

Markets, Pemba (Mozambique)

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 three traditional market settings in Pemba, Mozambique. 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=104) from three traditional markets in Pemba, conducted in February 2021.

Summary:

- Most fruit vendors were female. The proportion of female vendors was significantly lower for eggs, packaged foods and dairy.
- Almost half of the vendors have been a vendor in Pemba for less than 3 years.
- 98% of vendors observed changes in the market due to COVID-19; for most vendors, the mandatory wearing of face masks for vendor and consumer and the mandate for social distancing are the most useful changes.
- In addition to measures already in place, 47% of vendors wanted to receive regular communication on COVID 19, to reinforce the mandate to consumers and vendors to wear masks, and to set up handwashing or sanitiser stations.
- 99% of vendors have taken their own measures (wearing a face mask, using hand sanitiser, increased cleaning of surfaces, reminding customers on social distancing) due to COVID-19.
- 84% of vendors stated that the number of customers changed (substantial and slight decrease) during the pandemic.
- 46% of vendors used marketing strategies (additional discounts, credit, advertisements) to increase the number of customers or sales under COVID-19.
- 79% of vendors reported a change in their suppliers (increase in supplier's prices) since COVID-19 has been present in the area.

Vendors surveyed (n=104)

- 32% of vendors interviewed were female (Fig. 1).
- The age profile of the vendors was very mixed (Fig. 2).
- 56% of vendors identified as Makhuwa; 11% as Makonde; 8% as Portuguese; 8% as French and the remaining as others.
- 81% of vendors owned the business they were operating in; 15% of vendors were employed by family members.
- The length of being a vendor in Pemba has been mixed; 33% of those surveyed have been vendors for 1–3 years (Fig. 3).
- Overall, the major foods being sold were vegetables (50%) and legumes (40%). For eggs and packaged foods, the share of male vendors was significantly higher ($p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$, respectively); dairy was only sold by male vendors. A significantly higher proportion of female vendors sold fruits ($p < 0.05$).

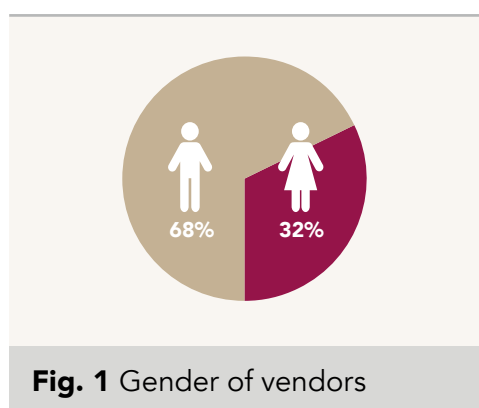


Fig. 1 Gender of vendors

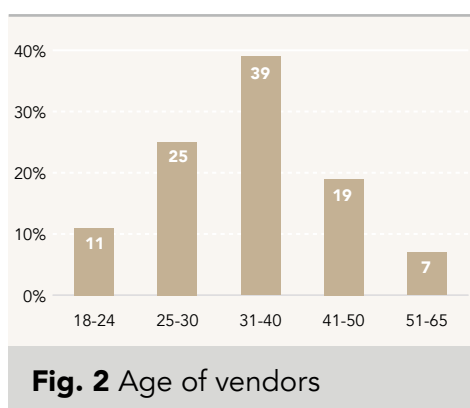


Fig. 2 Age of vendors

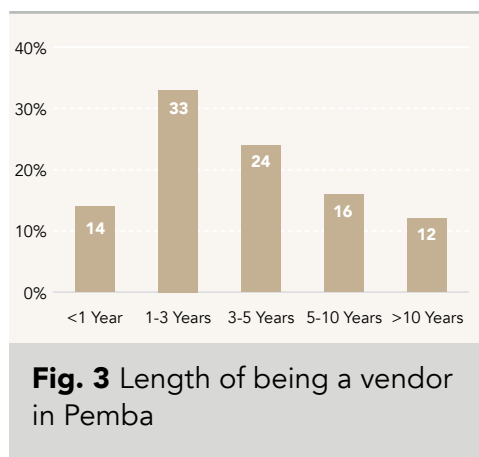


Fig. 3 Length of being a vendor in Pemba

Market response to COVID-19

Almost all vendors (98%) observed changes in the market due to COVID-19. Most vendors (93%) that noticed changes mentioned the mandate for consumers and vendors (87%) to wear masks/nose and mouth covers, the mandate for distancing (81%) and the setting up of handwashing or sanitiser stations in the market (49%). The same measures have also been recognised by the vendors as being useful to reduce the individual risk of contracting COVID-19 (Fig. 4).

In addition to the measures already in place, 47% of vendors wanted to receive regular communication on COVID 19, to reinforce the mandate to consumers (40%) and vendors (42%) to wear masks/nose and mouth covers and to set up (additional) handwashing or sanitiser stations (41%).

