

AFRICAN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INEQUALITY RESEARCH

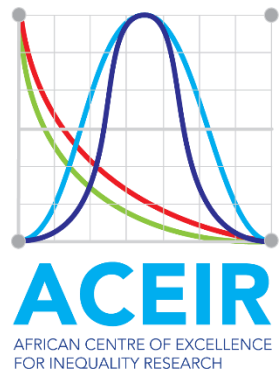
Inequality and poverty through the prism of a pandemic: Covid-19 in South Africa

Murray Leibbrandt

BPI Conference, 2024

Poverty and Social Justice in a Post-COVID World

6 June 2024



- Introduction
- Profiling COVID-19 Vulnerability in South Africa
- Tracking impacts of COVID-19 and policies to buffer impact

Profiling COVID-19 Vulnerability in South Africa

COVID-19 infection vulnerability in Africa

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Bristol Poverty Institute & Perivoli Africa Research Centre host
Poverty and Inequality Dimensions of COVID-19
in Africa: An Introduction

12th November 2020

Housing, sanitation and living conditions affecting SARS-CoV-2 prevention interventions in 54 African countries

Original Paper

Cite this article: Brewer TF *et al* (2021). Housing, sanitation and living conditions affecting SARS-CoV-2 prevention interventions in 54 African countries. *Epidemiology and Infection* **149**, e183, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0950268821001734>




Received: 12 May 2021
Revised: 9 July 2021
Accepted: 16 July 2021

Keywords:

COVID-19; non-pharmacologic interventions; prevention; Africa; public health

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WHY THIS WORK

Our work aims to:

- Identify individuals at the greatest risk of contracting COVID-19 infection due to their **living circumstance**
- Understand the **inequalities and gaps** in implementing the non-pharmacological interventions (NPIs) across regions and other demographic characteristics



SOUTH AFRICAN DATA AND METHODS

Large household
with six or more
people

Overcrowding
household with
more than three
people per room

No access to a
handwashing
facility and lack
soap for
handwashing

No access to a
radio or TV

People over age
60 living in
households with
one or more
younger people

No refrigerator

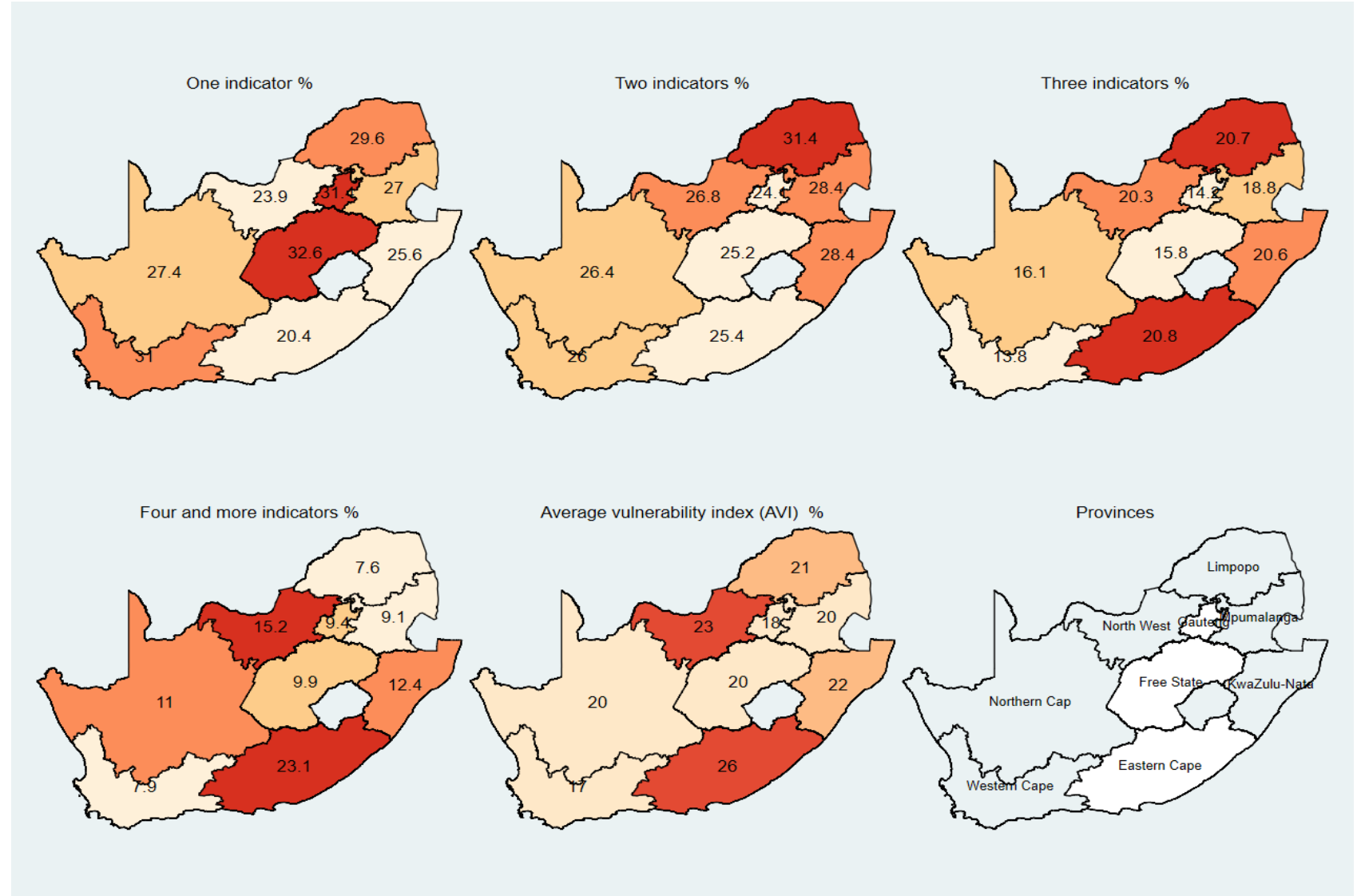
There is a
household
member with a
chronic health
condition

