



**GROUND TRUTH
SOLUTIONS**

HURRICANE MARIA

DOMINICA

SURVEY OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY HURRICANE MARIA

– **ROUND FOUR** –

30 APRIL 2018



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OVERVIEW

Eight months after Hurricane Maria hit Dominica with devastating force, the humanitarian response has given way to the recovery phase. This report analyses data collected from interviews conducted with 391 Dominicans between 10 and 21 April 2018¹.

Some of the key findings:

- **Outlook.** Almost half of those surveyed do not feel that life is improving (Q13);
- **Preparedness.** Most Dominicans do not feel better prepared to cope with another disaster (Q6);
- **Corruption.** Over half of those interviewed said delivery of aid is influenced by corruption (Q5);
- **Fairness.** Most people do not believe support goes to those most in need (Q4);
- **Information.** Respondents continue to feel ill-informed, notably about how to access assistance in rebuilding their damaged homes and businesses (Q1);
- **Channels.** Preferred information channels are direct contact with officials and radio (Q2);
- **Complaints.** Awareness about how to make complaints remains low, although most people say they feel confident they would receive a response if they did (Q11);
- **Trauma.** People's sense of post-hurricane trauma is a major issue surfaced in this round (Q18);
- **Correlations** suggest that those who feel their community was consulted and engaged in the response also believe that aid is going to those who need it most.

Analysis

The adrenaline rush of the initial emergency response has now given place to the slog of recovery. The results of the latest survey underline the tough circumstances in which Dominicans continue to find themselves. People's views on their prospects are coloured by the challenges they face in rebuilding their homes and re-establishing livelihoods. Pessimism is fuelled in part by perceptions that targeting of aid has not always been fair and that political affiliation is a factor. Negative views on these topics are matched by people's prevailing sense that they are ill-prepared to face another hurricane – although most see themselves staying in Dominica, no matter what. A new question included in this survey points to deep psychological scars that have not yet healed. The good news is that people continue to feel treated with respect by those in authority and believe that if they do complain they will receive a response or action will be taken, an indication of trust.

The clearest message from the survey is the urgent need to step up information provision and engagement – not just consultation – with affected communities. At present, too many people on the island lack information about what they can expect from the recovery programme and when 'building back better' will begin to make a difference in their lives. Correlations in the data indicate that people who are engaged and consulted by the authorities and aid providers feel that aid goes where it's most needed. This suggests that better communication and more fulsome engagement will enhance their views of the effectiveness of the recovery.

Recommendations

Talk. Circulate this report and talk to your colleagues and partners about the findings. If the data begs further questions, go out and talk to communities so that you understand more clearly what lies behind their views and how you can respond.

Close the loop. Survey fatigue is high in Dominica. The best remedy for this condition is to let people know you have heard them, make sure you understand their point of view, and explain how you plan to act on their feedback.

Communicate. The priority now is to provide clearer, more timely, and more actionable information about recovery plans – what people can expect, when they can expect it, who is eligible for what and

¹ As part of the [H2H Network's](#) DFID-funded mission in the Caribbean, Ground Truth Solutions, an NGO, is providing a regular flow of feedback on community perceptions about the effectiveness of the response and their evolving needs. The surveys offer decision-makers insight into community concerns as the basis for programmatic course corrections and to manage people's expectations. This report covers the fourth round of surveys in Dominica. For reference, the first three reports can be found on [our website](#). The raw data from the completed rounds of data collection can also be found on [HDX Connect](#).



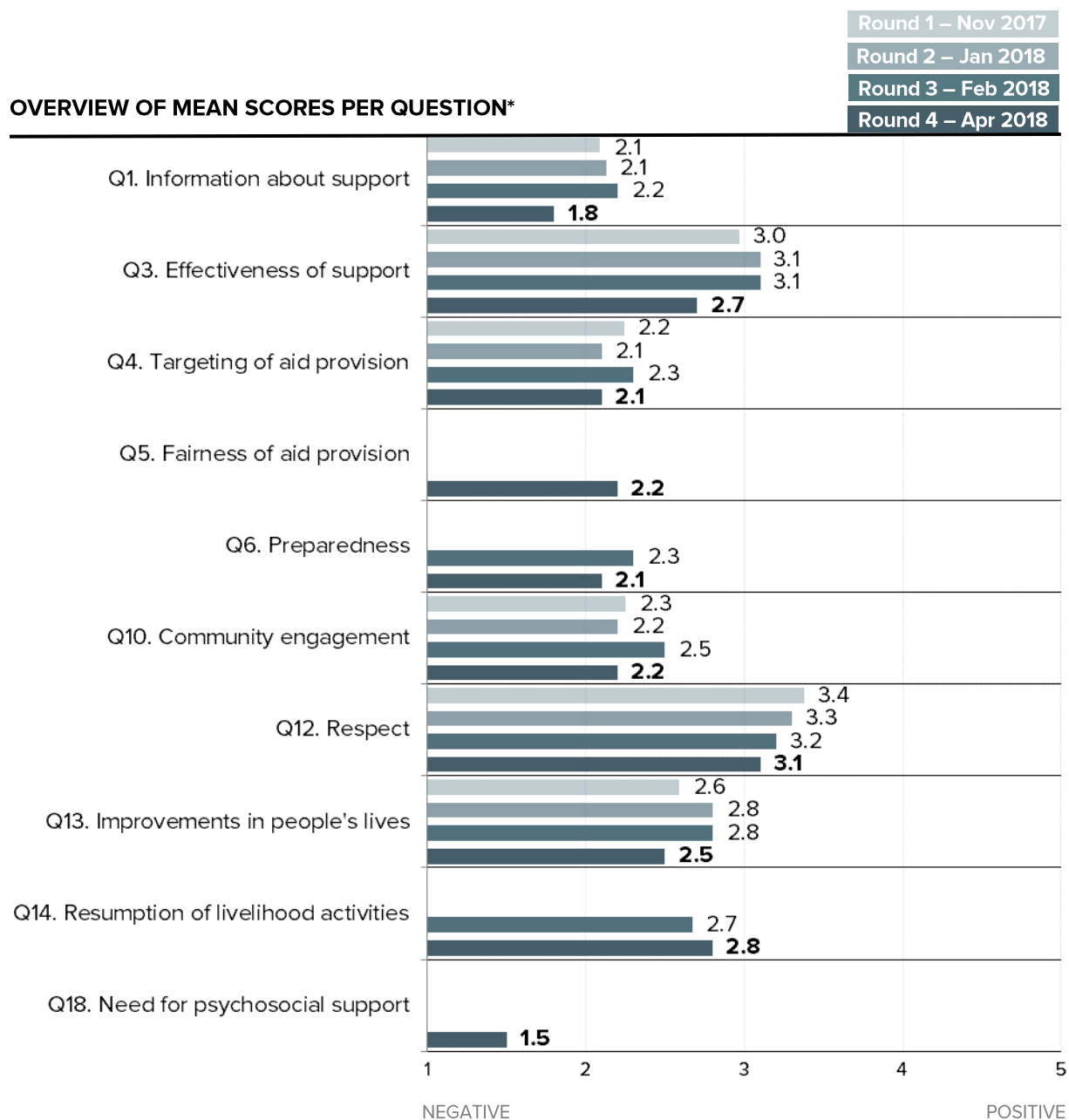
for how long. It is especially important to let people know when they are likely to see short-term benefits from longer-term programmes. Responsibilities are shared:

- **Government of Dominica** and its specialized affiliates – like the Office for Disaster Management and the Climate Resilience Execution Agency of Dominica (CREAD) – need to communicate more systematically. The survey suggests the public’s preference for information shared face-to-face and on the radio.
- **International aid agencies** need to do a better job of explaining the goals and focus of their programmes, and when people are likely to experience the benefits. They should also underline that they work to support the government’s efforts. The proliferation of agency and donor logos has a negative impact on perceptions of government ownership of the recovery. This is illustrated in the survey results by the public’s greater confidence in getting a response to complaints made to foreign aid workers than the government.
- Dominica’s **media** needs to be more energetic in seeking out information and explanations about the recovery programme. It must make sure it holds the government and aid partners to account while informing the public. The survey offers journalists a host of topics for coverage.

Provide psychological support. Given the extent of continuing trauma, it is important to let people know that they can turn to Dominica’s psychological support team for group counselling sessions.

