LONDON COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE SURVEY: WEEK TWO QUESTIONS

FIELDWORK 20th-23rd APRIL 2020

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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 profile, and included a small number of questions relating to the immediate impact post-lockdown of COVID-19.

The week two survey was shorter, and asked 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 180 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 107 organisations responded in full or in part to the week two questions, which were live between Monday 20th and Thursday 23rd April 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.

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BENEFICIARIES/SERVICE USERS

We asked responding organisations to tell us their three main beneficiary/service user groups. This table shows the number of organisations that picked each group. We will use this information to target recruitment to the cohort and to analyse responses to other questions.

Group	Number	Group	Number
Young people (aged 16 to 24)	25	Carers/parents	9
Children (aged 15 or under)	20	Physically disabled people	9
Homeless people	20	LGBT+ people	8
People of a BAME background	20	People with addiction problems	8
The general public / everyone	18	Women	7
Asylum seekers/refugees/migrants	17	Transgender and non-binary specific	4
Socially excluded /lonely/ vulnerable people	17	Offenders, ex-offenders and their families	3
People with mental health needs	15	Faith communities	2
Older people	10	Victims of crime and their families	2
Other civil society organisations	10	Deaf people/people with a visual impairment	1
People with a particular financial need	10	Men	1
People with learning difficulties	10	Volunteers	1

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Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey (n=101)

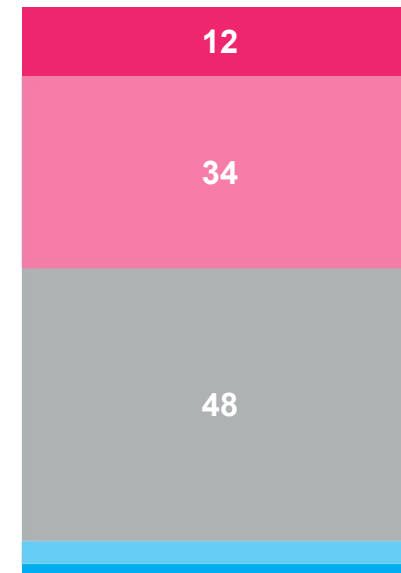# CHANGE IN NUMBERS SEEKING SUPPORT ON LAST WEEK

There are similar numbers of organisations seeing an increase (46) or little change (48) in the number of people seeking support.

Relatively few organisations (just 6) are seeing a fall in the number of people seeking support.

Using the data on main groups worked with (previous page), we can see if organisations working with different groups have seen varying patterns of change. This is only possible for groups with a higher number of organisations in the cohort and is only indicative:

- Organisations work with BAME, youth/children or socially excluded Londoners are more likely to have reported a 'much higher' increase this week than all other organisations.

- Further recruitment of organisations will allow us to look at these findings in more detail and with more confidence.

Change in numbers seeking support compared to last week (number of organisations)

| Much lower | Lower | About the same | Higher | Much higher |

Values in chart: 12, 34, 48

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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. All of the issues were mentioned by at least 35 organisations

Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand	Issue	Proportion reporting higher demand
Isolation and loneliness	80%	Capacity Building	47%
Mental health	68%	Employment	47%
Poverty	68%	Domestic violence	46%
Digital connectivity	66%	Discrimination	41%
Access to food	61%	Access to health	41%
Access to benefits	55%	Childcare or Parenting	38%
Housing	52%	Physical health	37%
Grief bereavement	51%	Access to care	37%
Debt issues	47%	Immigration issues	30%

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

Key themes

Common themes:

- **Capacity:** common themes mentioned included reduced capacity due to furloughed staff or staff capacity being reduced due to illness or caring responsibility, increased demand for support services, and capacity to pursue fundraising opportunities whilst responding to the crisis
- **Funding:** included funding needed to support emergency response work, and also concerns about loss of income in the long term
- **Maintaining engagement:** a new theme this week was the challenge in maintaining engagement with service users over a long period where face to face is not an option, some youth orgs spoke about screen fatigue and engagement with young people being really uneven, a number of groups also mentioned concern about service users they have not managed to reach at all
- **Liaising with local authorities:** another theme present in the responses was the challenge in liaising with local authorities, this included getting LA's to respond to the needs of clients, understanding what support was still available and local coordination

Other challenges highlighted by a small number of organisations (less than 10) but of interest for future monitoring include:

- Recovery planning
- Guidance on how to support vulnerable groups

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Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey

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

Key themes

Common themes:

- **Mental Health, Loneliness and Social Isolation:** Common patterns in this response included particular concern for LGBT+ Londoners, Young People and those in the Shielded category. A number of groups also drew a connection between isolation and increasing levels of anxiety
- **Lack of money:** Challenges in navigating different types of income support, with particular mention of housing costs/rent arears, the primary pressure identified are due to loss of income and increasing costs of food
- **Digital exclusion:** This spanned across access to equipment and also digital skills/knowledge
- **Access to food:** The responses included across increases costs/quantities of food and access to food. Particular concern for Disabled people facing challenges in accessing food deliveries

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GROUPS WHOSE NEEDS ARE NOT BEING MET AND NEW/EMERGING CHALLENGES

Sixty-two organisations said there were groups whose needs are not being met by the current support available in response to COVID-19. Groups identified include:

- Digitally excluded Londoners
- Londoners with No Recourse To Public Funds
- Londoners requiring mental health support

Fifty-six organisations said there were new or growing issues seen in the last week. Issues identified include:

- Mental health decline
- Disproportionate impact on particular groups, including BAME, LGBT and disabled Londoners

A smaller number of organisations raised other issues, including:

- Testing centres not being accessible for those without vehicles
- Whether funding will be available beyond the crisis period
- How organisations can start planning for recovery/exit from lockdown
- A general build-up of need across a range of issues

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Source: COVID-19 Community Response Survey

NEXT STEPS

Week three survey in the field between 27th – 30th April. This will collect questions on change in user numbers and specific needs of users increasing or decreasing

Results available on Monday 4th May

Cohort has now increased to 205 and ongoing recruitment will continue to grow the cohort

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