SOUTH AFRICAN DATA AND METHODS

In this study:

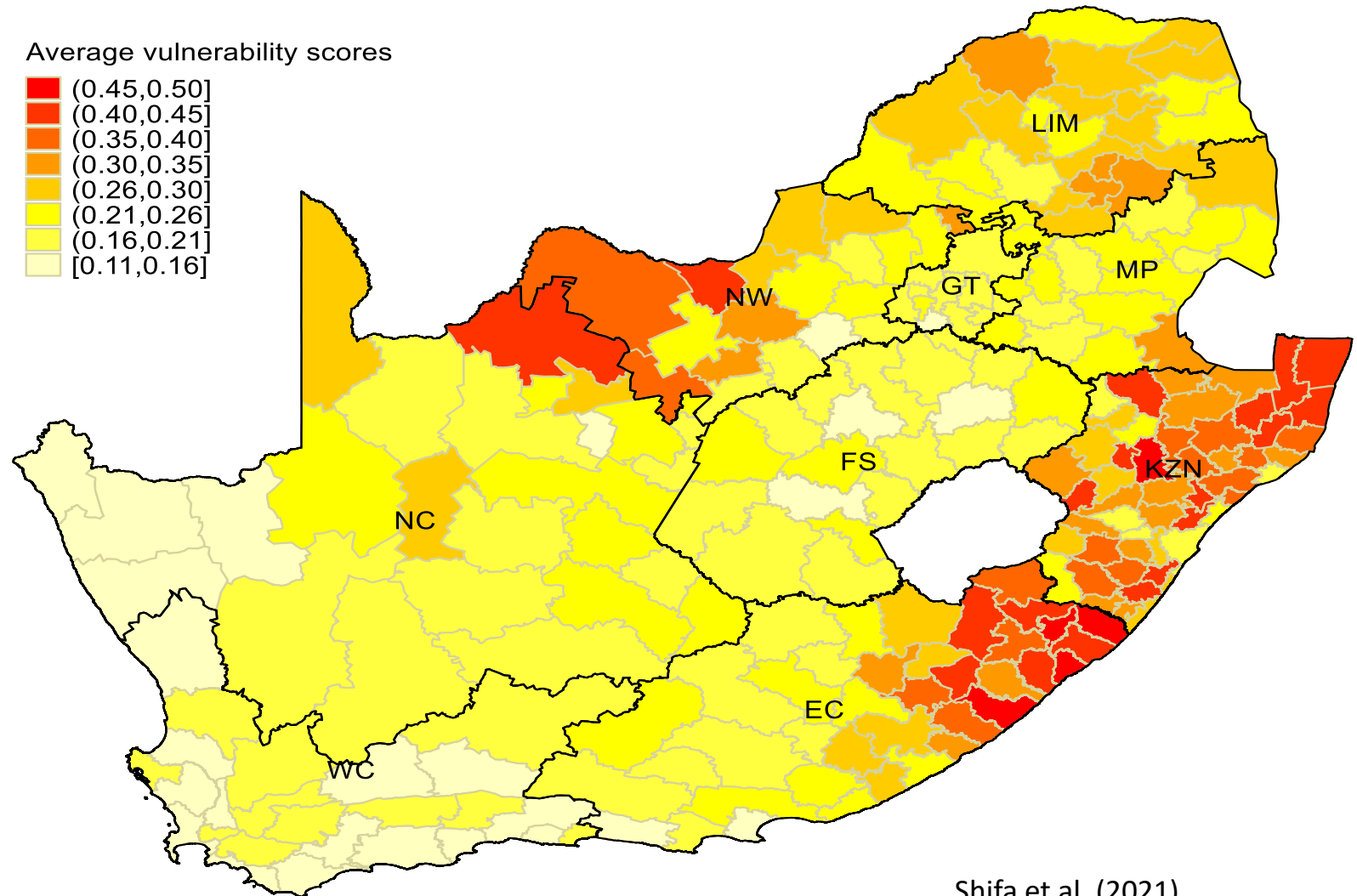
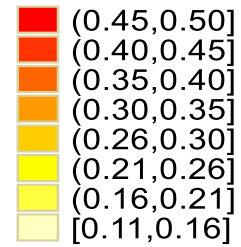
- We used the 2019 General Household Survey Data.
- Sample = 19,649 households and 68,986 individuals
- Vulnerability measures
 - Consider each indicator
 - Average vulnerability index
 - Average vulnerability score: A weighted sum of vulnerability scores for each individual (each indicator is equally weighted)
 - Counting: Count the number of vulnerability indicators for each individual

