

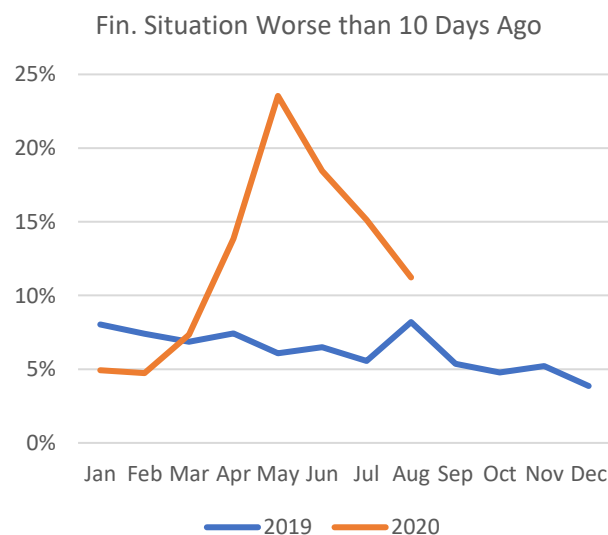
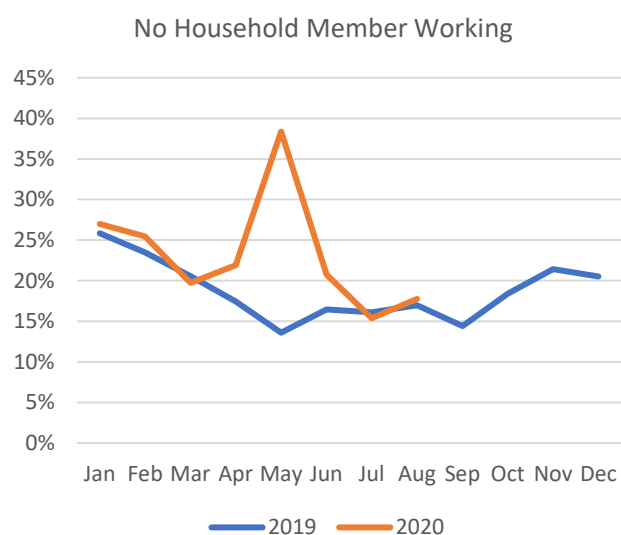
Economic and Social Impacts of COVID-19

Update from Listening to Tajikistan

After a sharp decline in April and May, the labor market began quickly recovering from June to August in the absence of lockdown measures. In August, the number of vacancies posted online recovered to the pre-crisis level. However, severe vulnerabilities remain. Among those reporting continued work disruptions, a rising share believe that job losses may be permanent. Food insecurity remains seriously elevated, and far above 2019 levels. Among those households seeking any medical care since the outbreak, 20 percent report being unable to obtain it. About 5 percent of household have reported newly receiving official financial or in-kind support from government since the outbreak.