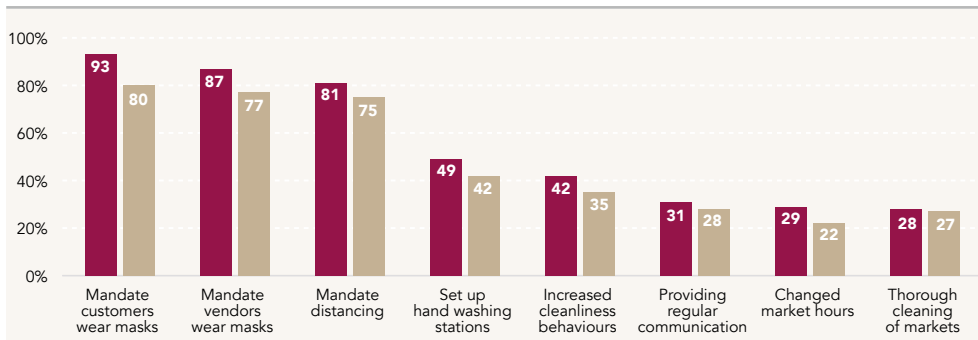


Fig. 4 Market responses to COVID-19 and usefulness of measures (n=102)

■ Measures recognised ■ Usefulness of measures

Knowledge and implementation of protective measures against COVID-19

Almost all vendors (99%) have taken measures to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. While 100% of the vendors stated that they always wear face masks, 48% of vendors always used hand sanitiser, 37% increased the cleaning of surfaces, 34% reminded customers to keep social distancing, 29% set up their own handwashing stations, and 16% modified opening hours (Fig. 5).

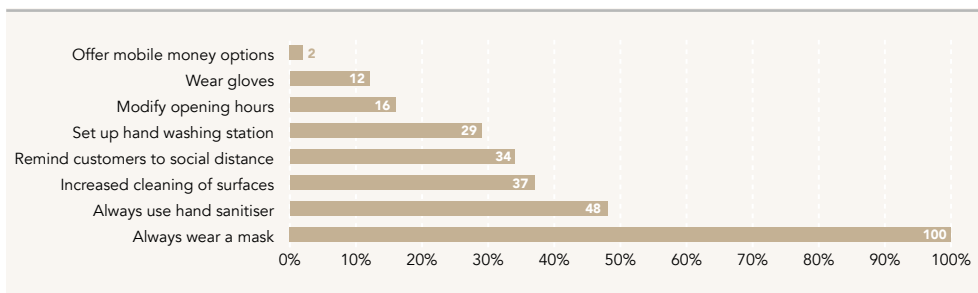


Fig. 5 Measures taken by vendors (n=103)

Impacts of COVID-19

About one quarter (24%) of vendors changed the type of products or food groups they sold during COVID-19, in the 6 months prior to the survey. Of those vendors who made changes, increases were reported for grains, eggs and vegetables, while for vegetables, fruits, fish, and poultry the answers were very mixed: different vendors reported both increases and decreases of these foods (Fig. 6).

A decrease in fruits was only mentioned by male vendors, although their share in selling these foods was significantly lower in this survey. Overall, reasons for changing the food products sold included a decrease in supply (40%), seasonal change (36%) and increased (32%) or decreased demand (24%) (Fig. 7).

In addition to changes in the products sold, a substantial number of vendors (84%) stated that the number of customers on a typical day changed due to COVID-19. Most of those vendors stating a change in the number of customers reported a substantial (60%) or a slight (36%) decrease in the number of customers (Fig. 8).

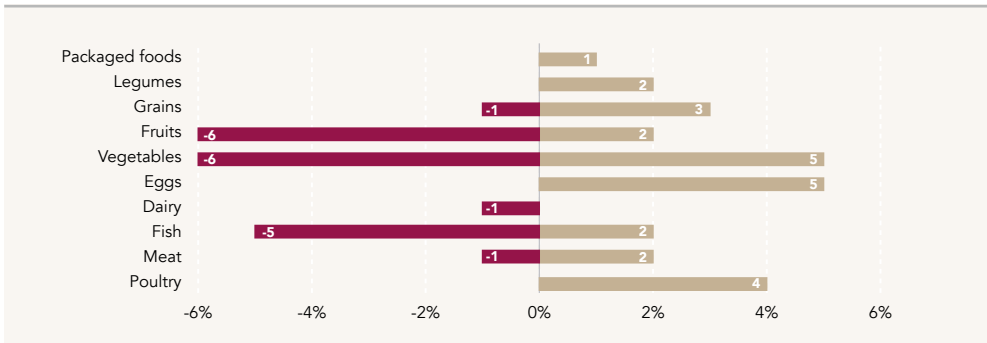


Fig. 6 Share of vendors changes in food products sold during COVID-19, last 6 months

