

# SUMMARY OF THE STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19



## Study on the effects of the COVID-19 crisis

- Facing the return of our field network, we decided to implement a flash study about the effects of the COVID crisis.
- A two-phase study

### 1) A qualitative phase - July to October

Work on a sample in order to understand the effects of the crisis on the people welcomed by the Restos du Cœur.

We did :

- 15 interviews with volunteers (responsible of centres)
- 40 interviews with people welcomed by a local point of Restos du Cœur
- 4 observations in 4 local points of Restos du Cœur

### 2) A quantitative phase - November to January

- 1 survey to a representative sampling ( +/- 700 people) of people welcomed by the Restos du Cœur


The objective was to refine and complete the information gathered in the 1st phase.

Our volunteers completed the survey together with the people welcomed by Restos du Cœur.



## COVID CRISIS EFFECTS

The **Confinement** (Lockdown Mars - May) and the **collapse of the economic activity** caused :

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- Fall in employment, especially for the low-skilled and short-contract workers.
  - Interim work stopped,
  - Small independents were not compensated by the French social protection.
  - Some activities fully stopped (tourism, hotels and restaurants, event, culture...)



# TYPOLOGY OF THE AUDIENCE AFFECTED BY THE CRISIS

The crisis affected the most vulnerable people harder:



→ People already welcomed by Restos du Cœur



→ People already weak, who have lost their safety net



→ New profiles that have suddenly fallen into precariousness

## 1- Increase of the precariousness of people welcomed by the Restos du Cœur

- People with precarious jobs before the crisis (short-term contract, temporary work, informal work, etc.)
- People having breaks in their integration path (ex: suspension of a paid training, business creation).
- The loss of an already modest income due to the shutdown of the economy.

At the same time:

- Significant increase of the cost of food (suspension of canteens, end of the strategies of 'donations against donations', etc.)
- Increase of energy costs
- Increase of the cost of IT equipment

⇒ Worsening of the situation.

*«With confinement, the children had to eat three times a day. Before I was home alone. I eat a butter sandwich and it's OK. But children, they don't eat like me.» (Madalina, accompanied person, unemployed)*

*«Before, my husband worked in the building industry but with the Covid-19 he lost his job. Now the only way to survive is to go and get food at Restos du Cœur.» (Cassandra)*



## 2- People losing their last safety net.

The COVID crisis has **reinforced processes of precariousness** of already fragile people and has broken their last safety net.

The COVID crisis is not the cause of the deterioration of their situation. People who were already at risk of precariousness, even without confinement, would have fallen into a precarious situation.

It is the combination of the 2 situations that has plunged people into precariousness. For example: people who were in debt situations, or had changes in their personal sphere (a child, a divorce, a disability, etc.), or people unable to cope with their expenses, people on short contracts, interim, informal economy with little or no social protection.

*«I haven't worked for six months (because of the confinement and the consequences of the COVID crisis). Since March the airport has been closed, so I'm on partial unemployment work. I'm already part-time, so I don't get much, but now it's even less. Fortunately the Restos du Cœur is there, because otherwise I do not know what my children and I could do.» (Nora, 44, partially unemployed)*



### 3- People directly impacted by the crisis

#### New profiles:

Because of its consequences, the COVID crisis plunges people into a precarious situation, in particular due to the total cessation of certain economic activities: tourism, catering, hotel sector, restaurants, cultural activities ... or also the suspension of some administrative services, preventing people to claim their rights.

*«We are independents, we are in events' sector and we perform circus shows. Now that circus shows are suspended, we are no longer allowed to work. The town halls no longer give authorisations, the prefectures prohibit town halls from organising grouping. So all of this prevents us to work at the moment».*



# FOOD AID, AN INDISPENSABLE LEVER FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE



- **A reduction of the cost of the food in personal budgets**, offering the possibility of transferring the savings made to other expenses (e.g. being able to maintain care services)
- Limiting debt and curbing the **spiral of precariousness**
- Better **food quality**
- **Freedom of choice**

*«I will describe it to you with numbers, [food aid] was essential, it helped to cover almost 75% of our needs or even more sometimes. And the 25% that remains, sometimes we manage, we work alongside.» (Abdel, 61, informal economy worker)*