Overview of mean scores

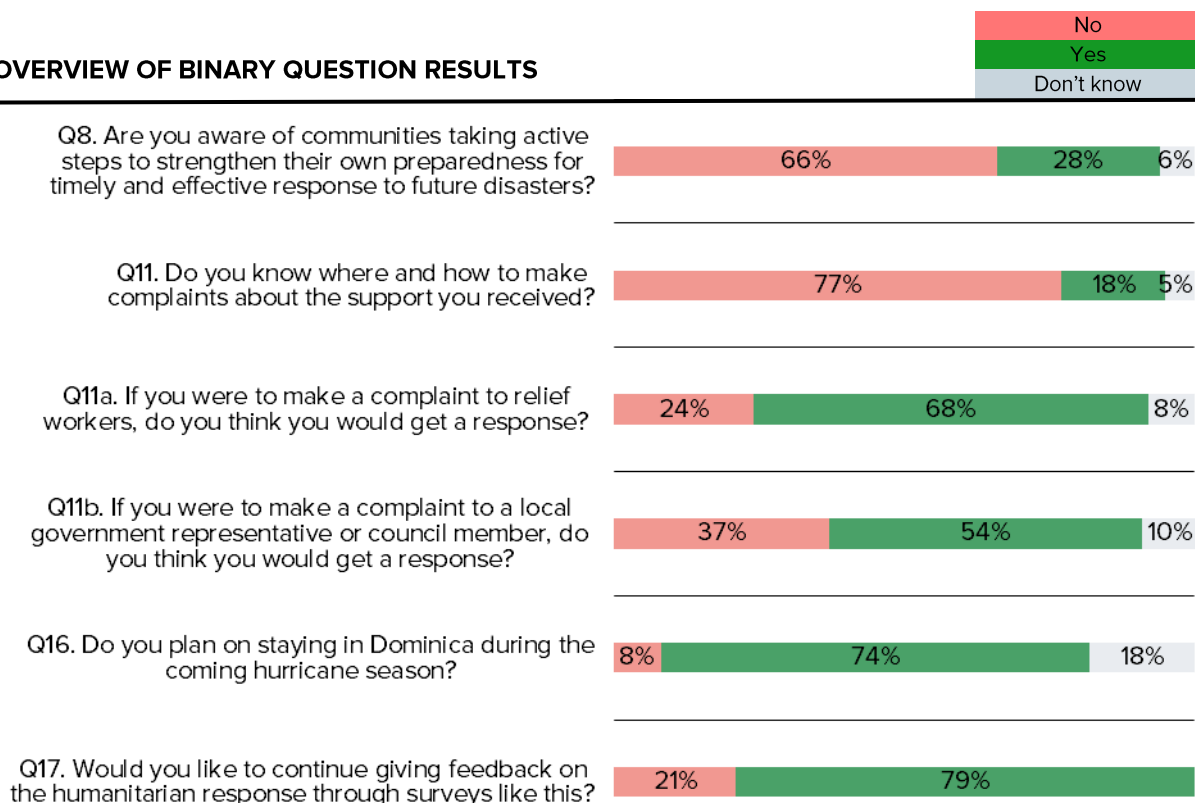
The survey includes 18 core questions about affected people's views on a range of issues related to implementing recovery programmes, the quality of relations with aid providers, and prospects for the future. Closed questions use a five-point scale. Mean scores above three indicate a tendency towards positivity; mean scores below three suggest a tendency towards negativity. A more detailed analysis is provided in the question-by-question breakdown of responses in the body of the report.



*Q6 and Q14 were introduced in Round Three and Q5 and Q18 were introduced in Round Four.



OVERVIEW OF BINARY QUESTION RESULTS





SURVEY QUESTIONS

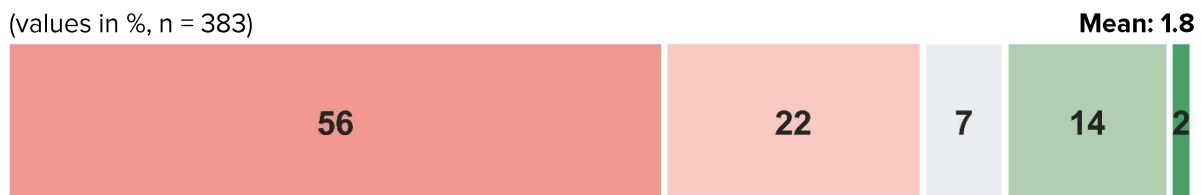
For closed questions, the bar charts show the percentage of respondents who selected each answer option, with colours ranging from dark red for negative answers to dark green for positive ones. For open questions, the bar charts indicate the percentage and frequency of respondents with answers pertaining to a particular theme. For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers. For each question, we indicate the main take-away or conclusion drawn from the data.

Q1. Information about support

Have you been kept informed about how to access the support available to you?

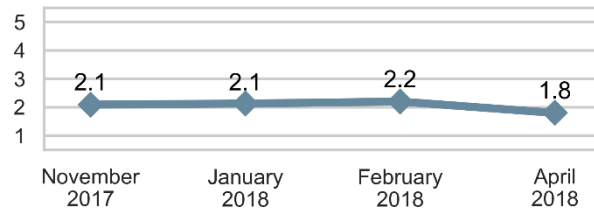
1 = Not at all
2 = Not very much
3 = Neutral
4 = Mostly yes
5 = Completely
Don't know

(values in %, n = 383)



Respondents feel less informed than in previous rounds.

Trend in mean scores



Awareness of support is low across all parishes, with only a slight improvement in Saint John since the previous round in February. Information needs are particularly pressing in Saint George.

Interview location (Parish)	Trend in mean scores
Saint Andrew	2.3 → 2.2 → 2.5 → 2.4
Saint David	2.4 → 2.6 → 2.0 → 1.7
Saint George	1.6 → 2.0 → 1.8 → 1.5
Saint John	2.2 → 2.1 → 2.2 → 2.4
Saint Joseph	2.1 → 2.4 → 2.6 → 1.8
Saint Patrick	2.7 → 2.2 → 2.8 → 1.8
Saint Paul	1.9 → 1.6 → 2.1 → 1.6

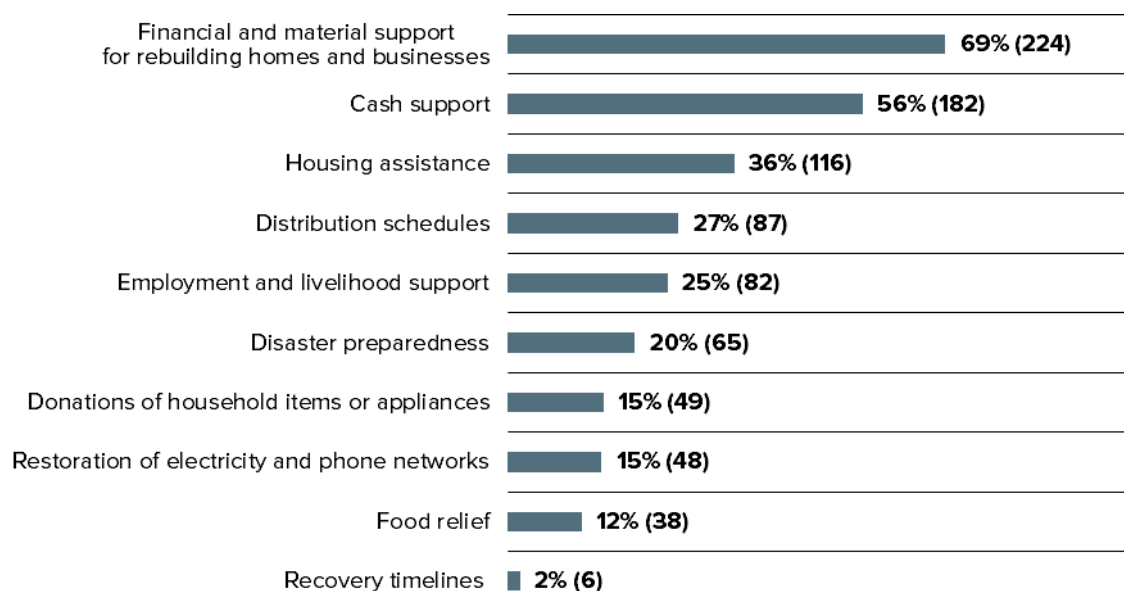
Parish	1 = Not at all	2 = Not very much	3 = Neutral	4 = Mostly yes	5 = Completely
Saint Andrew	35	25	12	25	4
Saint David	52	32	8	8	0
Saint George	70	19	3	9	0
Saint John	26	34	15	23	2
Saint Joseph	68	8	8	12	4
Saint Patrick	56	24	8	12	0
Saint Paul	66	16	6	12	0



Follow-up question asked to those who answered 1, 2, or 3 to Q1:

