



Native Women's  
Association of Canada

L'Association des  
femmes autochtones  
du Canada

# INCLUSIVE RESILIENCE SURVEY

Report  
March 6, 2023

**ENVIRONICS**  
RESEARCH



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE .....	3
RESEARCH METHODS .....	4
RESPONDENT PROFILE .....	5
SUMMARY .....	6
PERCEPTIONS OF DISASTERS .....	9
DISASTER PREPAREDNESS .....	17
HOUSING PROFILES .....	29
COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES .....	33

# **The goal of this research was to identify barriers to disaster preparedness and response in Indigenous communities.**

This survey is part of the Inclusive Resilience Project, funded by Public Safety Canada and implemented by the Canadian Red Cross, in collaboration with Partners for Action (P4A), BC Earthquake Alliance, FireSmart Canada and the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC).

# RESEARCH METHODS

**This report is based on an online survey completed by 100 Indigenous women, Two Spirit and Gender Diverse Peoples, from December 5, 2022 – January 27, 2023. The survey was not open to male participants.**

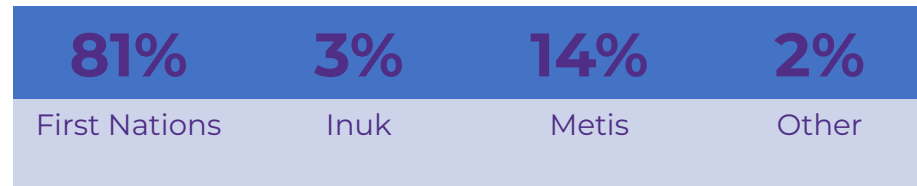
The questionnaire was designed by NWAC and the Canadian Red Cross, with input and advice from Environics Research. NWAC programmed the questionnaire in Simple Survey and distributed an open survey link via social media. A cash incentive of \$25 was offered to the first 100 participants. Due to the nature of social media and the offer of a cash incentive, a number of responses were determined to be invalid and removed from the final data set prior to analysis.

This sample is a convenience sample, meaning that it was drawn from a conveniently available group of individuals. Because it is not a probability sample (respondents were not randomly selected, nor did all individuals in the desired communities have an equal chance of being selected into the sample), **the sample cannot be considered representative of all Indigenous women, Two Spirit and Gender Diverse Peoples.** Caution should be used in interpreting the data.

The following page presents a regional and demographic profile of survey participants.

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

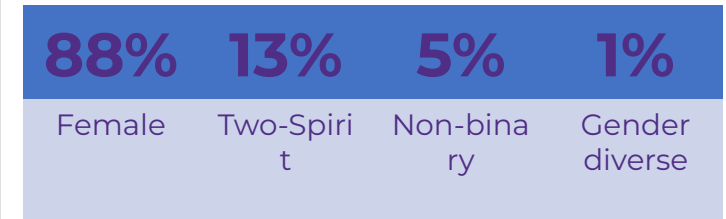
## INDIGENOUS IDENTITY



## REGION\*



## GENDER IDENTITY



## EDUCATION



## COMMUNITY ROLE



## MARITAL STATUS



\* Region is based on coding responses to the open-ended question "I live in...". As a result, it may not be fully accurate.



# SUMMARY

# KEY FINDINGS

- 1 This audience expresses widespread concern about disasters, due at least in part to past experiences with disasters in their communities and the related health impacts.** Nine in ten of those surveyed say they are at least somewhat concerned, personally, about disasters, and the consensus is that disasters are becoming increasingly common in their community (61%). Most of the disaster types listed in the survey (storms, flood, wildfires, extreme cold, extreme heat) are reported by close to four in ten (each) as having occurred in their community in the past five years. Moreover, three-quarters of those who experienced a disaster saw or heard of a mental health impact for community members; many also know of other impacts such as respiratory illness or contaminated food or water.
- 2 There is modest awareness of emergency preparations at the community level, as well as limited preparedness at the household level.** Close to three in ten each are aware of community preparations involving training (33%), disaster planning (31%) or having a disaster preparedness plans (29%), while fewer (23%) are aware of an early warning system; substantial proportions (ranging from one-third to one-half) are unsure about the status of these initiatives. At the household level, most respondents (71%) say they have stayed informed of weather and other advisories in the past year, but only minorities have taken other disaster preparedness actions such as learning about risks, building an emergency kit, discussing an evacuation plan or taking part in an evacuation drill. The most widely reported barriers to such actions are lack of money and lack of awareness about why and how they should prepare.

# KEY FINDINGS (CONT'D)

**Notably, in a disaster situation, participants are most likely to expect help from friends and family, followed by the federal government.** Comparatively fewer expect help from other levels of government such as their Nation or province. If this is not an accurate perception of how assistance will unfold in these communities, this has implications for government communications efforts. A majority (72%) believe they have adequate supplies to last at least three days in the event of an emergency, but only one-third have supplies for more than a week.

**This audience of survey participants prefers to receive disaster preparedness information in English and by email.** However, because the sample is not necessarily representative of all Indigenous women, Two Spirit and Gender Diverse Peoples, and because the survey was only available in English (thus excluding those who might favour other languages), these preferences cannot be directly extrapolated to the full population. Moreover, while email may be their preference, the question does not necessarily reflect the *effectiveness* of email for this purpose.

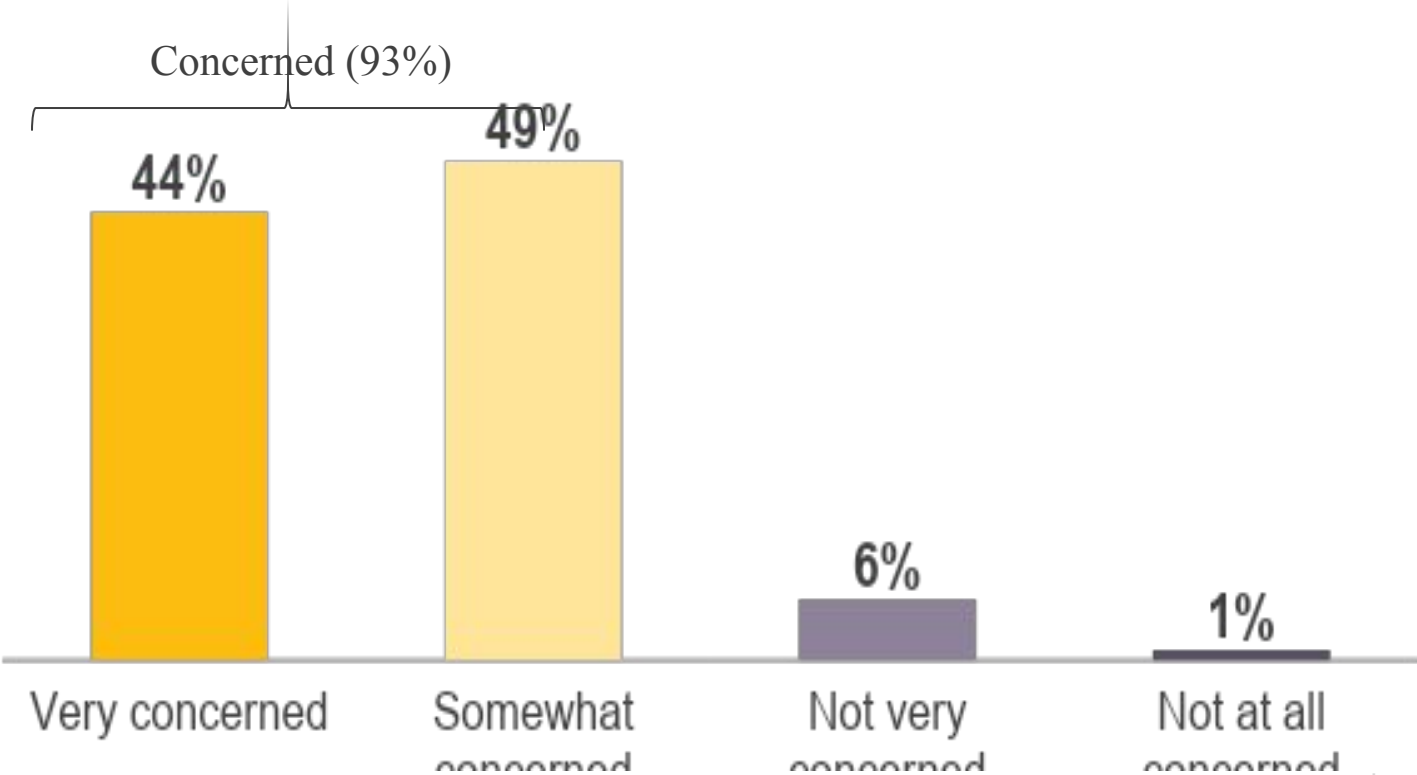


# PERCEPTIONS OF DISASTERS

# Perceptions | Overall degree of concern about disasters

There is widespread concern about disasters, including more than four in ten who are very concerned.

