



VITAL ECONOMIC OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT (VEOM)

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGIES FOR VITAL STOCKS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

COVID-19 is a health emergency, however it has impacted economy the most, which is resulting in loss of income, business and employment. If the situation gets worse and COVID-19 pandemic persists, the crisis may spread out from health and economy to food security. The lockdowns may disrupt distribution channels of essential goods and thus effecting the availability of stocks. It will affect both the supply side and the demand side of public goods and services. Therefore, it is high time to closely monitor the decline in food trends in the province.

In "Food Prices Post COVID-19 Outbreak: The Case of Punjab", it is stated that while there is no need to panic for an imminent risk to food security, there is also no reason to be complacent either.¹ Thus, making it mandatory to keep an eye on the food situation in the province. The idea is to have a complete picture of vital stocks available in the province. So that, in the case of panic-buying and disruptions in logistics, remedial actions can be take/n.

SECTOR WISE ESTIMATES OF VULNERABLE EMPLOYMENT

1. Wholesalers data collected through District Food Coordinators.
2. Utility Stores data collected through Assistant Directors of Industries Department.

WHOLESALE DATA COLLECTED THROUGH DISTRICT FOOD COORDINATOR

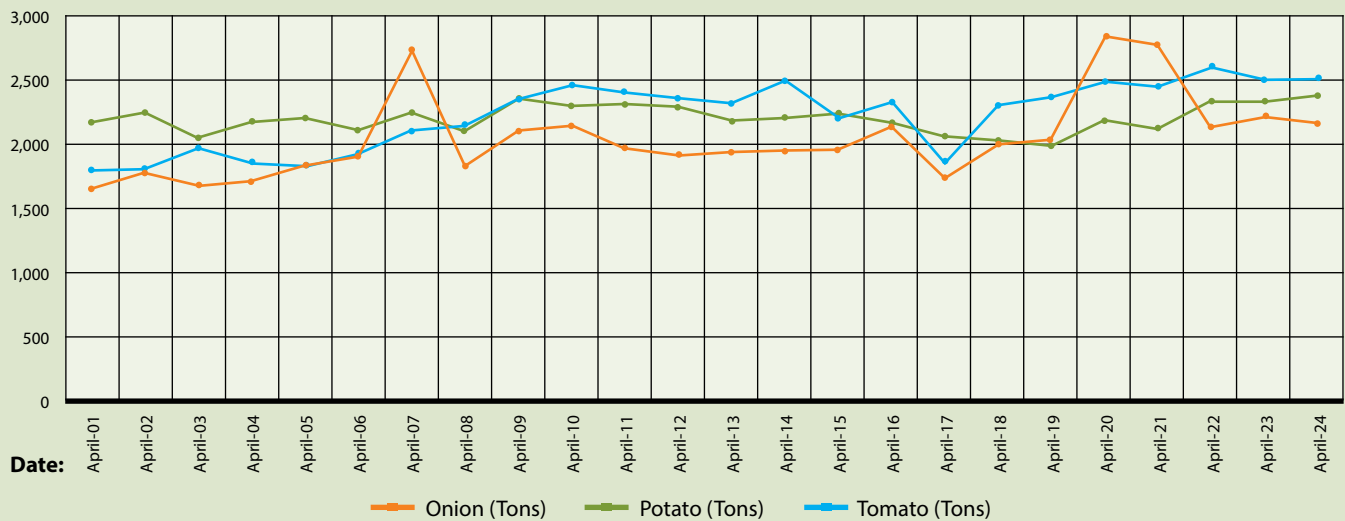
District Food Coordinators (DFCs) are collecting information of ten essential food commodities, which include wheat, sugar, potato, onion, tomato, edible oil, meat, pulse, rice and milk. DFC's team collects data (manually on paper on telephone and sometimes by visiting wholesalers' offices / premises) from main wholesalers of their respective districts. The team then fills the manually collected data in Microsoft Excel (template prepared by Food Department) and share that data (via excel file) with Food Department and District Administration. Simultaneously, DFC enters the data in Performance Management and Reforms Unit (PMRU) dashboard. PMRU receives data from all the districts on their dashboard and shares the report with the offices of the Chief Secretary and Additional Chief Secretary for informed decision-making.

UTILITY STORES DATA COLLECTED THROUGH ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT

One Area Manager is in-charge of around 10 Utility Stores. Area Manager collects data of five essential food commodities (wheat, oil, rice, pulses and sugar) manually on paper via telephone and sometimes by visiting the utility stores) and submits it to the Area Manager. Area Manager shares the information with Regional Manager. One Regional Manager has around seven Area Managers (depending on the district and geography). Regional Manager collects data from all Area Managers in hard form (paper format). Regional Manager's team fills the manually collected data in Microsoft Excel form and shares that data (in an Excel file) with the Zonal Manager. The Zonal Manager then shares the data with all the relevant stakeholders including Food Department and District Administration Office.

¹<https://www.google.com/search?q=Food+Prices+Post+COVID-19+Outbreak%3A+The+Case+of+Punjab&aq=Food+Prices+Post+COVID-19+Outbreak%3A+The+Case+of+Punjab&aqs=chrome..69l57.205j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

A glimpse of the Essential Food Stocks from April 1st to 24th



Daily Stock Analysis - April 1-24

CASE STUDY: MONITORING OF VITAL COMMODITIES IN INDIA

"In India, 22 commodities have been termed essential by Essential Community Act², which includes grains, pulses, edible oils, vegetables and other items such as sugar, milk, salt. The price and stock details of these commodities are being monitored.³ In India, to avoid disruption of supply of basic commodities, a devoted control room is setup in Delhi by the Local Government."

POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

1. Include other commodities in vital stocks such as face masks, hand sanitizers, soap bars, surface disinfectants (Dettol etc.) and life-saving medicines. Use of technology for data collection, such as a web-based or mobile-based application for real time data collection. This is a short-term solution and will have benefits like generating accurate data in real time and will have lower administration cost.
2. Stock levels of selected essential commodities i.e. onions, tomatoes and potatoes between 1st and 24th April were stable (within 10% of average). However, should there be a large dip in stock levels (larger than 10% drop) the provincial government has limited policy options to rectify the situation. In case of dwindling stocks in one district, mandated supplies can be arranged from other districts with higher stocks. Moreover, armed with accurate information, the provincial government will have the leverage to take remedial actions.
3. Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and national companies in the business of vital commodities should be engaged to partner with the provincial government and to contribute in collection of real time data on stock levels. A comparable case of "government intervention" to ensure supplies of essential commodities exists in the case of "petroleum" products. The Government of Pakistan liaisons with the private sector to make sure the availability of petroleum at all times by indicating the level of stocks, which should be maintained by them at all times.
4. Robust stock analytics should be introduced to analyse consumption of vital commodities at district level and compare stock levels against average consumption per item / month. Also, the provincial government should set ranges within which stocks levels of vital commodities should be. All this information can then be made available for entities engaged in the business of vital commodities to, with the provincial government's role of being a facilitator.
5. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should also frame and implement standard operating procedures for actions to be taken when vital stocks are not at the desired levels.

²An Act to provide, in the interest of the general public, for the control of the production, supply and distribution of, and trade and commerce, in certain commodities.

³<https://www.sundayguardianlive.com/news/no-need-ward-no-shortage-food-grains>