

Situations like the coronavirus pandemic can quickly become a catalyst for social conflict due to misinformation, rumors and fake news, as we've seen in the past. Every day we continue to see more false information shared throughout communities, confusing citizens and leaving them unsure as to who can answer their questions.

The **Pakistan Coronavirus CivicActs Campaign (CCC)** captures rumors and perceptions among communities to eliminate information gaps between the government, media, humanitarian agencies and citizens. By providing the public with facts, these coronavirus bulletins aim to create a better understanding of needs regarding coronavirus and to debunk rumors before they can do more harm.

## Current Situation of COVID-19 in Pakistan

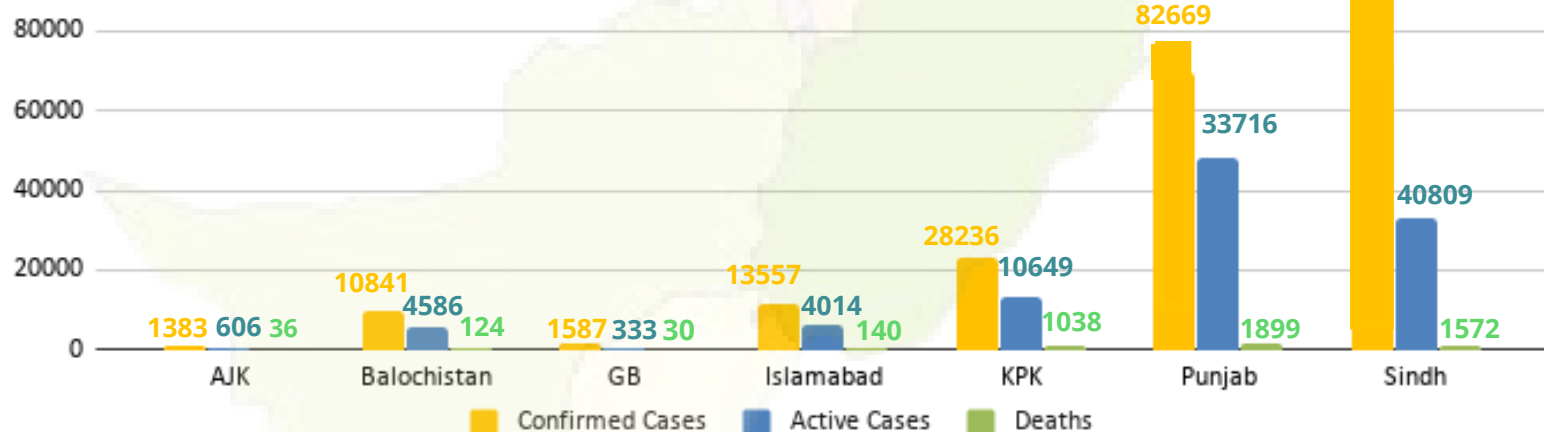
**Total Confirmed Cases**  
234,509

**Total Active Cases**  
94,713

**Total Deaths**  
4,839

**Total Recoveries**  
134,957

COVID-19 Cases status in provinces of Pakistan



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## **COVID-19 leaves Street Vendors in Distress**

Ubaidullah and Habibullah, both vendors on Old Shujabad road in Multan, were asked how they were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Ubaidullah has been selling T-caps and sunglasses while Habibullah has a corn stall on the roadside.

“We were hit hard when the lockdown began. It completely shattered our businesses. We lived hand to mouth, never knowing how long it would last and the kind of consequences it would have on our lives and businesses. When the lockdown was announced we had savings of Rs. 4000 - 5000 which ended in a week. We had to borrow money from relatives and faced many difficulties. Our family comprises 12 - 13 members and it was a big challenge to feed a huge family in such circumstances.

When the lockdown was lifted, we started selling face masks at our stalls so that we could earn some money. We tried hard to fill the gap but, being vendors, our livelihoods completely rely on being in public places. We are now allowed to sell on the street again but the situation is extremely challenging. Citizens are reluctant to visit the stalls which has resulted in declining sales. We want to attract customers to our stalls but our

efforts go in vain. The customers now prefer to go to market only to fulfill their needs.

Despite following the protocols and precautionary measures, we are often disrupted by police officials while selling corn at the stall. The Rs.12,000 scheme was only for people who already had enough resources. We haven't received the amount until now. We request the government to please introduce some good schemes for poor citizens, so that we can feed our families.”