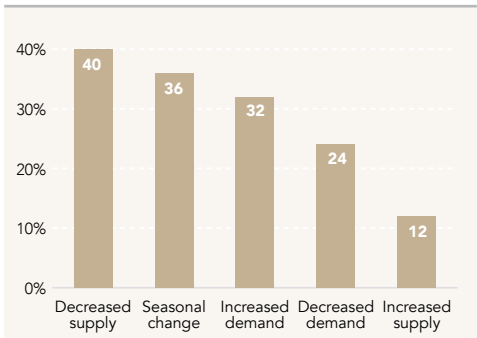


Fig. 7 Reasons for changing the foods sold, last 6 month (n=25)

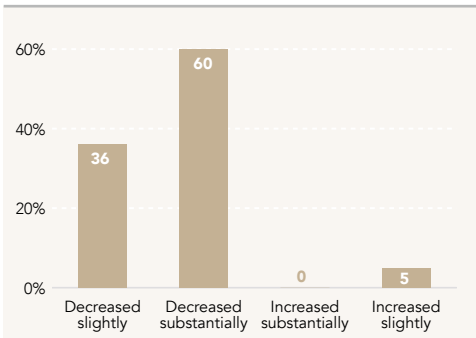


Fig. 8 Changes in number of customers during COVID-19 (n=87)

Business strategies and vendor connectivity

Almost half (46%) of vendors in this assessment used marketing strategies to increase the number of customers or sales under COVID-19. Most of those using marketing strategies provided additional discounts (79%), asked their own close network to advertise the business (38%), or provided credit (29%). Providing credit was mentioned by significantly more male vendors ($p < 0.05$). Overall, only a few vendors (2%) used advertisements such as leaflets, radio or tv announcements (Fig. 9).

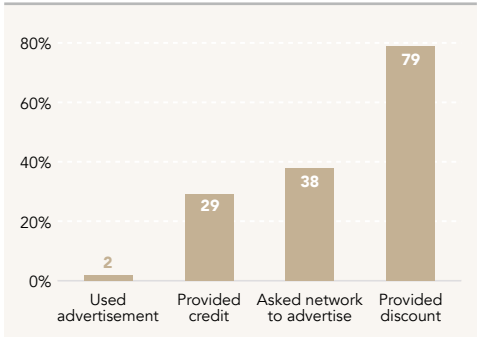
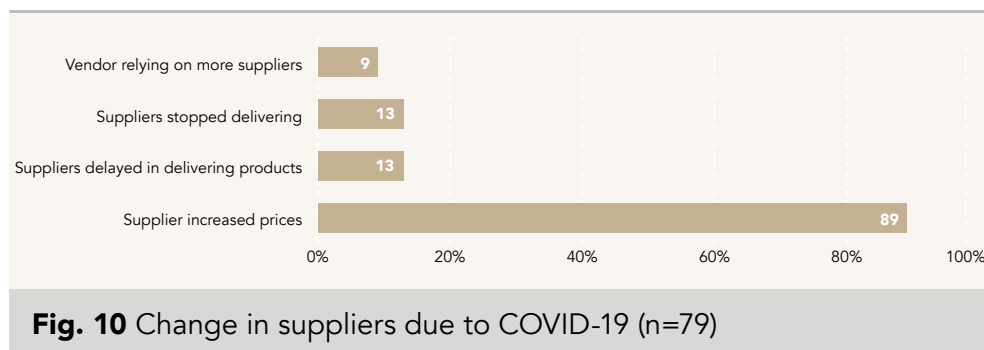


Fig. 9 Type of marketing strategies used (n=48)

Of the vendors surveyed, 79% reported experiencing a change in their suppliers since COVID-19 has been present in the area. Almost all (89%) of those vendors who recognised a change mention an increase in suppliers' prices; some vendors also mentioned that suppliers were delayed in delivering their products (13%), that suppliers stopped delivering (13%) or that vendors relied on more suppliers (9%) (Fig. 10).



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

Insights into vendor behaviours, perceptions and decisions under COVID-19 are based on interviews of 104 vendors from Mercado Alto Gingone (n=33), Mercado Central Pemba (n=34) and Mercado de Muchara (n=37) in Pemba, Mozambique. Non-probabilistic (quota) sampling techniques were used to select vendors selling different food commodities at different parts of the market, with different age and gender profiles from all three markets in Pemba. The interviews took place between 18–19th February 2021 using a structured questionnaire. The interview tool has previously been translated into Portuguese 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 and stored on KoBo Toolbox; data analysis and differences between vendor's gender using proportion tests were carried out 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
- gainhealth.org/impact/our-response-covid-19/effective-policymaking-and-coordination-during-pandemic

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