RAPID ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICES AND MEASURES ON SAFETY OF SANITATION AND WASTE WORKERS DURING COVID-19 IN PAKISTAN

A QUALITATIVE STUDY REPORT
The rapid assessment attempts to collect information on the knowledge and awareness about transmission, symptoms, prevention and treatment of coronavirus, hand hygiene practices and concerns of sanitation workers and solid waste collectors about Covid-19 pandemic, the kind of safety measures put in place to protect these workers and the gaps that exist in terms of safety measures. Using qualitative data collection tools, the data was collected from 63 respondents including solid waste collectors, sanitary workers (employed at homes, private offices and public department), and solid waste collectors at healthcare facilities through administration of key informant interviews.
RESPONDENT ATTRIBUTES

Geography wise

- Khyber Pukhtunkhwa: 14%
- Islamabad: 14%
- Punjab: 14%
- Azad Jammu & Kashmir: 14%
- Gilgit Baltistan: 14%
- Balochistan: 14%
- Sindh: 14%

Category wise

- Sanitation Worker: 67%
- Solid Waste Collectors: 22%
- Solid Waste Collectors at HCF: 11%

Organization wise

- Local Govt/ Municipalities: 33%
- Domestic Workers: 24%
- Private Offices: 16%
- Public Offices: 13%
- Private Hospitals: 8%
- Public Hospitals: 6%

Gender wise

- Female: 7%
- Male: 93%

Religion wise

- Muslims: 59%
- Christians: 35%
- Hindus: 6%

Employment nature wise

- Permanent: 55%
- Temporary: 29%
- Daily wager: 16%

Employment nature in each category wise

- Sanitation Worker (Domestic): 29%
- Sanitation Worker (Office): 29%
- Sanitation Worker (Public): 29%
- Solid Waste Collectors: 71%
- Solid Waste Collectors at HCF: 29%
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT COVID-19

What do you know about coronavirus?
- 87%: A disease related to flu, fever and cough
- 13%: A Chinese disease, A virus like cough and TB

Where did you first learn about Coronavirus?
- 47%: TV/Radio
- 19%: Workplace
- 13%: Family/Friends
- 9%: Public
- 5%: Social Media
- 3%: Mobile Dialtune
- 2%: Training
- 1%: Newspaper

Can you identify any means of this virus transmission?
- 49%: 1 way of virus transmission
- 30%: 2 ways of virus transmission
- 11%: Could not identify any way of virus transmission
- 10%: More than 2 ways of virus transmission
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT COVID-19 (CONT.)

Are you aware of its symptoms?

- Identified 1 symptom: 29%
- Identified 2 symptoms: 14%
- Identified 3 symptoms: 35%
- Identified more than 3 symptoms: 11%
- Could not identify any symptoms: 11%

Do you know what you can do to prevent it?

- Use of masks: 26%
- Social Distancing: 25%
- Wearing gloves: 13%
- Frequent Handwash: 11%
- Avoid Handshake: 6%
- Use of sanitizer: 5%
- Wearing protective shoes/gowns: 5%
- Maintain Cleanliness: 5%
- Avoid Hugging: 1%
- I don’t know about any measure: 3%

Do you know what to do if you fall ill?

- Going to hospital/doctor: 11%
- Isolating/Quarantine: 11%
- Getting corona test: 11%
- I don’t know any treatment: 7%
- Taking medicines: 5%
- Contacting Helpline provided by Govt.: 5%
- Washing hands frequently: 2%
Do you think keeping good hand hygiene is important during pandemic time?  

Do you wash your hands after returning home from work?  

Are there handwashing facilities with soap and water or any hand sanitizer available where you work?  

Are there handwashing facilities with soap and water or any hand sanitizer available at home?
IMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19

Are you going to work during the lockdown period?

If Yes, did your work hours/days increase, decrease or remain the same?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Remain same</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes 89%
No* 11%

*Discontinued work due to closure of offices
*Laid off by employer
*Sent on paid leaves

What was your monthly average income before COVID-19?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents Categories</th>
<th>Income Range PKR</th>
<th>% of Permanent Employees within income range</th>
<th>% of Non-permanent Employees within income range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation Worker (Public)</td>
<td>15000 - 35000</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation Worker (Homes)</td>
<td>7000 - 15000</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation Worker (Offices)</td>
<td>6000 - 30000</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid Waste Collector</td>
<td>8000 - 20000</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid Waste Collector at HCF</td>
<td>13000 - 25000</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you face any financial challenges due to lockdown?

46% Yes
54% No

Has there been any change in your wage/income since the lockdown was imposed?

Decrease 38%
Remain same 54%
Increase 8%
IMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19 (CONT.)

How did you cope with the financial implication?

- Self-managed*: 51%
- Support by others: 49%
  - Took loans
  - Use saving
  - Selling personal items

- Private NGOs/Business: 10%
- Government: 42%
- Individual philanthropist: 26%
- Employer: 22%

Are you aware of any compensation or support which will be provided by the government/your employer, if you or any other sanitation worker falls sick with Corona virus?

- Slightly aware: 76%
- Not aware: 24%
KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES ON SAFETY MEASURES

Do you know about the safety measures one should take during work to prevent catching this virus?

[Image of person wearing a mask]

Yes 100%

Do you practice these safety measures while working?

- Fully practicing: 85%
- Partially practicing: 8%
- Not practicing: 7%

If fully/partially practicing, please specify these safety measures

- Masks: 39%
- Gloves: 28%
- Washing hands with water and soap: 17%
- Using sanitizer: 13%
- Using green tea and hot drinking water: 3%

Have you received any training from your employer on practice of safety measures for personal protection?

Yes 55%

(It should be noted here that only permanent and contract base employee have received training from their employers)
AVAILABILITY AND USE OF PPEs

Do you have any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) now, like masks/gloves/boots/coverall/goggles etc?

If Available, are these PPEs reusable or disposable?

Not available
Available

10%
90%

53% Disposable
47% Reusable

How do you disinfect your PPEs for reuse?

After washing with hot water
Washing with detergent
Washing with Dettol

(It should be noted here that these materials were not available at workplace and respondents were using these at home)

What are the challenges that you faced while using PPEs?

Suffocation
Poor quality/ill fitted masks and gloves
Shortage of supplies
Financial implications in case where they have to buy PPEs
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