THE INTENSITY OF VULNERABILITY INDICATORS BY PROVINCE



VULNERABILITY INDEX BY MUNICIPALITIES

Average vulnerability scores

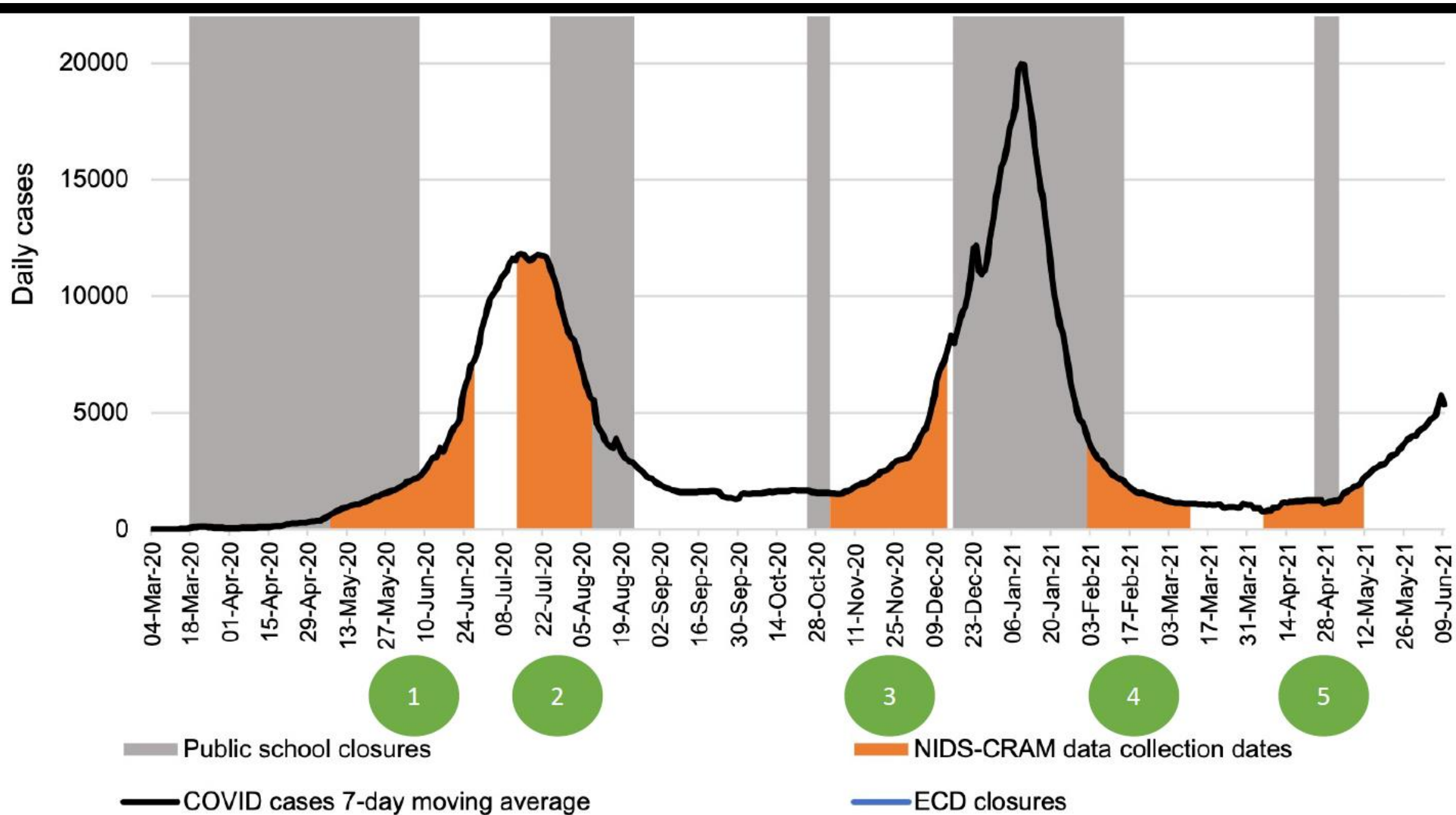


SUMMARY

- A large portion of the population is ill-prepared to protect itself against the virus, with disparities across space and social groups.
- Poorer households' ability to follow WHO recommendations may be limited by their living conditions Use public transports
- Measures of containment may not work as intended.

Tracking the socio-economic impact of the pandemic with longitudinal data (panel data)

