

Monthly Bulletin

Gov-HER-Nance

Ensuring Gender Equity and
Socio-Economic Resilience
During COVID-19



Women are generally the primary caregivers in Pakistani society. And with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, that burden of care has vastly increased. Data* shows that 83% of a woman's time is spent at home, providing care for household members, home maintenance and self-care. It is also reflected in the limited mobility of many Pakistani women. They are often four times less mobile than men, leading to limited information availability. Their need for updated information is critical to providing efficient care for their families. This bulletin aims to reach women and provide them with COVID-19-related news to help them navigate around issues of safety, community and local governance.

Accountability Lab Pakistan (ALP), with support from the Health Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany is publishing bulletins under the "Governance Ensuring Gender Equity and Socioeconomic Impact during COVID-19" campaign. This campaign aims to build and strengthen the resilience of marginalized populations, especially women, in three districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa against the negative impacts of COVID-19 and other future pandemics and health emergencies.

These bulletins include important government decisions, community feedback, verified information, valid concerns, and other questions from the ground around health, safety and local governance.

*Source: [UNWomen](#)

FACT



COVID-19 IS NOT AIRBORNE

The virus that causes Covid-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. These droplets are too heavy to hang in the air and quickly fall on floors or surfaces. You can be infected by breathing in the virus if you are within 1 meter of a person who has Covid-19, or by touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands.

To protect yourself keep at least a meter distance from others and disinfect surfaces that are touched frequently. Regularly wash your hands and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.



SOURCE: [WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION](https://www.who.int):

MYTH



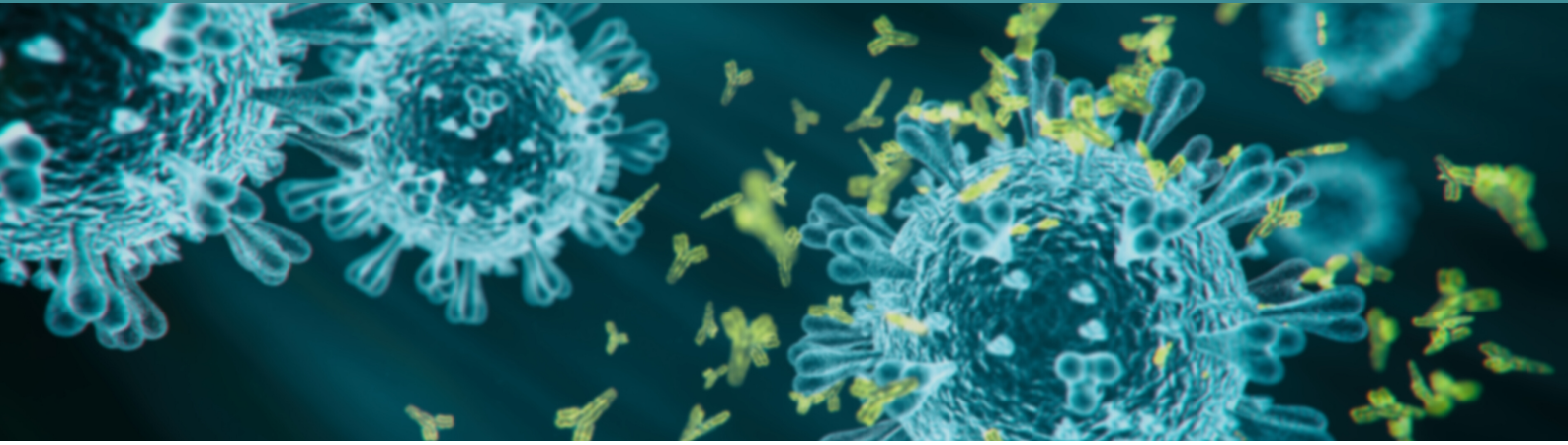
COVID-19 CAN BE TRANSMITTED THROUGH FOOD.

The World Health Organization (WHO) advises that there is currently no evidence that the Covid-19 virus could be transferred through food. There's no evidence to suggest people could get infected by swallowing the virus in, or on, food or drink. Research has shown that the virus is inactivated inside the acidic environment of the stomach, and is unlikely to reach the gastrointestinal tract and cause illness.

The International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF) has also concluded that there is no documented evidence that food is a substantial source of transmission of Covid-19. The main threat of transmission is from near contact with infected people. The best technique is to exercise social distance and maintain good personal hygiene always. Wash your hands often with soap and water and keep away from touching your face to reduce the risk of infection.