What kind of information would help improve your current situation? *

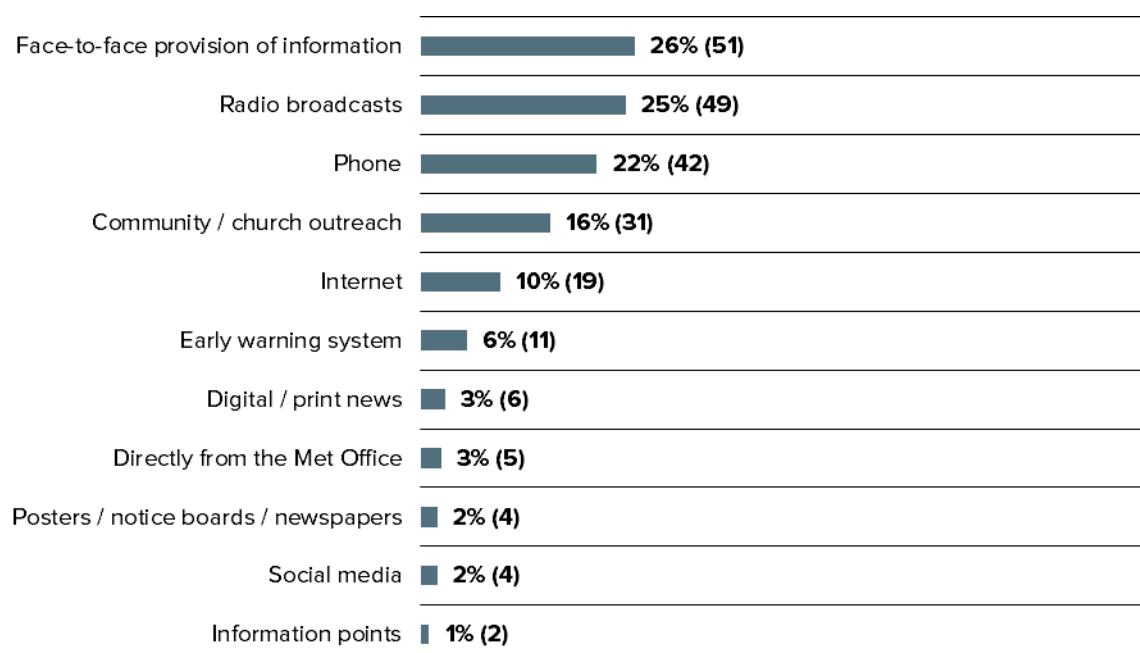
Information about:



* For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers, or because only the most common responses are displayed. For a complete breakdown of responses please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.

Q2. Access to reliable and timely information

How would you prefer to receive information? *





* For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers, or because only the most common responses are displayed. For a complete breakdown of responses please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.

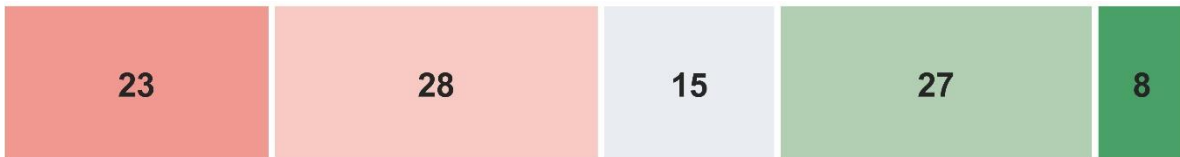
Q3. Effectiveness of support

Are your most important needs being met?

1 = Not at all
2 = Not very much
3 = Neutral
4 = Mostly yes
5 = Completely
Don't know

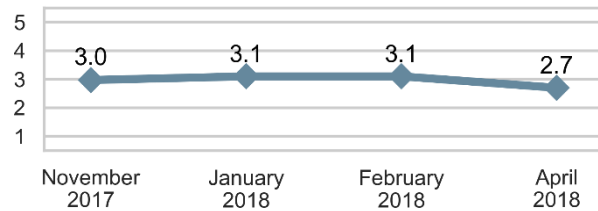
(values in %, n = 382)

Mean: 2.7



Over half of respondents answered negatively this round, a 12% increase in negative responses from the previous round in February.

Trend in mean scores



A majority of respondents in Saint David do not feel their priority needs are met.

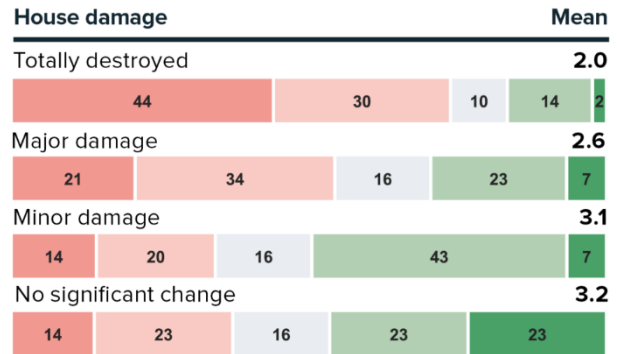
In the previous round, 75% of people surveyed in Saint Patrick felt their needs were being met, positive responses have now fallen to less than a third.

Interview location (Parish)	Trend in mean scores
Saint Andrew	2.7 → 3.0 → 2.6 → 3.0 ↑
Saint David	2.7 → 2.8 → 3.1 → 2.2 ↓
Saint George	2.9 → 3.0 → 3.0 → 2.6 ↓
Saint John	3.0 → 2.8 → 3.5 → 3.0 ↓
Saint Joseph	3.4 → 3.2 → 2.7 → 2.6 ↓
Saint Patrick	3.1 → 3.3 → 3.7 → 2.4 ↓
Saint Paul	3.3 → 3.6 → 3.0 → 2.7 ↓

Parish	1 = Not at all	2 = Not very much	3 = Neutral	4 = Mostly yes	5 = Completely
Saint Andrew	13	21	21	42	4
Saint David	23	51	10	15	
Saint George	25	32	13	22	8
Saint John	6	27	29	38	
Saint Joseph	26	33	4	26	11
Saint Patrick	42	21	8	17	12
Saint Paul	38	12	10	23	17

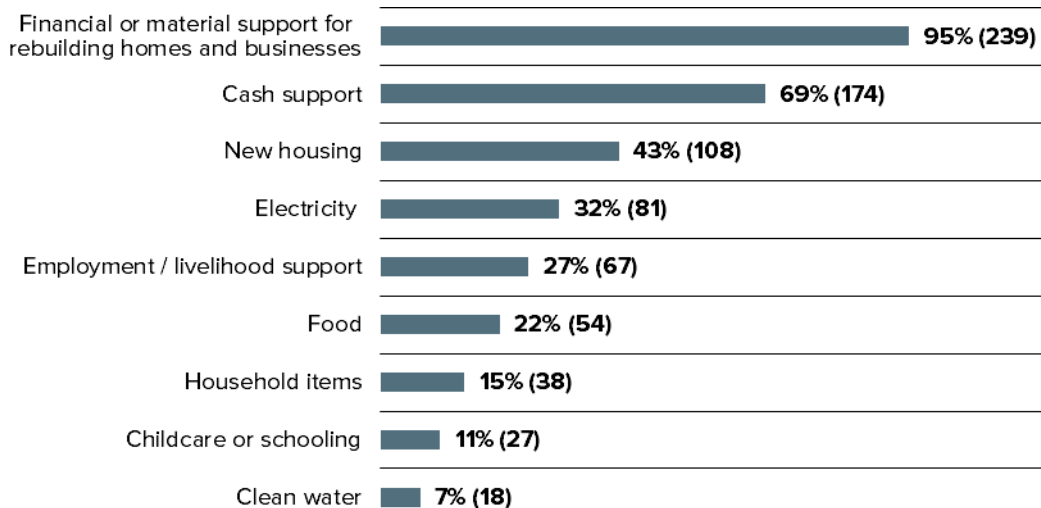


Respondents whose homes were totally destroyed – meaning only the foundation is left and more than half of the walls are gone – do not feel their most important needs are met.



Follow-up question asked to those who answered 1, 2, or 3 to Q3:

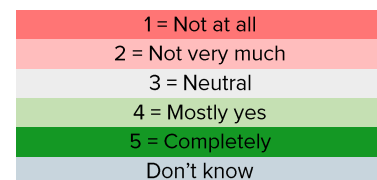
What are your most important needs that are not adequately addressed? *



* For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers, or because only the most common responses are displayed. For a complete breakdown of responses please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.

Q4. Targeting of aid provision

Do you think that support is going to the people who need it most?



