



WOMEN, INFORMAL WORK & COVID-19 IN SA

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JOB LOSSES UNDER LOCKDOWN

Job loss estimates:

NIDS-Crams Survey: **3 million** jobs lost in April 2020

QLFS: **2.2 million** jobs lost in Q2 2020

Gender impacts:

Women accounted for **2/3 of these lost jobs** (Casale, D. & Posel, D. 2020).

Sector impacts:

In Quarter 2, the informal sector shed 640 000 jobs and a further 311 000 jobs were lost in private households (Stats SA, 2020).

A TRIPLE CRISIS

- Widespread recognition that the informal economy has been affected disproportionately by the crisis (61% of the total employment - ILO)
- The impacts *within* the informal economy are being experienced unevenly
- Pre-crisis projection: the rate of extreme poverty among households with informal workers (constituting roughly 21 million people) would increase from 10 per cent to 26 per cent in the absence of direct income support (Bassier et al., 2020)

FIGURE 1: PERCENTAGE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL WORKERS THAT WERE 'LOCKED OUT' OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT IN APRIL 2020, BY GENDER

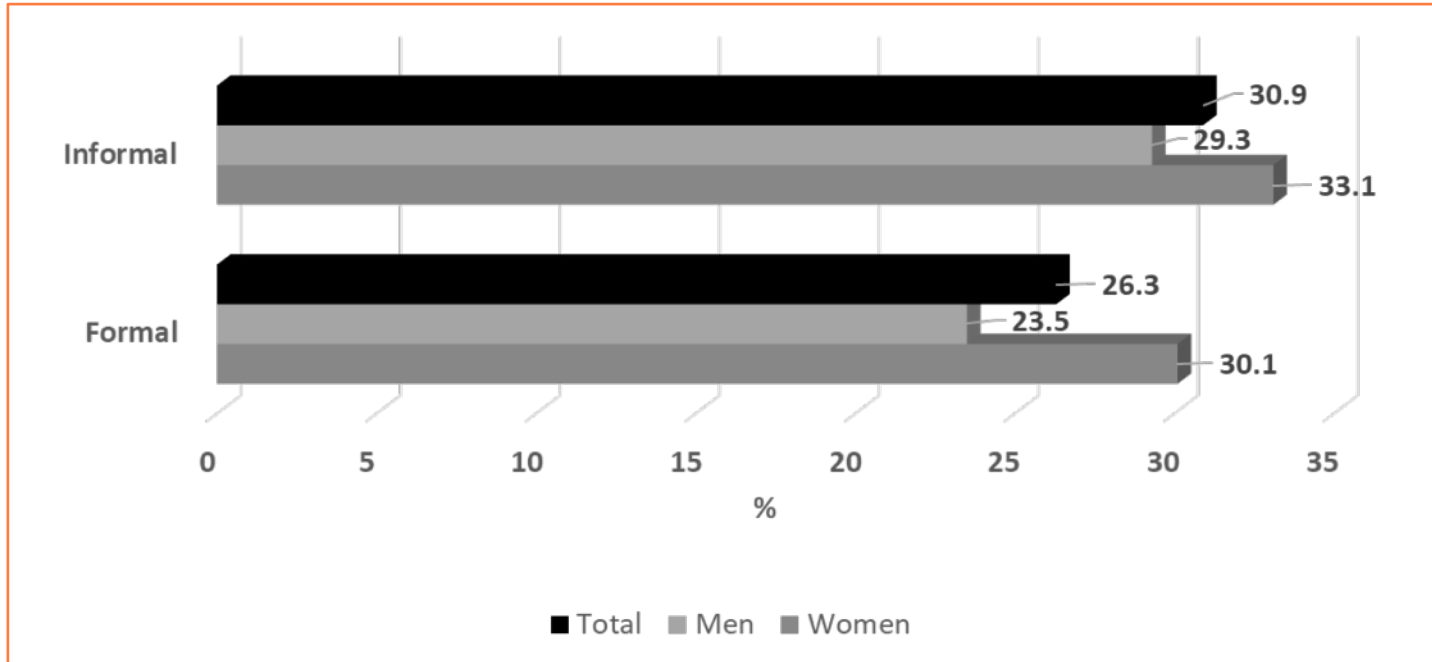


FIGURE 2: DECREASES IN TYPICAL WEEKLY HOURS BETWEEN FEBRUARY AND APRIL (2020), BY STATUS IN INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT AND GENDER



