

# Markets, Peshawar (Pakistan) 2020/21



The COVID-19 Vendor Survey Factsheet (VSF), developed by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) highlights the behaviours, perceptions, and decisions of vendors in 10 traditional markets in Peshawar, Pakistan. The VSF provides a snapshot of vendor's challenges and needs as they cope with business and food security choices under COVID 19.

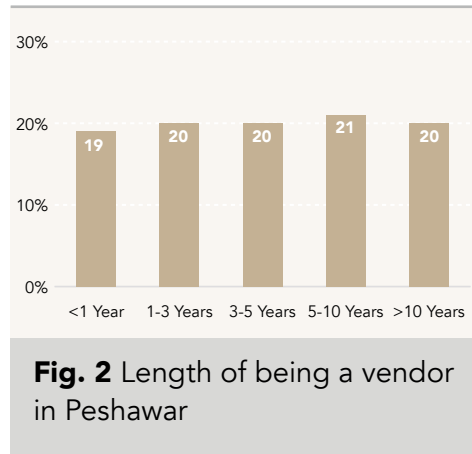
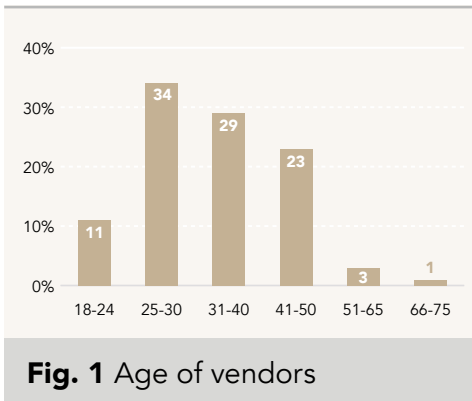
The assessment is based on face-to-face interviews with non-probabilistically sampled vendors (n=80) from 10 different traditional markets in Peshawar, conducted between the end of December 2020 and early January 2021. Peshawar markets largely supply produce locally, to neighbouring provinces and across the border to Afghanistan.

## Summary:

- 70% of vendors regarded the mandate to wear face masks for vendors and customers (67%) and the communication strategies (58%) as useful measures against COVID-19.
- 96% of vendors have taken their own measures (wearing face mask, increased cleanliness of surfaces, reminding customers to keep social distancing, wearing gloves); only 5% offered mobile money options.
- 9% of vendors changed the product they sell due to seasonal changes and decreased demand during COVID-19.
- All vendors stated that the number of customers substantially decreased during the pandemic.
- 40% of vendors used marketing strategies (additional discount, advertisement, sales on credit) to increase the number of customers or sales under COVID-19.
- 31% of vendors reported a change in their suppliers; however, the changes mentioned seem mixed (relying on fewer suppliers, increase in supplier's prices but also a decrease in supplier's prices).

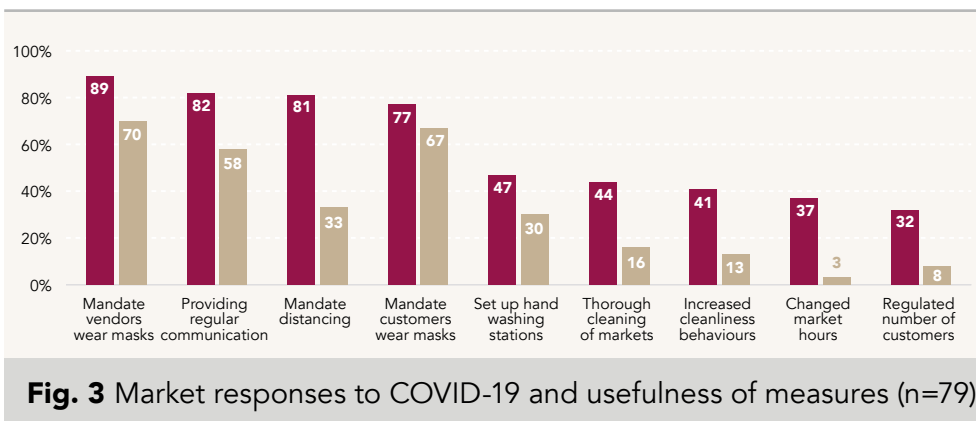
### Vendors surveyed (n=80)

- As fresh food retailing businesses are mainly operated by male vendors in Pakistan, all vendors (100%) interviewed were male.
- About one third (34%) of vendors were between 25 and 30 years of age (Fig. 1).
- 98% of vendors identified as Pathan.
- 71% of vendors owned the business they were operating in and 19% were employed by an external person or a company.
- The length of time individuals had spent working as vendors in Peshawar was very mixed (Fig. 2).
- The vendors interviewed sold meat, fish, dairy, eggs, fruits and vegetables.