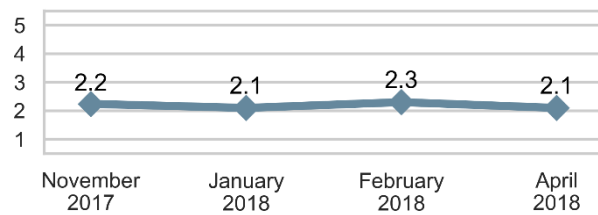
(values in %, n = 391)



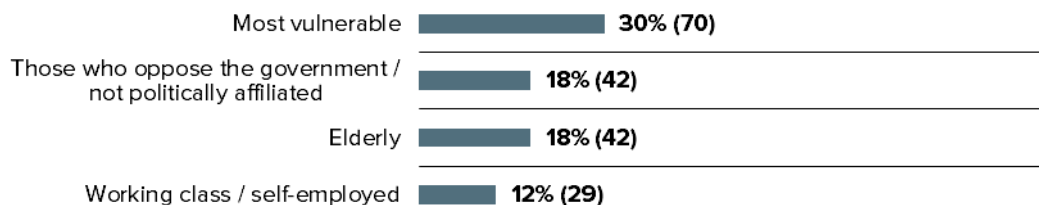


Most respondents do not believe support is going to those most in need. There has been no improvement in scores since the first round of data collection in November 2017.

Trend in mean scores



Follow-up question asked to those who answered 1, 2, or 3 to Q4: Which people do you think are excluded from support?



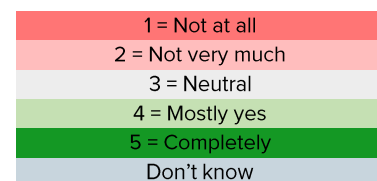
The same people are seen as excluded from support as in the last round, namely those who are most vulnerable, those who oppose the current government, and elderly persons.

* For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers, or because only the most common responses are displayed. For a complete breakdown of responses please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.

Q5. Fairness of aid provision

In your view, is aid provided to your community in an honest way? *

* Respondents tend to refer to aid they received directly rather than broader recovery programmes.



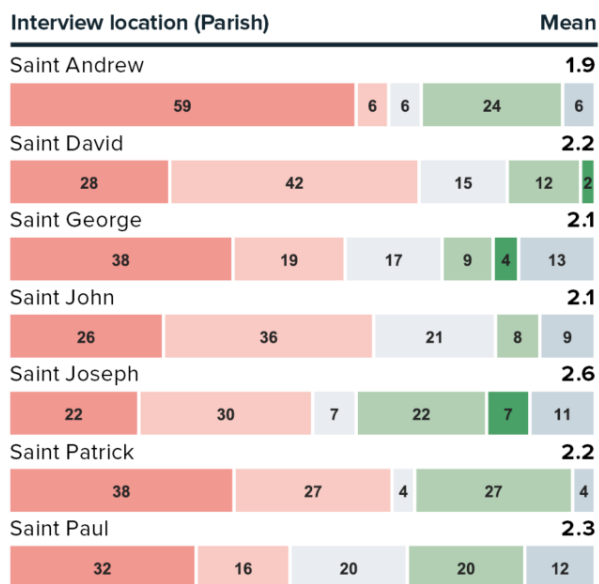
(values in %, n = 391)



Over half of respondents say that corruption and unethical behaviour play a role in the way aid is provided to their community.



The sense that aid is not provided honestly and fairly is strongest among respondents in Saint Andrew.

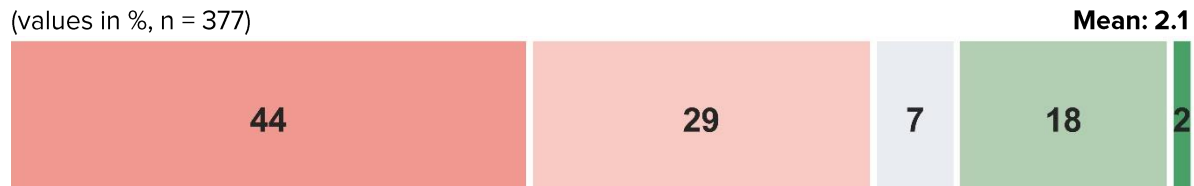


Q6. Preparedness

Are people now better prepared to cope with a future natural disaster?

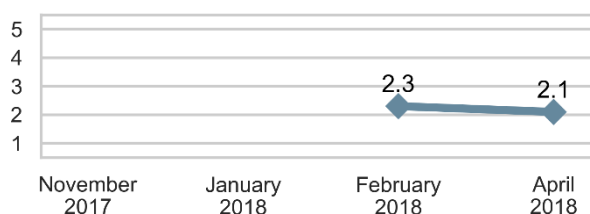


(values in %, n = 377)



Most Dominicans interviewed do not feel better prepared to cope in the event of another natural disaster.

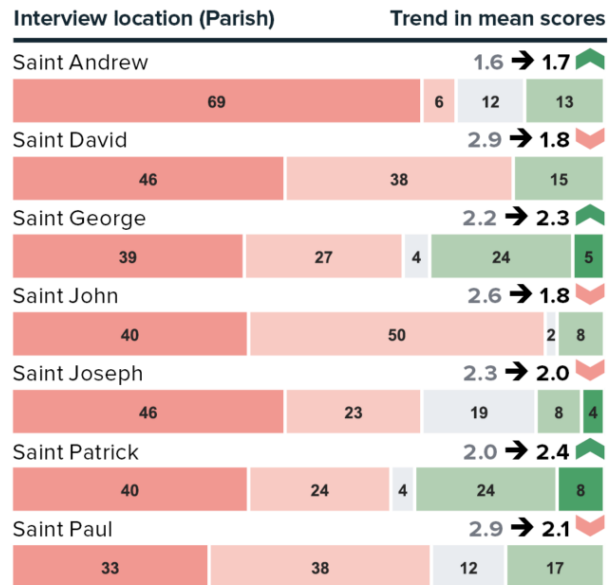
Trend in mean scores





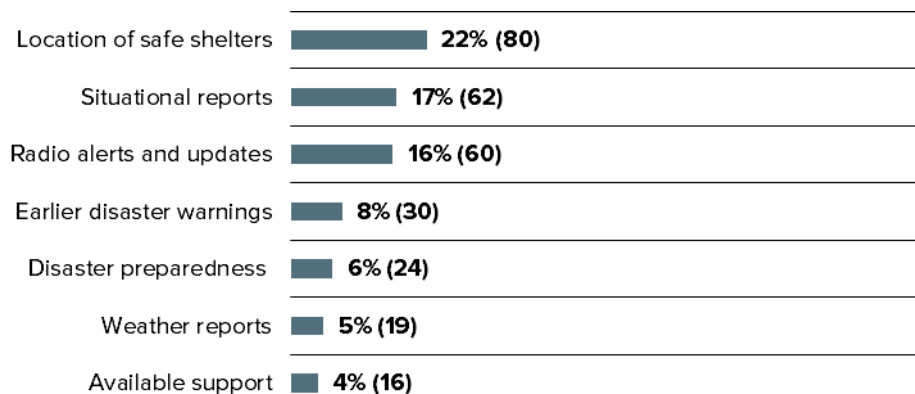
Respondents in Saint Andrew, Saint David, and Saint John feel the least prepared to endure another disaster.

Saint Andrew and Saint John were some of the hardest-hit parishes, with damage sustained to 83 percent of housing in Marigot (Saint Andrew Parish,) and 55 percent in Portsmouth (Saint John Parish). Saint Andrew and Saint David Parishes were among the poorest communities before the storm.²



Q7. Disaster information gaps

What type of information would improve your preparedness if another disaster were to hit Dominica? *



* For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers, or because only the most common responses are displayed. For a complete breakdown of responses please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.

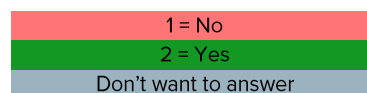
² "Dominica Flash Appeal 2017: Hurricane Maria (September - December 2017)," ReliefWeb, accessed April 25, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/dominica/dominica-flash-appeal-2017-hurricane-maria-september-december-2017>.



Q8. Community-led disaster risk management

Are you aware of communities taking steps to strengthen their preparedness?

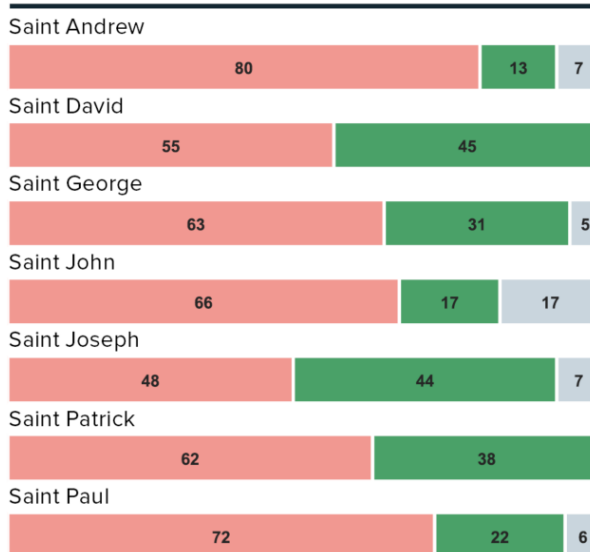
(values in %, n = 391)



Most Dominicans interviewed are not aware of preparedness measures being actively taken by communities.