Livelihoods

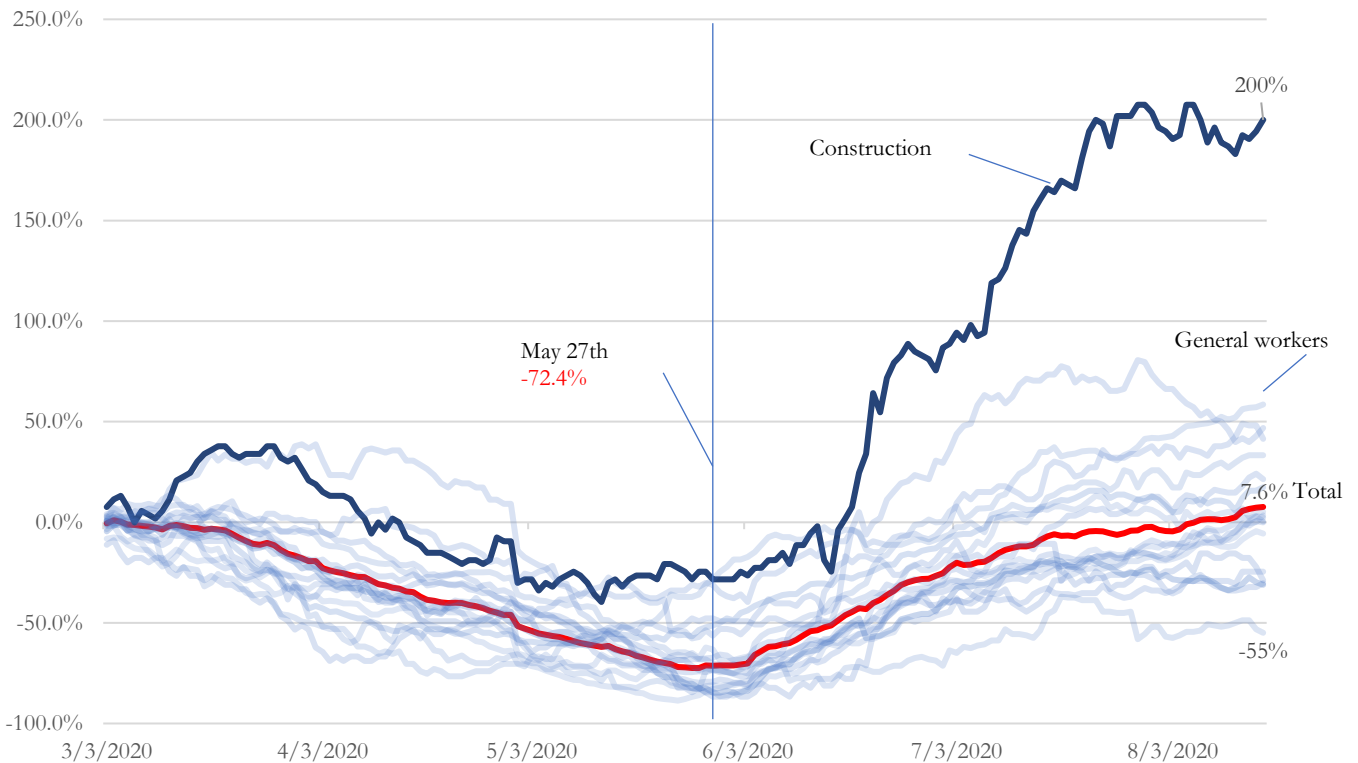
- **Domestic employment regained lost ground after sharply deteriorating following the outbreak.** The share reporting that no member had worked in the preceding week spiked to nearly 40 percent in May but converged to its 2019 level by August. Led by construction jobs, the number of postings on popular site somon.tj rose to 7 percent above its pre-crisis level in August after falling by more than 70 percent.
- **Work disruptions are less pervasive than immediately following the outbreak, but a rising share of remaining unemployment may be permanent.** The share reporting work disruptions of household members due to COVID-19 fell to about 40 percent in August from 63 percent in May. However, a rising share who halted work were reported as “unlikely to resume,” from 19 percent to 33 percent over the same period.
- **The extent of severe financial strain is moderating but remains elevated.** The share with deteriorating finances moderated by August to 3 percentage points above its level in 2019. The share who believe they could pay an emergency expense of 100 somoni (about \$10) rose from 43 percent in May to 52 percent in August. The share who reported being very concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and their livelihoods was nearly 53 percent in August, down from about 71 percent in May.



