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Power and Participation Research Centre
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ONE YEAR INTO THE COVID-19 CRISIS
COVID-19 Impact on
Education Life of Children
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Presentation Structure

1. Sample and Pre-COVID Status
2. Education Life Framework
3. Process and Risk of Learning loss
4. Coping Mechanism
5. Psychological and Economic Costs
6. Parental Expectations and Concerns
7. Policy Messages

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The Survey and Sample

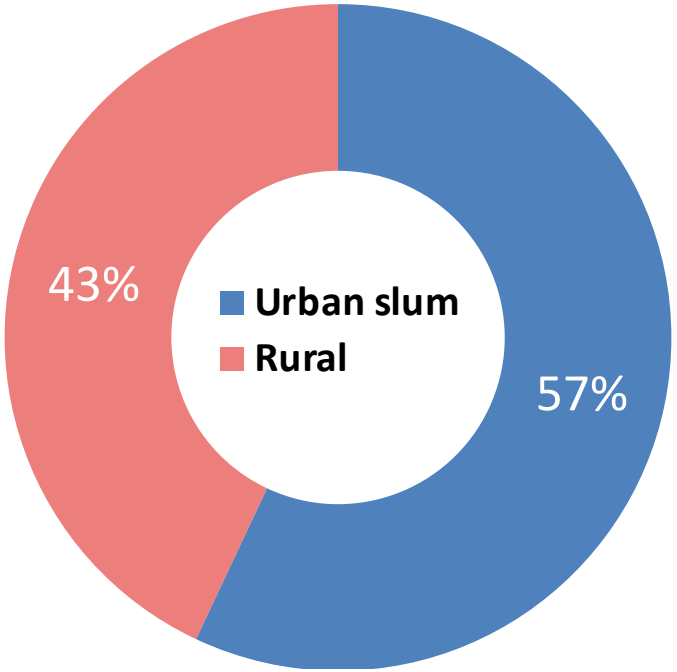
Study period

11 March ⟷ 31st March 2021

7,638 HHs are re-surveyed

6,099 (81%) successfully

Respondent is the household head



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Only 19% of our surveyed HHs don't have any school-going age child

Sample distribution	% of HHs	Number
Have primary school-going aged boys	36	2,195
Have primary school-going aged girls	33	2,042
Have secondary school-going aged boys	33	2,039
Have secondary school-going aged girls	33	2,030

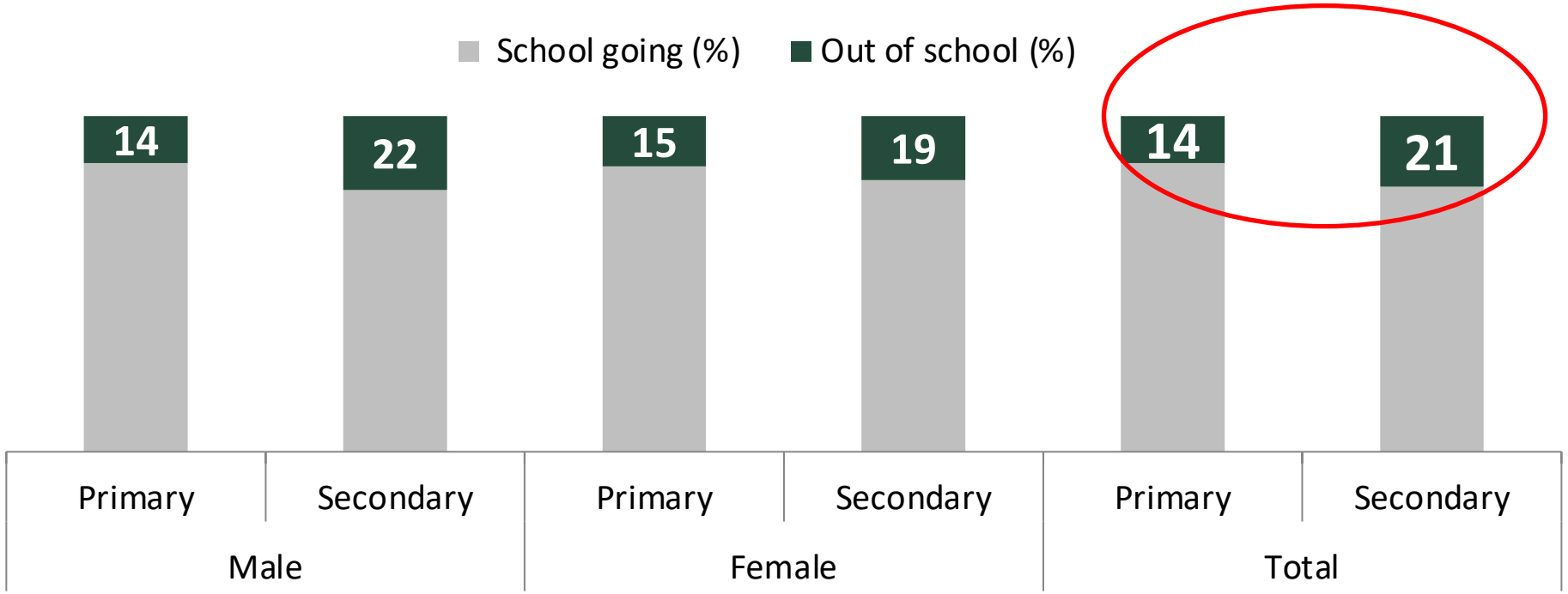
Total number of Respondents: 6099

Total number of respondents with school-age children: 4940

Pre-COVID Household Human Capital Realities

14% of primary age

21% of secondary age were not in school



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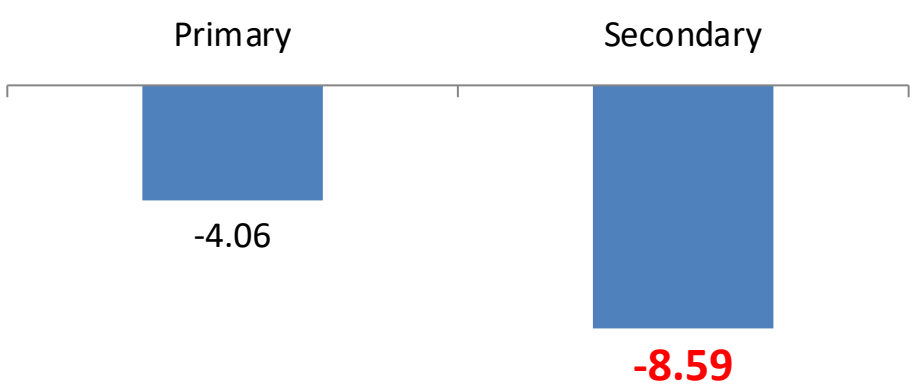
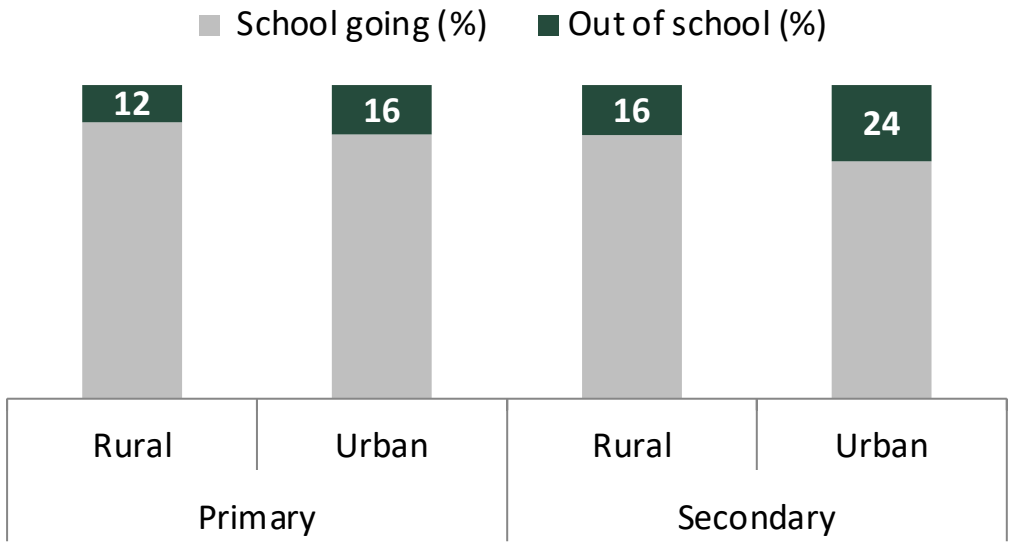
Pre-COVID Household Human Capital Realities poorer in urban slums compared to rural