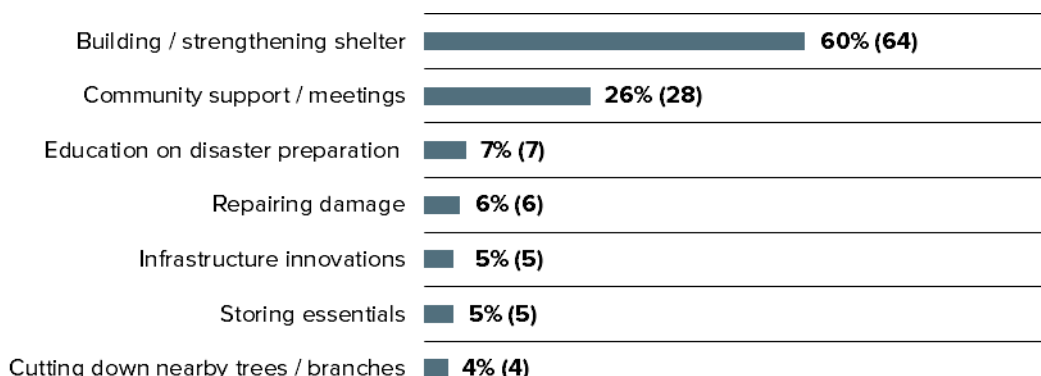
Respondents in Saint Andrew and Saint Paul are least aware of any preparedness efforts.

Interview location (Parish)



Follow-up question asked to those who answered “yes” to Q8:

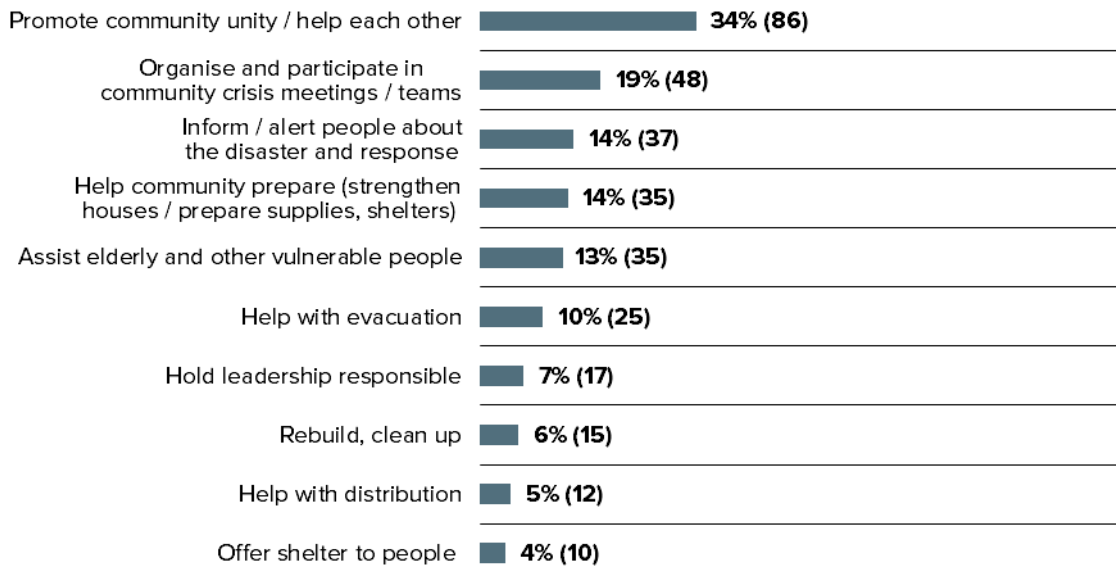
How are they preparing themselves?





Q9. Community engagement in disaster response

How would you and your community like to be involved in the next response?



Q10. Community engagement

Are you satisfied with how you and your community have been consulted?

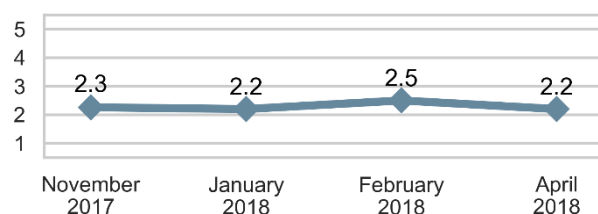


(values in %, n = 387)



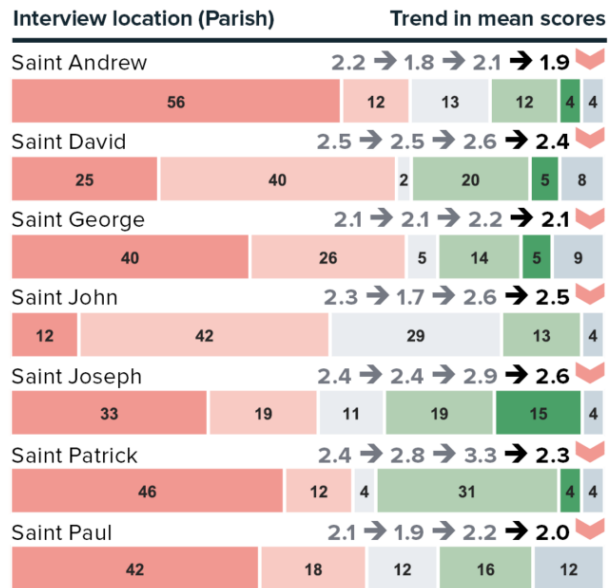
Dominicans interviewed are generally unsatisfied with the extent to which they have been involved in decisions about support for those affected by the hurricane.

Trend in mean scores



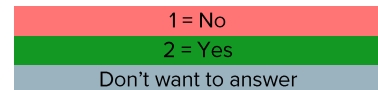


Respondents in Saint Andrew are the least satisfied.



Q11. Awareness of complaints mechanisms

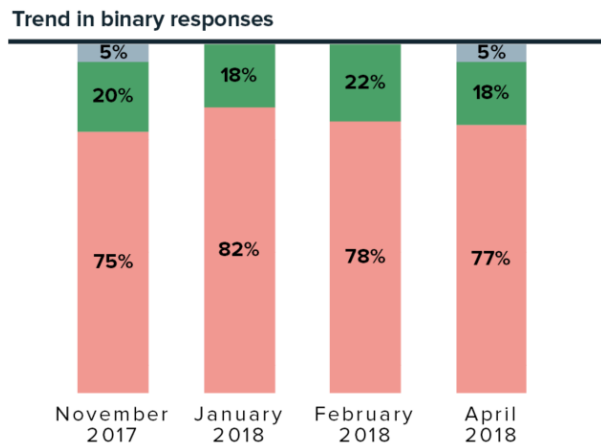
Do you know where and how to make complaints?



(values in %, n = 391)

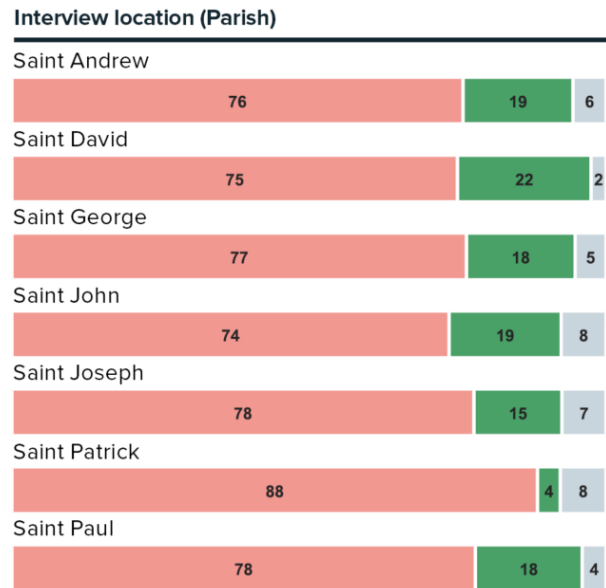


Knowledge of existing complaints mechanisms has remained low since the first round of interviews in November 2017.