FIGURE 3: CHANGES IN AVERAGE AND MEDIAN EARNINGS FROM INFORMAL SELF-EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN FEBRUARY AND APRIL (2020), BY GENDER

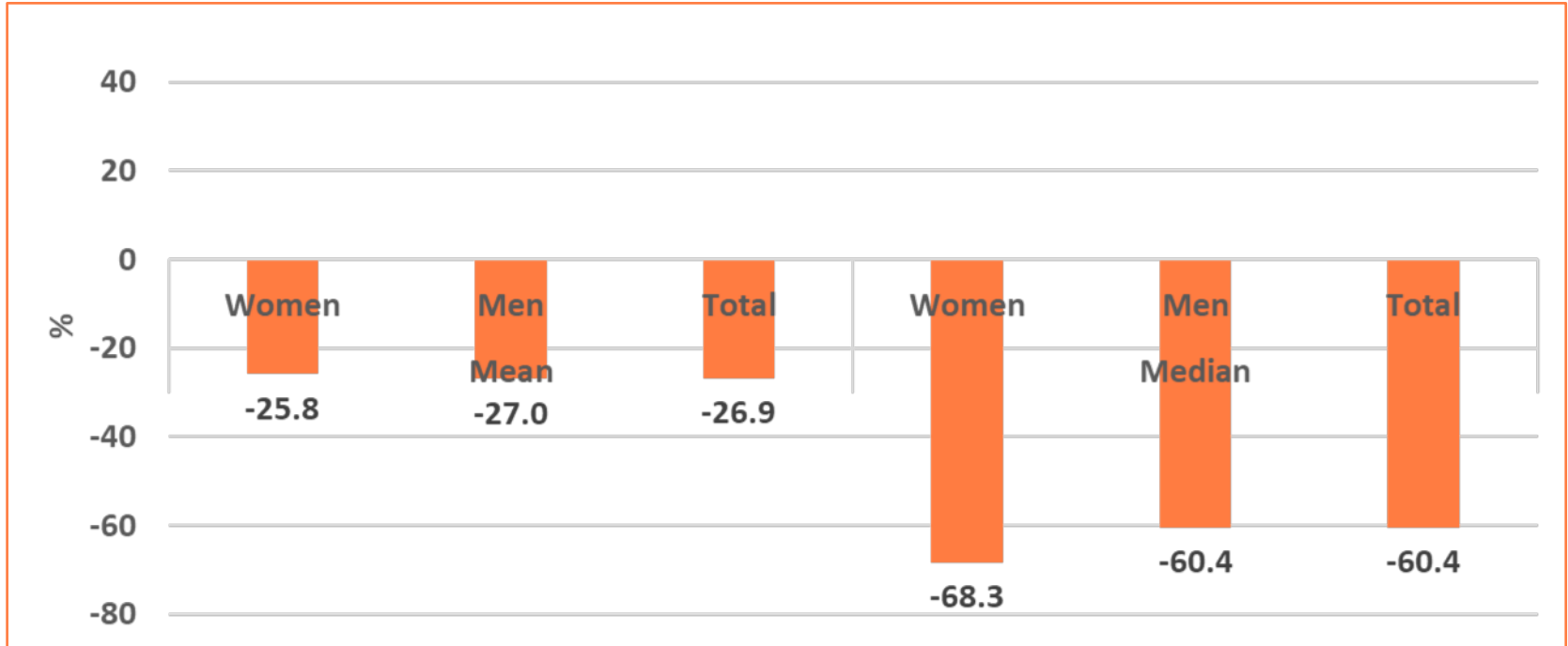


FIGURE 4: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN EARNINGS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

