



Gendered experiences of food and energy insecurities linked to Russia's war on Ukraine—Insights from a phone survey in Bangladesh (Feb/March 2023)

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Basic information & profile of respondents

- Phone survey with 1,085 respondents implemented during February to March 2023
- One third of the respondents were men, and two-thirds were women
- Households were randomly selected from the Feed the Future Zone of Influence stratum of the Bangladesh Integrated Household Survey, 2018-19, which comprises 21 districts (out of a total of 64 districts) of Bangladesh
- We selected the main decision maker of the household as the respondent
 - The main male decision-maker of the household for the male sample or the main female decision-maker for the female sample
- The average age of respondents was 45 years for men and 38 years for women; the average household size was 4.4



PRICES

- 99% of women and men observed increases in **food prices**
 - **Rice and soybean oil** were mentioned most as having increased in price
- 92% of women and 98% of men observed increases in **fuel prices**
- 71% of women and 87% of men observed increases in **fuel prices for agricultural machinery**
- 71% of women and 82% of men observed increases in **pesticide prices**
- 83% of women and 88% of men observed increases in **fertilizer prices**

RESPONSES

- The main response to higher fuel prices of both women and men was to **go less to the market**
- Among those who **borrowed money to purchase food**, 43% of women and 42% of men relied on neighbors and friends. More men than women had access to formal institutions such as NGOs, micro-credit schemes and banks to borrow funds
- **Child marriage** was mentioned by 7% of women and men as a response to increases in food/fuel prices
- 54% of women and 47% of men **blamed the government** for higher food prices

IMPLICATIONS

- **Food insecurity levels are high for women and men.** However, proportionally, more women than men are food insecure:
 - 59% of women and 43% of men said that they **do not have enough food**
 - 22% of women and 15% of men **ran out of food**
 - 46% of women and 40% of men **ate less**
- Women reported **less access to different foods** compared to men. Over a 24-hour period:
 - 36% of men and 26% of women consumed eggs
 - 69% of men and 47% of women consumed pulses/beans/peas

Characteristics of respondents



Credit: CRS PHOTO/Shutterstock

Around 40% of women and men work in agriculture while 46% of women reported that they do not work



Figure 1. Phone Survey Results: Main occupation, % of respondents (n=1085)

Most men cultivate staple crops (85%) while most women raise poultry (64%)

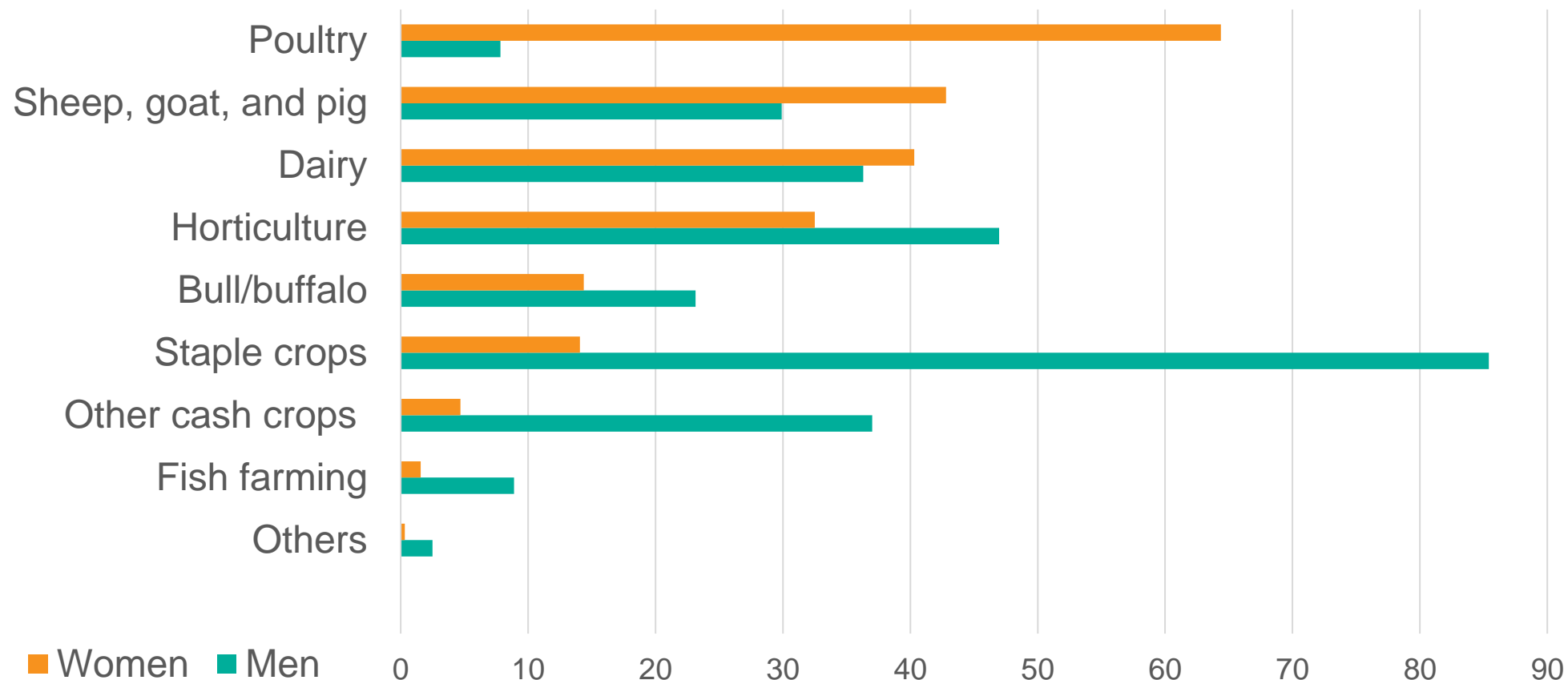
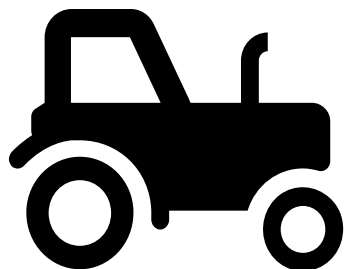


Figure 2. Farming Types, % of respondents (n= 601)

29% of men and 14% of women reported that they have access to farm machinery



Of those farmers who use farm machinery, fuel is mostly used for pumping irrigation water