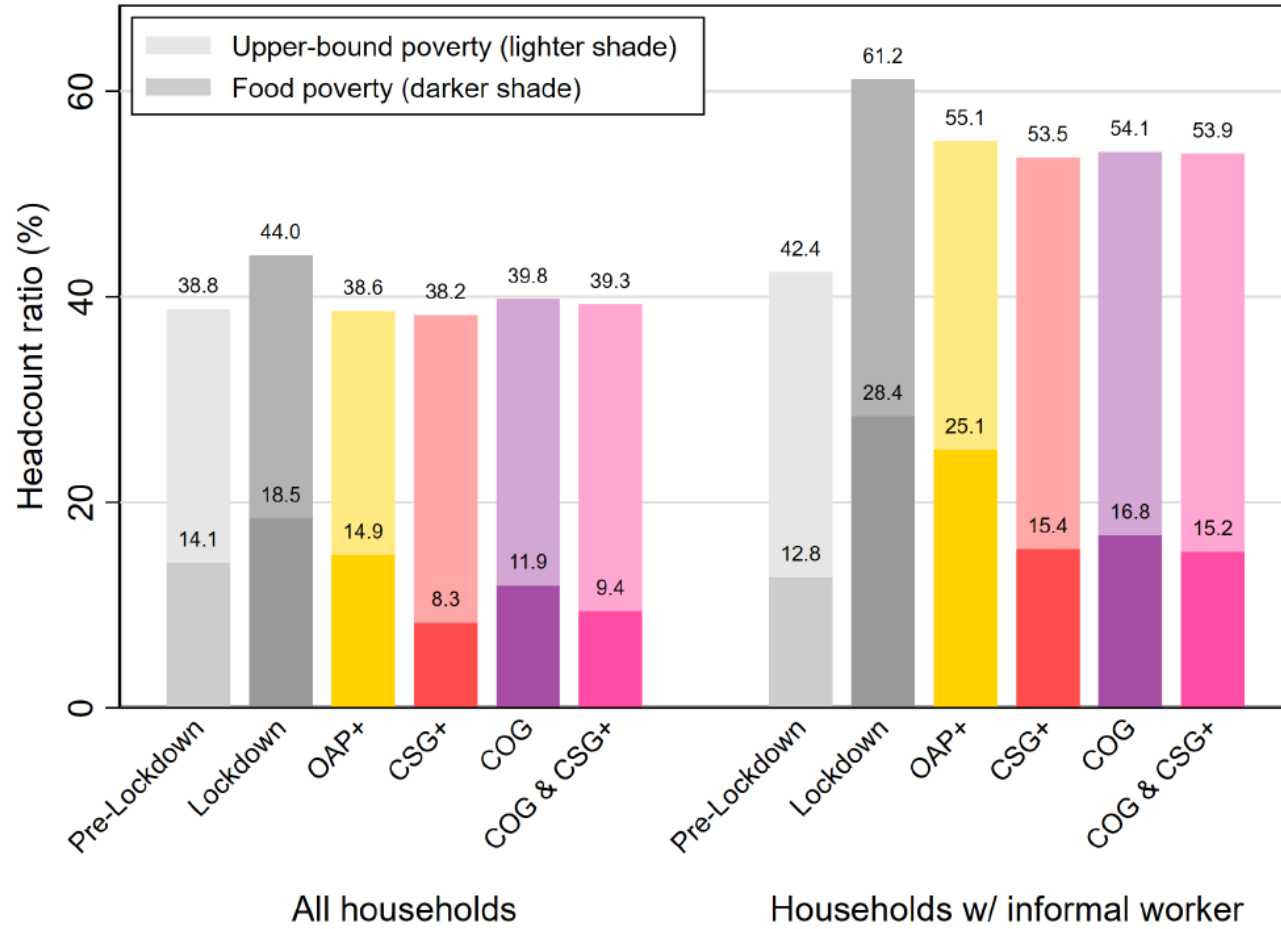




Source: Wills & Kika-Mistry, 2021.

Figure 3: Poverty impacts by lockdown scenario

(a) Headcount ratios (FGT0), Upper-bound & Food poverty lines



A decade's worth of grant-growth accomplished in 6-months?

- **10 years:** Between 2009 and 2019 the total number of grants paid out in SA grew from 14mil to 18mil (+4mil) (Kohler & Bhorat 2020)

- **4 months:** By July/August 4,2-mil people had received COV-19 SRD grants. (SASSA reports 4,3mil recipients)

...grants

Table 1: Number of social grants distributed by grant type, 2009/10 versus 2019/20.

	2009/10			2019/20			Growth in recipients (2009/10 - 2019/20) (%)
	Monthly amount (nominal Rands)	Thousands	% of total	Monthly amount (nominal Rands)	Thousands	% of total	
Child Support Grant	240	9 381	68.08	440	12 777	71.00	36.20
Older Persons Grant*	1 010	2 491	18.08	1 860	3 655	20.31	46.73
Disability Grant	1 010	1 299	9.43	1 860	1 058	5.88	-18.55
Foster Care Grant	680	489	3.55	1 040	350	1.94	-28.43
Care Dependency Grant	1 010	119	0.86	1 860	155	0.86	30.25
Total		13 779	100.00		17 996	100.00	30.60