### **Struggling to Survive**

“I still remember the days before the outbreak began, when I was able to generate a decent enough amount of income for my family. When I was young, my father passed away, and being the eldest

son it was expected of me to earn money and provide financial support. Before my mother's eyesight was affected, she used to stitch clothes, and together with my income, we would save half the total money for my three younger sisters' dowry to get them married. But with my earning being the only source for the past few years, the pandemic has affected our lives drastically.”

Hassan Khan, a street vendor, shares that since the lockdown has been imposed he could not make any money at all. He has been shifting his stall from one market to another,

hoping he can bring a minimum amount just for two meals a day. From being able to sell 500-800 packets of french fries daily, earning an average of Rs.1,500- 5,000 and even more on a good day, he has now gone to selling a minimum of 10 packets in a week. "My biggest market was school children who would buy from me during their lunch breaks/off time, but with educational institutions closed for over 5 months now, it won't be wrong to say that I may no longer earn." Hassan also serves and earns a small proportion from markets where people come to shop and may decide on having a quick snack. But the lockdown has also taken that opportunity from him.



"The amount of people visiting shops has declined tremendously. They just visit for basic groceries or to go to pharmacies; they have no interest in goods being sold by street vendors. It seems to me that they think that we (street vendors) are infected by people as we are out to earn and that our food may infect them as well. What can we do? We need money! I need to feed my family. I can't stay at home."

## **To Make Ends Meet**



Asif Khan has been selling handicrafts since the pandemic took over the nation. This is something his family has been doing for generations, they are skilled in jute and bamboo work which they use a source of income. It was not something Asif dreamed of doing, but to make ends meet he, along with his younger brother and father, have been taking their pushcarts to different places in hope of earning some

income to get through these difficult times. "We have not been able to sell even a few of our goods in the last few weeks because there are no customers around. No one can even be seen in the streets as people are following restrictions announced by the government." Asif shared that many times he has thought of giving up, seeing their efforts going to waste and disputes arising within his family

"I then gave some thought and realized that we should offer goods based on the need of the time. I negotiated with a respiratory mask supplier and have now been selling disposable masks in markets and on traffic signals. My father hadn't approved this approach of mine, but when I came home with Rs. 300 on the first day, he was so proud. Although the earning varies daily, at least it's better than having nothing to take back home."





## **How to deal with this crisis?**

The street vendors are the first point of contact in the supply chain for consumers, and in difficult times like this when public scrutiny for hygiene is bound to be high, it becomes crucial, to provide appropriate training to vendors on safety & hygiene in order to increase general public confidence on street vending.

The 2016 Gallup Survey of Pakistan highlighted that 75 percent of Pakistani inhabitants said that they have easy access to hawkers, khokhas and dhabas. This shows that the urban poor in Pakistani cities are largely dependent on venter market because household use commodities are cheaper than formal commercial markets and stores.

Government should launch a national program for regularization of the informal sectors of the economy by enacting a national policy for street vending. Under the eighteenth amendment, provinces have the constitutional right to formulate acts and laws for the social and economic welfare of masses.

In context of the economic hardship being experienced by the vulnerable due to the coronavirus crisis government has also launched various programs as an aid such as Ehsaas Emergency cash, PM's COVID-19 Fund Portal, and Ehsaas Ration Portal. A dedicated team should be assigned to ensure that the programs are being transparently implemented and that the deserving families are being benefited.



## Coronavirus symptoms Include:

- Fever
- Dry Cough
- Shortness of Breath
- Tiredness

**Contact your doctor or the coronavirus helpline at**



**1166**



## Where can I get tested?

### Karachi

#### **Aga Khan University Hospital**

Stadium Road, Karachi

#### **Civil Hospital**

DOW University Campus

Mission Road, Karachi

#### **Dow Medical Hospital**

Ojha Campus

Suparco Road, Karachi

#### **Indus Hospital**

Opposite Darussalam Society, Korangi Crossing, Karachi

### Lahore

#### **Punjab AIDS Lab**

PACP Complex

6 - Birdwood Road, Lahore

#### **Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital**

7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town, Lahore

### Islamabad

#### **National Institute of Health**

Park Road

Chak Shahzad, Islamabad

### Rawalpindi

#### **Armed Forces Institute of**

#### **Pathology**

Range Road

CMH Complex, Rawalpindi

### Multan

#### **Nishtar Hospital**

Nishtar Road,

Justice Hamid Colony, Multan

**For more cities visit the**

**[COVID-19 Health Advisory Platform](#)**

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