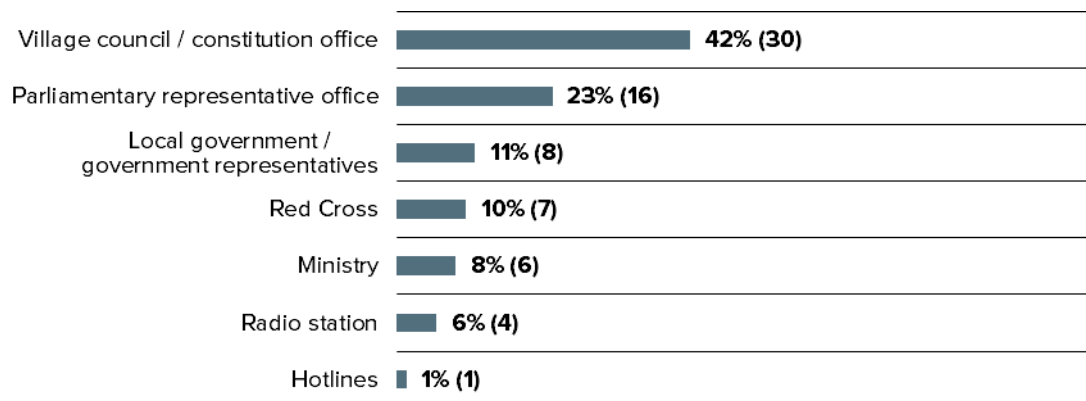


Only 4% of respondents in Saint Patrick Parish report knowing where or how to make complaints about support.



Follow-up questions asked to those who answered “yes” to Q11:

If yes, where?



Among those who are aware of where to submit complaints, many know they can report grievances to their village council or constitution office.

* For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers, or because only the most common responses are displayed. For a complete breakdown of responses please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.



Q11a. Trust in aid agency complaints mechanisms

If you were to make a complaint to aid workers, do you think you would get a response?

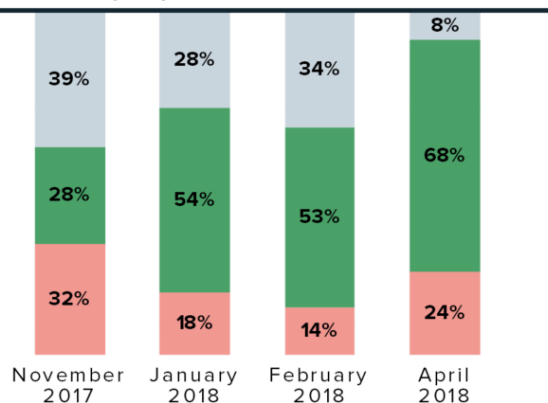
1 = No
2 = Yes
Don't know

(values in %, n = 71)



Respondents have grown increasingly confident that they would receive a response from aid workers if they were to make a complaint.

Trend in binary responses



Q11b. Trust in government complaints mechanisms

If you were to make a complaint to a local government representative or council member, do you think you would get a response?

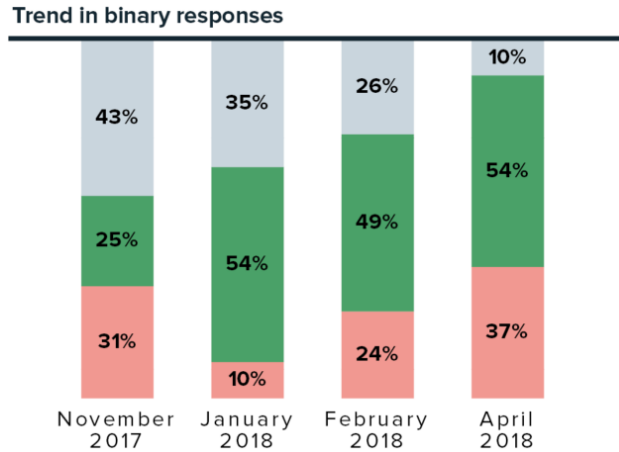
1 = No
2 = Yes
Don't know

(values in %, n = 71)





Just over half the respondents believe they would receive a response from local government representatives or council members if they were to make a complaint. This round of data collection shows the highest proportion of negative responses to this question.

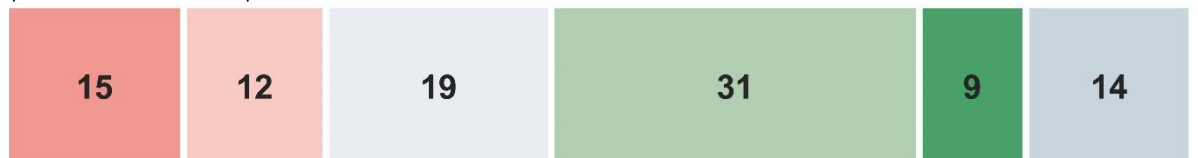


Q12. Respect

Do aid workers treat you with respect?

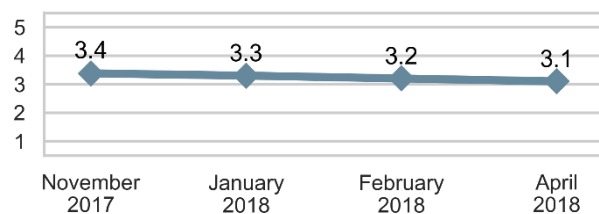


(values in %, n = 389)



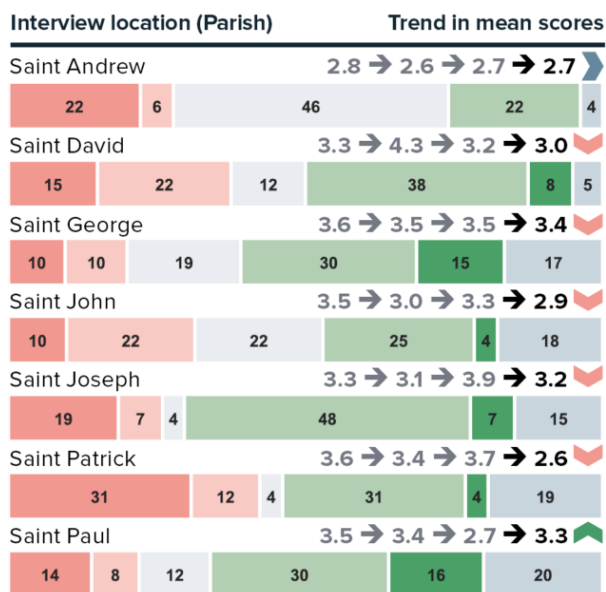
Responses are mixed, though declining steadily since the first round in November.

Trend in mean scores





Almost a third of those interviewed in Saint Patrick Parish say that relief workers do not treat them with respect. Respondents are most positive in Saint Joseph.

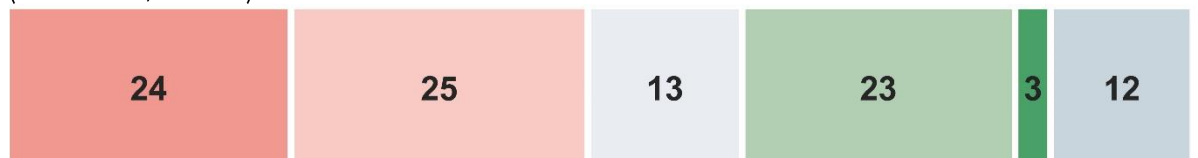


Q13. Improvements in people's lives

Overall, is life improving for the people affected by Hurricane Maria?

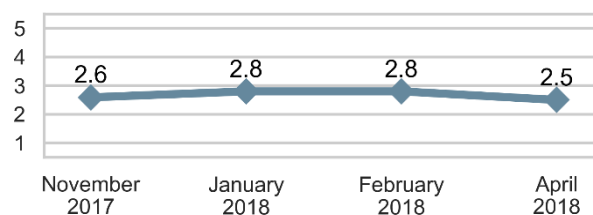


(values in %, n = 388)



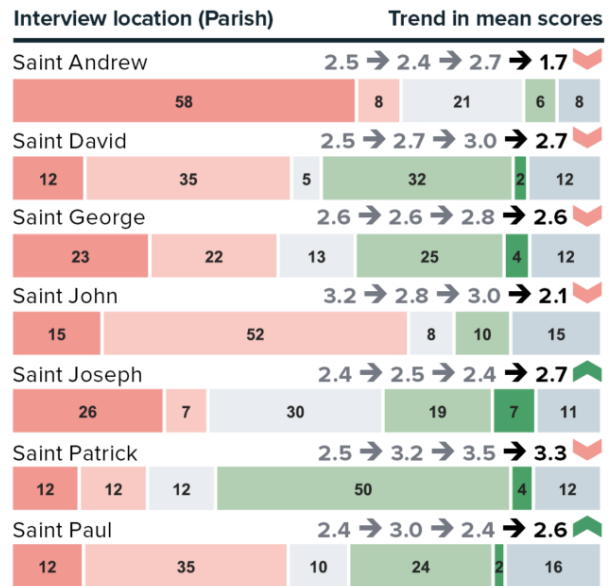
Almost half of respondents do not feel that life is improving for those affected by the hurricane.