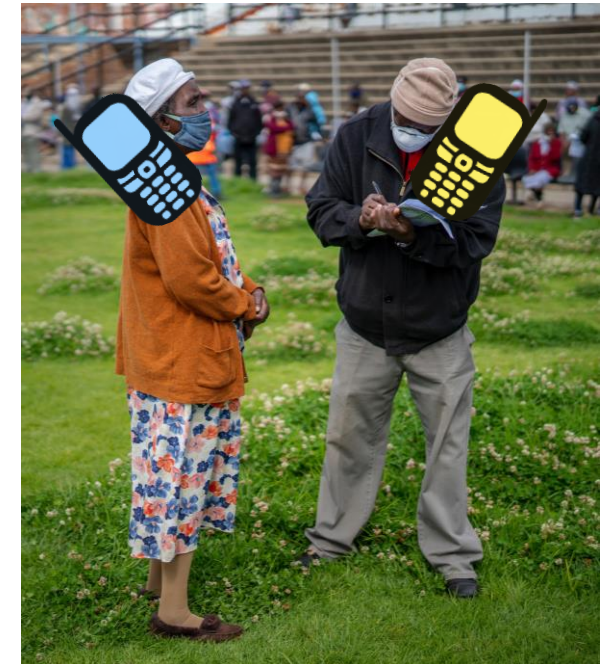
+4mil

Source: Kohler & Bhorat, 2020

BACKGROUND

- **NIDS-CRAM (2020)**

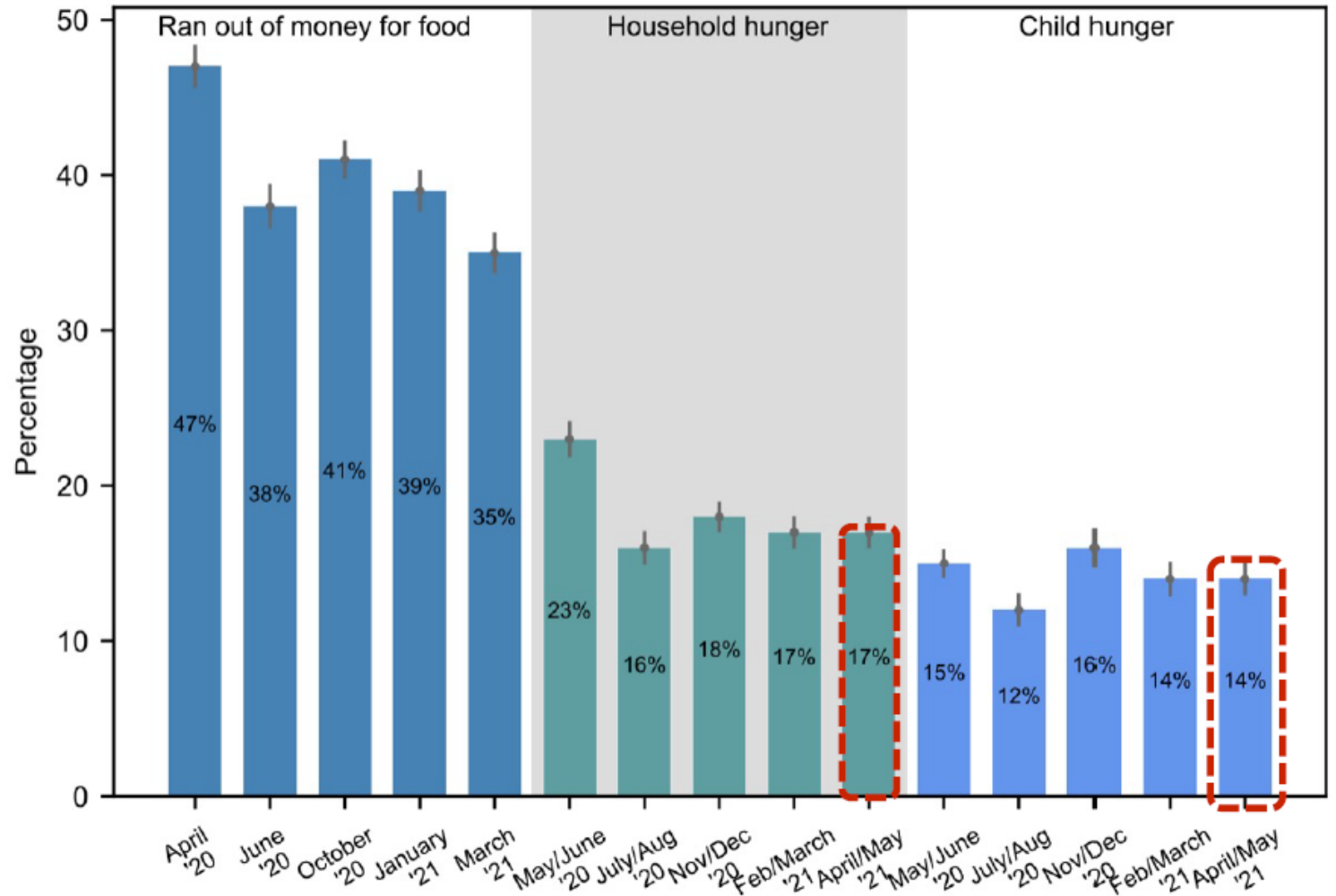
- **Wave 1: ~ 7000 individuals surveyed in NIDS-CRAM Wave 1:** In total 17,568 randomly selected individuals from NIDS were called and of these, 7,073 were interviewed in NIDS-CRAM
- **Wave 2:** ~5700 responses (80% response rate – same individuals)
- Details of the telephonic survey:
 - **Managed by SALDRU at UCT**
 - **50 call centre agents** phoning from 13 July to 13 August 2020
 - **20-minute survey** (available in all 11 languages)
 - **R20 airtime** given to respondents to thank them for participation.
 - **Questions** on demographics, migration, grant-receipt, employment, income, hunger + COVID-19 risk perceptions and behaviour + **(W2) education, ECD, mental health**
- **Wave 3-5 (Oct 2020 – July 2021)** – includes sample top-up