Q5 *How concerned are you, personally, about disasters? A disaster can be defined as: A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability, and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts. Risk examples: flood, slides, wildfire, fallen trees, etc.*

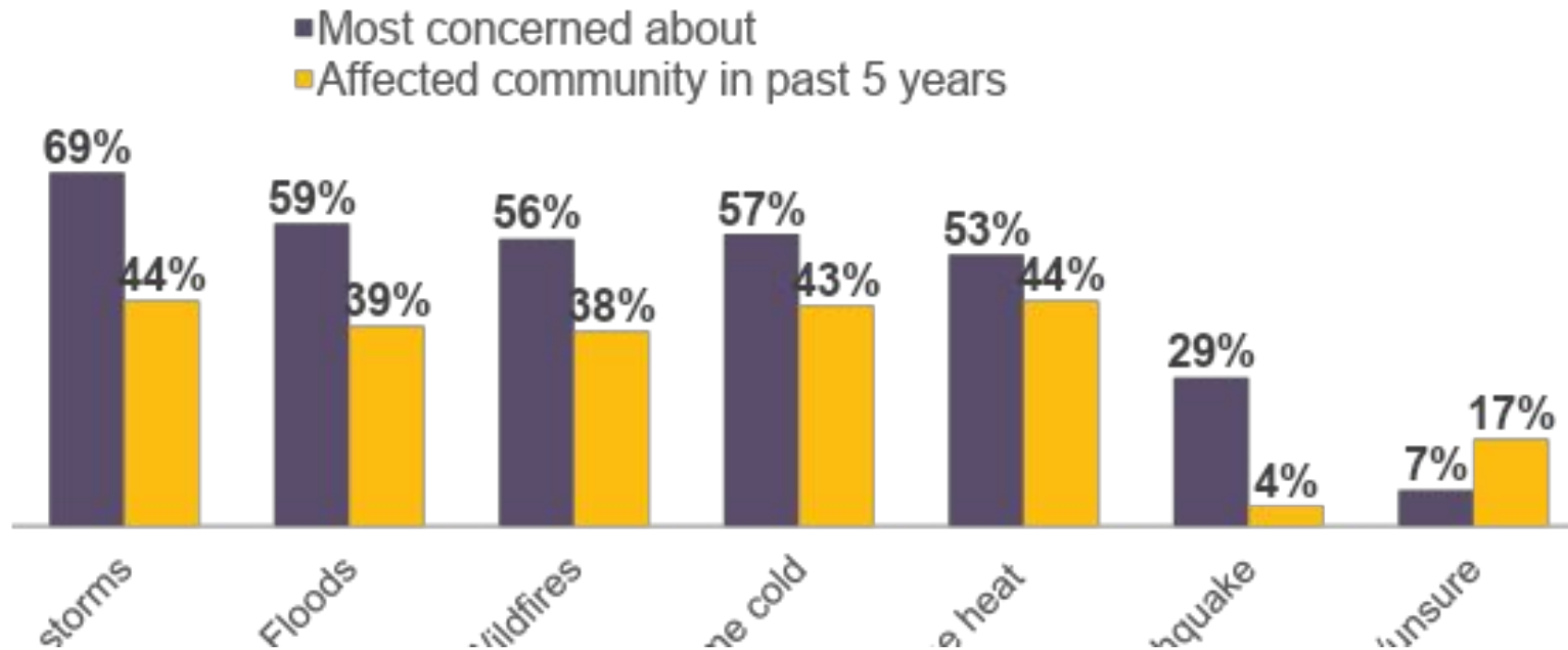


# Perceptions | **Concern about vs experience of disasters**

The most prominent concern is about severe storms, but majorities are also concerned about most other types of disasters. Close to four in ten report experiencing any of these disasters in the past five years. The exception is earthquakes, which are notably less common and therefore of less concern.

Q6 What type of disaster are you most concerned about? (Multiple responses allowed)

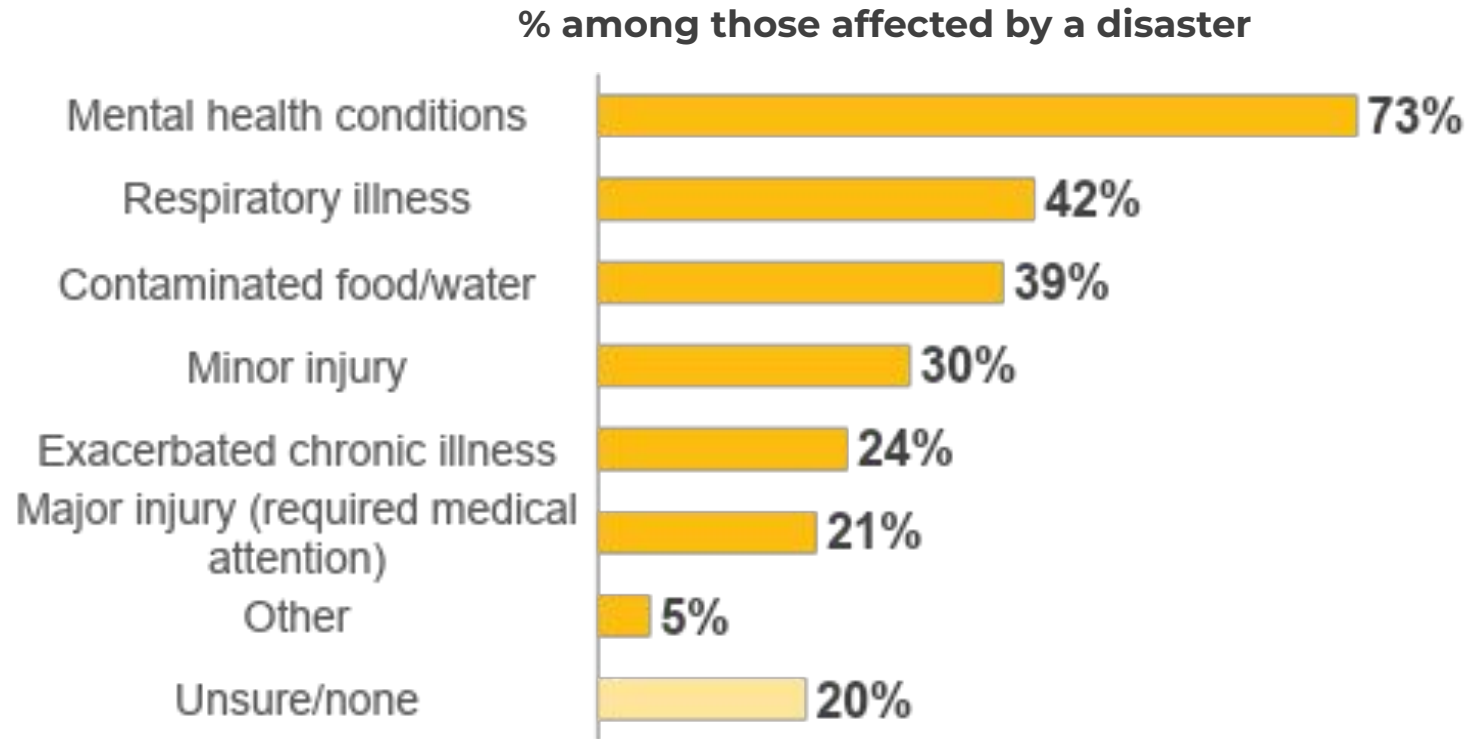
Q7 In the past 5 years, was your community affected by any of the following disasters? (Multiple responses allowed)



# Perceptions | **Health effects of disaster**

Among those reporting a disaster in their community in the past five years, the most widely reported effect is on mental health conditions. Less common, but still reported by substantial minorities who experienced a disaster, are respiratory illness, contaminated food and water and minor injuries.

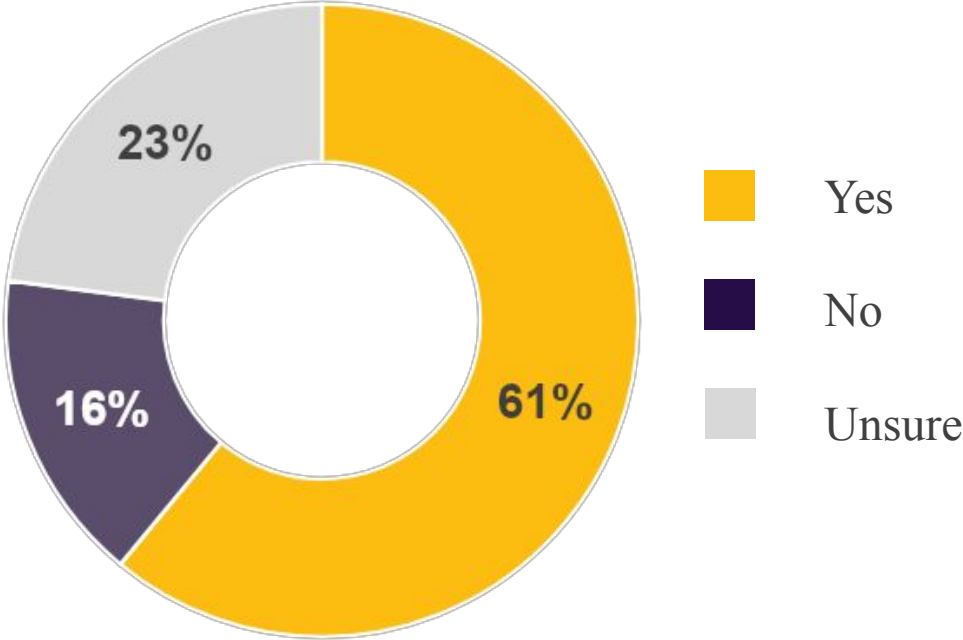
Q8 From what you know or have heard, what were the health effects on community members from the disaster? Subsample: Filtered to those who say their community was affected by a disaster in the past 5 years (n=84) (Multiple responses allowed)



# Perceptions | **Change in frequency of disasters**

A majority of six in ten believe disasters are becoming increasingly common in their community.