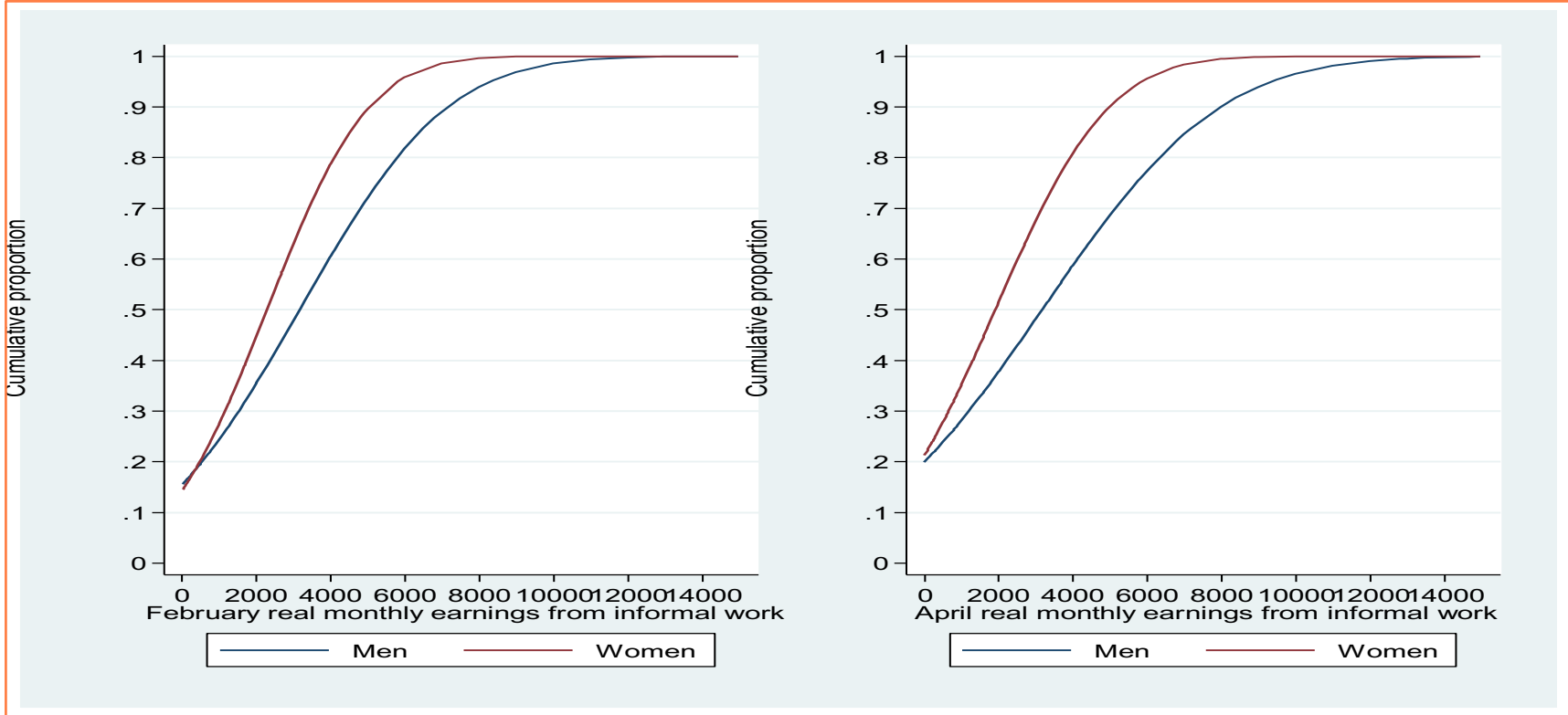
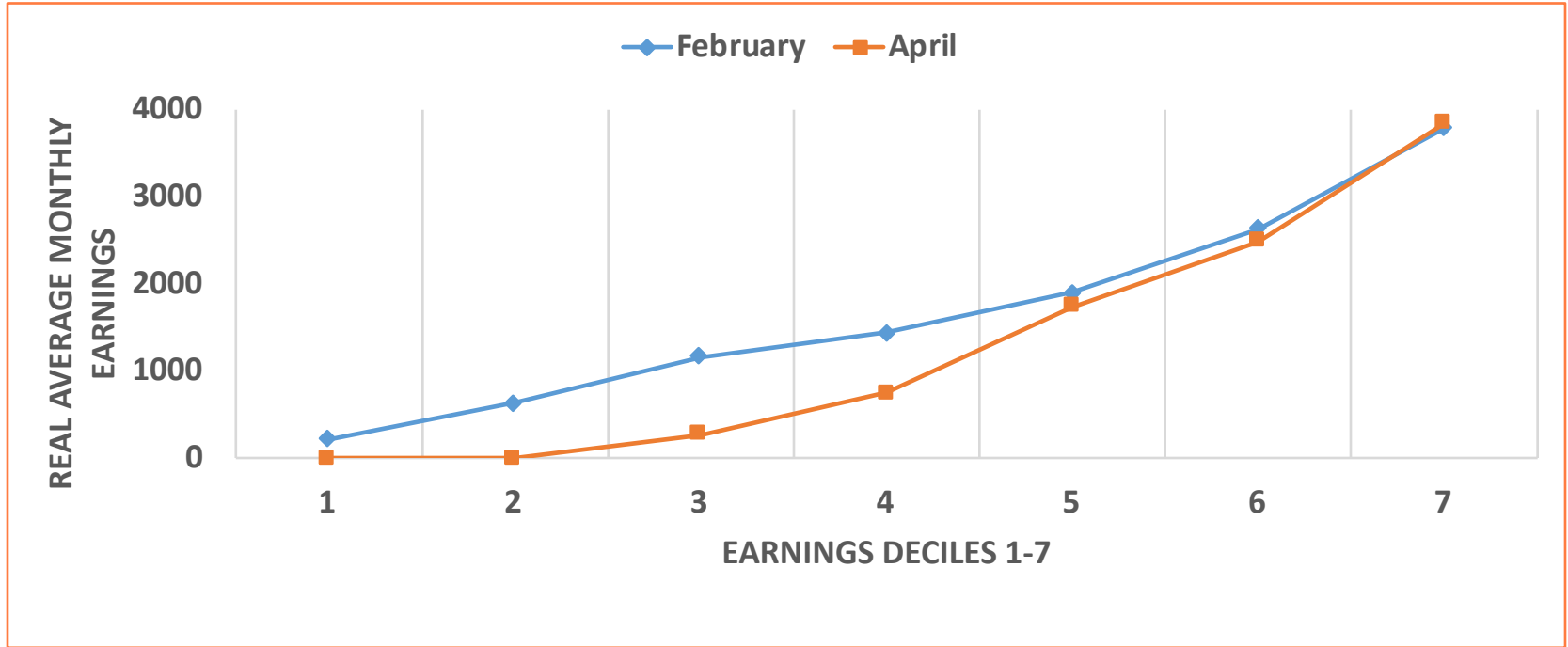


