10
Reaching vulnerable groups	14	Advice/training on supporting vulnerable	<10
Need to provide new or changed services	14		

Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey

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

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

Challenge	Number of organisations	Issue	Number of organisations
Social Isolation	45	Home schooling	11
Mental health	43	No recourse to public funds	<10
Digital exclusion	40	Access to local authority support	<10
Employment issues	27	Domestic violence	<10
Low income	25	Multi-lingual support	<10
Access to food and essentials	17	Social distancing rules	<10
Family tension	12	Bereavement	<10
Inadequate accommodation	12	Access to PPE	<10

Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey

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BENEFICIARY CHALLENGES BY BENEFICIARY GROUP

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

Organisations working with children were particularly likely to mention family tension (36 per cent of organisations) and social isolation (55 per cent)

Organisations working with young people were particularly likely to mention social isolation (43 per cent of organisations) and mental health (53 per cent)

Organisations working with BAME Londoners were particularly likely to mention issues around employment (39 per cent of organisations)

Organisations working with socially excluded/vulnerable Londoners were more likely to mention access to benefits (20 per cent of organisations), low income (30 per cent) and issues around employment (40 per cent)

Organisations working with the general public were more likely to mention employment issues (40 per cent of organisations) and mental health (40 per cent of organisations) and social isolation (56 per cent)

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

We received 38 responses to the question this week, there were very few dominant patterns (with the exception of digital exclusion, NRPF and disabled people). We have identified the quote below to illustrate the gap between current support mechanisms and individuals or families whose needs will not be met through that mechanism.

"People who receive food parcels or have shopping delivered by volunteers but cannot cook due to disability etc and therefore need access to hot food. People who need culturally or religiously appropriate food. People with sensory impairments who are impacted by social distancing rules. Inequalities between those who have their own private transport, who can travel, and those who do not, who cannot due to rules about using public transport. Older people who are fit and well and do not fully understand the choices available to them as to whether or not they need to 'shield' if they have no health problems."

DIGITAL EXCLUSION

11 different organisations wrote to us about the complexity of digital exclusion. This has been a consistent pattern in the survey and impacts on many different elements of how Londoners are being impacted by COVID-19. Groups wrote to us about the impact on accessing services, educational outcomes (for children and adult learners), isolation, seeking employment, and access to information.

"Poverty and digital poverty a massive issue as the next 'phase' of the pandemic is promoting health and social care to be delivered 'digitally by default' for the next year. Problem with devices and connectivity and exasperated by poverty. Additionally it is harder to communicate with health and social care if English is not your first language by phone or video than in person. Added problem for sensory impaired."

New or growing issues

We received 37 responses to this question, below are individual response that highlight new issues that have not been previously identified.

- Anti-Social Behaviour

"People are spending more time indoors and issues with ASB from neighbours are being experienced more acutely. Noticing that many registered social landlords only offer a way of reporting noise nuisance online via apps."

- Impact on civil society

"Because of the nature of current funding all being focussed on CV-19 we are starting to see more competitive behaviour across organisations. The reality of the future seems to be setting in and organisations starting to think less collaboratively."

- Confusion about government guidance

"The government guidance has been particularly confusing for the client group, making it even more difficult for them to process/adhere to"

NEXT STEPS

Week seven survey in the field between 26th – 28th May.

Results available on Monday 1st June.

Cohort has now increased to 270 and ongoing recruitment will continue to grow the cohort