

# Effects of the COVID-19 crisis on household food consumption and child nutrition in Mozambique

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## Abstract

The study investigates the impact of COVID-19 and related restrictions on household food consumption and children's nutritional outcomes in Mozambique. Specifically, this study aims at understanding how the socio-economic effects of the crisis have in turn affected nutritional and food security outcomes. Due to the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, households are expected to adjust their food choices both in terms of food quality towards cheaper and unhealthier food and in terms of quantity, with a consequent reduction in diet diversification and a higher exposure to malnutrition, mainly of children. Empirical evidence on the effects of COVID-19 on child nutrition is still scarce, mainly due to lack of data. Relying on household survey data from 2019/2020, which includes anthropometric measures for under-5 children and detailed food consumption data, this study aims to fill this evidence gap. We take advantage of repeated cross-sectional wave of the survey to estimate the variation in household food consumption and child nutrition before and after the pandemic. Results show that there has been a significant reduction in household food consumption and per capita caloric intake, and an increase in stunting, especially among newborn children.

*Keywords:* COVID-19; food security; nutrition