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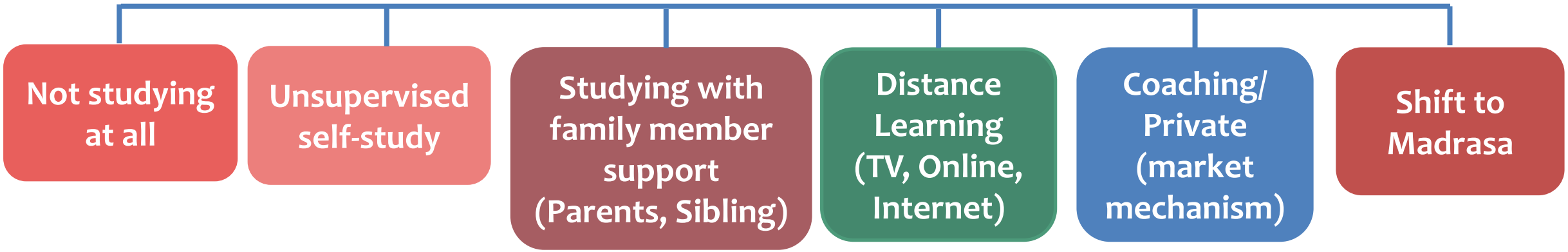
Education Life during School Closure



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Process and risk of Learning loss

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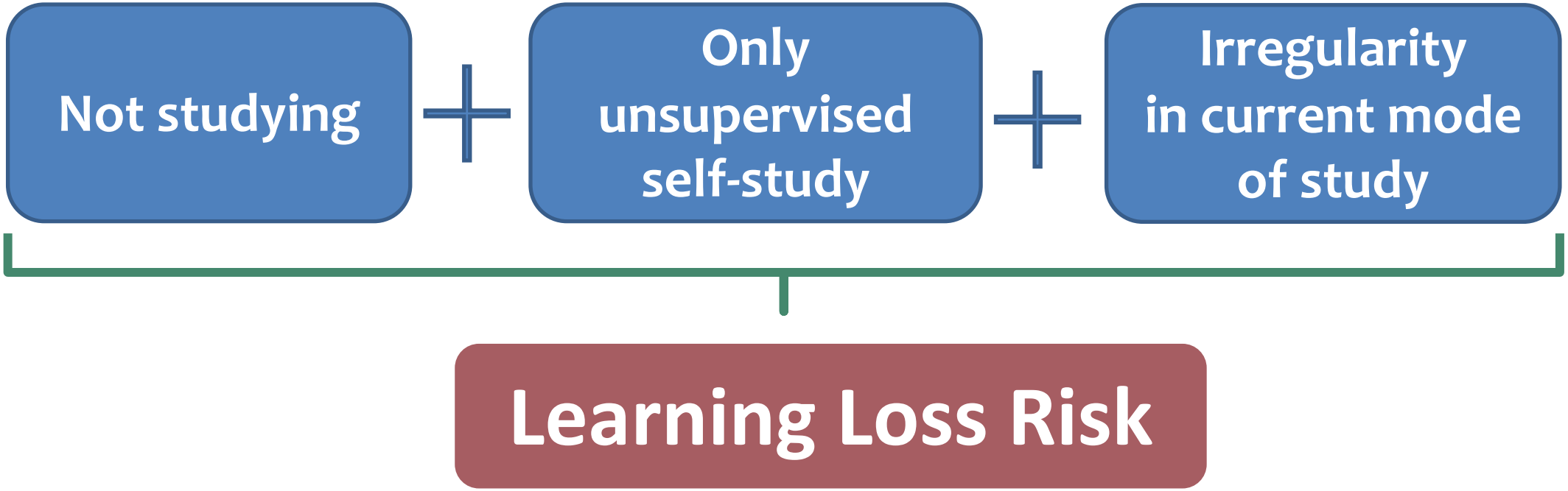
Process and Risk of Learning Loss



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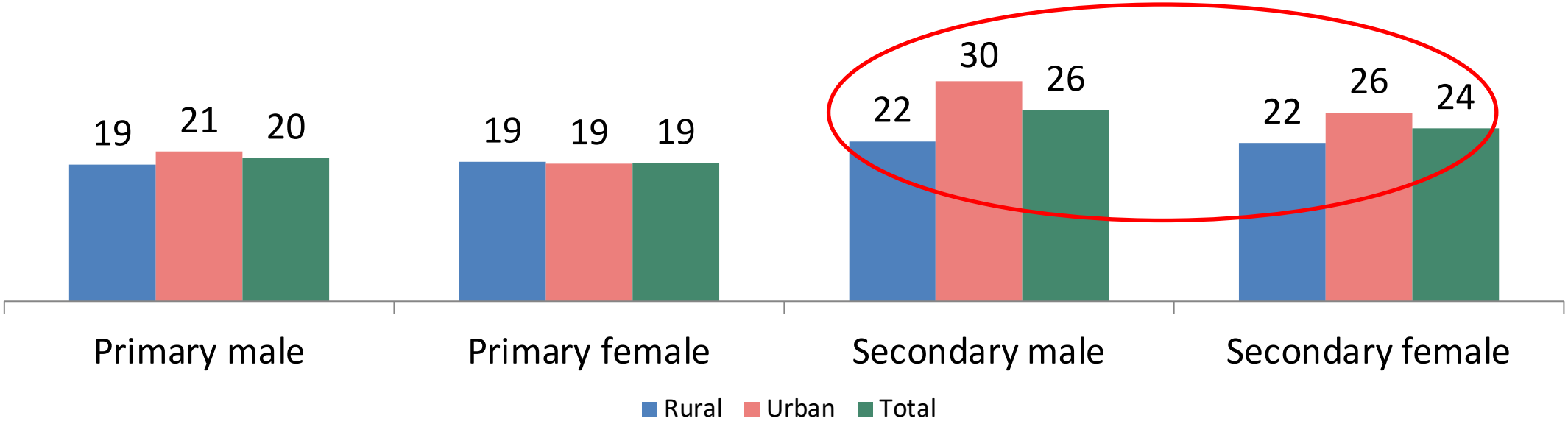
Learning loss risk: Rural-Urban