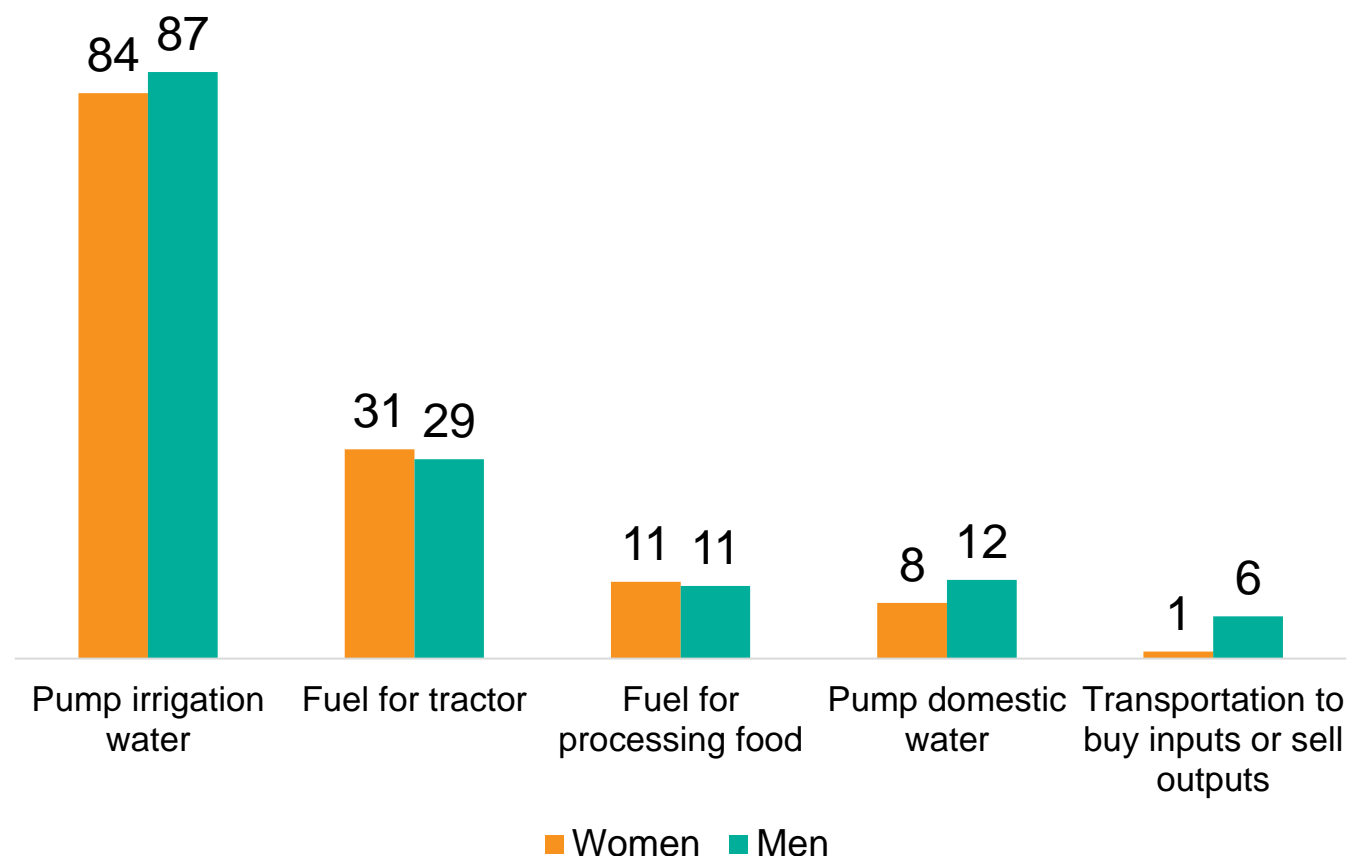


Figure 3. Fuel uses among farmers with access to farm machinery (n=209), % of respondents

Perceptions of price increases



Credit: Canto-IFPRI

99% of women and men observed increases in food prices in the last 6 months before the survey (n=1085)

More women than men believe food was at least twice as expensive as previously

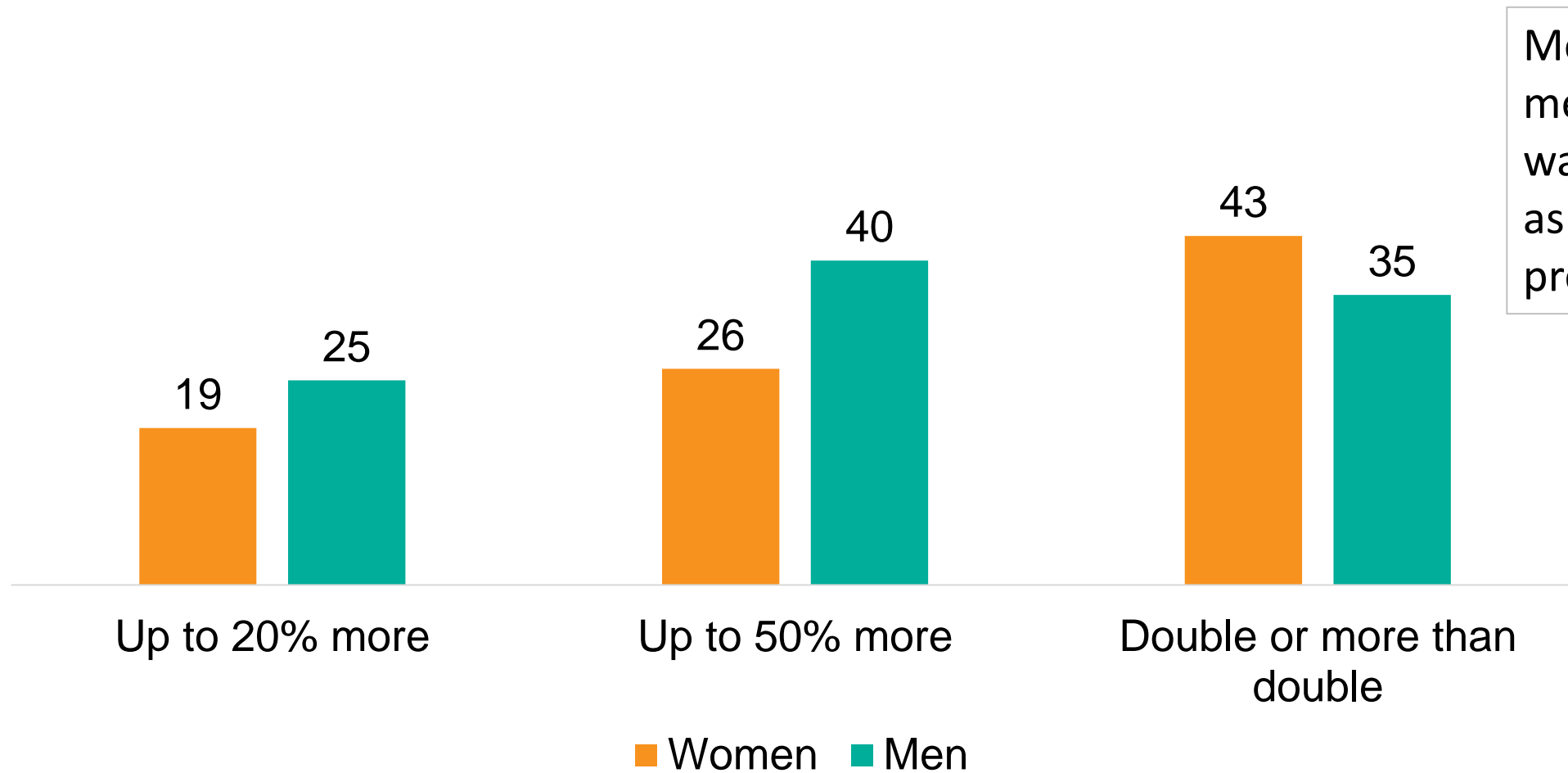


Figure 4. Perceptions of food prices among all respondents compared to the last year, %