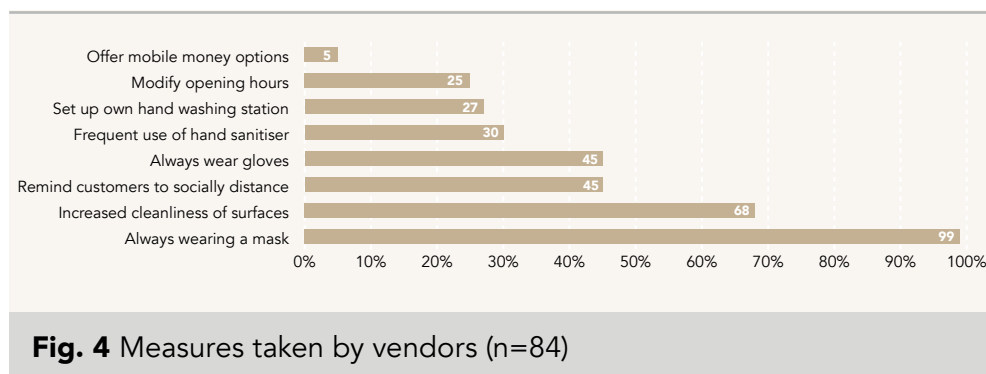
### Market response to COVID-19

Most vendors (89%) noticed the mandate to wear masks for vendors, the regular communication from markets about COVID-19 spread and self-protection measures (82%), and social distancing rules (81%) in place in the market spaces to protect vendors and consumers. The measure perceived to be most useful, mentioned by over two thirds of vendors, was the mandate for vendors to wear face masks (70%), followed by the mandate for customers to wear face masks (67%), communication strategies (58%) to reduce an individual’s risk of contracting COVID-19 in the markets, and the social distancing rules (33%). Other measures, including an increased demand for vendor cleanliness, changes in market hours and the regulation of the number of customers in the market, were recognised by at least one third of vendors, but were not seen as extremely useful measures for the vendors in those markets (Fig. 3).



## Knowledge and implementation of protective measures against COVID-19

Almost all vendors (96%) said that they had taken measures to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. The most popular measure was to always wear a face mask (99% of vendors), while 68% increased the cleanliness of surfaces, 45% regularly reminded customers to maintain social distancing when possible and 45% of vendors always wear gloves. Only 5% of vendors offered mobile money options (Fig. 4).

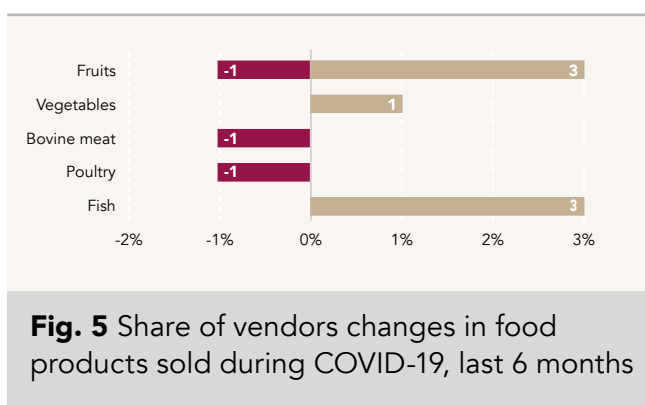


**Fig. 4** Measures taken by vendors (n=84)

## Impacts of COVID-19

Only 9% of vendors changed the type of products or food groups they sold during COVID-19 in the last six months. Of those vendors that made changes, most reported increasing the sales of fish, fruits and vegetables, and a few reported decreasing sales for poultry, bovine meat and fruits (Fig. 5). Reasons for changing the food products were seasonal changes (71%) and decreased demand (29%).

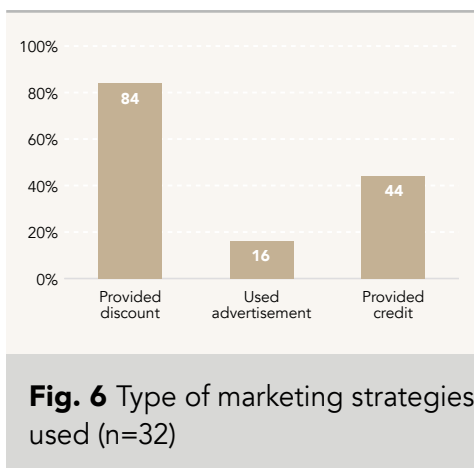
All vendors said that the number of customers on a typical day decreased due to COVID-19. About 80% of vendors reported a substantial decrease, while 21% reported a slight decrease in the number of customers.