FIGURE 5: DIFFERENCES IN EARNINGS IN INFORMAL SELF-EMPLOYMENT IN FEBRUARY AND APRIL (2020), BY DECILE



LOCKDOWN EASING

Jobs recovery:

- Only a limited recovery in jobs after lockdown (Ranchod & Daniels, 2020)
- Women remained well behind men in reaching their pre-COVID employment levels in June (Casale & Shepherd, 2020)

Gender wage gap:

- Estimated at 30% in February and 52% in June;
- Widest among lower earners;
- Largely due to reduced working hours for women (Hill & Köhler, 2020).

GRANTS

- The R500 caregivers allowance and R350 COVID-19 grant and the are estimated to have prevented over 5 million people from falling below the food poverty line (Bassier and Leibbrandt, 2020).
- As of the end of July only 32% of those receiving the C19 grant were women. (Sassa, 2020) Those receiving child support, predominantly women, are disqualified.
- The extension of the C19 grant by three months is positive.
- However for gender parity, poverty alleviation and food security, the caregivers grant and top ups to the pension need to be extended as well.
- Current amounts are well below what is needed – the monthly cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet is R693.

FURTHER POLICY IMPERATIVES

- Reform the unemployment insurance system so that informal workers, notably domestic workers, can access it.
- Rethink DSDB criteria for access to small business support.
- Longer term - rethink the role of the informal economy which is inextricably linked with the 'formal economy'.



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