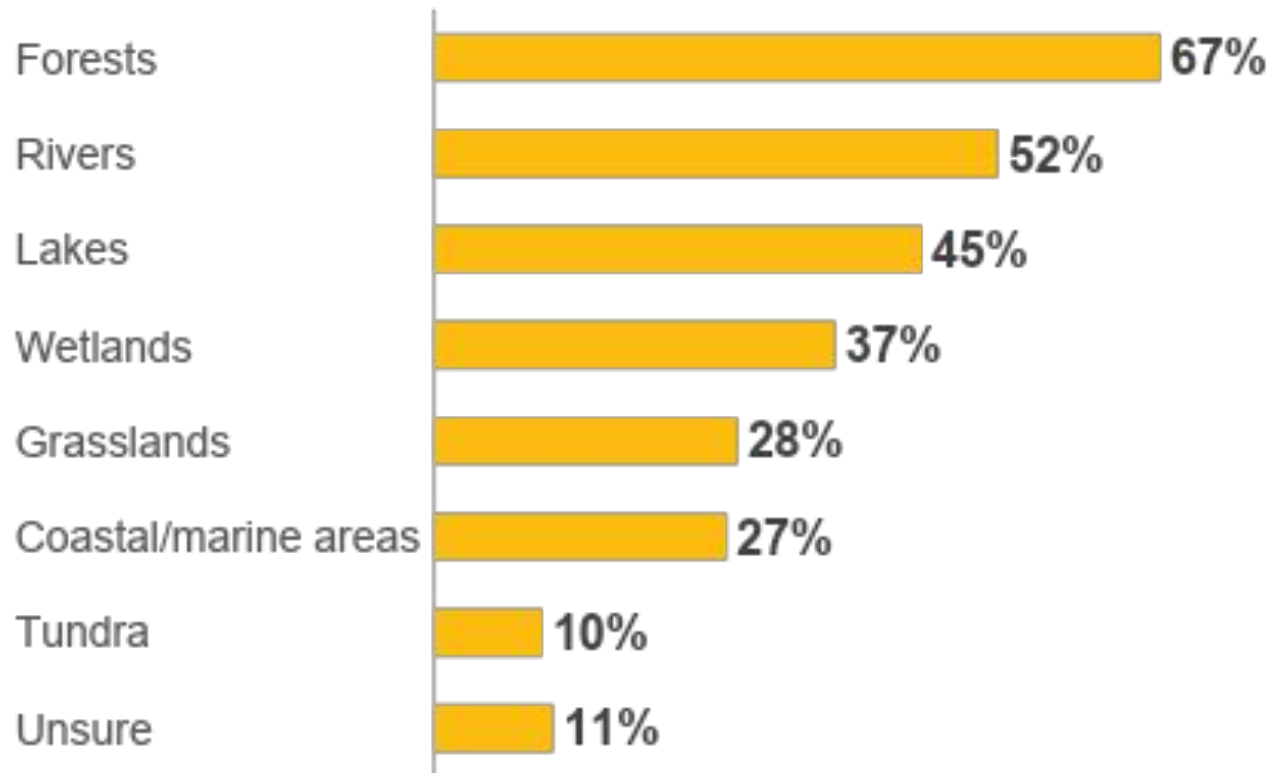
Q9 *In your opinion, are disasters becoming increasingly common in your community?*



# Perceptions | **Most at-risk ecosystem**

Respondents believe that forests would be most at risk from a disaster in their community, followed by rivers and lakes, which is, in part, a function of community proximity to these ecosystems (i.e., coastal areas and tundra are less likely to be mentioned not because they don't also face risks, but because relatively few respondents reside near them).

Q17 *In your opinion, if a disaster were to occur in your community, which environmental ecosystem would be most at risk? (Multiple responses allowed)*

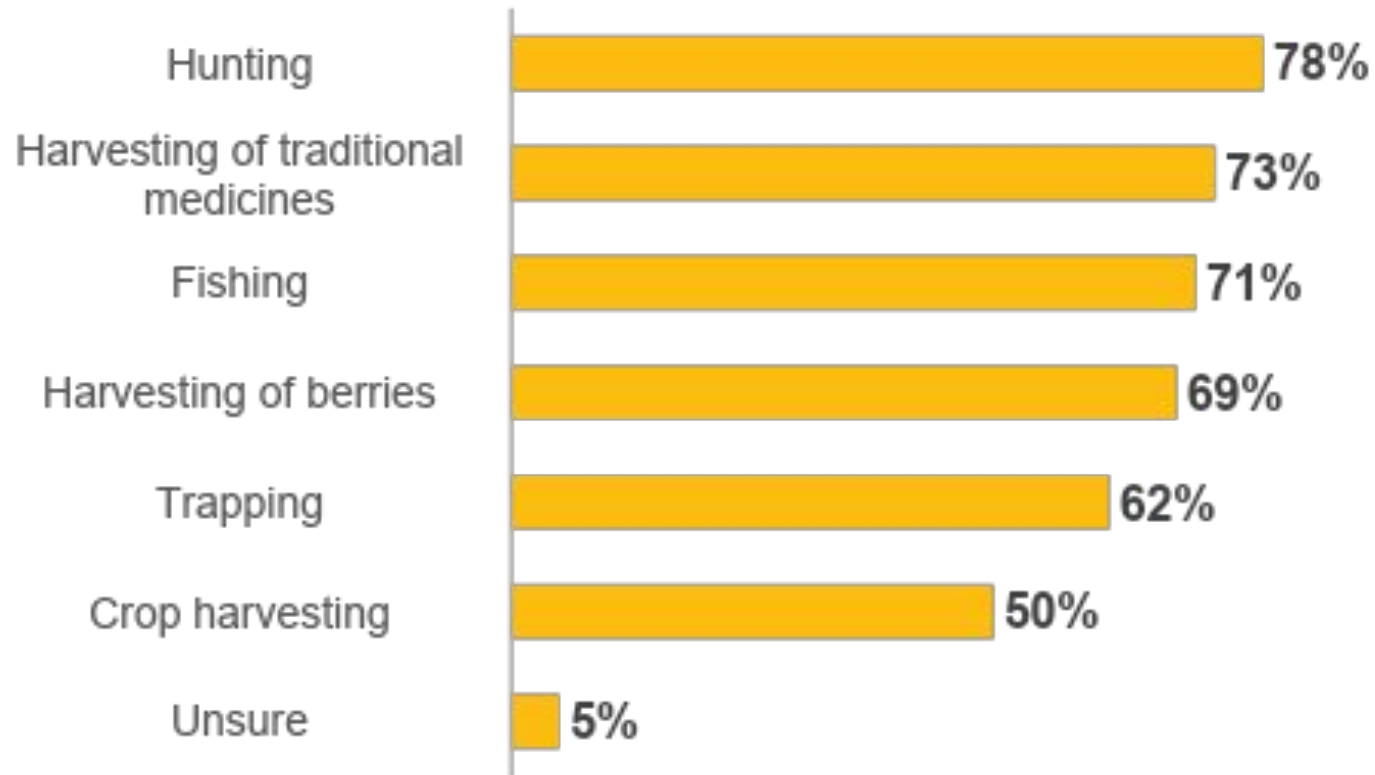




# Perceptions | **Harvesting practices most affected**

Respondents widely anticipate that most harvesting practices will be affected by disaster.

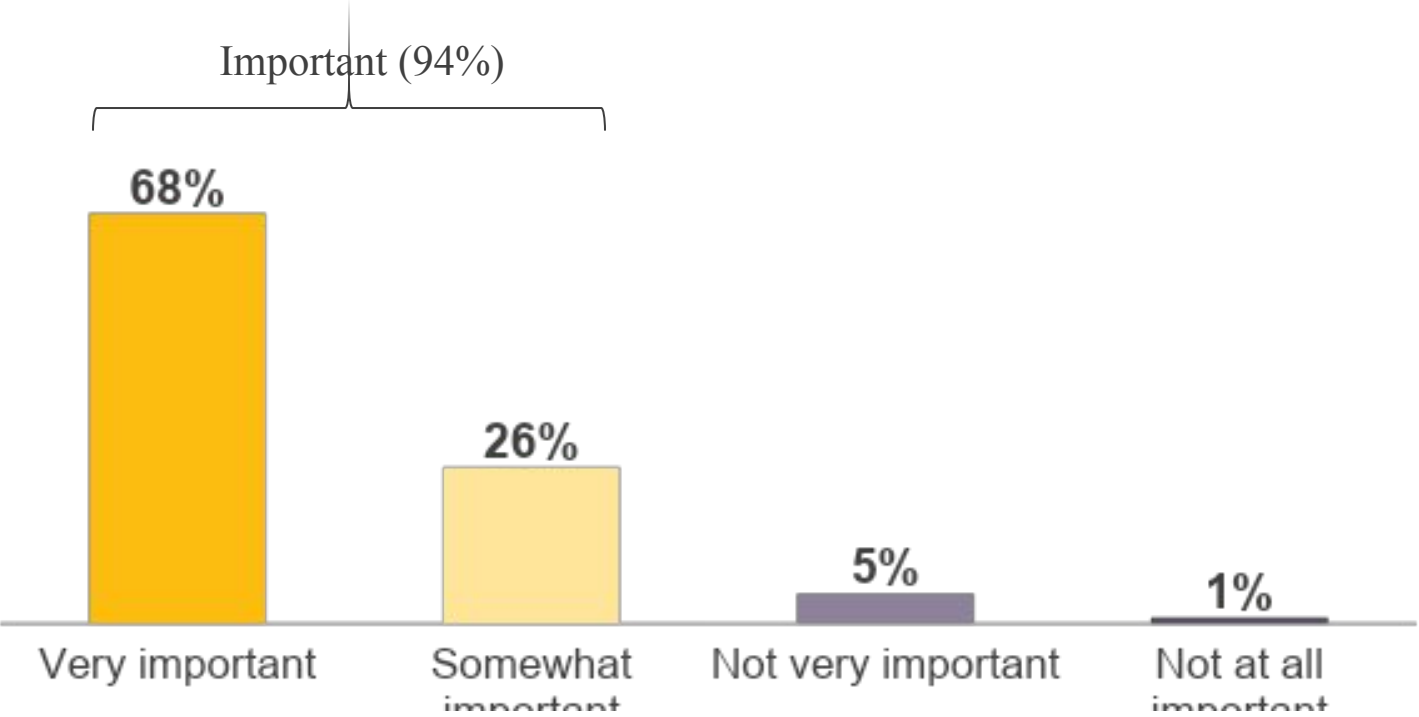
Q18 Which harvesting practices would be most affected by disaster? (Multiple responses allowed)



# Perceptions | **Perceived importance of climate strategy**

Survey participants widely believe it is important for their community to have a climate change response strategy.