Trend in mean scores





Dominicans interviewed in the parishes of Saint Andrew and Saint John feel the most concerned about their situation.

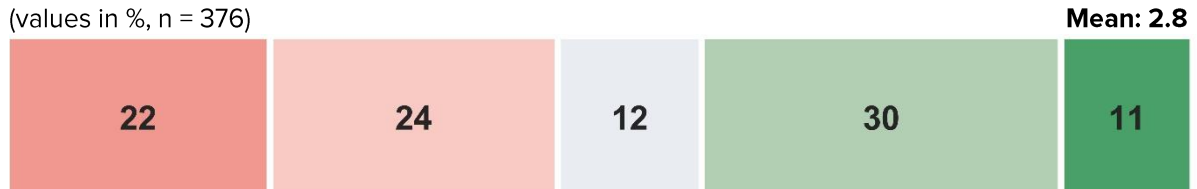


Q14. Resumption of livelihood activities

Have you been able to maintain or resume the livelihood and/or income source that you had prior to the hurricane?

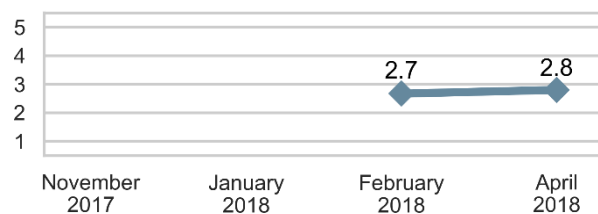


(values in %, n = 376)



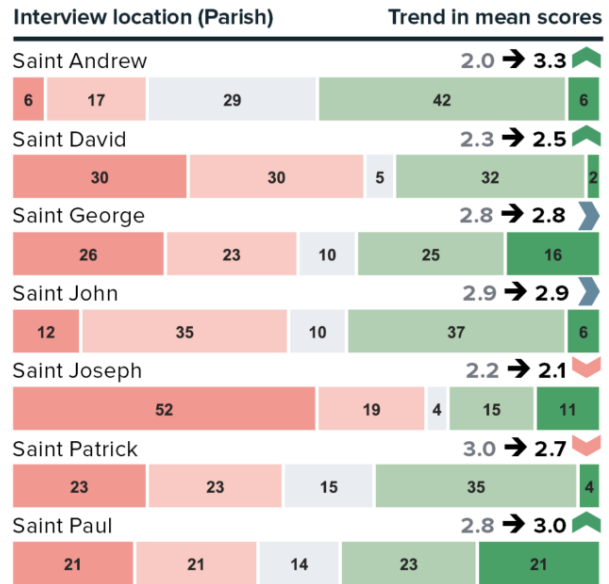
Responses remain in negative territory.

Trend in mean scores

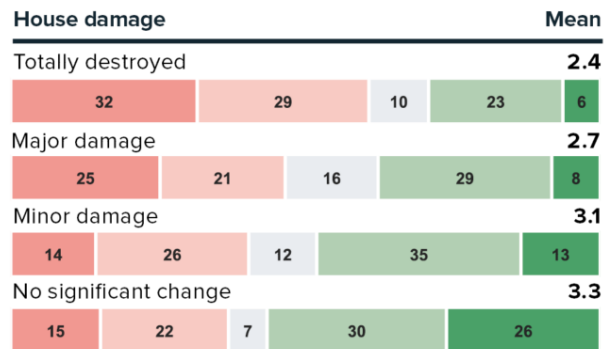




Resuming former livelihoods has been particularly difficult in Saint Joseph.

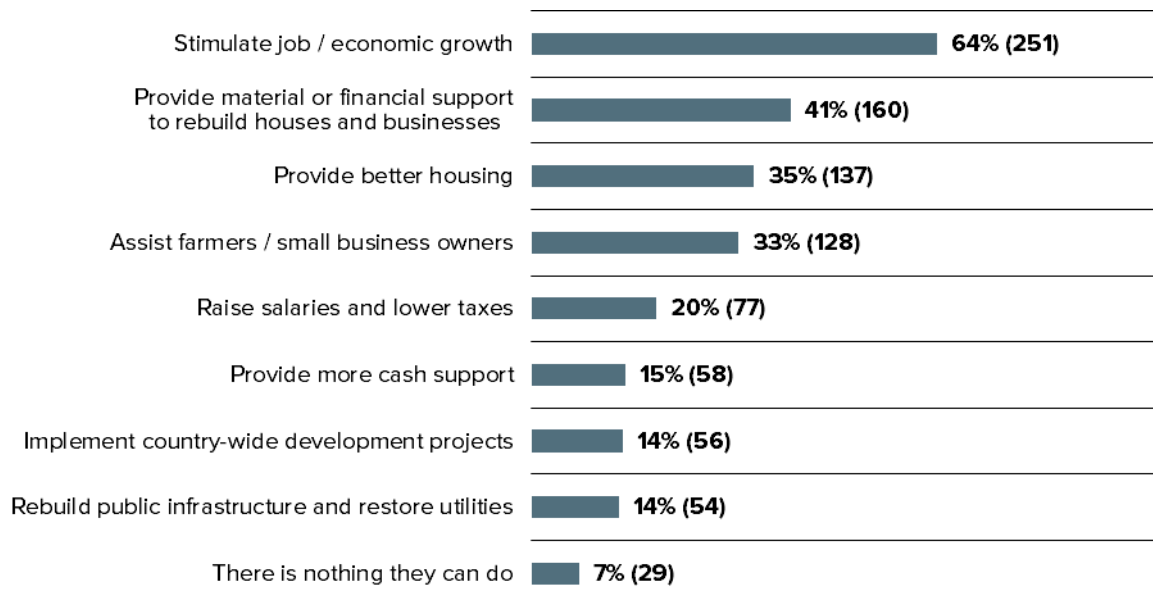


Dominicans whose homes were most damaged feel least able to resume their livelihoods or income-generating activities.



Q15. Incentives to return

How could the government facilitate/encourage the return of those people who left the island following Hurricane Maria? *



Stimulating the economy and helping to increase employment opportunities are seen as key steps toward encouraging people to return to Dominica.



* For open questions, percentages do not always total 100% because respondents might have been given the option to provide multiple answers, or because only the most common responses are displayed. For a complete breakdown of responses please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.

Q16. Plans to remain or resettle elsewhere

Do you plan on staying in Dominica during the coming hurricane season?

1 = No
2 = Yes
Don't know

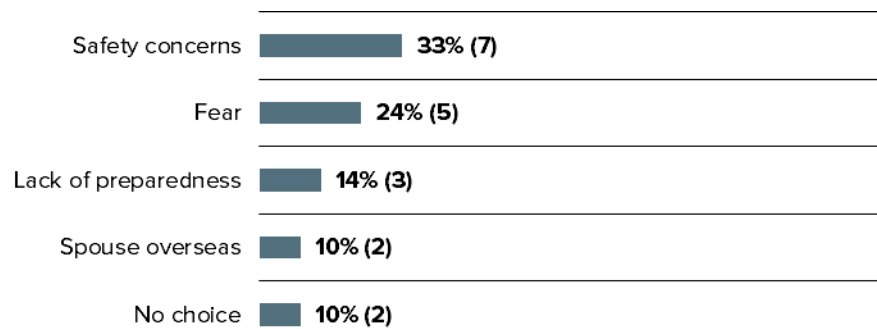
(values in %, n = 389)



The majority of respondents plan on remaining in Dominica.

Follow-up question asked to those who answered 1, 2, or 3 to Q16:

Why not?



Q17. Survey fatigue

Would you like to continue giving feedback through surveys like this?

1 = No
2 = Yes
Don't know

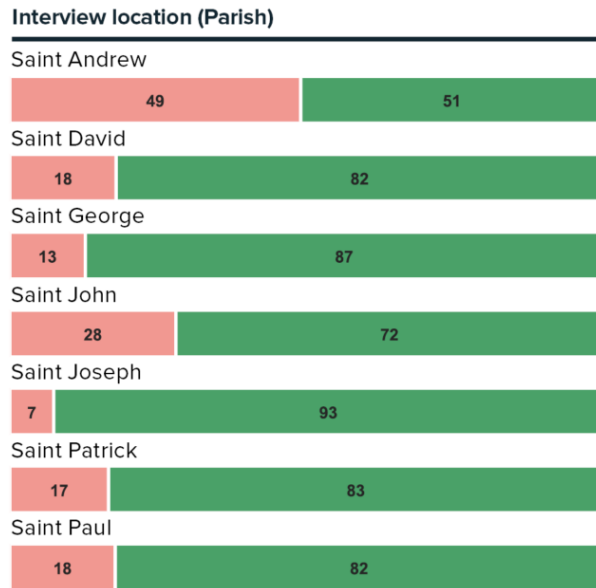
(values in %, n = 374)



The majority of Dominicans interviewed would be happy to continue giving feedback. It should be noted that during data collection some people refused to participate and expressed frustration at being surveyed repeatedly by different organisations with no follow-up action.