Most women and men observed increases in the prices of soybean oil and rice

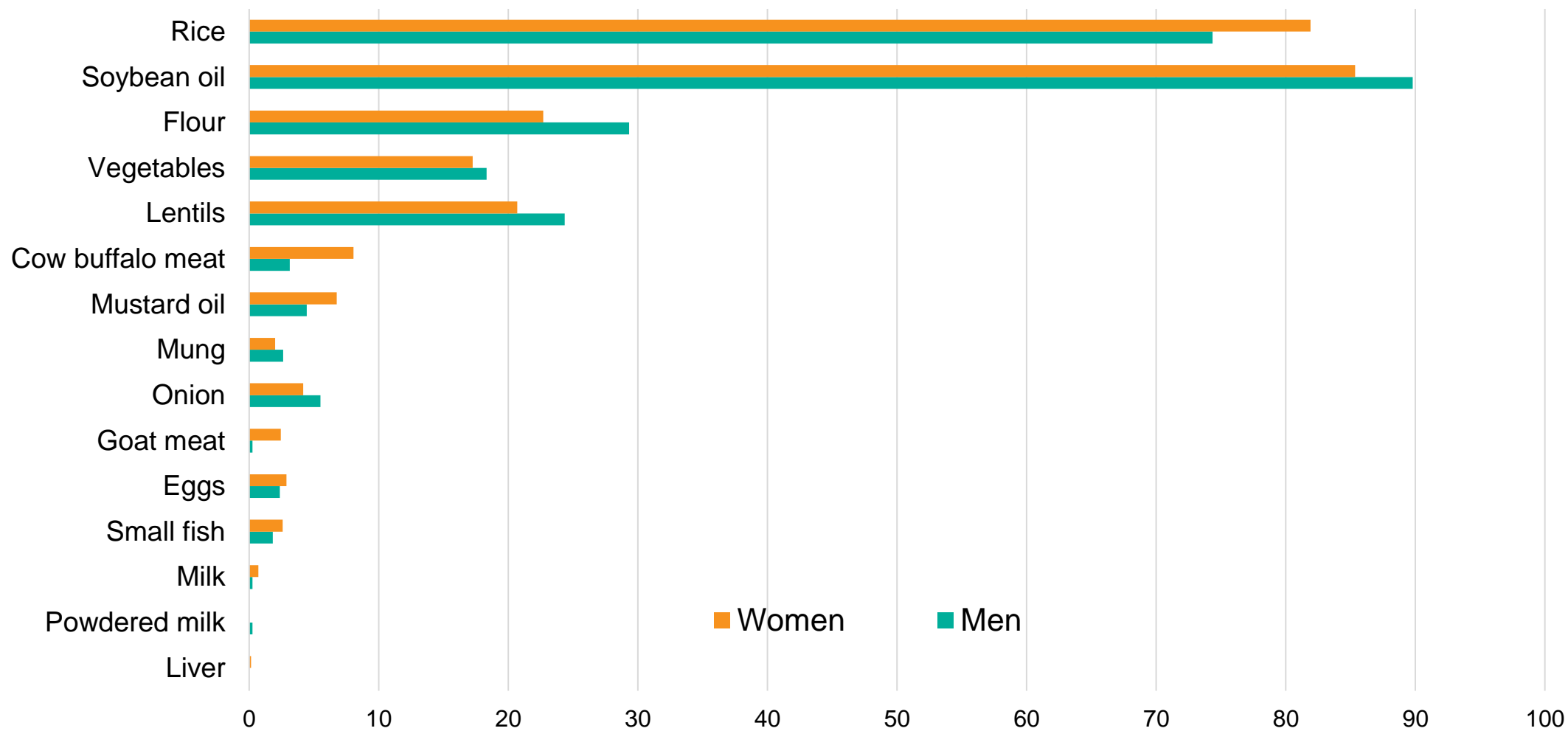


Figure 5. Food Commodities identified as affected by higher food prices, % of respondents (n=1078)

92% of women and 98% of men observed increases in fuel prices in the last 6 months before the survey (n=1085)

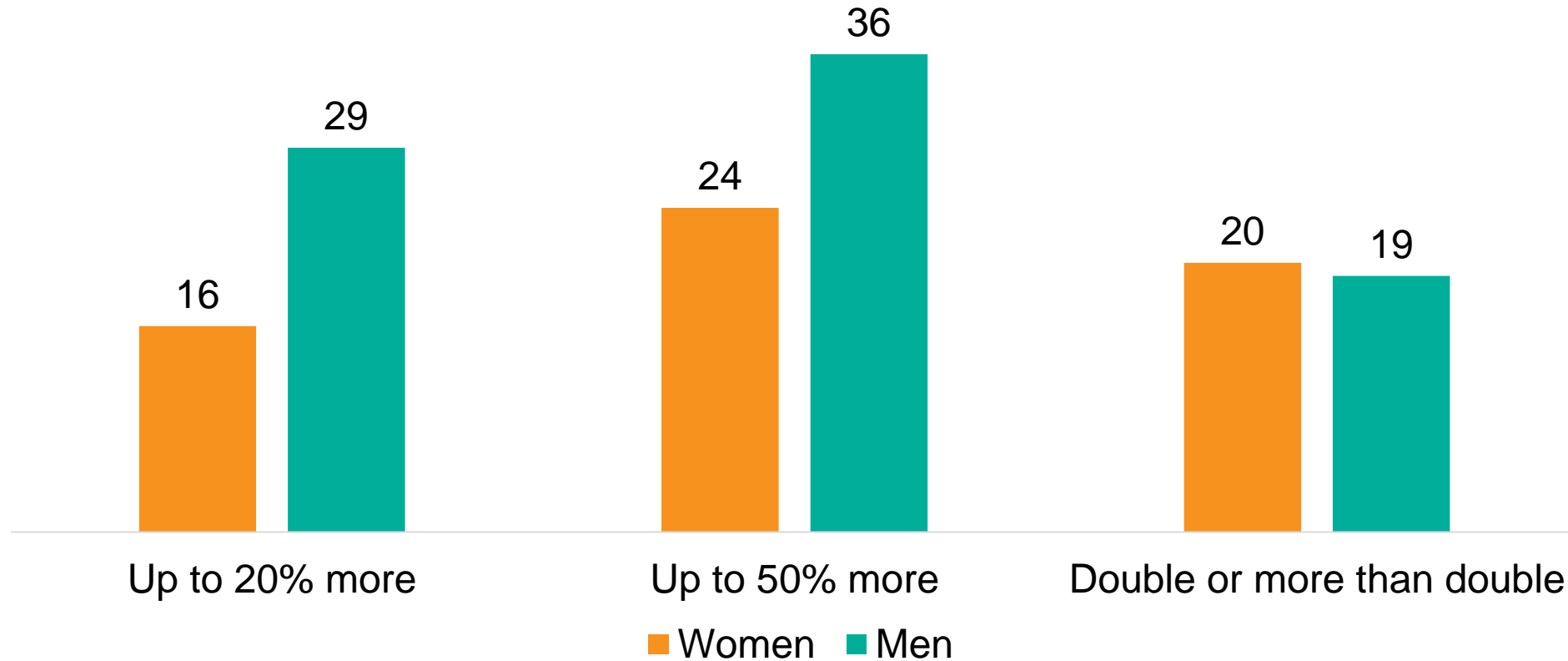


Figure 6. Perception of increases in fuel prices compared to the previous year, %

71% of women and 87% of men observed increases in fuel prices for agricultural machinery in the last 6 months before the survey (n=1085)

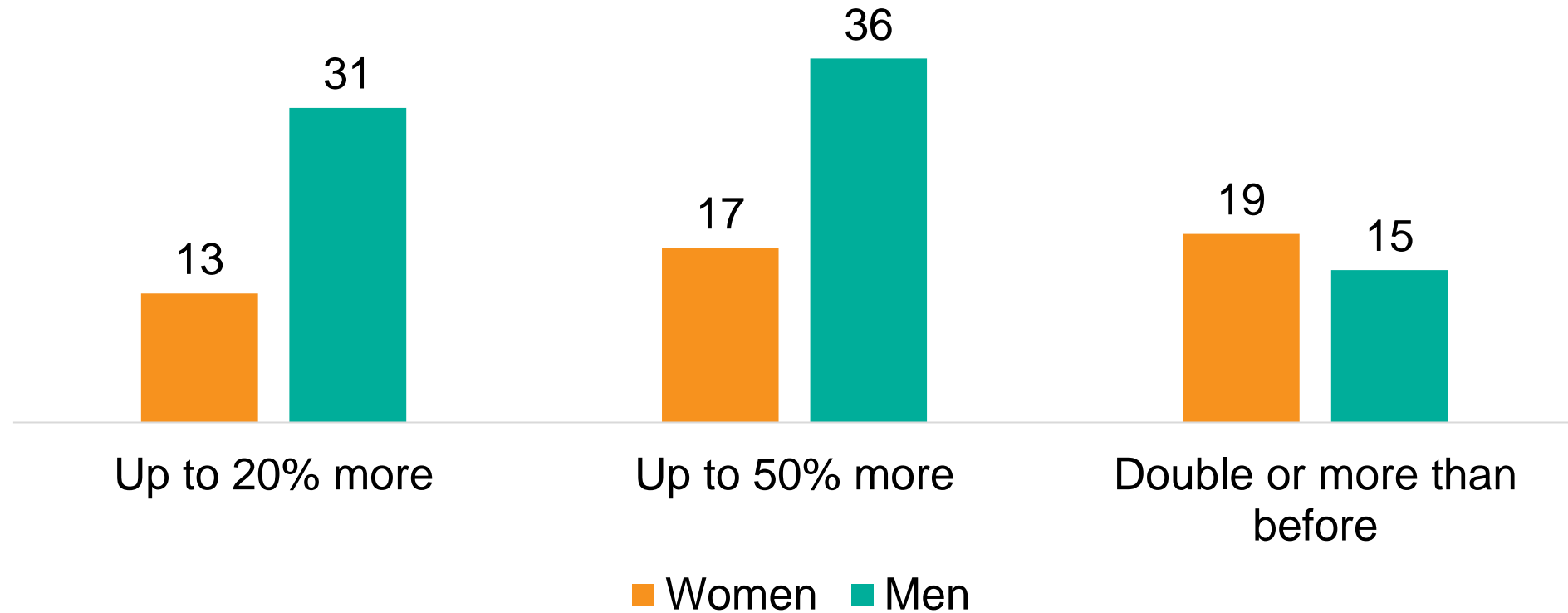


Figure 7. Perceptions of price increases for fuel in agricultural machinery compared to the previous year, %