- Higher in secondary
  - Higher in males
  - Higher in urban



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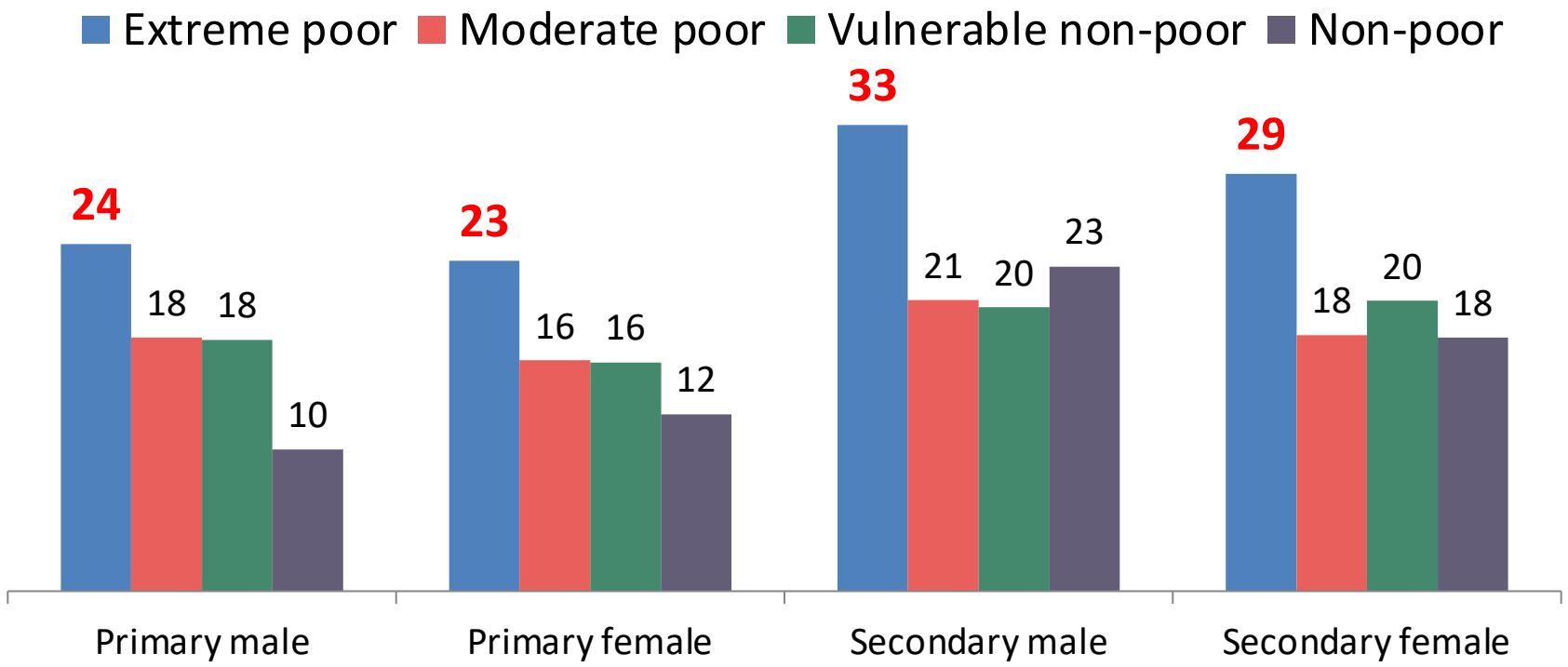
Learning loss risks across poverty groups

- Learning loss risks distinctly higher for children from extreme poor HH
  - A direct consequence of Covid impact on poverty



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- **Overall, at a minimum 19% of primary & 25% of secondary students face learning loss risk**

- **Actual learning loss risk is likely to be higher because only the 'unsupervised' component of 'self-study' has been considered**

- **Learning loss risk is highest for urban secondary male students (30%)**

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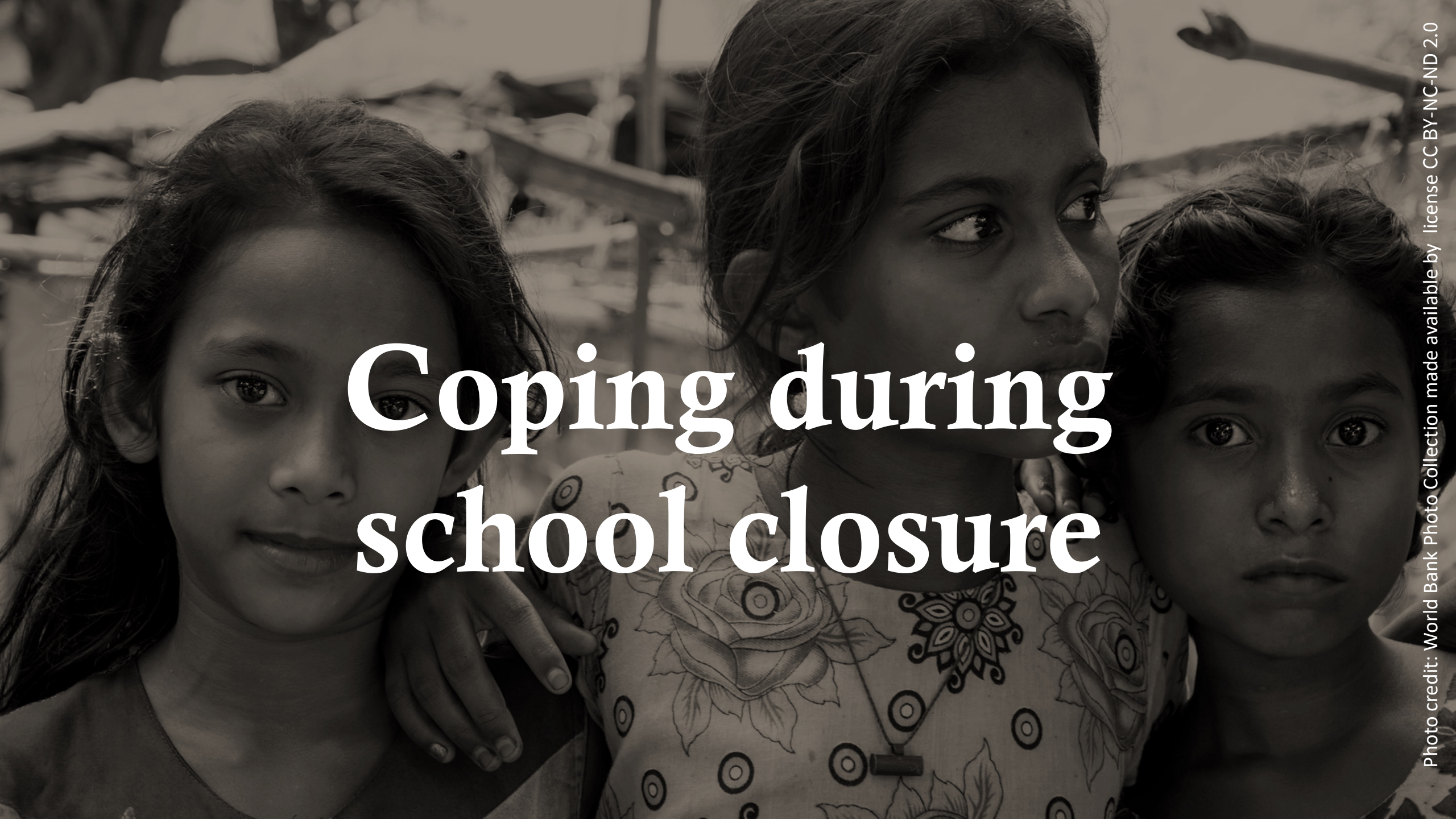

Coping during school closure

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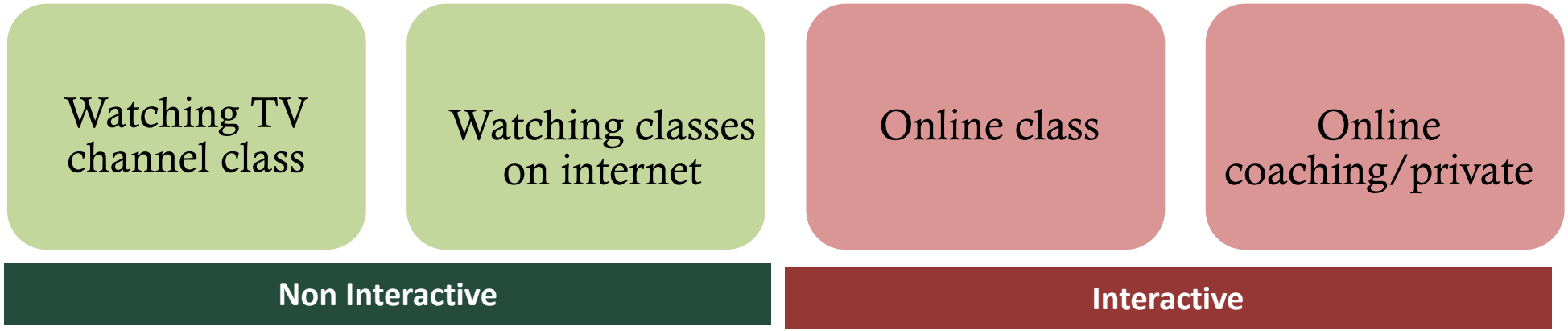
Distance Learning