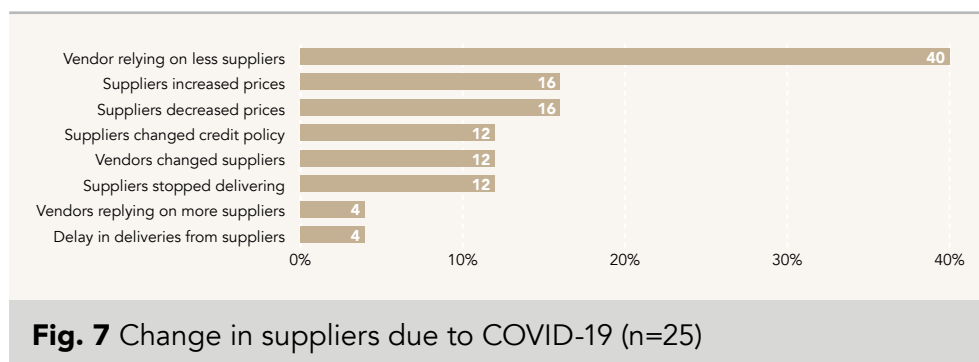
**Fig. 5** Share of vendors changes in food products sold during COVID-19, last 6 months

## Business strategies and vendor connectivity

Of the vendors surveyed, 40% used marketing strategies to increase the number of customers or sales under COVID-19. Almost all of those using marketing strategies provided additional discounts (84%), offered the possibility to shop on credit (44%), or used advertisement such as leaflets, radio, tv or social media (16%) (Fig. 6).



Less than one third (31%) of the vendors surveyed reported experiencing a change in their suppliers since COVID 19 has been present in the area. Of those that recognised a change in suppliers, 40% said that they relied on fewer suppliers and 16% reported an increase in supplier's prices in the month prior to the survey. However, the reported changes in suppliers are mixed, with 16% of vendors also reporting a decrease in supplier's prices (Fig. 7).



### Methods: Assessing vendor behaviours, perceptions and decisions under COVID-19

Insights into vendor behaviours, perceptions and decisions under COVID-19 have been based on interviews of 80 vendors from Sunday Bazaar-T-iii, Saturday Bazaar-T-iv, Bara Mandi-T-iii, Chargano Chowk Market-T-I, Nothia Potock-T-ii, Scheme Chowk-T-iv, Thana Market-T-iv, Firdo Market-T-I, Faqir Abad-Hashtnaghry-T-I and Mathani Bazar-T-vi in Peshawar. Non-probabilistic (quota) sampling techniques were used for a balanced representation of vendors dealing with eight different food items: seasonal fruits, vegetables, beef, mutton, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy items (primarily milk and yogurt). Furthermore, vendors were only selected if they were above 18 years of age and provided verbal consent to participate in the survey. The interviews were conducted in each of the 10 informal market settings in Peshawar between 30th December 2020 and 3rd January 2021 using a structured questionnaire. The interview tool has previously been translated into Urdu and tested in the field. Surveys are conducted with complete adherence to global guidelines on COVID-19 prevention and control. All data were collected via Open Data Kit (ODK) collect and stored on KoBo Toolbox; data analysis was done using Stata version 15.1.

### **Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) COVID-19 Response**

The necessary COVID-19 responses, such as lockdowns and/or curfews, have placed a spotlight on the weakness of food systems across the world. In the COVID-19 context, the single most important thing that can be done for the health and resilience of people and economies is to protect the nutritional status of current and future generations. GAIN has developed the *Keeping Food Markets Working (KFMW)* programme as an emergency response to the COVID-19 crisis, providing rapid support to food system workers, to small and medium enterprises supplying nutritious foods, and to keeping fresh food markets open. While disease control responses to the pandemic are essential, they also disrupt food systems, depress income, and put a strain on social protection programmes, which can threaten the nutritional status of the most vulnerable. The KFMW programme is focused on mitigating those risks and keeping affordable nutritious foods flowing in African and Asian markets to the people who most need it.

***Supporting effective policymaking and coordination during the pandemic***, is one of several initiatives under this KFMW programme. This initiative focuses on 6 cities, in 3 countries i.e., **Machakos and Kiambu (Kenya); Beira and Pemba (Mozambique); Rawalpindi and Peshawar (Pakistan)**, with the aim of better understanding city-context specific experiences of the urban food system during the pandemic – most especially traditional food markets which provide vital access to food for the most vulnerable. Valuably, the evidence reveals food system, everyday realities as experienced and practiced by urban residents. Together with key informant interviews and focus groups involving a range of urban food system stakeholders, including market committees and city government policy makers, as well as satellite imagery and desktop studies, this vendor survey helps better inform and align urban food system policy, coordination and resilience for all.

For more information please view our other factsheets on the qualitative findings of this rapid assessment and future co-designed policy toolkits:

- [gainhealth.org/impact/our-response-covid-19#keeping-food-markets-working-programme](https://gainhealth.org/impact/our-response-covid-19#keeping-food-markets-working-programme)
- [gainhealth.org/impact/our-response-covid-19/effective-policymaking-and-coordination-during-pandemic](https://gainhealth.org/impact/our-response-covid-19/effective-policymaking-and-coordination-during-pandemic)

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## **Contact**

GAIN  
The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)  
Rue de Varembe 7  
1202 Geneva  
Switzerland  
T: +41 22 749 18 50  
E: [info@gainhealth.org](mailto:info@gainhealth.org)  
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[www.gainhealth.org](http://www.gainhealth.org)