For questions or comments, please contact:

William Seitz (wseitz@worldbank.org) and Alisher Rajabov (arajabov@worldbank.org)

Change in Vacancies (Base March 1st)



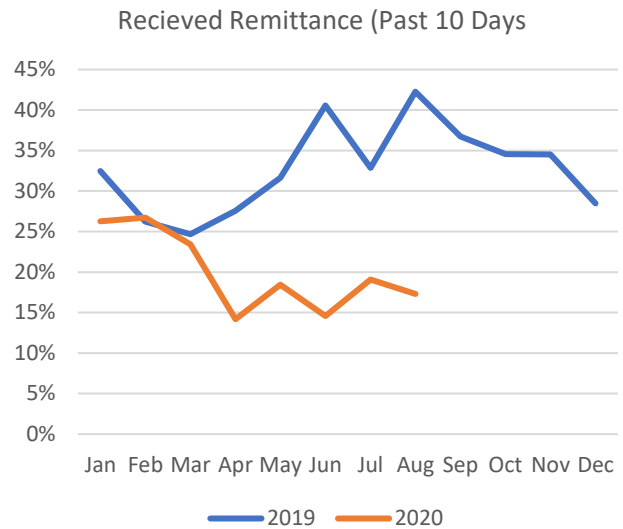
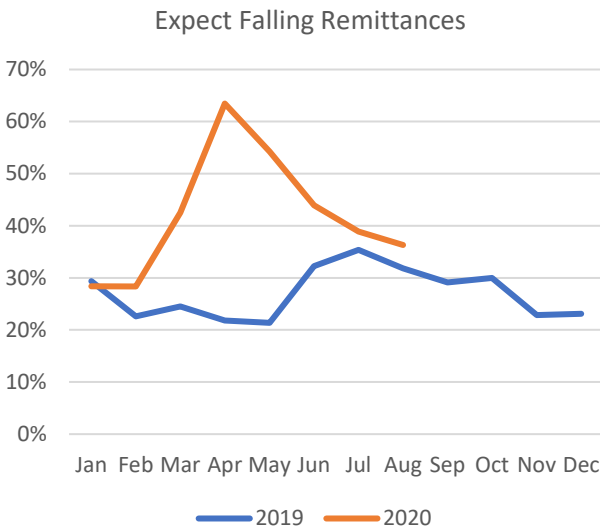
Authors' calculations, data courtesy of Somon.tj

Migration and Remittances

- **Among households with migrants already abroad, remittance income fell dramatically in April but recovered some lost ground through August.** The share of migrants sending remittances over the preceding 10 days remains severely lower than last year, by more than 25 percentage points in August. About 62 percent of recipient households reported a decline in remittances in April, the highest share ever recorded in the L2T survey. However, through August expectations of continued transfers steadily closed the gap with 2019 levels. Rather than having fully lost employment arrangements, respondents typically report short-term income loss among migrants as the cause of less frequent remittance transfers.
- **Lower remittances are expected to push the poverty rate higher.** Poor households in Tajikistan depend much more on remittances than those better off. More than 80 percent of households that receive remittances reported that they primarily spend them on food and other basic necessities.
- **Interest in migrating abroad for work is returning.** After falling to about 2 percent of households in May, interest in migrating abroad rose to 7 percent of households in August, nearly the same level as the same time in 2019. The share of households providing details of at least one member currently abroad fell to 32 percent in August, in comparison to 41 percent at the same time last year.