Hunger

Child hunger remains extremely high at 14% in the past week in April/May 2021. Hunger seems to have stabilised at a new (higher) rate both for adults and children.

Women were more likely to shield children from hunger than men.



N.i.D.S.
NATIONAL INCOME DYNAMICS STUDY



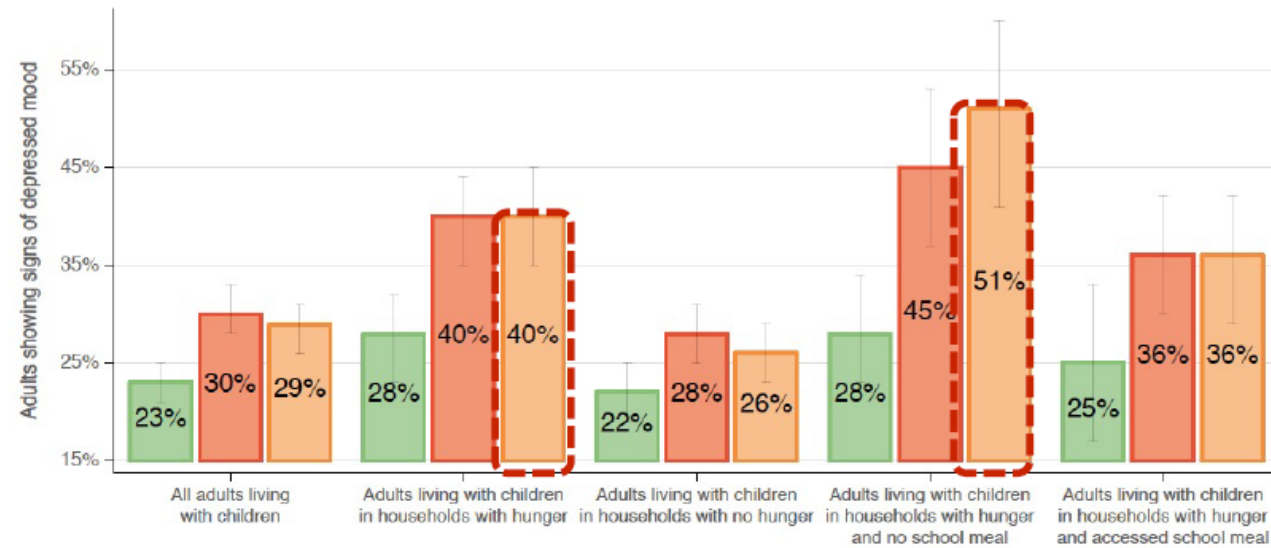
CORONAVIRUS RAPID MOBILE SURVEY 2020

Mental Health

40% of adults living with children in food insecure households show signs of depressed mood in April 2021.

This compared to 26% amongst those living with children in food secure households, not significantly different from 12 months prior. This proportion rises to 51% when we take a lack of child access to food at school into account.