71% of women and 82% of men observed increases in pesticide prices in the last 6 months before the survey (n= 1085)

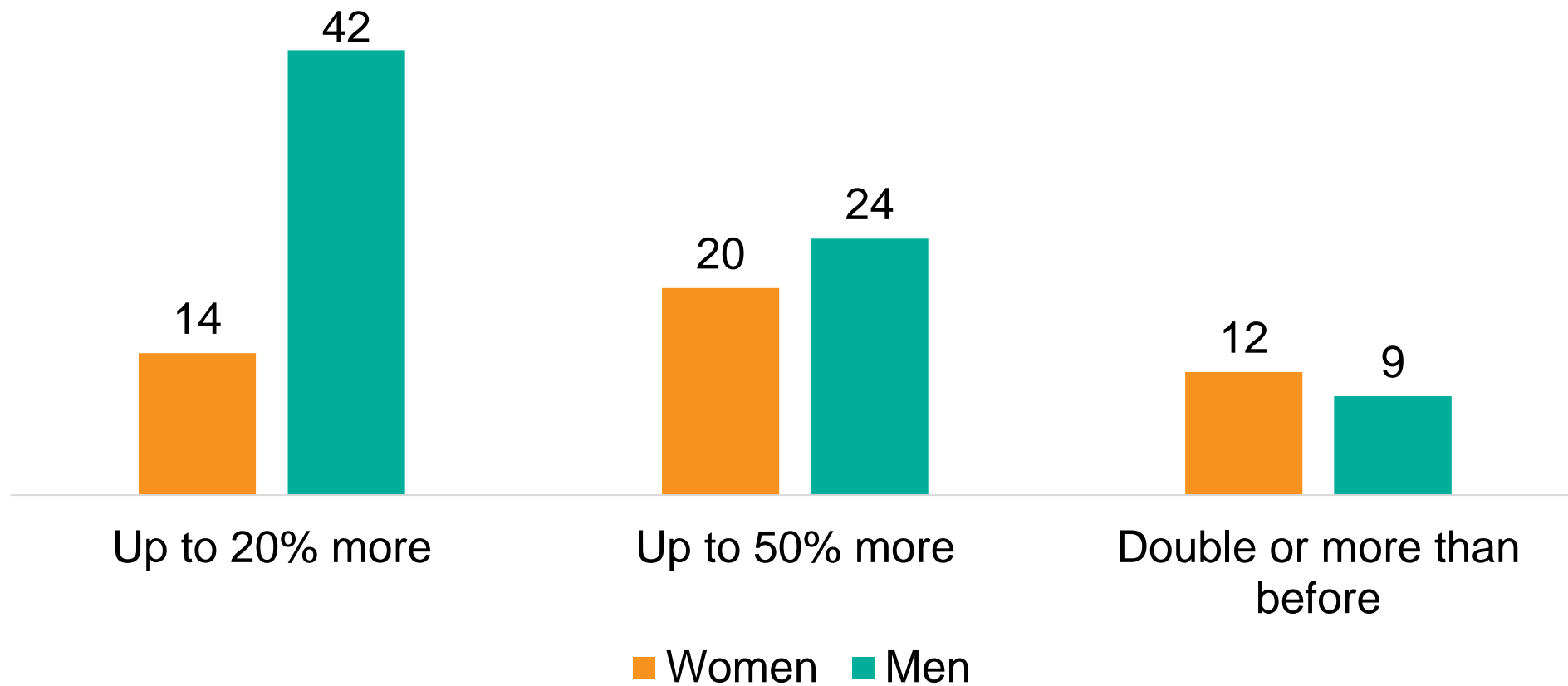


Figure 8. Perceptions of pesticide prices among all respondents compared to the previous year, %



83% of women and 88% of men observed increases in fertilizer prices in the last 6 months before the survey (n=1085)

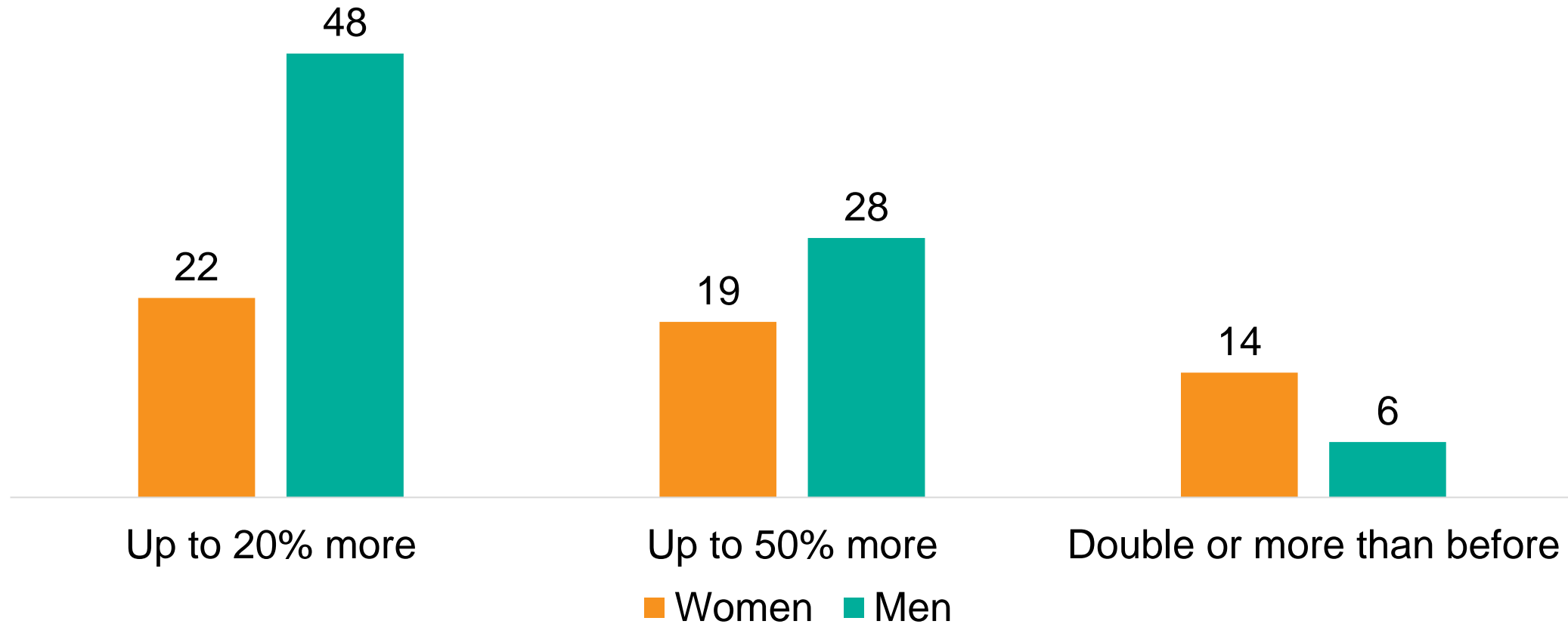


Figure 9. Perception of increases in fertilizer prices among all respondents compared to the last year

Implications for agriculture and food security



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Credit: Zakir Hossain Chowdhury / Alamy Stock Photo

According to several indicators, proportionally more women than men reported suffering from food insecurity