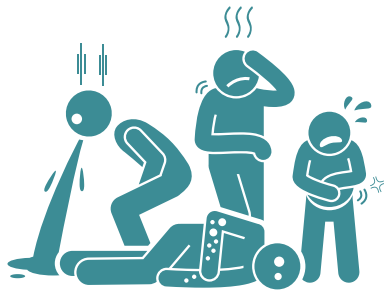
SOURCE: [WHO.INT](https://www.who.int)



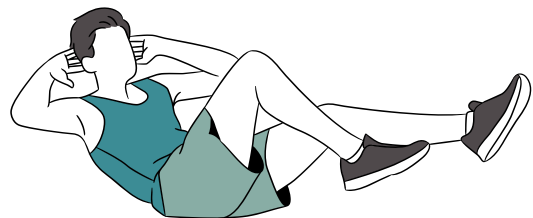
REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MAY LESSEN COVID RISKS

A global analysis of data suggests that regular exercise of about 20 minutes a day lowers your risk of developing Covid-19 or falling seriously ill with the disease. Regular physical activity is linked to a lower risk of Covid-19 infection, severity, hospitalization and death, according to the new pooled data analysis of the available evidence published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine.

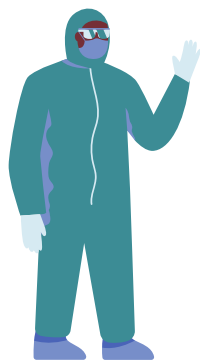
Including regular physical activity in weekly routines helps protect people against Covid-19, according to the peer-reviewed analysis of 16 global studies that included more than 1.8 million adults. Racking up 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity, offered the best protection against Covid infection and severe disease, the researchers found.



44% lower risk of serious disease compared to their physically inactive peers, the researchers said.



Those incorporating exercise into their weekly routine also had a 36% lower risk of hospital admission with Covid



43% lower risk of death from Covid than those who did not, the researchers found.



Regular exercisers had an 11% lower risk of Covid infection

SOURCE: [FORBES](#)

COVID-19 MAY HAVE LONG-TERM EFFECTS ON THE BRAIN

Covid-19 has proven capable of affecting nearly every part of the body including the brain. A study of 1.28 million people who had the disease, published Aug. 17 in the Lancet Psychiatry, sheds light on the impacts of Covid-19 on the minds of kids and adults.

Analyzing data from patients in the U.S. and several other countries, researchers found that within the first two months of getting Covid-19, people were more likely to experience anxiety and depression than people who got a different type of respiratory infection. And for up to two years after, people remained at greater risk for conditions such as brain fog, psychosis, seizures, and dementia

Changes in the brain including shrinkage, weakened connections and poorer performance on thinking and memory tests could explain 'brain fog' after Covid, even after mild cases. Most of what we know about how Covid can affect the brain has come from studies of severe infection.

In people with severe Covid, inflammatory cells from outside the brain can enter brain tissue and spread inflammation. There may be changes to blood vessels. Brain cells can even have changes similar to those seen in people with Alzheimer's disease (a progressive neurologic disorder that causes the brain to shrink).

For the first time, a new study has investigated the effects of mild Covid (infection that doesn't lead to hospital admission) on the brain.

Many people who have had Covid report feelings of "brain fog", fatigue and problems with concentration and memory long after their initial symptoms resolve. These problems, collectively referred to as "long Covid", may last for months even after mild infection. Long Covid is very common and may affect more than half of the people who catch Covid, even if they have a mild case.

SOURCE: [TIME](#)



EXPERT INTERVIEW



In this month's edition, we interviewed Ms. Samina Ghani, the District Education Officer (DEO) Elementary and Secondary Department Peshawar. She has done her master's degree in International Relations (IR) from Institute for Education and Research (IER) at Peshawar University. Previously, she has been working as a DEO in various districts (Malakand, Swabi Mardan, and Swat) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK).

In this interview, we talked about how during the pandemic, education for students was revived by applying strategies like tele-schools, "Taleem Ghar", by the Government across the country along with diagnostic assessment tests which were conducted by the district's administration.

Like most industries, Covid-19 also affected the education sector. What impact did Covid have on the education system?