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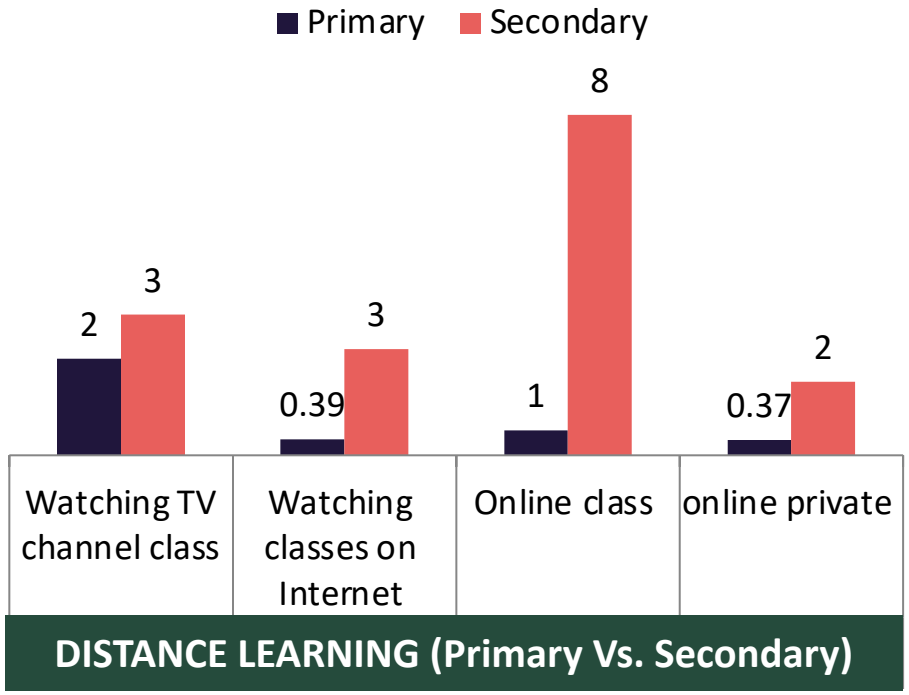
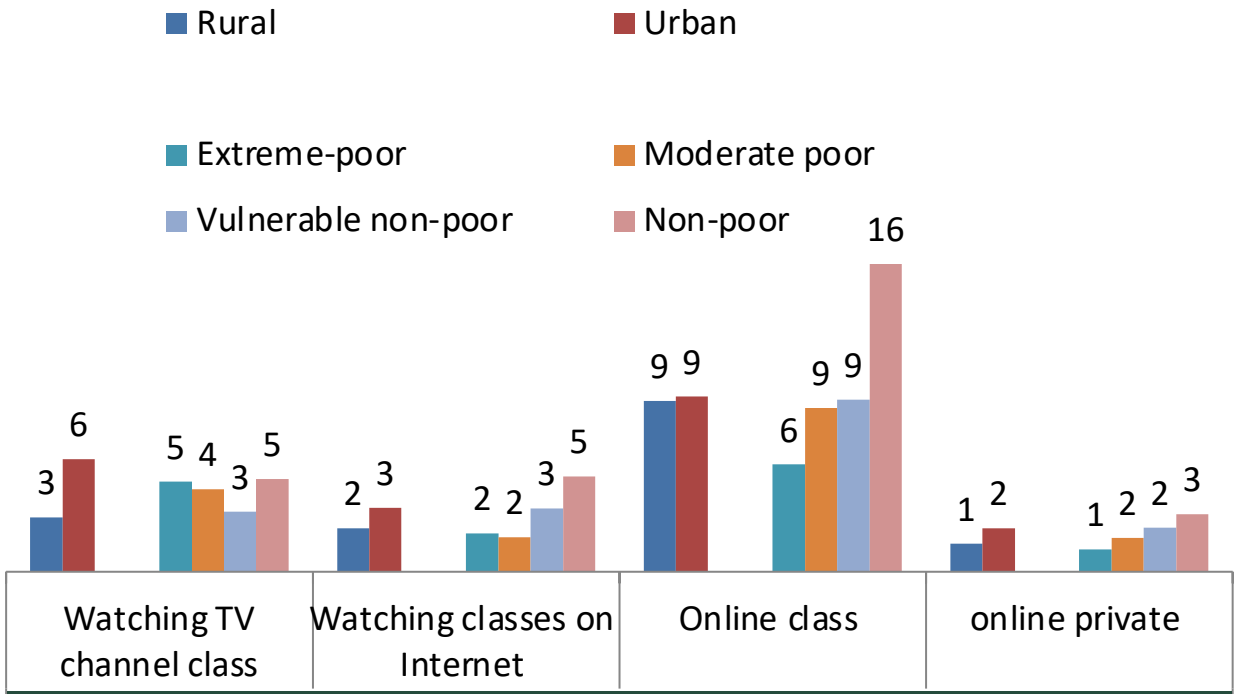


DISTANCE LEARNING (Primary Vs. Secondary)



DISTANCE LEARNING among Secondary Children (Rural Vs. Urban and Poverty Groups)

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- **Overall, only around 10% of students had access to or used distance learning opportunities to compensate school closure**

- **Non-interactive classes through public TV was availed by only 2% in primary and 3% in secondary**

- **Secondary students showed greater interest in interactive online options relative to primary students – 10% to 1%**

- **Difference in online class, most dominant form of distance learning is very sensitive to current economic status- 6% to 16%**

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Family Support

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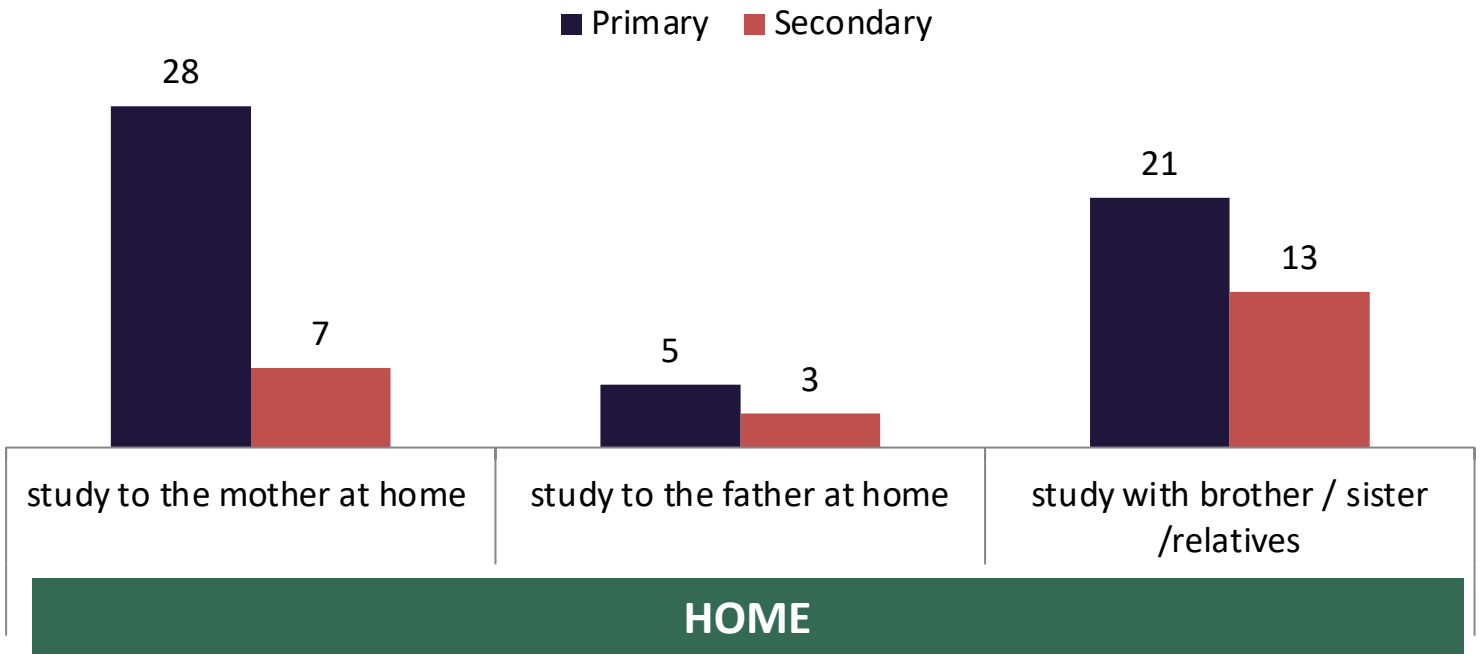
Family member support lower among secondary school-going children