Q39 How important is it that your community has a climate change response strategy?



# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

# Preparedness | **Aware of community preparations**

Roughly three in ten each are aware of community preparations involving training (33%), disaster planning (31%) or having a disaster preparedness plan (29%). Fewer are aware of an early warning system (23%). In all cases, there is a large proportion (ranging from one-third to one-half) who are unsure about status.

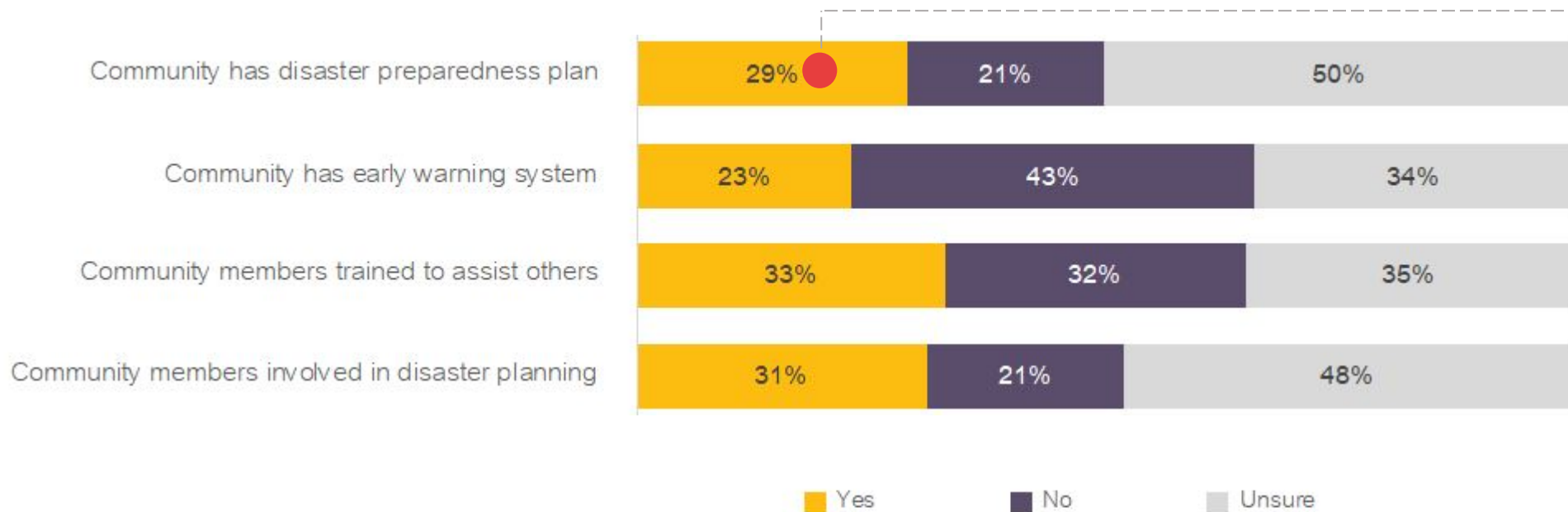
Q11 Does your community have a disaster preparedness plan?

Q12 (IF YES) Is the plan publicly available to all community members upon request?

Q13 Does your community have an early warning system?

Q14 Have community members been trained to assist others in the event of a disaster?

Q15 Are community members involved in planning or coordinating disaster preparedness and response with local government or First Nation?



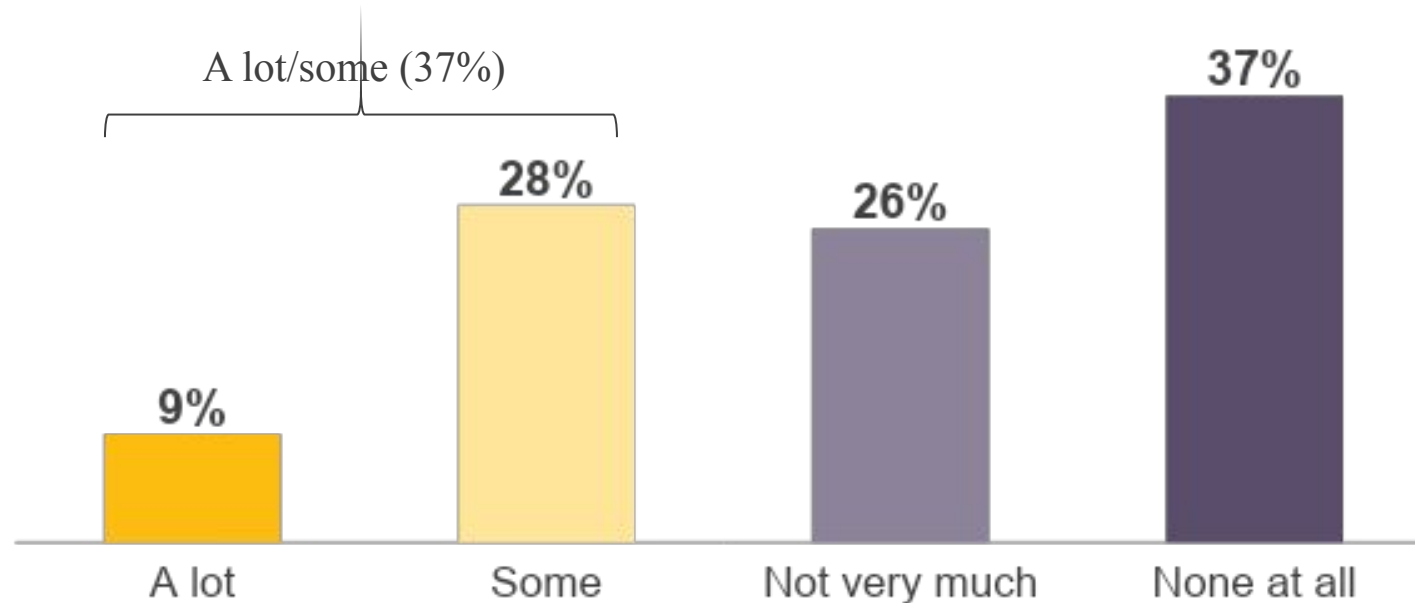
**Plan is available upon request: 62%** of those who say their community has a plan (n=29), representing 18% of the total sample

# Preparedness | **Traditional knowledge**

One-third carry at least some traditional knowledge around disaster preparedness; almost two-thirds do not.

Q16. Do you carry any cultural or Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) around disaster preparedness?

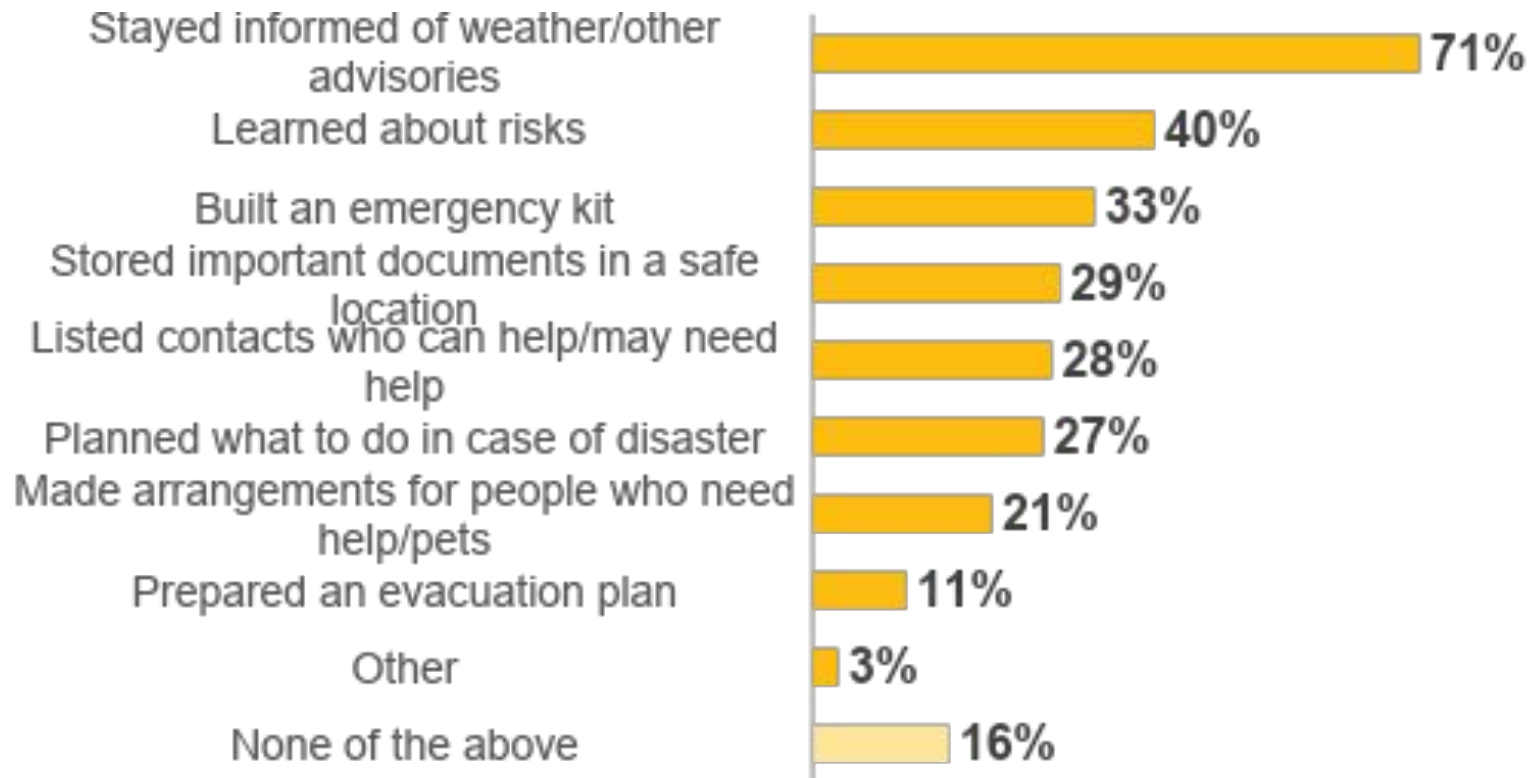
**Traditional Ecological Knowledge** (TEK) is the ongoing accumulation of knowledge, practice and beliefs about relationships between living beings in a specific ecosystem that is acquired by Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial through direct contact with the environment, handed down through generations, and used for life-sustaining ways.