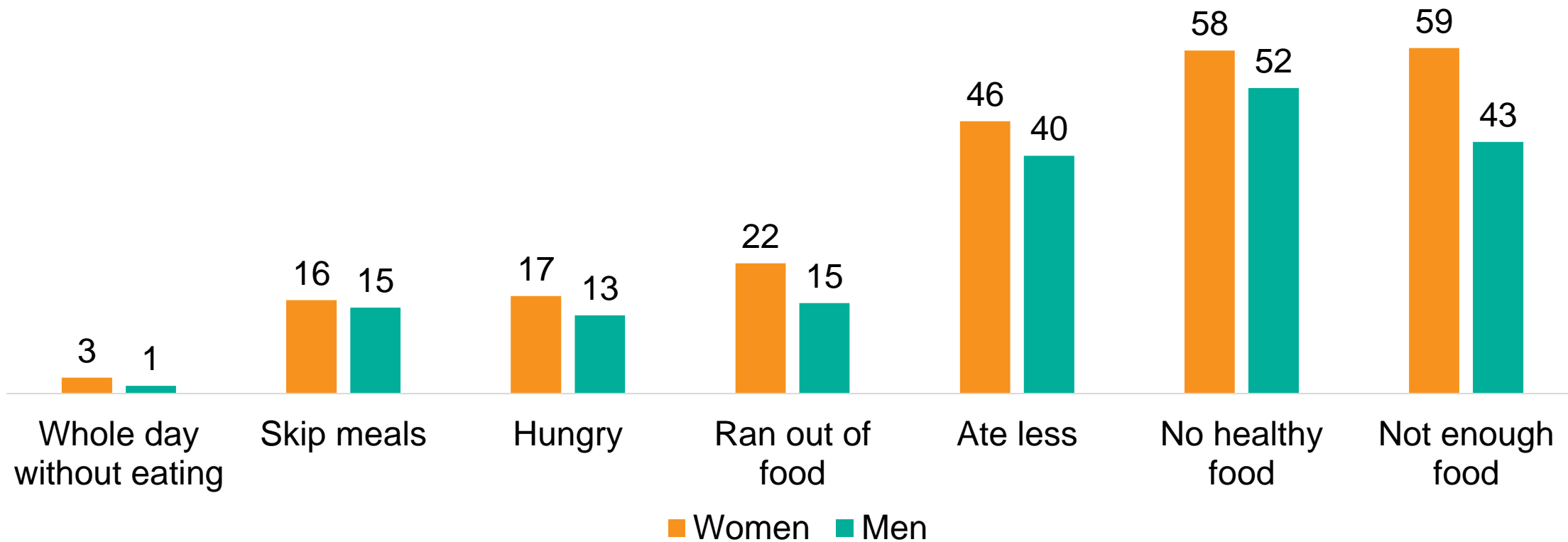


Figure 10. Food access difficulties as a result of current overlapping crises, % of respondents (n=1085)

More men than women have access to different types of food such as meat, beans, eggs and fruits

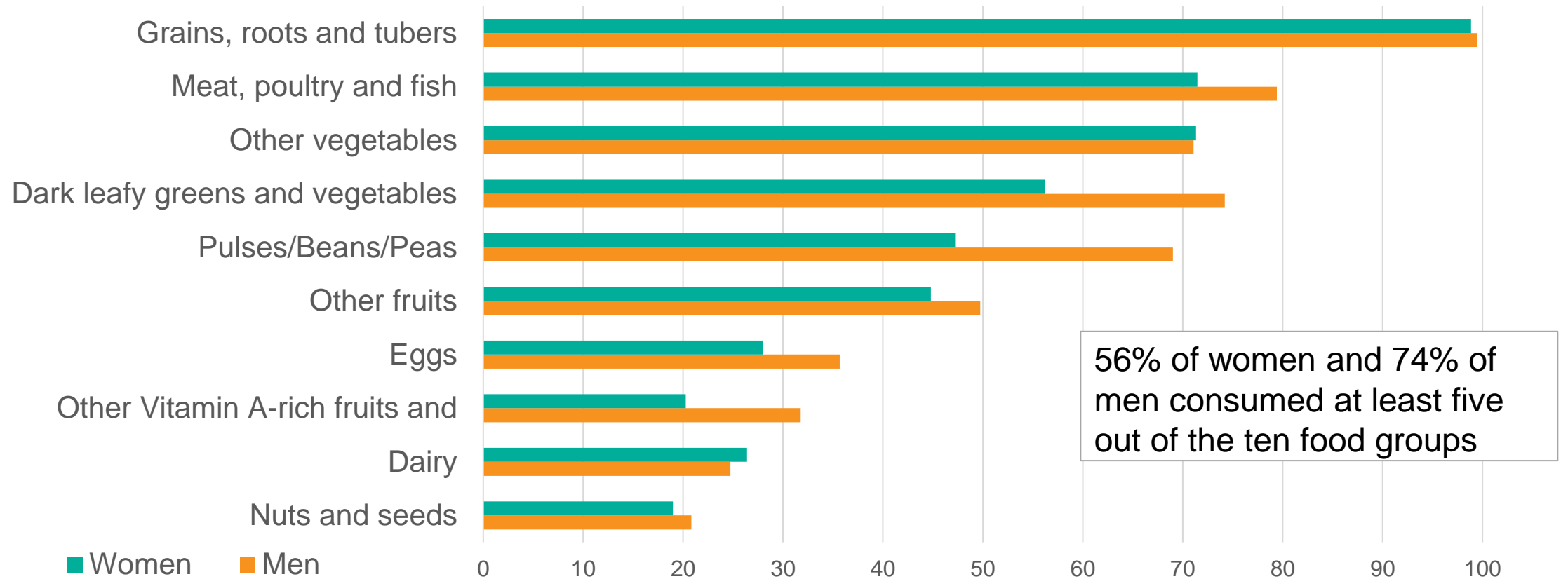


Figure 11. Food consumed in the last 24 hours, % of respondents (n= 1085)

Responses to high prices



Credit: Canto-IFPRI



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Key actions taken in response to higher fuel prices, apart from doing nothing, where reducing trips to the market, using different transportation modes and reducing generator use

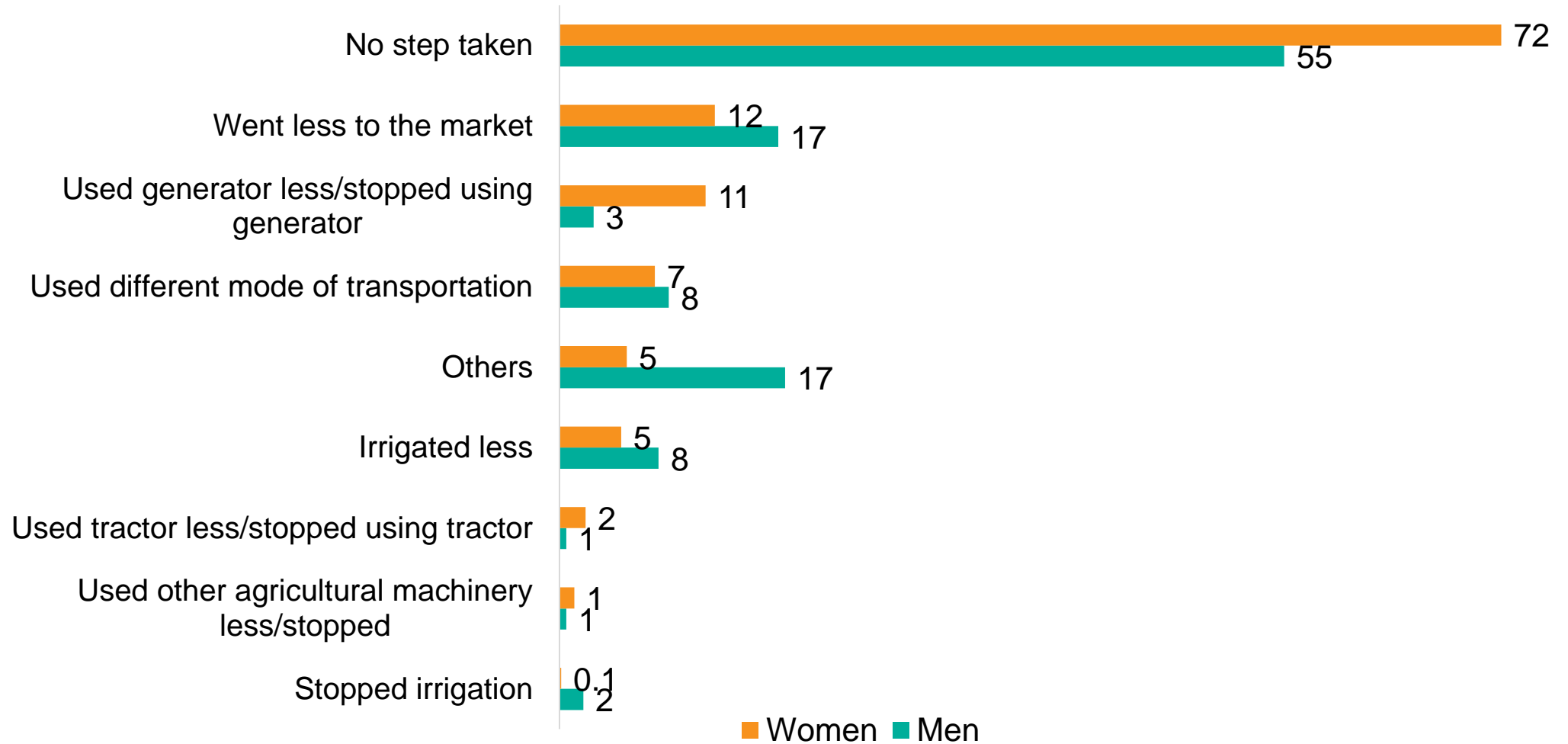


Figure 12. Main response to high fuel price responses, % of respondents

Key actions taken in response to higher fertilizer prices were, apart from not knowing what to do, to use less fertilizer on respondent's and family plots