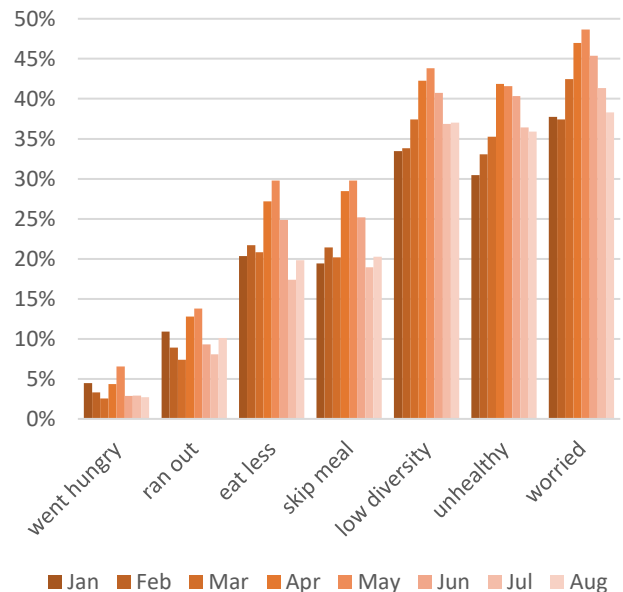
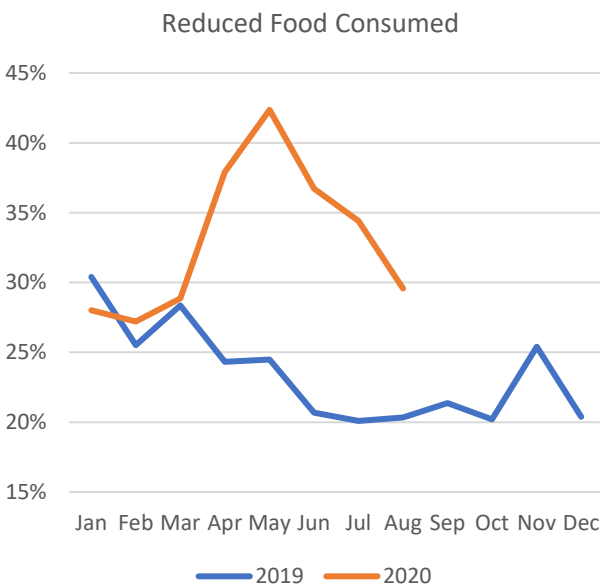
For questions or comments, please contact:

William Seitz (wseitz@worldbank.org) and Alisher Rajabov (arajabov@worldbank.org)



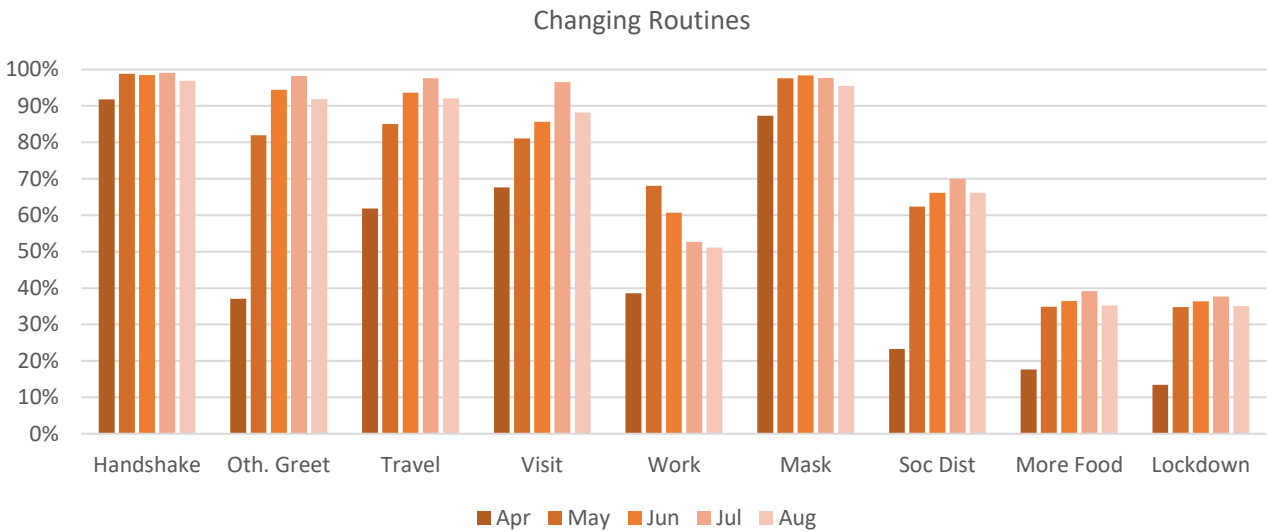
Food Security and Spending

- Reports of reduced food consumption spiked in May to 41 percentage points above 2019 levels in August.** Overall food security deteriorated during the peak of the crisis across a range of indicators, with rising shares reporting going hungry, reducing dietary diversity, and worries over obtaining enough food, before recovering somewhat from June to August. Similar increases were seen in reduced ability to pay for utilities, and in coping mechanisms such as selling assets and reduced spending on medical care.
- Very few households reported local shortages of basic goods in August.** Less than 2 percent of respondents reported that items are out-of-stock, down substantially from 10 percent in May.