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- **Mother played a relatively important support role for primary students (28%).**

- **Overall, family support role in child's educational life to compensate for school closure is distinctly higher in primary compared to secondary.**

Coaching/Private (market mechanism)

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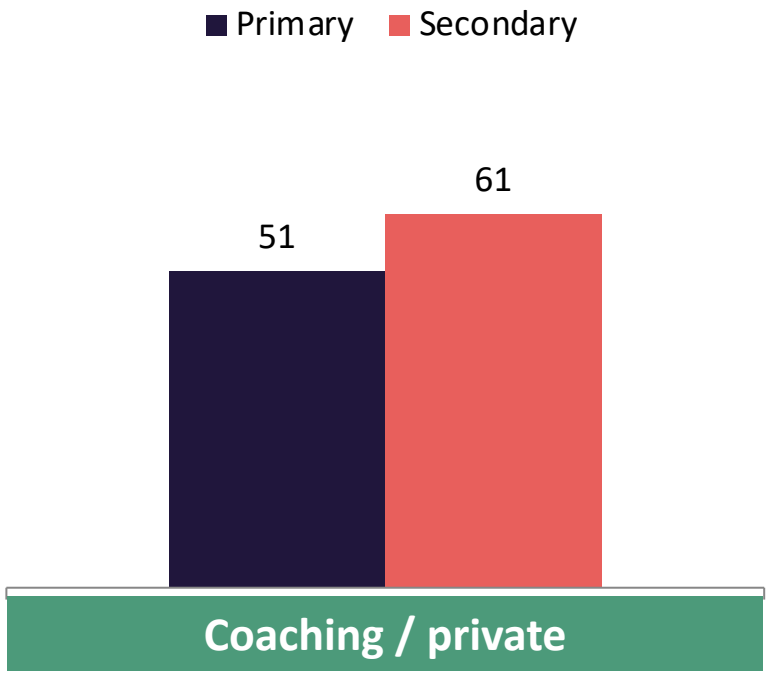
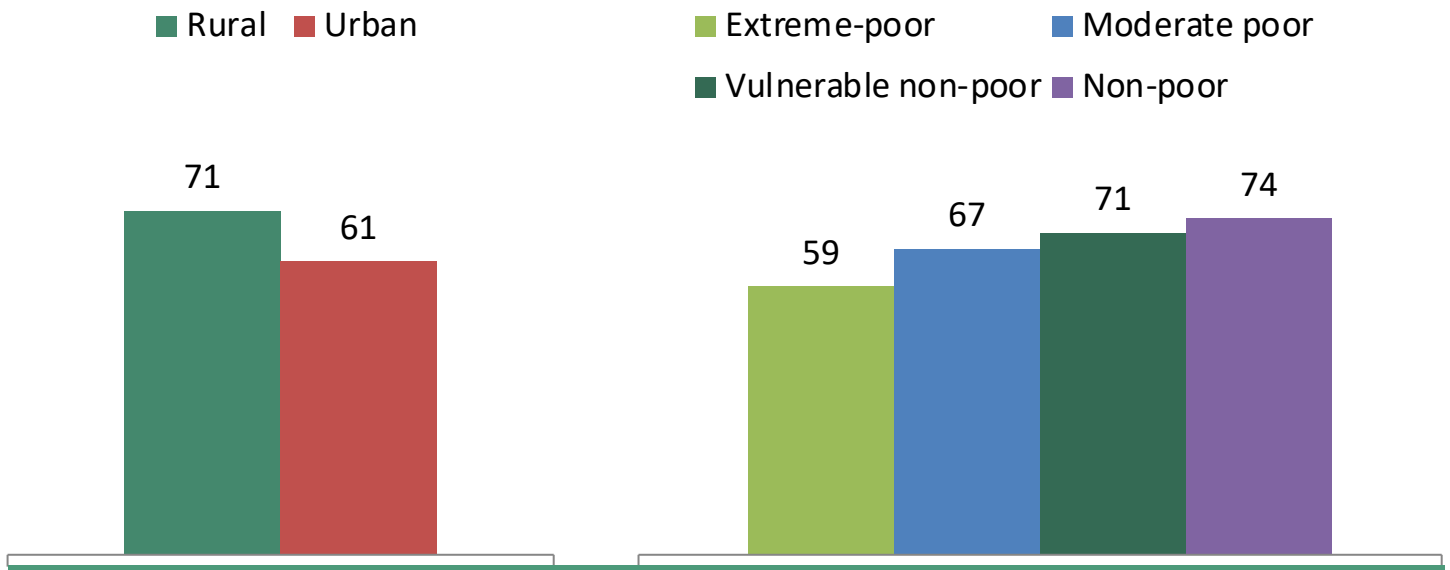


Coaching / private



Coaching/Private among Secondary Children
(Rural Vs. Urban and Current Poverty Groups)

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- **Market mechanism (coaching/private) has been the dominant way – 51% in primary and 61% in secondary – in which students have tried to continue education life during school closure.**

- **In relative terms, urban slum households have been less able to use market mechanism but even here 59% of extreme poor households were utilizing coaching/private for their secondary children.**

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Shift to Madrasa

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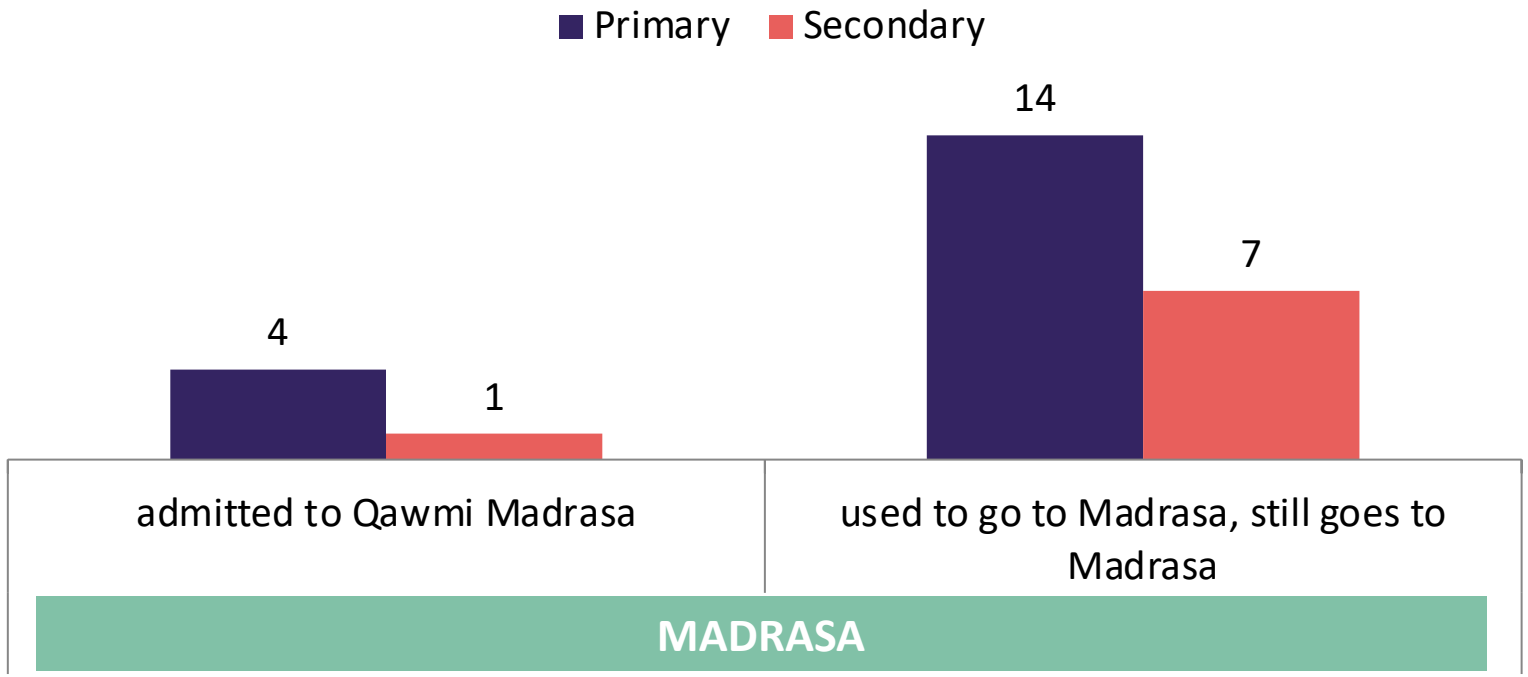