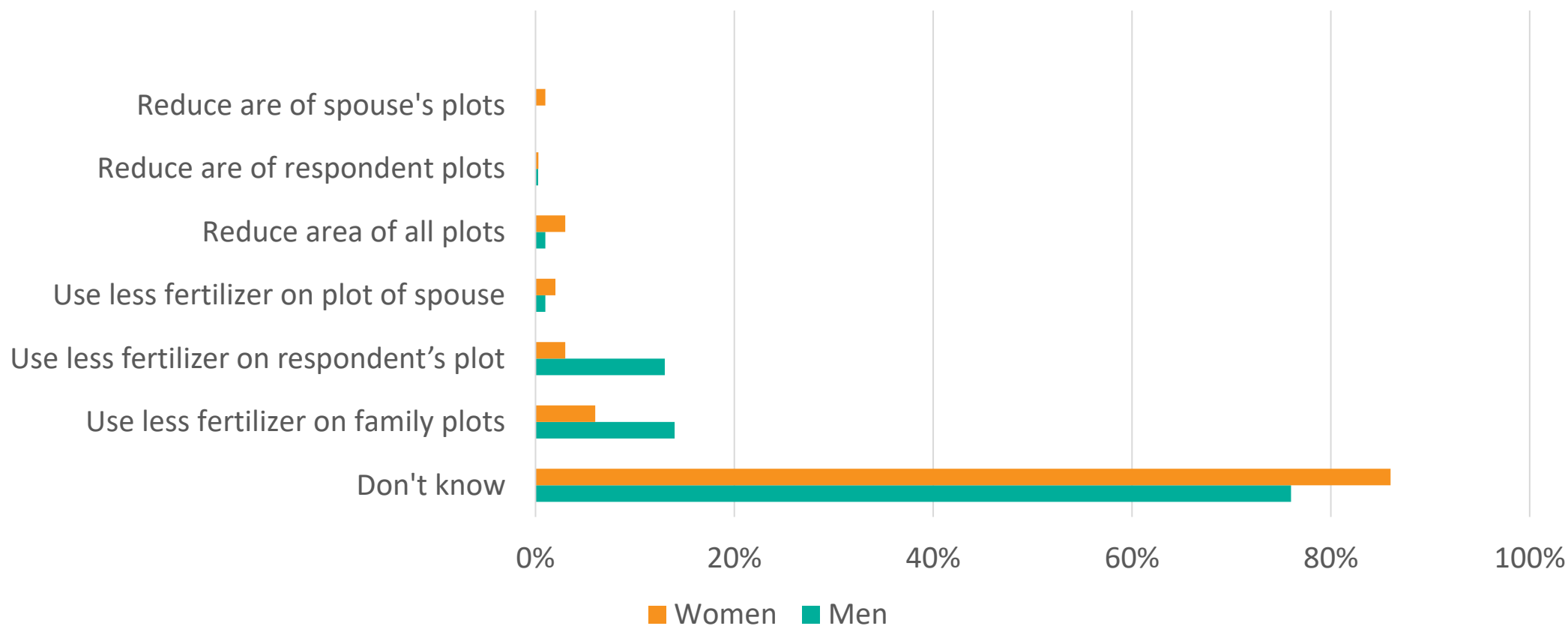


Figure 13. Responses to high fertilizer price responses, % of respondents

Most respondents reduced expenditures on clothing and household goods in response to high food prices

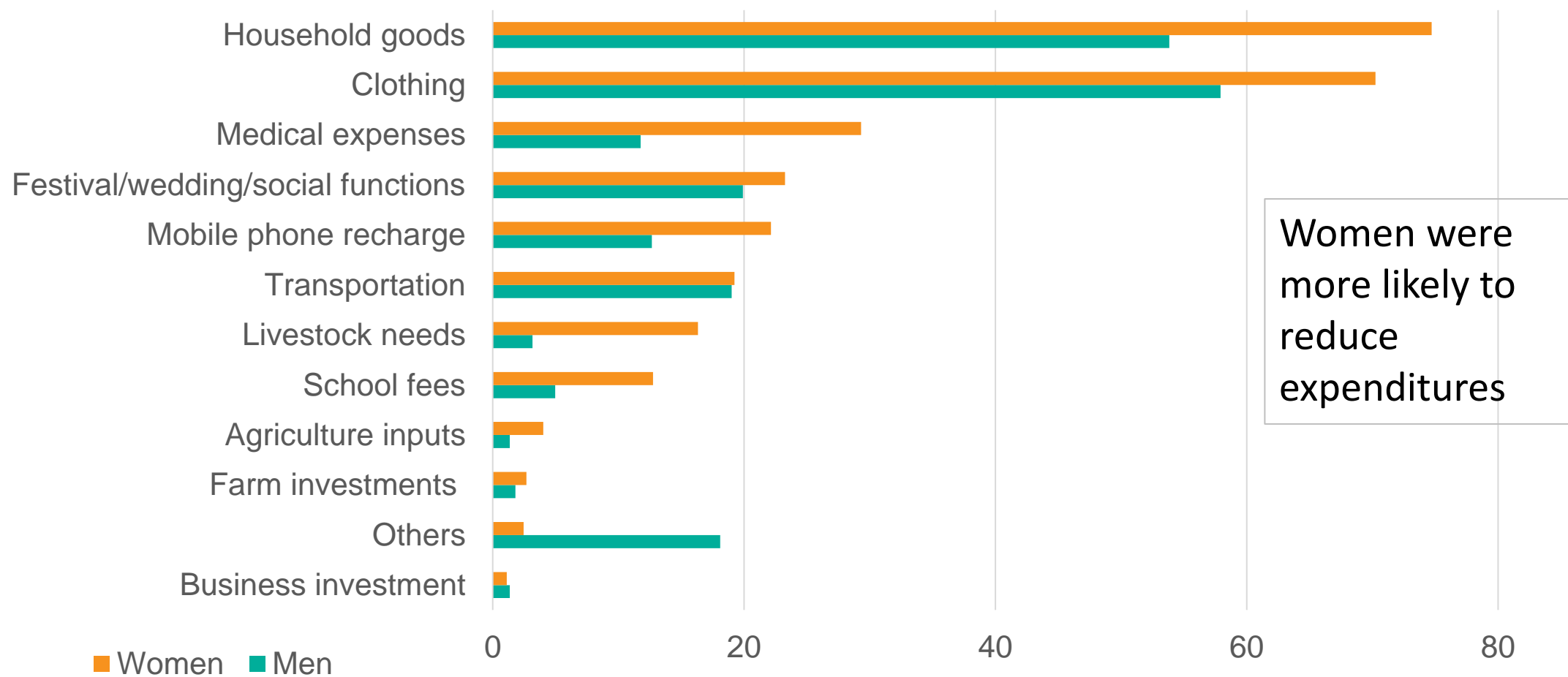


Figure 14. Reduced Expenditure (n=668) Respondents that mentioned reduction of expenditure to cope with increasing food prices

Proportionally, more men than women who borrowed money had access to formal mechanisms

