Situations like the coronavirus pandemic can quickly become a catalyst for social conflict due to misinformation, rumours, and fake news, as observed in Pakistan during recent national catastrophes caused by dengue fever, floods, and earthquakes. The situation is no different with COVID-19 as stories emerge on how fake news is being used to manipulate response efforts, spread rumours and misinformation leading to behaviours that are undermining community cohesion, and causing citizens to be unaware of the role they can play in the pandemic response.

With that in mind, Accountability Lab Pakistan (ALP) with financial support from the European Union and technical support from The Asia Foundation (TAF) Pakistan, has officially launched the Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC). This campaign aims to debunk rumours, conduct regular fact-checking, synthesize data, and convene virtual forums to produce informative bulletins each week. These bulletins will include important government decisions, visual materials, community feedback, debunked rumours with verified information, valid concerns, and other questions from the ground around health and other issues. The goal is to support enhanced awareness among the most vulnerable groups in Pakistan with a focus particularly on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. These bulletins will be translated into Urdu and Sindhi and published on a weekly basis, with audio transcriptions in Pashto. They will be shared with stakeholders, local government leaders, media, CSOs, humanitarian organizations and others. They will also have a dedicated web-page, be shared widely on social media, and be aired on local community radio stations.

Current Situation of COVID-19 in Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Confirmed Cases</th>
<th>349,992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Active Cases</td>
<td>22,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Deaths</td>
<td>7,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Recoveries</td>
<td>320,849</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provinces</th>
<th>Confirmed Cases</th>
<th>Active Cases</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Recoveries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AJK</td>
<td>5041</td>
<td>1166</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>3759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balochistan</td>
<td>16226</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>15780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GB</td>
<td>4409</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>4162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamabad</td>
<td>22765</td>
<td>2913</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>19604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPK</td>
<td>41258</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1302</td>
<td>38426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>108221</td>
<td>8111</td>
<td>2438</td>
<td>97672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>152072</td>
<td>7922</td>
<td>2704</td>
<td>141446</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://covid.gov.pk/stats/pakistan
While it is true that vitamins D, C, and Zinc are essential for a well-functioning immune system and play an important role in ensuring good health, there is currently no evidence on the use of these supplements as a treatment of Covid-19. While these supplements cannot cure Covid-19 (only a vaccine can do that), they can in fact improve your nutrition and immunity in order to prepare itself to fight off the coronavirus. However, please ensure that you take the daily prescribed doses from a recommended health practitioner, as an excess of these vitamins could end up leading to other health issues.

The coronavirus is a new virus that will require its own vaccine to fight it uniquely. The pneumonia shot (pneumococcal vaccine) can only protect you from a type of bacterial pneumonia. However, since pneumonia and Covid-19 are both respiratory illnesses, if you do get sick from pneumonia, you could be vulnerable to Covid-19 as well. WHO recommends that you get vaccinated against respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia, but know that this does not guarantee protection from the coronavirus.

Vitamin and mineral supplements cannot cure COVID-19

While it is true that vitamins D, C, and Zinc are essential for a well-functioning immune system and play an important role in ensuring good health, there is currently no evidence on the use of these supplements as a treatment of Covid-19. While these supplements cannot cure Covid-19 (only a vaccine can do that), they can in fact improve your nutrition and immunity in order to prepare itself to fight off the coronavirus. However, please ensure that you take the daily prescribed doses from a recommended health practitioner, as an excess of these vitamins could end up leading to other health issues.

Rinsing your nose with saline prevents COVID-19

There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline can protect you from getting infected with the new coronavirus. While regularly rinsing your nose with saline can help you recover more quickly from the common cold, it cannot prevent respiratory infections such as Covid-19.

Source: WHO, Scientific American, NPR.
How can ventilation keep your homes, schools, offices, and shops safe from Covid-19?

Ventilation is the intentional introduction of fresh air into a space while the stale air is removed, to maintain the air quality of the space. WHO has stressed that ventilation is a crucial factor in preventing the spread of coronavirus indoors. Opening windows or doors to ensure that outdoor air circulates indoors is an effective way to prevent infection in public places such as offices, shops, buildings, tourist accommodations, and schools, etc. By introducing fresh air into closed spaces, we can ensure that the air inside is constantly changing, and that we are not breathing in the repeatedly circulated air shared by people around us.

In case of air recirculation, filters should be cleaned regularly, especially for jobs that place an individual at a medium or high risk of exposure to COVID-19. Examples of such jobs may include frontline workers in retail, tourist accommodation and domestic workers. If you live in a place with high levels of pollution, and cannot risk opening the windows, you can use air purifiers to clean the air.

It is essential that we increase the rate of ventilation in indoor spaces, by natural or mechanical ways, to avoid recirculation of air. Along with other preventive measures, this is an important measure we can implement to help prevent the spread of Covid-19.

The transgender community at high risk during the pandemic in Pakistan.