# Preparedness | **Disaster preparedness in past year**

Most respondents say they have stayed informed of weather and other advisories in the past year, but only minorities have taken other disaster preparedness actions such as learning about risks or building an emergency kit.

Q30 In the past year, have you and your household members taken any of the following disaster preparedness actions? (Multiple responses allowed)

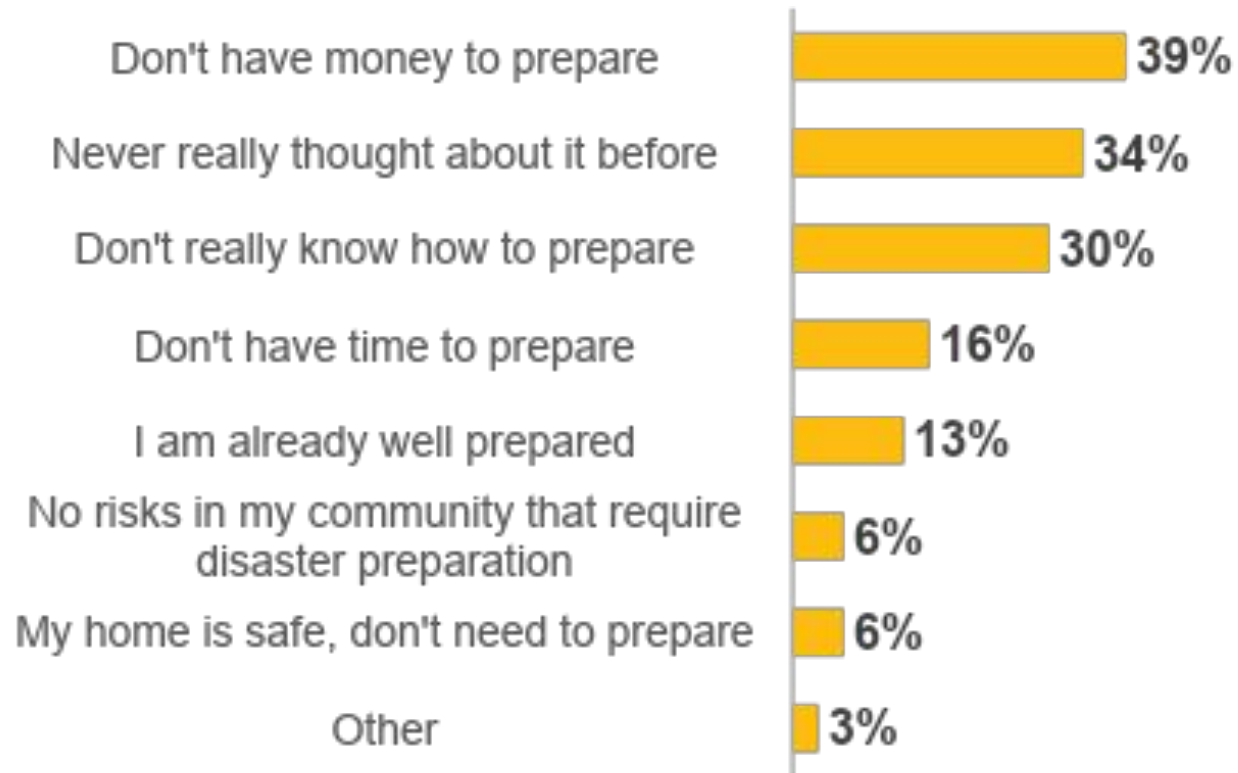




# Preparedness | **Barriers to disaster preparedness**

The most widely reported barriers to disaster preparedness are lack of money and lack of awareness about why and how they should prepare.

Q31 Have any of the following ever prevented you from taking disaster preparedness actions? (Multiple responses allowed)

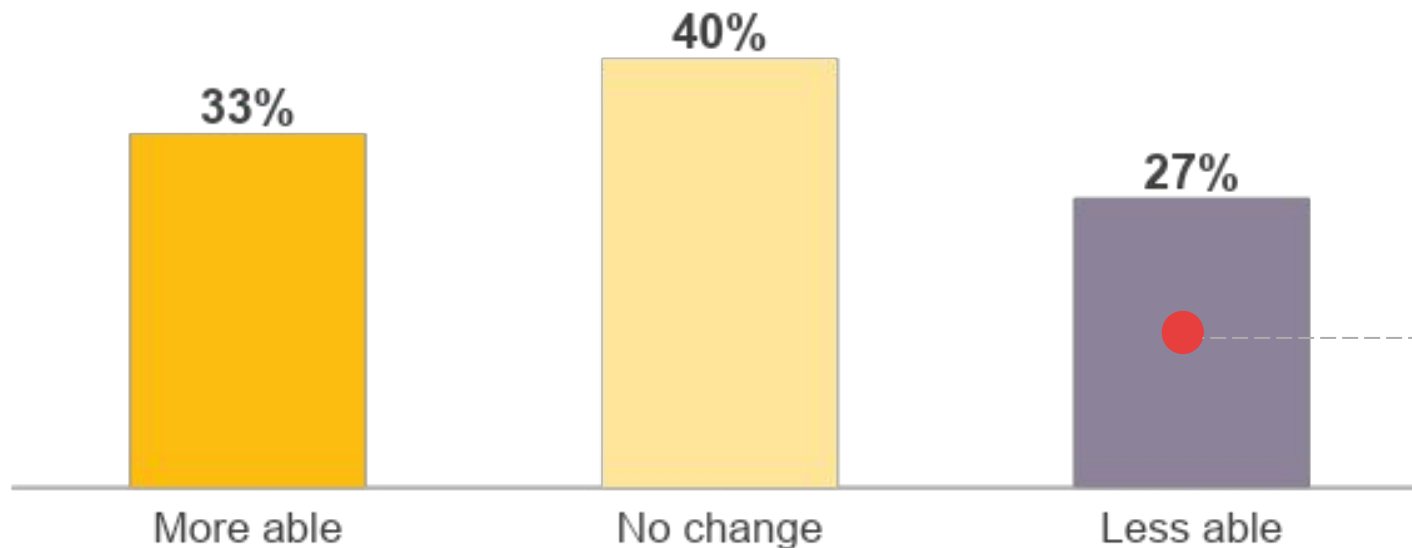


# Preparedness | **Change in preparedness**

Roughly equal proportions of participants say they are more able (33%) or less able (27%) to handle a disaster, or their ability has not changed (40%), compared to a year ago.

Q32 Compared to a year ago, are you and your family more or less able to handle a disaster, or has there been no change?

Q33 Which of the following reasons make you and your family less able to prepare for a disaster compared to a year ago? Subsample: filtered to those who say they/their family is less able to handle a disaster compared to a year ago (n=27) (Multiple responses allowed)



**Reasons less able to handle a disaster (among those who say they are less able, n=27):**

78% increased cost of living

74% health problems/stress

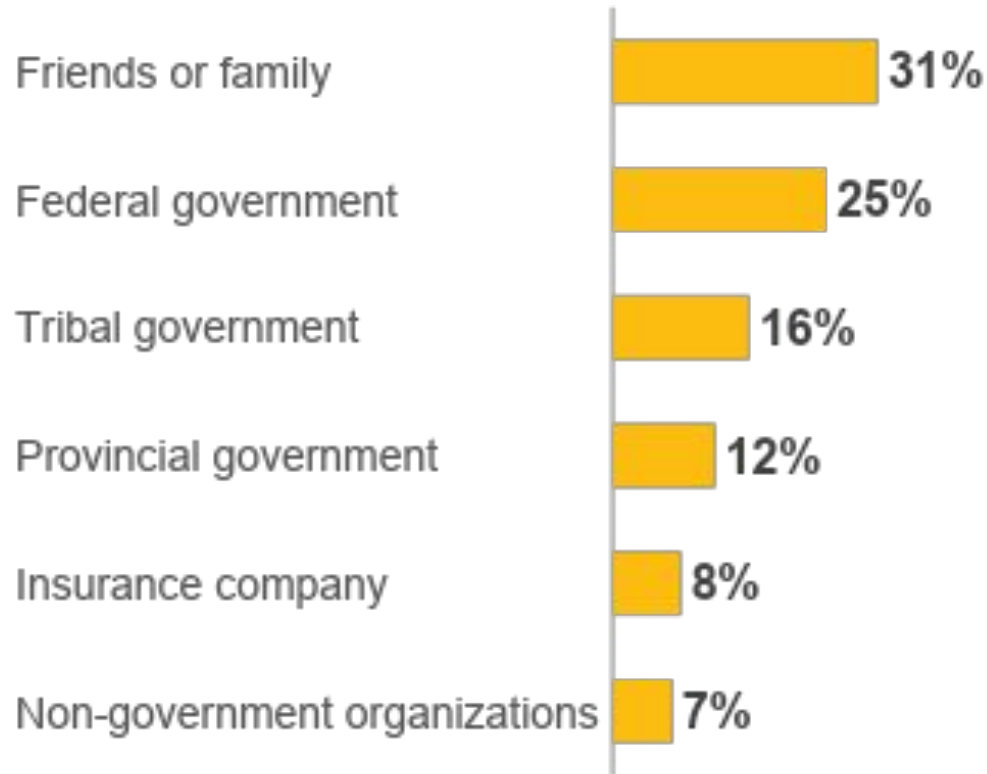
48% loss of employment/income

48% lack of resources/information

# Preparedness | **Expectations of help in a disaster**

In a disaster, survey participants are most likely to expect help from their friends or family, followed by the federal government; comparatively fewer say they expect help from other levels of government.