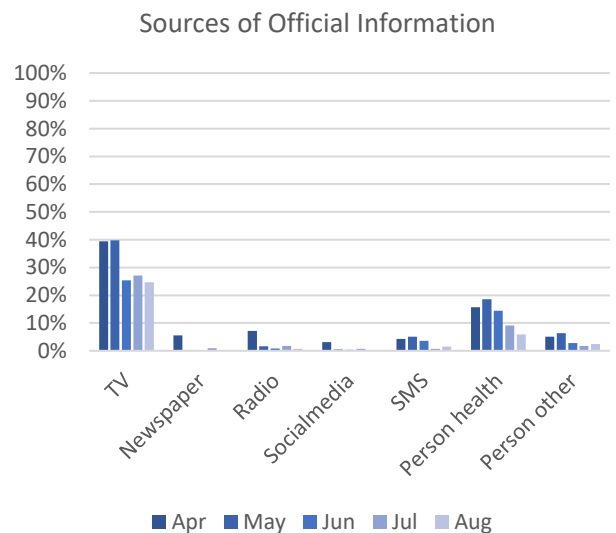
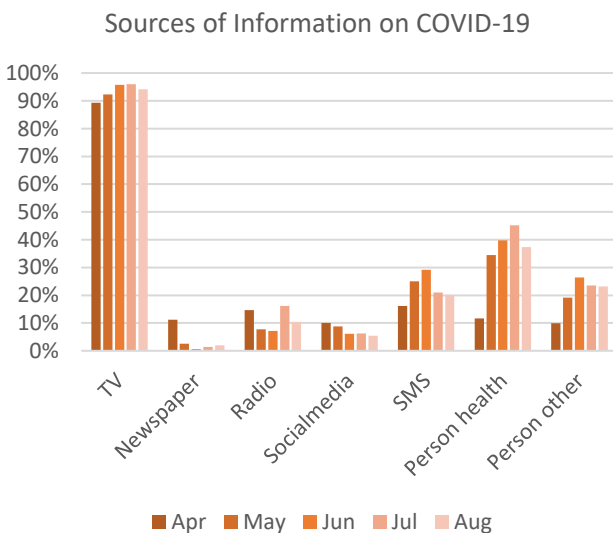
For questions or comments, please contact:

William Seitz (wseitz@worldbank.org) and Alisher Rajabov (arajabov@worldbank.org)



Knowledge, Education, and Behavior

- Nearly all respondents report changing their routines due to COVID-19.** About 97 percent report reducing handshakes consistently since May. A remarkably higher share report reducing other greetings, such as kissing and hugging, following the outbreak. Reported mask use and social distancing also rose substantially in May. Respondents in Tajikistan increasingly reported more frequent handwashing, rising from a median of 7 times per day in April to a median of 10 times per day in August.
- Levels of concern about COVID-19's impacts on health and the economy are moderating. In August, about 56 percent of respondents** reported being very concerned about the health of their family, down from about 79 percent in April. Slightly more than 53 percent reported being very concerned about the impact of the outbreak on the economy and their livelihoods, down from more than 70 percent in April.
- About 28 percent of households reported having needed medical care per month since the outbreak.** Among them, 20 percent report not having been able to obtain it. Reports of inability to access care have been higher among those living in urban areas (22 percent of attempts vs. 18 percent in rural areas).



For questions or comments, please contact:

William Seitz (wseitz@worldbank.org) and Alisher Rajabov (arajabov@worldbank.org)