Transgender people in Pakistan mostly work in the informal sector of the economy, with most either begging on the streets or performing sex work to survive. Discrimination against transgender people in Pakistan has resulted in a lack of education and employment opportunities, limiting their options in society. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic made their lives even more difficult with social distancing measures, and the stigma that transgender people are “unclean,” depriving them of the limited means of making a living they had before the start of the pandemic (such as performing at weddings, sex work, etc).

According to a study conducted in Rawalpindi - Islamabad by UNDP in collaboration with Ministry of Human Rights, transgender people continued to experience discrimination from staff in social and health care settings, leaving them even more vulnerable in the wake of the pandemic (UNDP). The study revealed transgender people are at higher risk of being infected by the virus as many of them live together in cramped spaces, being unable to maintain social distancing. The study also revealed that 59% of respondents ranked public health care as their first priority as almost a quarter of them suffer from a disability or an illness, making them extremely vulnerable to contracting the novel coronavirus.
A big public gathering such as a wedding ceremony is at high risk for the spread of Covid-19 infection, and should therefore be organized while complying with health and safety protocols. Accordingly, SOP guidelines have been issued by the Ministry of Health, to be implemented starting Nov 20th, in the urban centers of Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Multan, Hyderabad, Gilgit, Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Peshawar, Quetta, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Faisalabad, Bahawalpur & Swat.

Indoor weddings have been banned by National Command Operation Center (NCOC) in the aforementioned cities, starting from Nov 20, 2020. If you plan to organize an outdoor wedding, you must ensure that:

- **Your guests are no more than a 1000 - sitting 6 feet apart.**
- **That the event lasts a maximum of 2 hours (ending at 10 pm latest).**
- **That everyone wears a mask at the event.**

Space requirements should be made according to the number of people attending the event, by adhering to the following mandatory guidelines on person to space ratio, ensuring that all attendees sit 6 feet apart.

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**Annex. Layout for outdoor wedding events**

[Diagram showing layout and social distancing guidelines]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Distance</th>
<th>Space-6 Feet apart</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Space</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>103x102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>7200</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95x95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>83x85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>73x74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>60x60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>30x30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This publication was produced with the financial support from the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Accountability Lab Pakistan and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*
The responsibility of ensuring everyone complies with the wedding SOPs lies with the organizers of the event and the event managers. During the event, the following guidelines (SOPs) must be adhered to:

- **Thermal scanning** for all attendees is mandatory at the entrance.
- All attendees **must wear a face mask/cloth face** covering at the event (to be monitored by marriage event authorities).
- **Buffet dinner or lunch cannot be served at the event.** Instead, organizers can provide lunch boxes or table services.
- Attendees should **frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds** and use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- All attendees **must maintain social distancing of 6 feet** at all times.
- Employees and attendees should **stay at home if tested positive for COVID-19** or are suspected with symptoms of the virus.
- The hosts should provide basic hygiene supplies including soap, water, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, cloth face coverings (as feasible), and no-touch trash cans. They should also ensure that each guest is given a face mask and mini sanitizer at entrance for use.
- There should be post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., at entrances, in restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures.
- **Traditional Greetings** (hand shaking, hugging etc.) **should be discouraged**, as this can quickly spread infection.

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**Mild Symptoms include:**

- Sore Throat
- Fatigue
- Loss of smell
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Coughing

**Severe Symptoms include:**

- Chest Pain
- Difficulty in Breathing
- Inability to stay awake
- Bluish Face or Lips

If you have COVID-19 symptoms contact your doctor or the coronavirus helpline at **1166**.
## Where can I get tested?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Karachi    | Aga Khan University Hospital  
Stadium Road, Karachi  
Dow Medical Hospital  
Ojha Campus  
Suparco Road, Karachi  
Indus Hospital  
Opposite Darussalam Society, Korangi Crossing, Karachi |
| Multan     | Nishtar Hospital  
Nishtar Road,  
Justice Hamid Colony, Multan |
| Rawalpindi | Armed Forces Institute of Pathology  
Range Road  
CMH Complex, Rawalpindi |
| Islamabad  | National Institute of Health  
Park Road  
Chak Shahzad, Islamabad |
| Abbottabad | Public Health Lab Ayub Teaching Hospital  
Mansehra Road. Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa  
Shaheena Jameel Hospital  
Abbottabad N-35 |
| Quetta     | Fatima Jinnah Hospital  
Bahadurabad, Wahdat Colony, Quetta |
| Lahour     | Punjab AIDS Lab  
PACP Complex 6 - Birdwood Road, Lahore  
Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital  
7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town, Lahore |
| Peshawar   | Khyber Medical University  
Phase 5, Hayatabad, Peshawar, KP  
Hayatabad Medical Complex  
Phase-4 Phase 4 Hayatabad, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa |

For more cities visit the [COVID-19 Health Advisory Platform](#).

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**Coronavirus CivActs Campaign** is brought to you by Accountability Lab Pakistan

**To receive our regular updates through WhatsApp**

1. Add our number +27 60 080 6146 as a contact.
2. Send the word "Pakistan" as a message on WhatsApp.

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