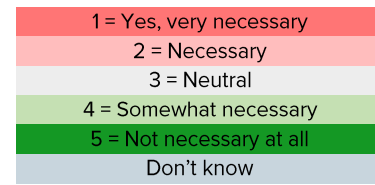


Nearly half of respondents in Saint Andrew Parish do not wish to be surveyed on the response in the future.



Q18. Need for psychological support

Do you feel there is a big need for psychosocial support for Dominicans after Hurricane Maria?



(values in %, n = 379)



The overwhelming majority of Dominicans interviewed believe the provision of psychosocial support is important.



DEMOGRAPHICS

The graphs below depict the demographic breakdown of the 391 respondents. Each graph includes percentages as well as the frequency in parentheses.

Gender



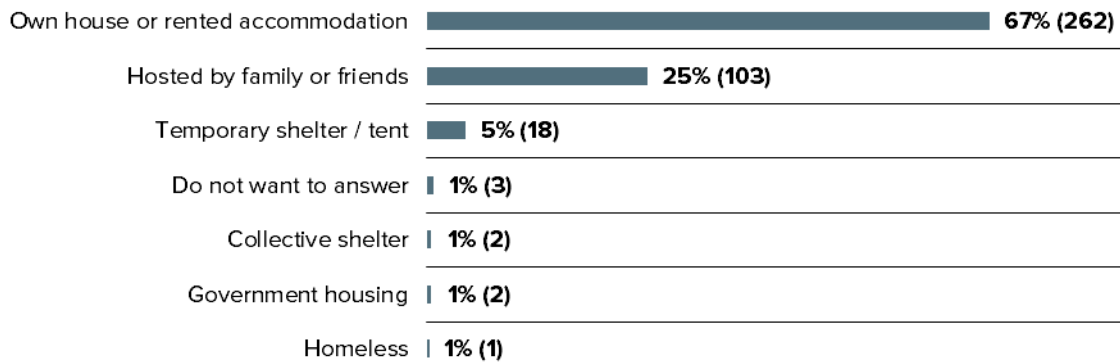
Female 50% (197)

Male 50% (194)

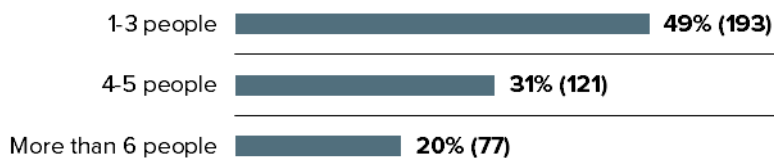
Age



Current housing situation



Household size after the hurricane

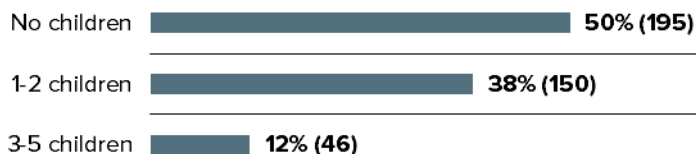


Disability

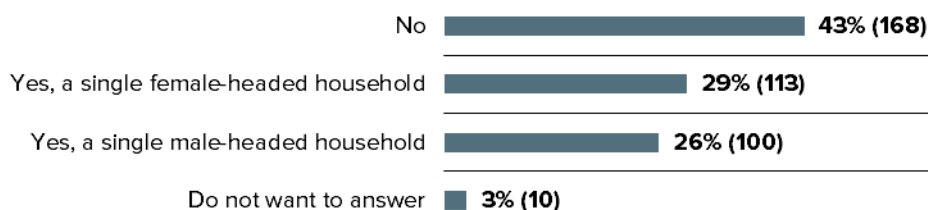




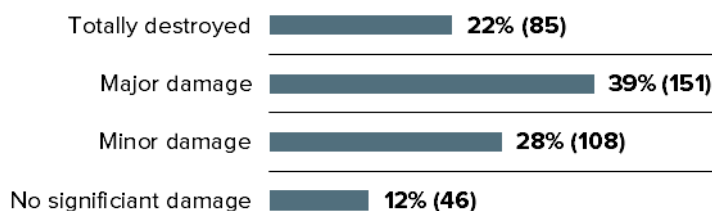
Number of children



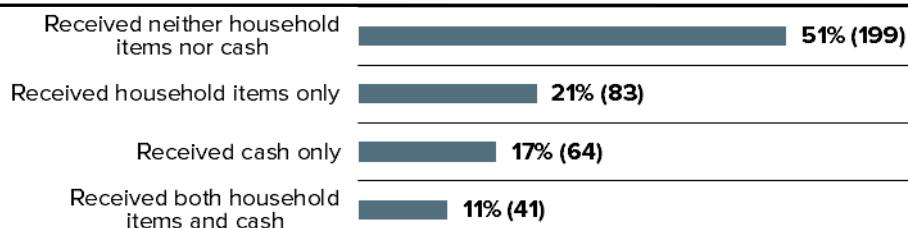
Member of a single-headed household?



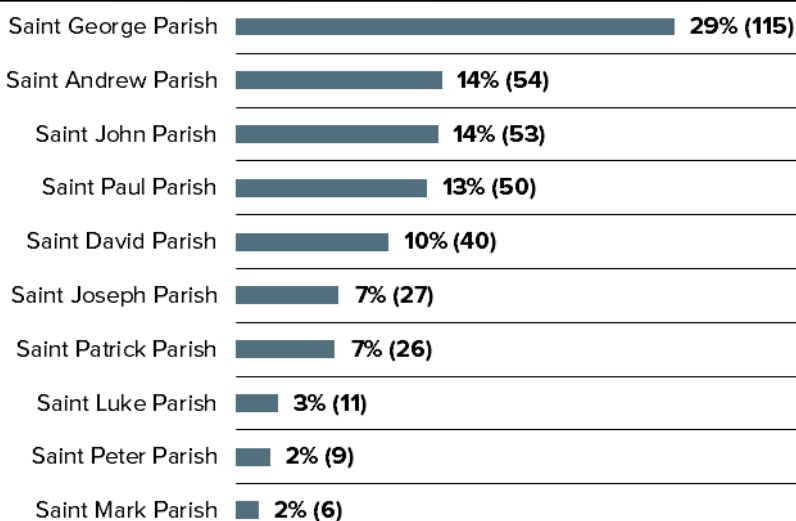
House damage



Types of support received



Location of interview



METHODOLOGY

Sample size

Interviews were conducted with 391 Dominicans currently residing in Dominica.

Sampling methodology

The survey was conducted face-to-face and recorded using handheld phones following the CAPI method. Only individuals 18 years of age or older were interviewed. Each enumerator aimed to ensure an even number of males and females were surveyed.

Data disaggregation

Data is disaggregated by gender, age quantile, current living situation, parish or dependency in which the interview was carried out, disability, type of support received, and current size of household. The analysis in the report includes any significant difference in the perceptions of different demographic groups. It does not, however, show the full breakdown of responses according to these categories. To see the complete breakdown of responses, please request the output file by sending an email to info@groundtruthsolutions.org. Data was collected from all 10 of Dominica's administrative parishes, however the parishes of St. Luke, St. Peter, and St. Mark were omitted from the question breakdowns as the sample sizes from each were too low. The number of respondents per parish can be found in the Demographics section above.

To identify groups of persons with disabilities within the sample, a staff member at [Handicap International](#) was consulted and participants were asked a series of questions:

- Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?
- Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?
- Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?
- Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?

For the purposes of this survey, if a survey participant indicates having difficulty or inability to do one or more of the above activities, they are considered a person with a disability.

Language of the survey

This survey was conducted in English.

Data collection

Data was collected in face-to-face, one-on-one interviews between 10 and 21 April 2018 by Dichter & Neira and DMR Insights, independent data-collection companies based in the Caribbean. As mentioned in the introduction, during this round of data collection there was a clear sense that people felt frustrated at being surveyed by various organisations while continuing to live in poor conditions. Many people refused to participate in the survey, and data collectors faced greater challenges in finding willing participants than in previous rounds.

For more information on the survey, please contact info@groundtruthsolutions.org.