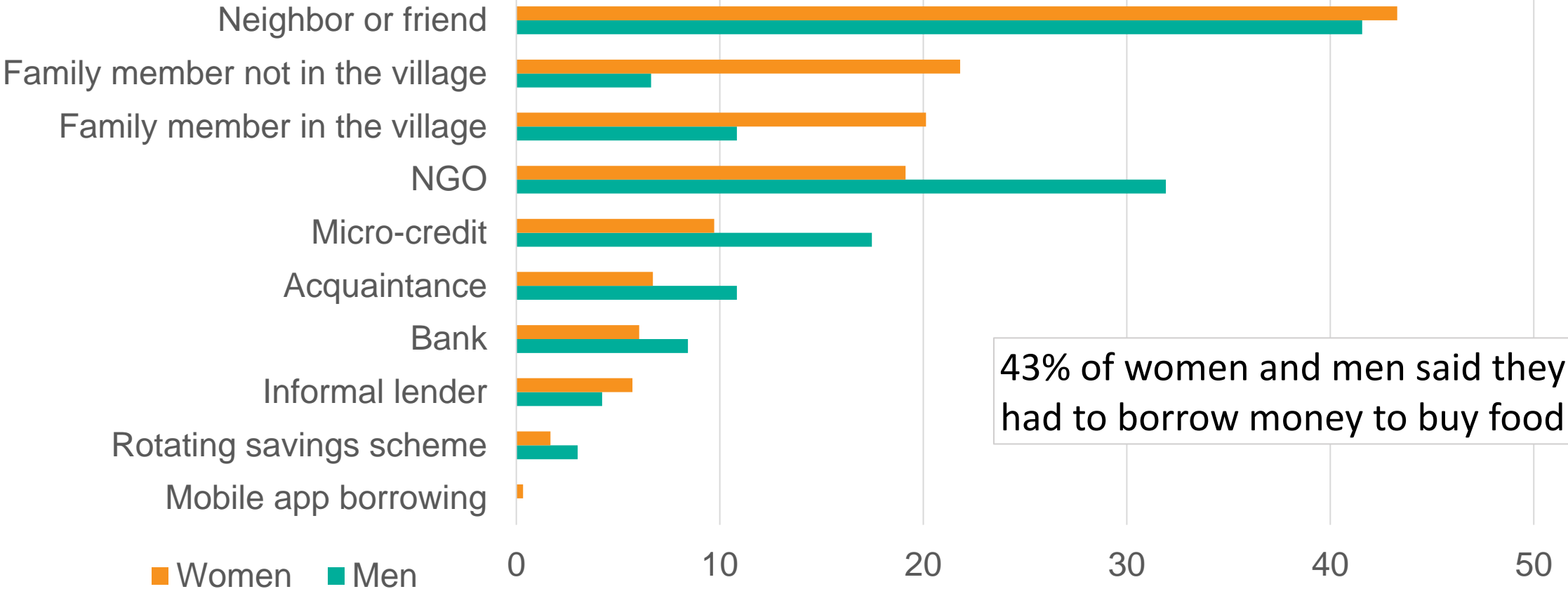


Figure 15. Sources of borrowing (in response to currently higher food prices), % of respondents

Around 7% of women and men reported that they heard that families in the community married their daughters under 18 years old in response to the rising prices

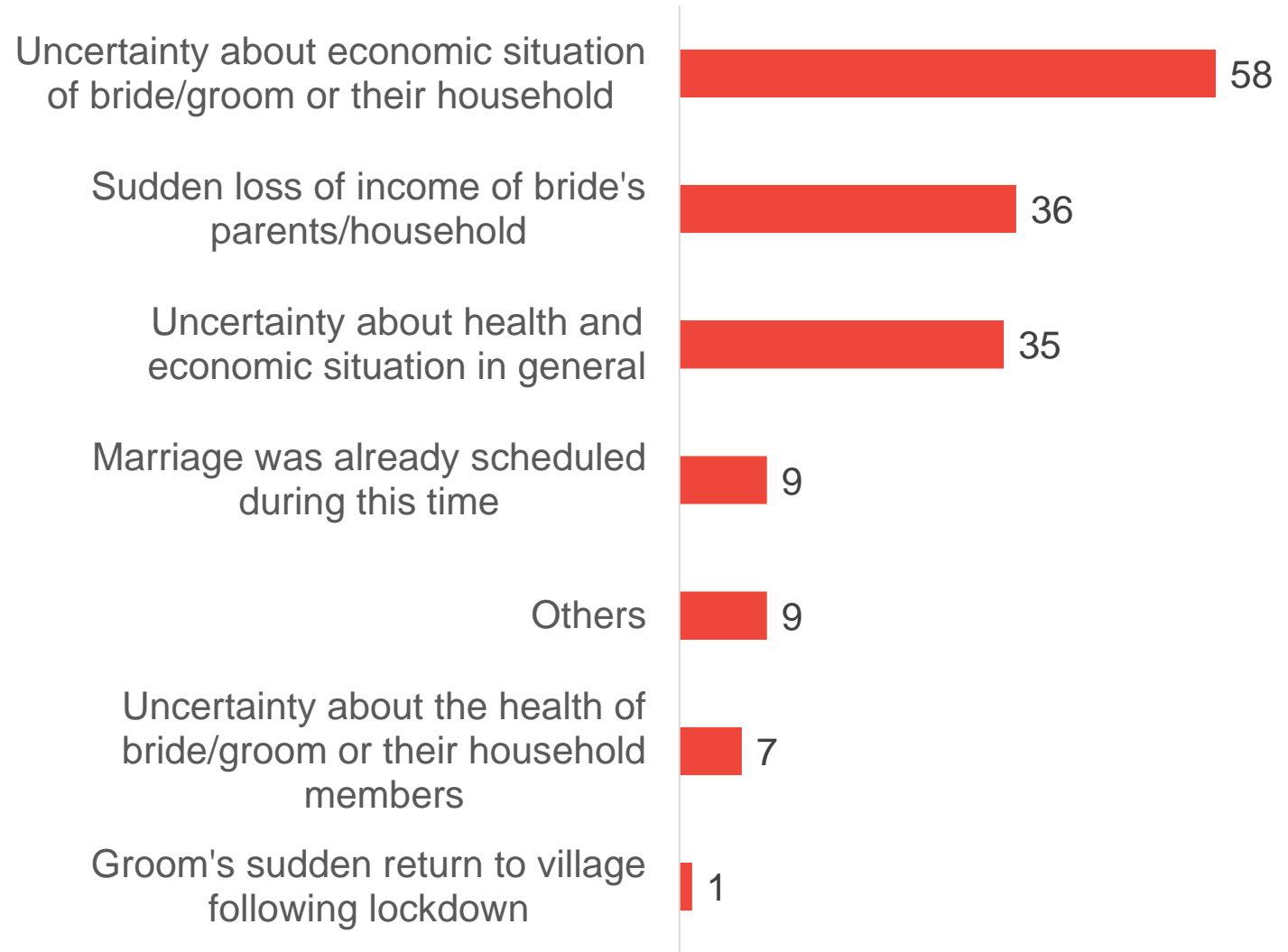


Figure 16. Reasons for child marriage, % of respondents, n=74

Perceptions on reasons for the high prices



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Credit: 2019 Chaosamran_Studio/Shutterstock.