When this pandemic came in March 2020 in Pakistan, we were having our Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) exams. Soon after, the Government announced nationwide lockdowns and decided to close down all schools from Primary to Secondary levels immediately. Initially, we were neither mentally prepared nor had any pre-plan to cope with the pandemic but with the passage of time, we realized and started thinking about alternative ways and methods we could adapt to the education sector.

What were the initiatives taken by the administration for the revival of education during the pandemic?

During the pandemic, we made WhatsApp groups for different classes to keep them engaged in curriculum-related activities so that they do not waste their time and remain engaged. The government started tele-schools across the country for primary and secondary level students with the idea of "Taleem Ghar". It was then realized that we could not afford to keep our students out of school for a long time so we decided to call back the students in segregation of different sections to maintain social distancing. Along with that, we reduced school timings as well.



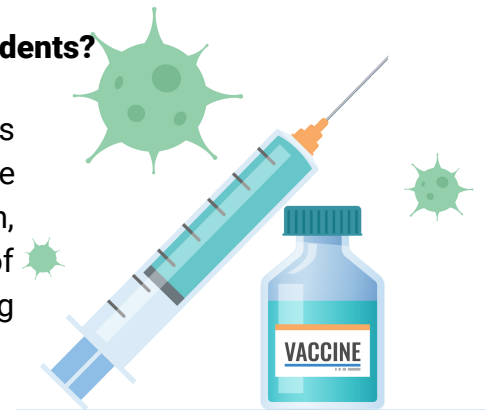
The administration in the education sector decided to conduct diagnostic assessment tests for primary school students to analyze their current knowledge base. Similarly, courses for different classes were reduced to core subjects only and the academic calendar was revised accordingly.

Awareness sessions were also conducted for the students by the education departments where SOPs or guidelines were given. Similarly, face masks and hand sanitizers were also provided to the students. Various IEC materials were displayed at the premises for the awareness of the students and staff.



Would you please elaborate on the vaccination process for the students?

During the vaccination phase, we faced a lot of difficulties as parents were initially reluctant to have their children vaccinated due to different myths and fake news circulating in society. But later on, we convinced them on how vaccination will benefit the health of their children. This resulted in the majority of the students getting their first dose of vaccination followed by the second one.



How have teachers responded to this pandemic?

The faculty remained very responsive during the pandemic, especially in terms of awareness sessions among students, SOP implementation, or opting for unconventional teaching mechanisms. Although the Government gave us clear directions to promote the students of grades one to eight levels without exams, these were teachers who decided to keep students of such grades engaged in different curriculum-related activities. This was only done to keep a sense of responsibility among the students and parents.

Do you have any suggestions/recommendations in case of future pandemics?

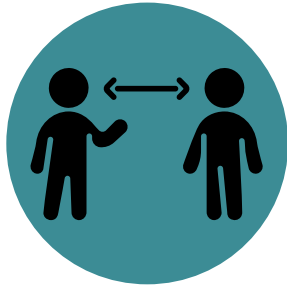
We need to restructure the staff training program that currently exists in a way that it can adapt to the need of future pandemics while including mitigation strategies therein.

Faculty staff needs to be aware that emergency handling cannot be stopped under any circumstances, so they should know what role they need to play to respond to it. Secondly, there should be a contingency plan available at the district level, that deals with the question of continuing children's schooling and meeting their needs in the case of a pandemic.

Thirdly the Pakistani government should extend the Information Technology (IT) outreach across the country to facilitate online education in case of emergencies.



PREVENTIVE MEASURES THAT CAN BE TAKEN AGAINST CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Wear a mask that has two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric and covers your mouth, nose and chin. It should not be loose on the sides.

Practice physical distancing outside your home by keeping a distance of 3 feet between you and others.

Get registered for vaccination as soon as possible and follow all pre and post-vaccination guidelines.



If you fall sick, stay at home and contact a healthcare provider.

Avoid unnecessary outdoor socialising and spending time in crowded spaces

Avoid unnecessary contact with eyes, nose and mouth as that increases chances of virus transfer.





VACCINATION CENTRES

MARDAN

DHQ Hospital Mardan
03005921350

Mardan Medical Complex, Mardan
03339298814

NOWSHERA

Cat D Hospital, Manki Sharif
03028318682

District Head Quarter Hospital
Nowshera
03005712208

PESHAWAR

Hayat Abad Medical Complex
Hayatabad
03005669116

Khyber Teaching Hospital
University Town
03339677767