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- **A small percentage – 4% of primary students and 1% of secondary students – shifted to madrasa during school closure for twin reasons – qawmi madarasah were open and these typically provide some social support such as food.**

Psychological and Economic Costs of School Closure

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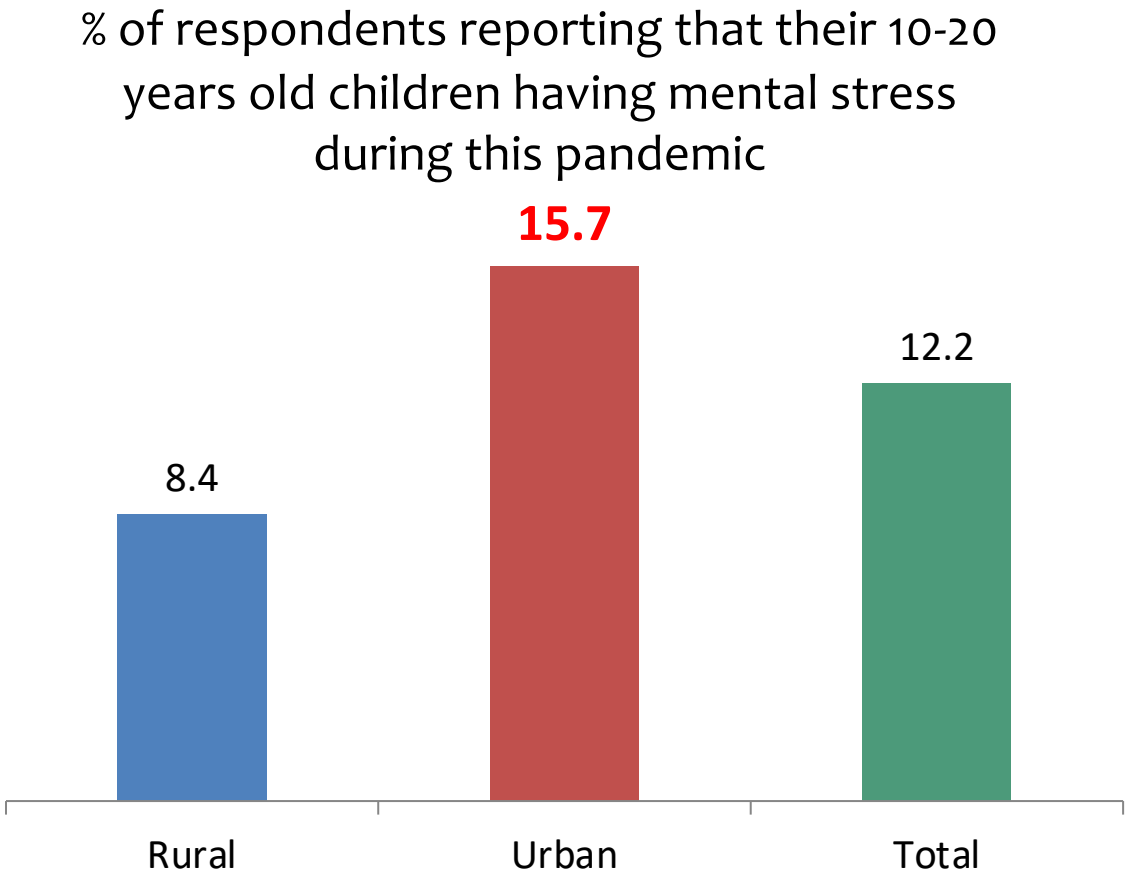
- 12% of 10-20 year olds suffering from mental stress during pandemic
- Rate of mental stress double in urban slums compared to rural
- For an older demographic – 18-20 years – a companion survey (BIGD Youth survey) found 52% reporting mental stress reported by youth themselves



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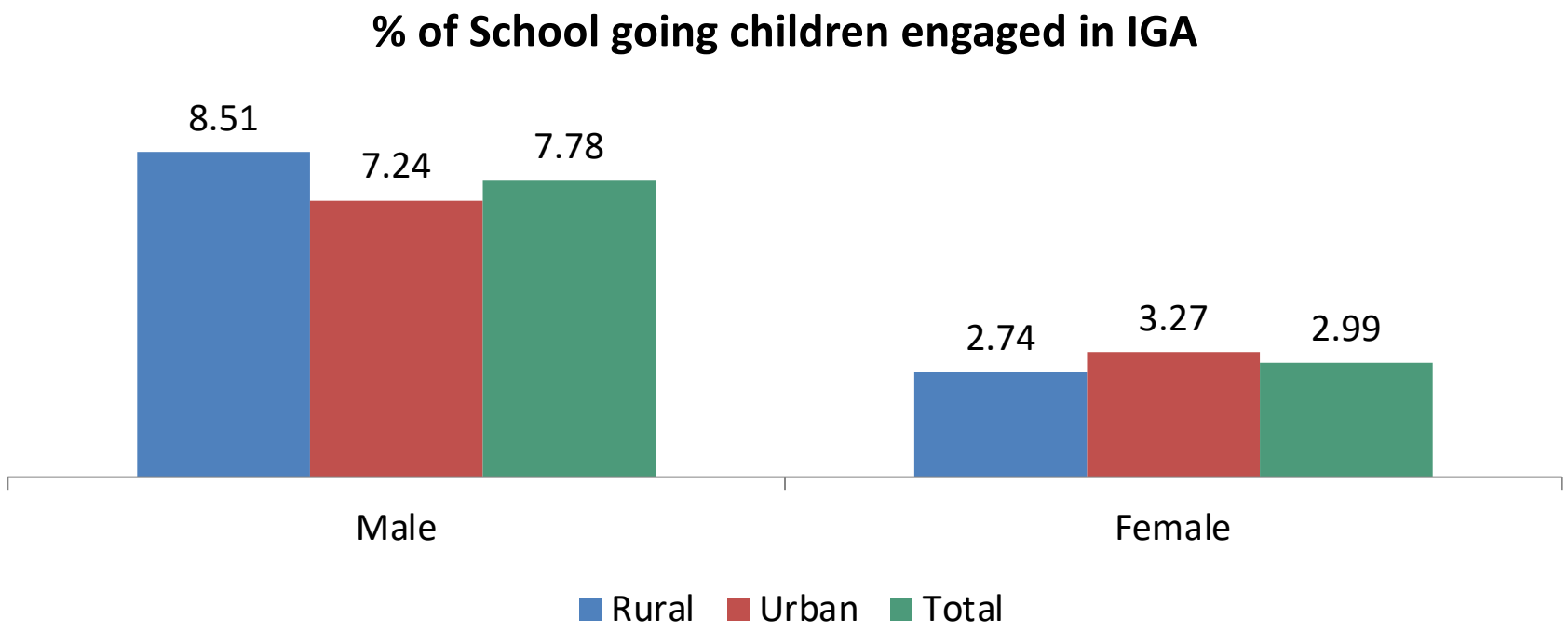
Three prominent types of mental stress in children reported by parents in descending rank:

- **Irritable mood**
- **Being afraid to go outside**
- **Angry/violent behavior**

Loss of interest in studying can become a bigger worry if prolonged closure continues

- 8% school-going boys are engaged in income generating activities and 3% of girls
- Higher in rural because of more working opportunities in rural than urban slums during this pandemic