Figure 1: Rate of adult depressive mood by household food insecurity in July 2020 (green), November 2020 (orange) and April 2021 (peach)



Source: NIDS-CRAM, Waves 2 and 3 (2020) and Wave 5 (2021)

Notes: The sample is all adult respondents who reported to live with at least one child (<=17 years of age) at the time of interview. The unbalanced panel is used, and data are weighted appropriately. 95 percent confidence intervals are shown.

Pathways to comprehensive social security

Table 5.1: Summary of universal BIS scenarios modelled in SAMOD - number of eligible BIS beneficiaries, annual cost, and impact on income inequality and on poverty using three poverty lines, 2021⁷⁴

Policy option	BIS amount (Rands pm)	Means-test (Rands pm)	Eligible (million)	Annual cost (R'billion)	Income inequality (Gini)	Poverty line (%)		
						FPL	LBPL	UBPL
Scen 1	n/a	n/a	0.0	R0	0.65	21.2	33.5	48.9
Scen 2	350	n/a	32.7	R137	0.62	13.8	26.3	43.3
Scen 3	595	n/a	32.7	R233	0.60	10.6	21.1	39.9
Scen 4	860	n/a	32.7	R337	0.58	2.6	13.6	35.7
Scen 5	1 300	n/a	32.7	R509	0.55	0.1	5.6	28.1

Number of employed
From Q4:2009 to Q4:2019



The number of employed people increased by **2,4 million** from **14,0 million** in Q4:2009 to **16,4 million** in Q4:2019

A decade's worth of job-growth lost in 6-months?

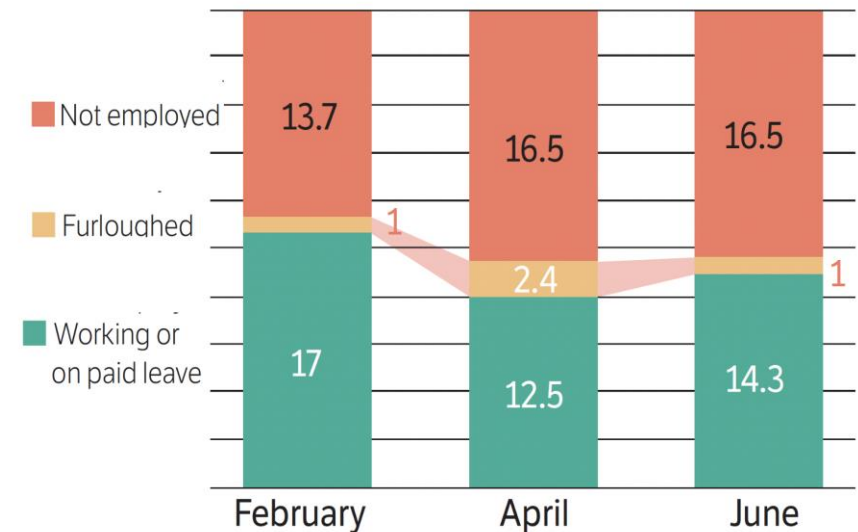
NIDS-CRAM 2020

- **-2.8-million** net jobs lost Feb → June 2020

QLFS 2020:

- **-2.2-million** net jobs lost Q1 → Q2

Weighted NIDS-CRAM Wave 1+2 (millions)



...jobs



stats sa

Department:
Statistics South Africa
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Lessons

- Necessary but not individually sufficient components are:
 - Good data
 - Research capacity in place
 - Political and social engagement and will
- The real time data, data-gathering and research must be as good as possible, but it will not be perfectly designed evaluation work
- Very hard to mainstream policy lessons, even very positive ones, into longer-run policy
 - BUT! Now a much more open discussion of dynamic social protection and active labour market policies recognising intersecting vulnerabilities

NIDS-CRAM is a public good



- **Overview:** Largest non-medical study in SA at the moment.
 - Broadly nationally representative telephonic survey available in all 11 languages.
 - Sample drawn from existing NIDS 2017 survey.
 - 5 waves over the last year.
 - 30+ researchers, 6 universities
 - Wave 5: 6 April to 11 May 2021
- **Data:** All data (Waves 1-5) are freely available for download at DataFirst (<https://www.datafirst.uct.ac.za/>)
- **Research:** All 67 Working Papers from Waves 1-5 are freely available for download at the NIDS-CRAM website (from 8 July) (www.cramsurvey.org)

Thank you



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