53% of women and 35% of men blame the government for the high food prices

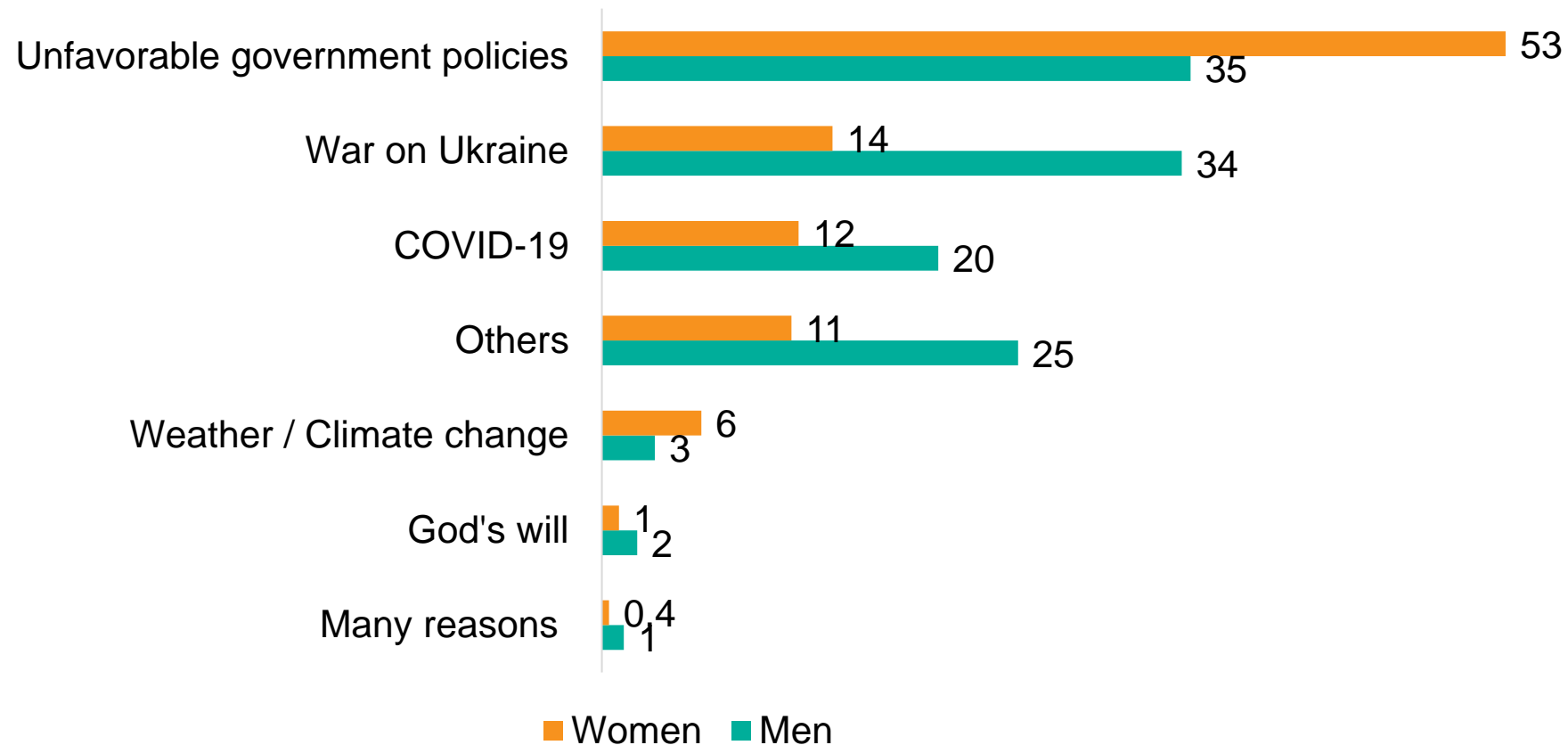


Figure 17. Reasons why food prices have increased (n=1078), % of respondents

41% of men blame the war on Ukraine for the high energy prices while 34% of women blame the government

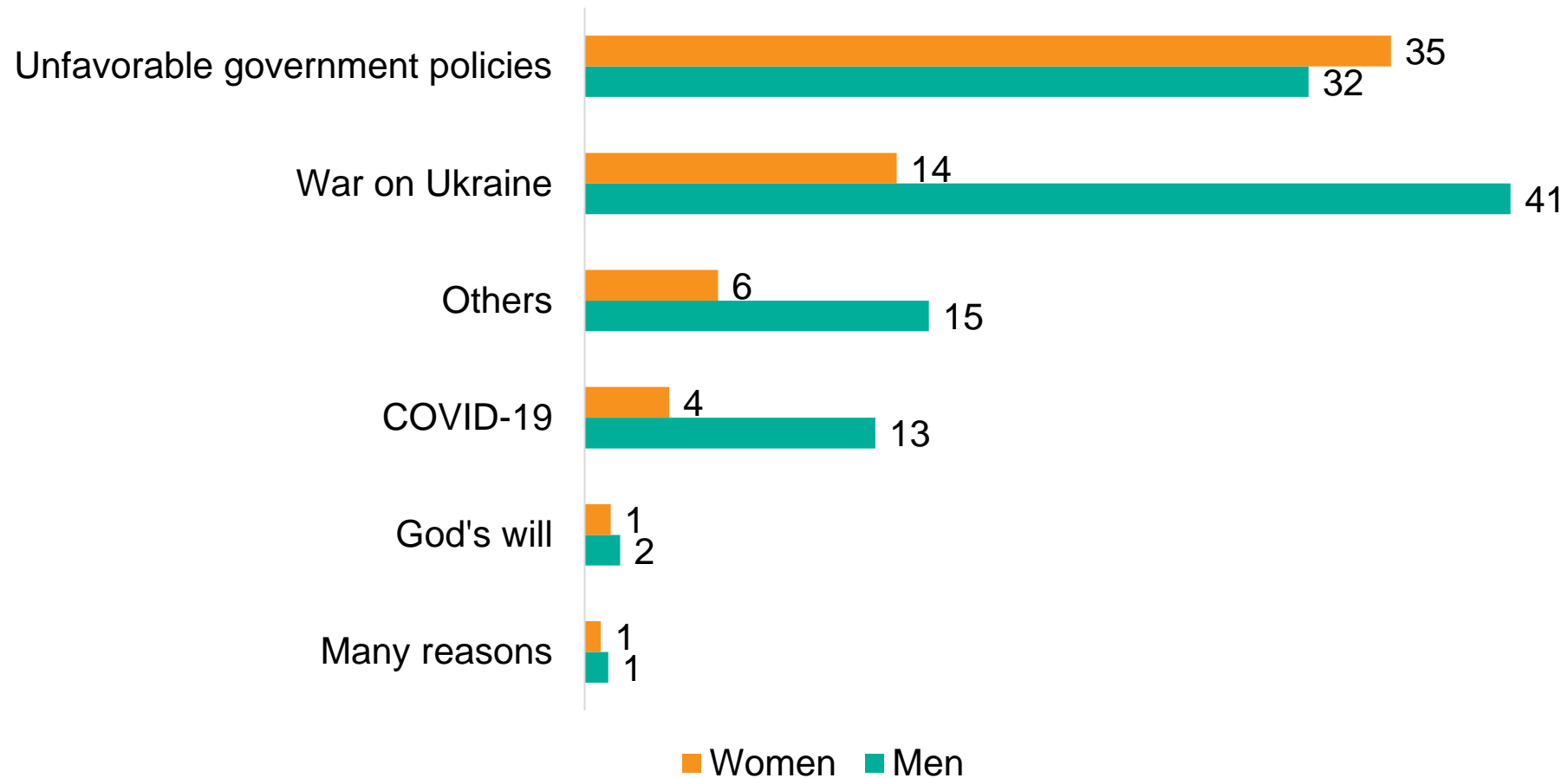


Figure 18. Reasons for High Energy Prices, % of respondents (n= 1085)

Other findings

- 83% of women and 80% of men think food prices will increase even more
- Just over half of women respondents and 58% of men said they received a transfer from the government in 2022 and 3% of women and 5% of men reported receiving a transfer from an NGO
- 42% of men and 50% of women think that the fuel price to pump water also increased in the last 6 months
- In response to rising transportation costs: 31% of women and 21% of men think it is more difficult to visit friends, 22% of women and 3% of men have difficulties to access services, such as schools and health clinics and 32% of women and 41% of men travel to the market less frequently

Conclusions

- Most women and men perceived increases in prices of food, fuel, pesticides and fertilizers; women perceived higher food price increases
- Increases in fuel prices negatively impacted the mobility of respondents and increases in food prices resulted in a significant share of women and men borrowing money and reducing expenses
- Women were more likely to reduce expenditures in response to the crisis
- Men were more likely to have access to formal sources of credit
- 22% of women and 3% of men noted difficulties in access to services
- The government was blamed for higher food prices
- Both women and men reported higher levels of food insecurity. However, women were disproportionately more impacted
- Just over half (56%) of women and close to three quarters (74%) of men consumed at least five out of the ten food groups

Recommendations

- Expand social protection programs to help households to cope with multiple crises and reduce food insecurity levels, for example, school-feeding programs, food banks, and cash transfers directed at mothers
- Target financial services to poor households and women in poor households without cumbersome requirements
- Develop gender-sensitive asset programs to rebuild assets after multiple crises
- Provide gender-sensitive, affordable modes of transportation, such as community buses
- Monitor interventions in the agricultural input space in terms of reach and benefits (as many such programs do not reach poorer and women farmers)