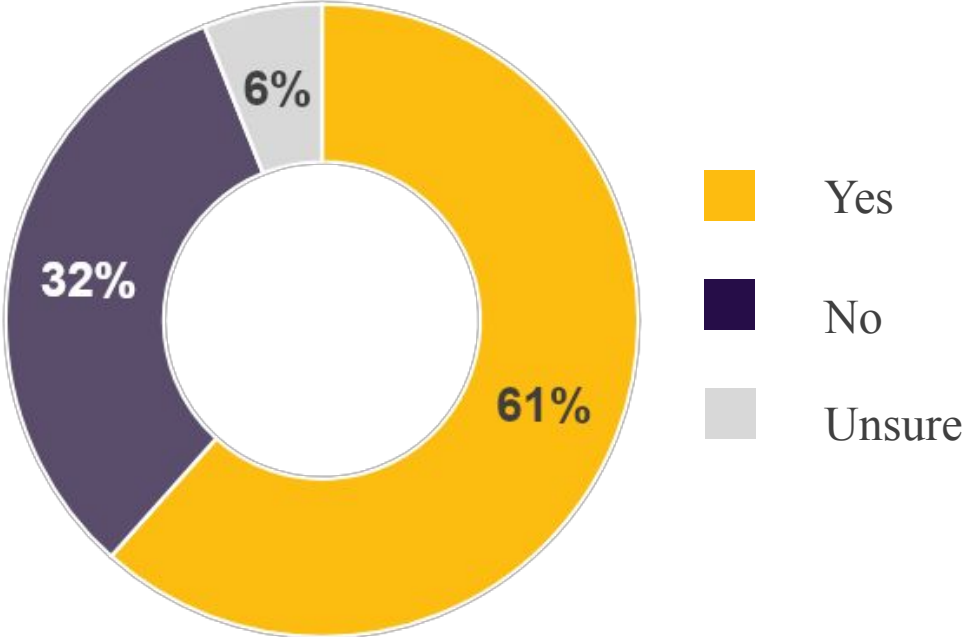
Q34 In the event of a disaster, who would you expect the most help from? (Single response accepted)



# Preparedness | **Family who can help outside current area**

A majority of six in ten say they have family outside their current area who can help in a disaster.

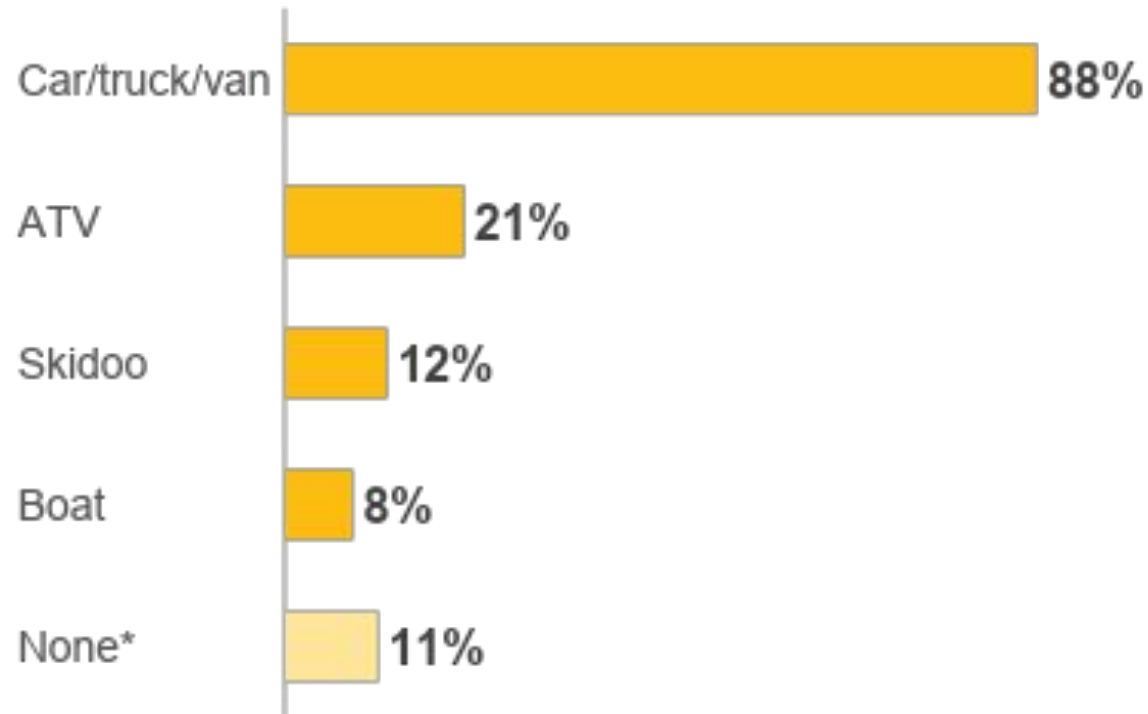
Q35 Do you have any family living outside your current area who can help you in the event of a disaster?



# Preparedness | **Access to transportation for evacuation**

Most survey participants own or have access to a car should they need to evacuate due to a disaster; fewer have alternate types of transportation in that situation.

Q36 In the event of a disaster, do you have access to, or own any of the following to evacuate from the community? (Multiple responses allowed)

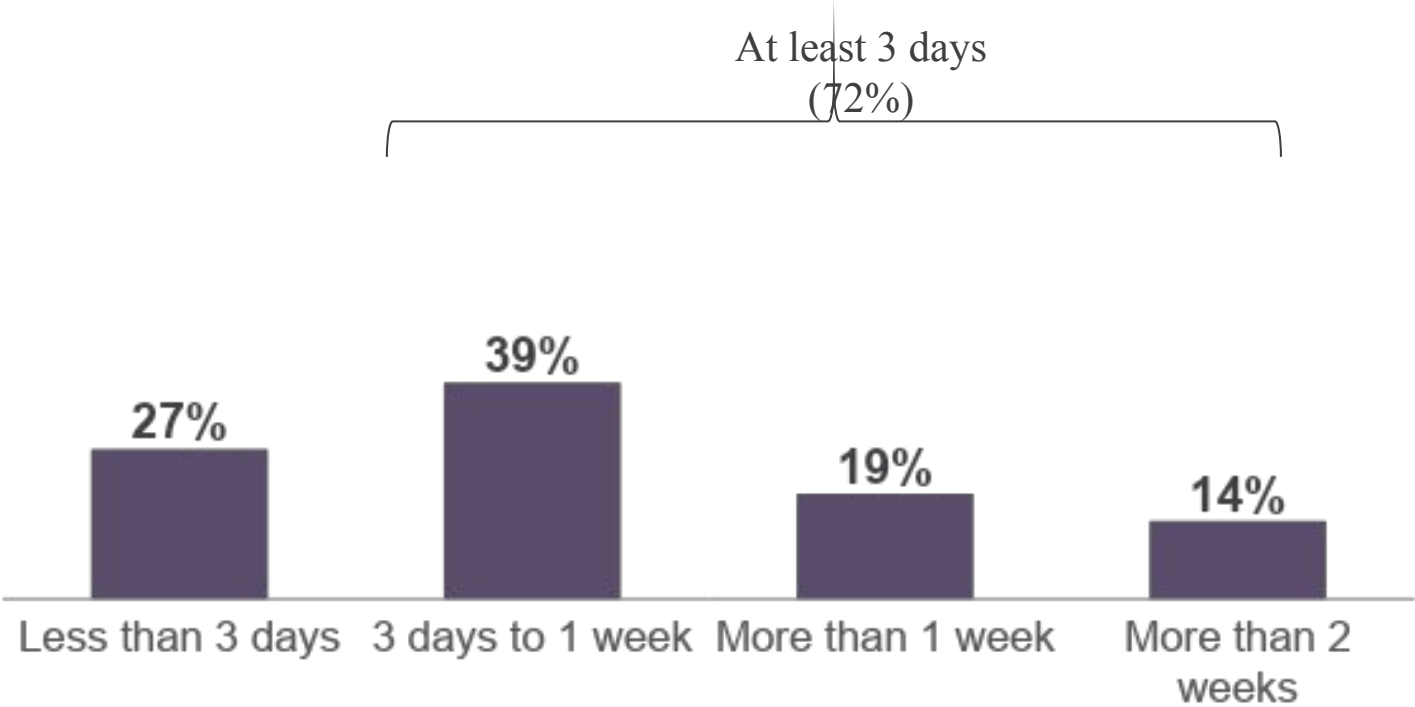


\* 11% of respondents selected "other", and then wrote in the answer "none"

# Preparedness | **How long supplies will last in disaster**

Seven in ten believe they have at least three days worth of supplies in the event of a disaster, but only one-third have supplies for more than a week.

Q37 How long would you estimate your supplies would last in the event of a disaster?