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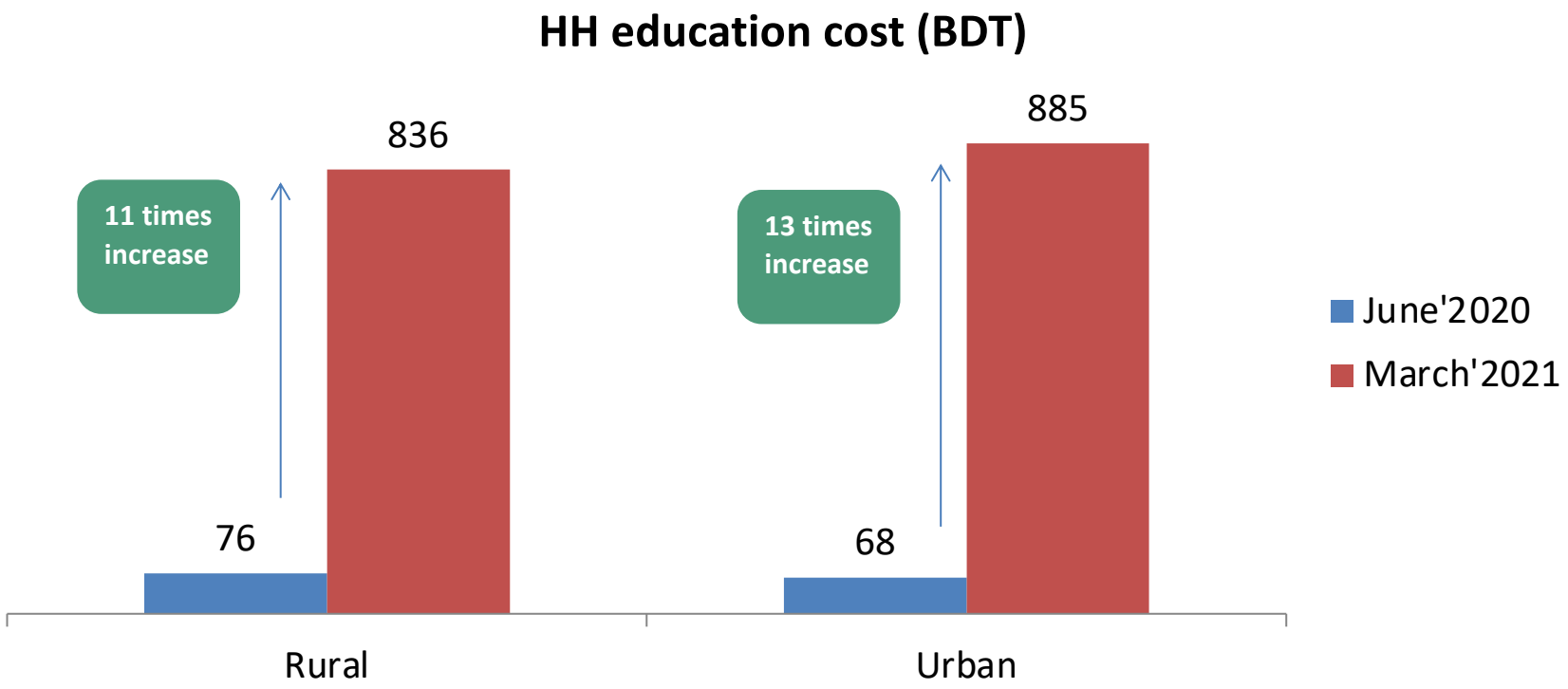
Households' out of pocket expenditure for education increases *12 times* from June'2020 to March'2021



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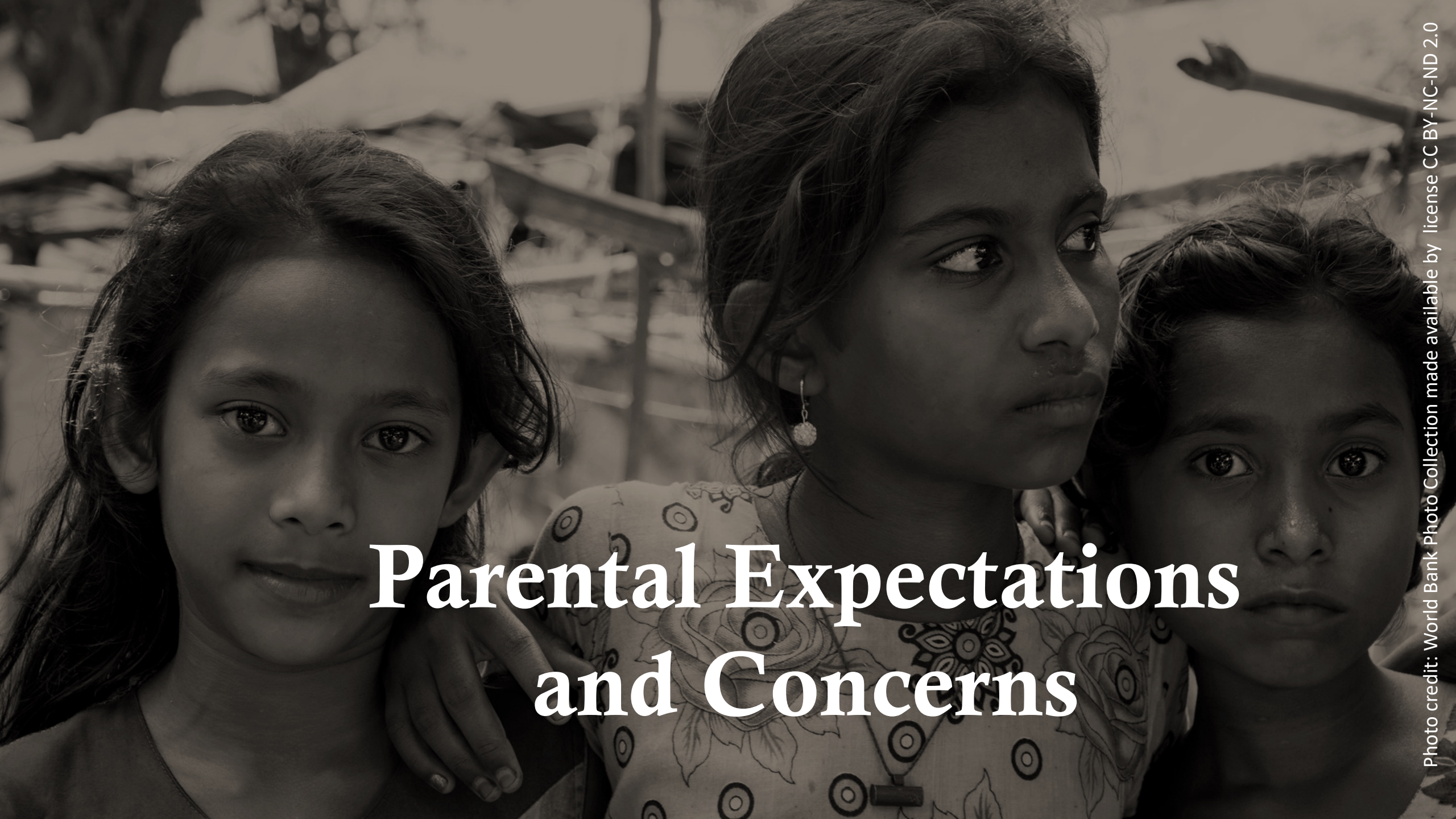