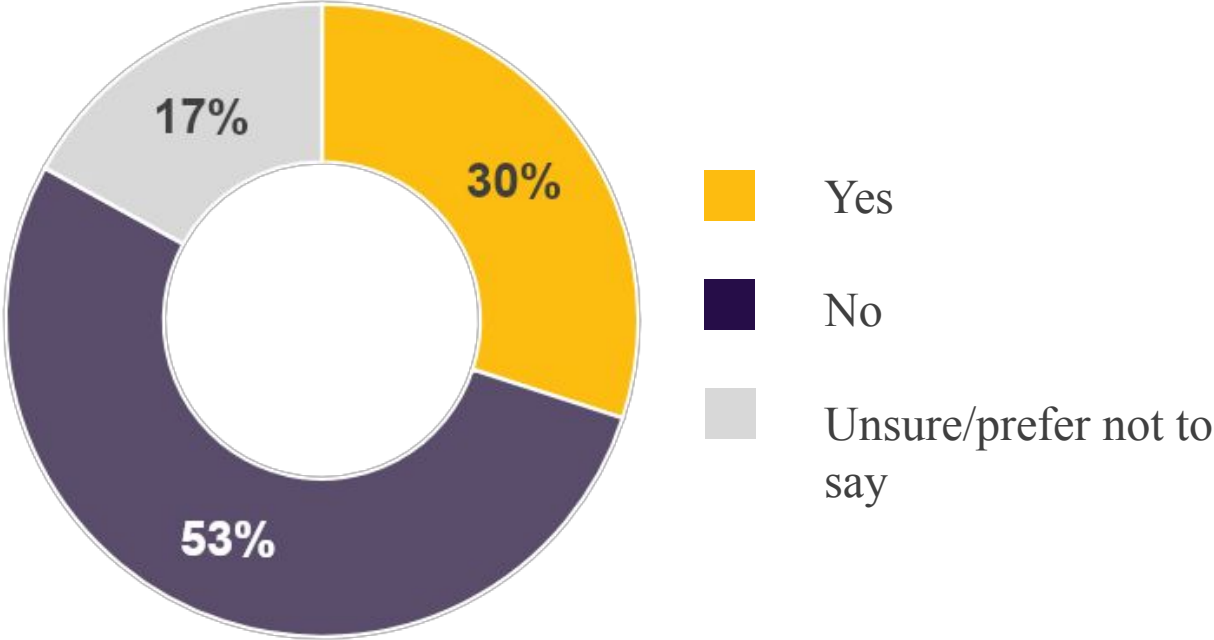




# Preparedness | **Negative impact due to gender identity?**

Three in ten believe a disaster would have relatively more negative consequences for them because of their gender identity; over half do not believe this will be the case (the rest are unsure).

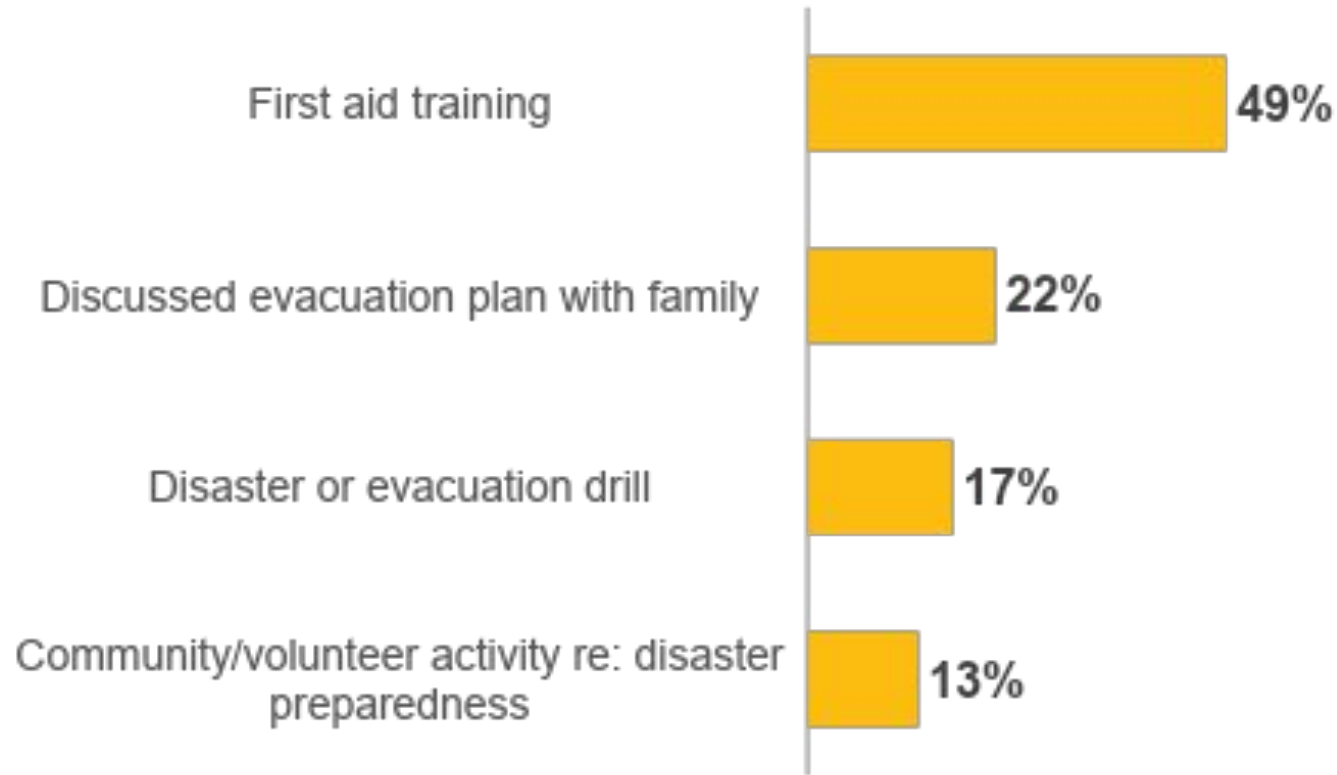
Q10 Do you think a disaster would impact you more negatively than other community members because of your gender identity?



# Preparedness | **Activities in past year**

Half report that their family has taken first aid training in the past year. Fewer than one in four have prepared in other ways, such as discussing an evacuation plan, taking part in a drill or volunteering.

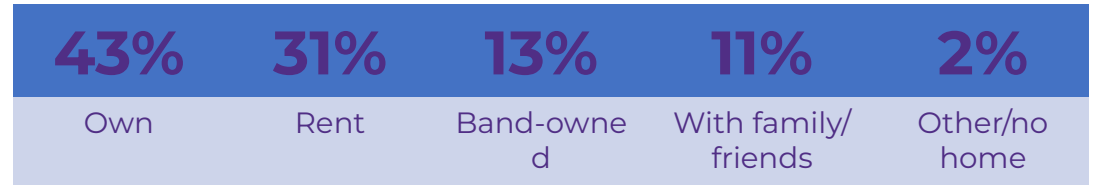
Q38 In the past year, have you or any of your family members done any of the following activities? (Multiple responses allowed)



# HOUSING PROFILE

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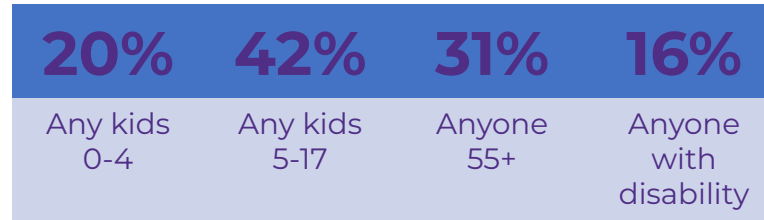
## CURRENT LIVING SITUATION



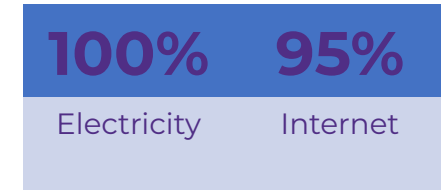
## NO. IN HOUSEHOLD



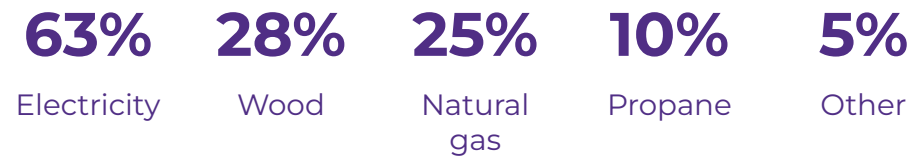
## HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



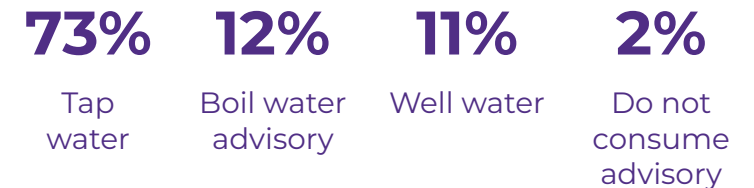
## UTILITIES AT HOME



## HEAT SOURCE



## WATER SUPPLY



\* Note: 1% indicated they are currently without housing, thus, these questions do not apply.

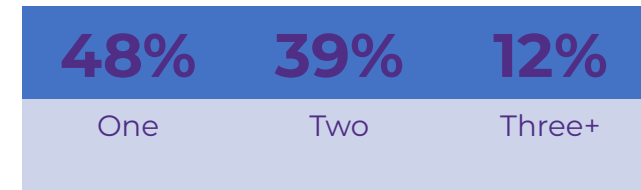
# HOUSING PROFILE (CONT'D)



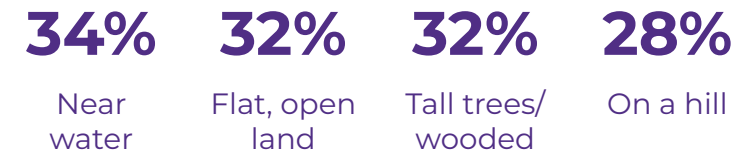
## MONTHLY MORTGAGE/RENT



## NO. BATHROOMS



## LOCATION

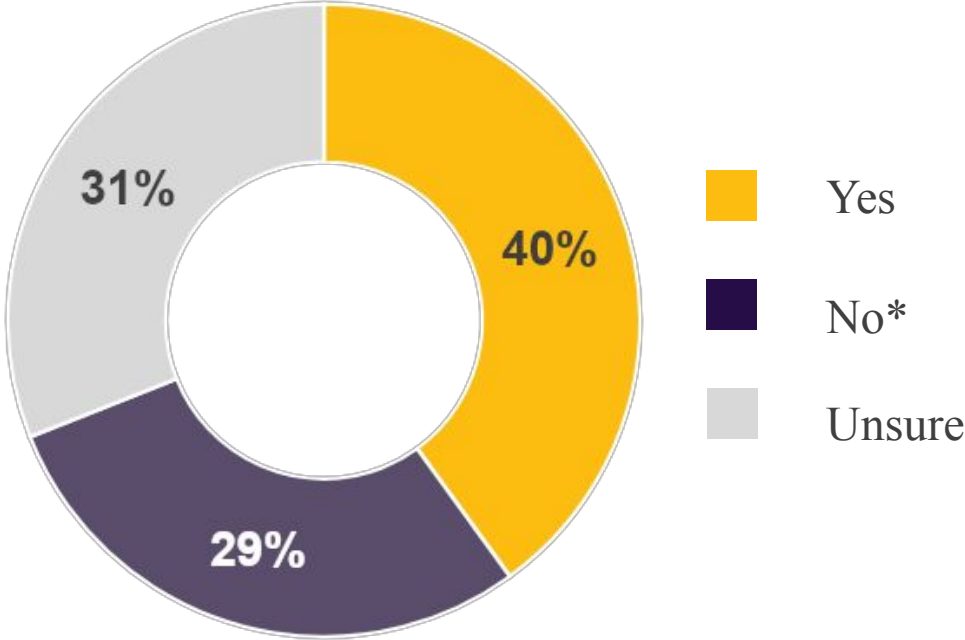


\* Note: 1% indicated they are currently without housing, thus, these questions do not apply.

# Housing | Home at risk due to location

Four in ten believe their house is at risk from a disaster due to its location; three in ten are unsure.

Q29 Do you consider your house at risk from a disaster because of its location?



\* Includes 1% who indicate they are currently without housing

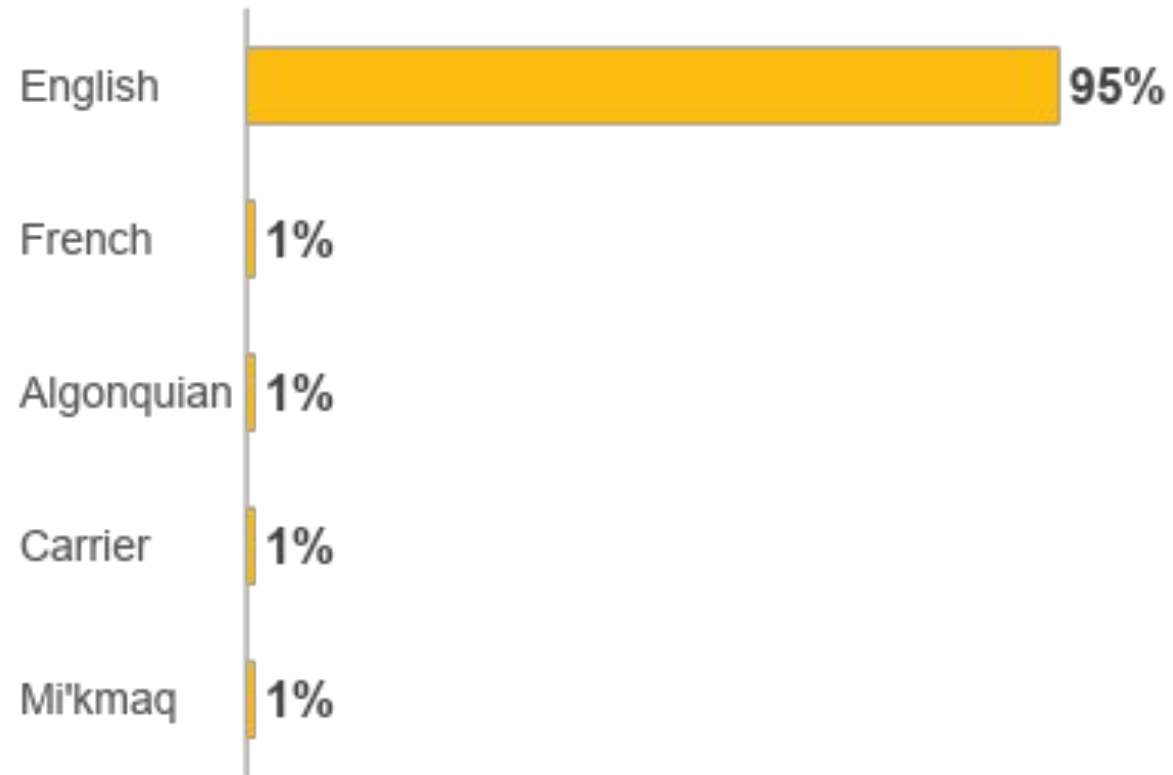


# COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

# Communications | **Language preference**

Given that the survey was available in English only, it is understandable that English is also identified as most respondents' preferred language for receiving disaster preparedness information.

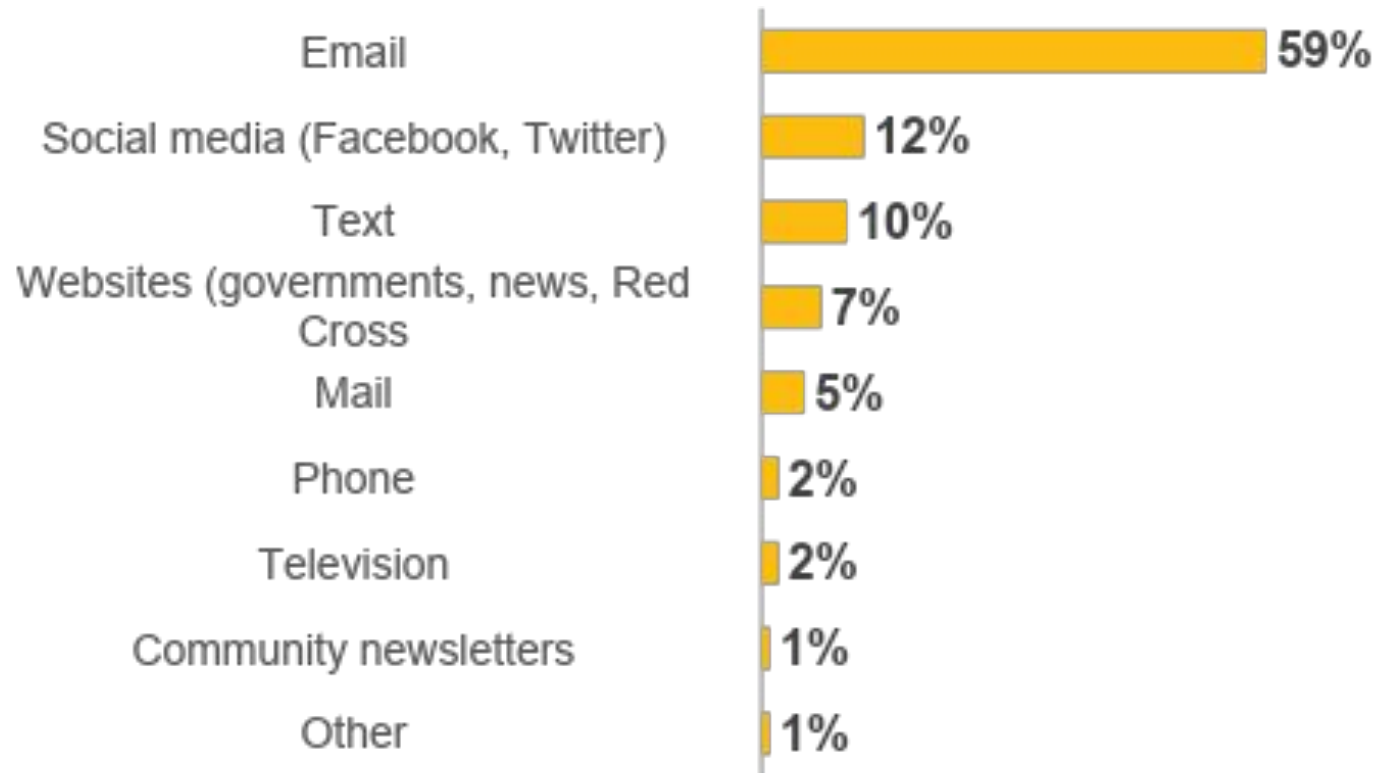
Q42 What is your preferred language for receiving disaster preparedness information? (Single response allowed)



# Communications | Preferred source of preparedness info

The most preferred method of receiving disaster preparedness information is email. (While this may be their preference, we cannot determine from this survey if email is an effective tool for this purpose, nor can this preference be extrapolated to emergency alerts, since email is not an efficient communication method in a crisis).

Q43 What is your preferred way of receiving disaster preparedness information? (Single response allowed)



# Thank you.

**ENVIRONICS**  
RESEARCH