Parental Expectations and Concerns

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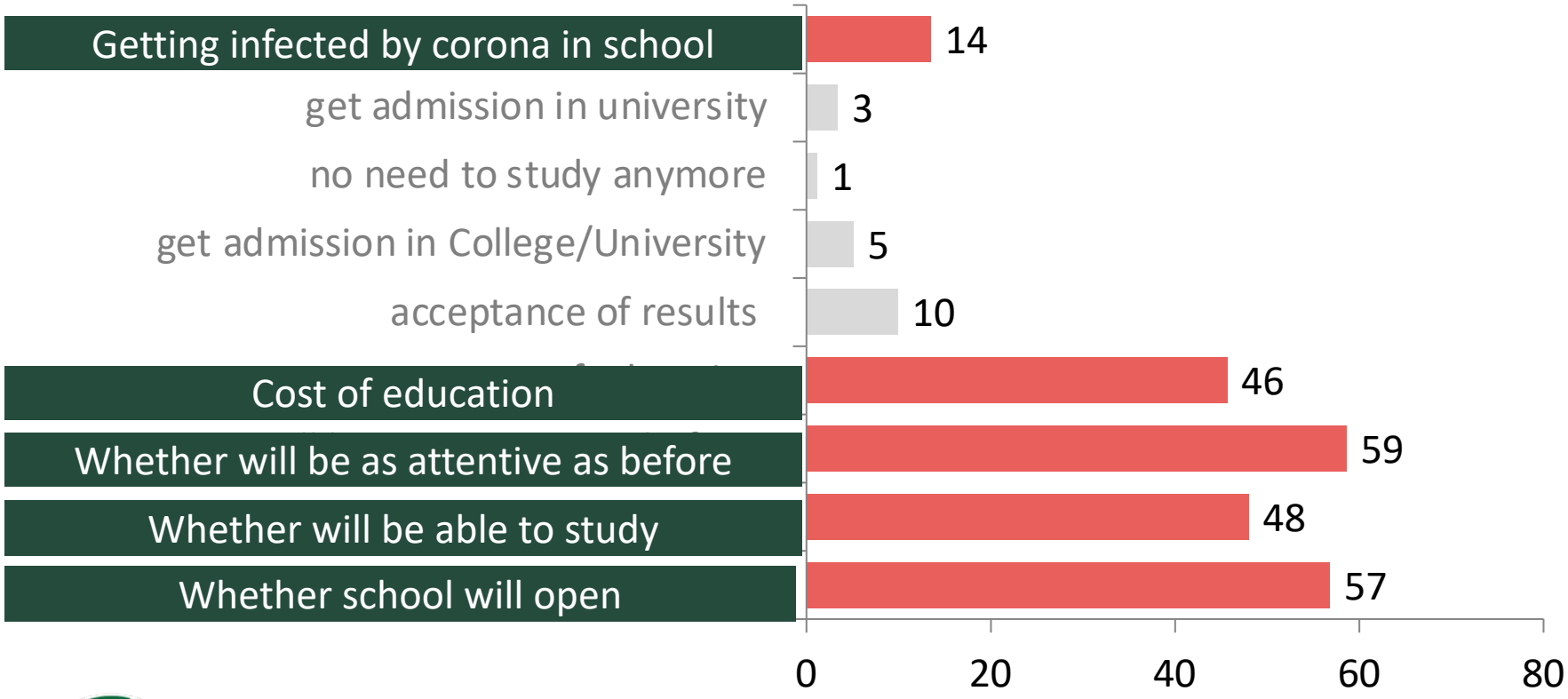
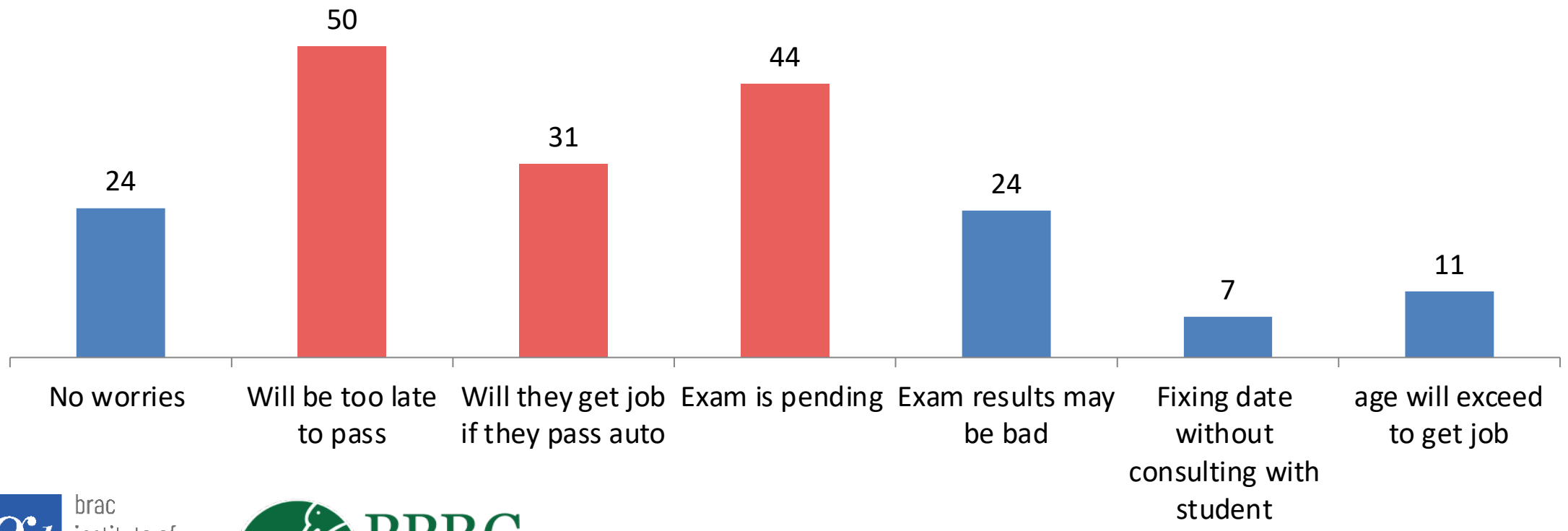
- Guardians are more concerned about learning and motivation loss, educational cost and uncertainty of school opening
- Less concerned about fear of corona



❑**Time delay, pending exams** and **quality of results** are the main concerns of the guardians about the youth's exam



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Parental Attitude to School re-opening

- **97.7% of primary and 95.5% of secondary school-going children's guardians will send their children to school if school reopens**
- **No difference across rural-urban and current poverty groups**

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Policy Messages

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One year into school closure: 9 Highlights

- **Three consequences** of one year of school closure: i) acceleration of **learning loss risk** ii) economic burden of **out-of-pocket education costs** and iii) **multi-dimensional social alienation**.

- At a minimum, learning loss risk stands in **primary at 19%** and in **secondary at 25%**. This translates into **3.42 million primary students** and **2.50 million secondary students** – a total of **5.92 million school children** at serious learning loss risk.

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Highlights contd.

- Dominant coping response to prolonged school closure has been **recourse to market solutions**. 51% of primary students and 61% of secondary students were availing coaching and private education services. This on the one hand defeated the very purpose of school closure to prevent virus spread and on the other imposed economic burden on the families, more so on the poorer families.

- **Out-of-pocket education costs** rose 11 times for rural families and 13 times for urban poor families between June 2020 and March 2021.

Highlights contd.

- **Technological solutions** through distance learning has played a quite limited role in compensating school closure. **Non-interactive classes through public TV** was availed by only 2% in primary and 3% in secondary. Overall, only around 10% of students had access to or used distance learning opportunities. Secondary students showed greater interest in interactive online options relative to primary students – 10% to 1%.

- Within limits, **mothers** have played an important supportive role for the education life of their children in primary during school closure.

Highlights contd.

- 12% of 10-20 year olds (16% for urban sub-sample) are reported to be suffering from **mental stress**.

- **Parental concerns** on school closure has crystallized around four issues: i) **learning and motivational loss** of their children ii) out-of-pocket education **cost burden** and iii) continuing uncertainty about school opening and iv) whether **auto pass** will secure job in the market.

- Parents are very eager on **school opening**. 97.7% of primary guardians and 95.5% of secondary guardians will send their children to school on re-opening.

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Four Policy Messages

Depending on the 2nd wave, in order to prevent learning loss, ensure parental preference and address education cost burdens clearly calls for early re-opening of primary and secondary schools.

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Four Policy Messages

The problem of learning loss will not be overcome merely by school re-opening. Learning loss is an accumulated problem affecting a considerable body of students at both primary and secondary. Solution to learning loss will have to be addressed through additional program outside class hours.

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Policy Messages contd.

Non-interactive public TV classes have failed to engage student interest. Digital solutions to distance learning solutions to overcome learning loss are marked with low scale and out-of-pocket cost burdens that constrain access by the poor. The potential of radio as a hybrid interactive solution merits exploration here.

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Policy Messages contd.

To redress out-of-pocket education cost burdens accumulated through one year of school closure, existing primary and secondary stipend programs can be used for an immediate leakage-effective cash boost to families. If primary stipend is increased to BDT 500 per month, 2021-22 budget can make an allocation of BDT 2960 crore for this very worthwhile purpose (calculation based on earlier PPRC Policy Paper)

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