

Urban Food Security and Food Marketing in Metropolitan Lahore, Pakistan



**Report of a workshop
held at Town Hall, Lahore
10th June 1999**

organised by
Metropolitan Corporation Lahore
and
Agriculture and Livestock Products Marketing and Grading Department
(Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock - Government of Pakistan)

under the auspices of the
Food Supply and Distribution to Cities Initiatives of the
Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

FOREWORD

The city of Lahore is facing increasingly serious food security problems mainly as a result of many constraints affecting the way food reaches the city and is redistributed within the whole urban area. Such constraints, daily faced by traders, shopkeepers and transporters, mean that consumers need to pay higher than necessary prices for accessing food, the quality of which is often less than optimal. Low-income inhabitants of Metropolitan Lahore, estimated around 50 percent of its present 5.7 million inhabitants, face a serious food security risk.

Furthermore, inappropriate hygienic conditions in urban markets and street food sales are causing health problems to consumers. Such problems can and must be solved. Finally, the quality of air and water as well as the overall environment in Lahore, are being undermined by the growing number of food-laden trucks, which create traffic congestion, and the increasing amount of organic and inorganic waste generated by urban markets. These problems contribute to a progressive deterioration of the quality of life in our city.

The city of Lahore is expected to double its present population within a decade. Such high urban growth is likely to further increase poverty conditions in the city. Consequently, the food security of an increasing urban constituencies will progressively deteriorate.

We should be concerned with the food security of our cities, not only because it is a matter of justice, but also because food security, urban political stability and urban development are linked. We thus need to face our problems and take adequate steps to ensure that we all have access to good quality and safe food, at the lowest possible costs.

The challenges ahead are numerous and require, first and foremost, that we, the decision-makers, have a proper understanding of how the food requirements of Lahore are currently satisfied and will be satisfied in the next five to ten years. Secondly, we need to have common and comprehensive urban food security policies and strategies. Action plans with clearly identified institutional responsibilities must be formulated.

For this reason, the Metropolitan Corporation of Lahore organised, in collaboration with the Agricultural and Livestock Products Marketing and Grading Department (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock) a one-day workshop, the main conclusions and recommendations of which are summarised in this brief report. The workshop took place under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). The objective of this workshop was to sensitise senior decision makers concerned with urban development and food security issues about the challenges that rapid urbanisation and increasing urban poverty pose on urban food security, and the need to take appropriate, concerted action.

The content of this report is by no means exhaustive. It represents a first attempt to look at the problems of our city from different angles and sheds some light on the key problems requiring urgent solution. It is hoped that this report will stimulate further thought and, indeed, action as well as proper collaboration between the various institutions and organisations, both private and public, which are involved, directly or indirectly, in food trade activities.

Meaningful and sustainable solutions to the food security problems facing Lahore will only be achieved if we all put our work together towards a common goal. Under the dynamic leadership of the Chief Minister, Punjab, Mr. Shabaz Sharif, the Metropolitan Corporation Lahore is ready to play its role.

Khwaja Ahmed Hassaan,
Lord Mayor,
Metropolitan Corporation,
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INTRODUCTION

Urban Food Security and Food Marketing. A challenge to City and Local Authorities

The world is becoming more urbanized and by the year 2025, according to UN projections, 61 per cent of the world population will be living in urban areas. How to adequately feed the growing numbers of the urban consumers, many of whom will still be living under poverty conditions, is the challenge.

In some regions, it is the high rate of growth of cities, rather than the level of urbanization, that is the concern. The way food will reach all these areas, and the cost at which this will be achieved, is indeed a matter of concern, if the food security of urban consumers is to be protected.

Urban growth has many consequences for the food situation. It increases marketed food demand but reduces the availability of productive land in both urban and peri-urban areas. It makes existing market areas and infrastructure inadequate to cope with the growing pressures in both rural and urban areas. Urban expansion modifies food-purchasing habits in favour of neighbourhood shops and supermarkets and increases the demand for processed food.

While private food marketing systems are generally considered flexible, efficient, highly structured and organised, the overall cost borne by consumers may be very high owing to constraints on farm production and on private marketing systems. Such constraints get compounded in the context of rapid urban expansion.

As urban food demand rises, food supply and distribution systems (FSDSs) have to supply the inhabitants of cities with increasing amounts of food coming from new and, possibly, more distant production areas and/or from more intensive production systems. Urban areas can provide the necessary incentives for increased national production made possible by more remunerative producer prices if linkages between production and consumption areas are strengthened.

Farmers, traders and transporters require an appropriate legislative and regulatory framework, transport facilities, credit, investment incentives, skills, etc.

Forms of food distribution and food processing activities, which simplify marketing channels, need to be stimulated.

Newly urbanized areas require adequate space and facilities for private food retail activities. They must be adequately planned.

Expanding urban food requirements increase the need for transport as well as market infrastructure and services. An adequate analysis of medium and long-term food needs and their production sources will help identify investments into rural road construction and maintenance, as well as into transport facilities at intra-urban level.

With regard to market infrastructure, large number of public markets have burned down many developing countries over the last few years, often because of inadequate maintenance and poor management, or to force traders into new markets. These sudden blows to the local economy have obvious important financial implications for small traders and entrepreneurs. These incidents immediately increase the cost of food access by consumers who are forced to go to more distant markets for their food purchases.

Increasing commercial activities in urban markets often lead to higher valued manufactured products pushing food products into more remote and unhealthy parts of the market or in the streets around markets, with implications for food quality and safety. Occupation of land along roads create major traffic disruptions, with consequent higher fuel consumption and operating costs.

Both the proliferation and rapid turn-over of casual middlemen in markets in many developing countries, give the impression of economic vitality but complicate the collection of dues and affect the profitability of facilities and the ability to maintain them. This lowers the economic return to business people willing to invest in market and community development.

Urban markets are usually seen as a source of revenues to local town coffers, but those funds are often not adequately reinvested in appropriate infrastructure maintenance and better services. This leads to traders feeling that market taxes are not justified and to unrest when they are increased.

Greater food quantities may also have an adverse impact on the environment, caused by air pollution and noise arising from increased traffic, as well as by growing amounts of market garbage.

In almost all cities, market authorities guarantee cleaning inside the markets, but this is rarely adequate. Cleaning is not such a problem for vendors of manufactured good, but sections producing a great deal of waste (farm produce, and especially butchers) find it much harder to maintain even a minimum level of hygiene. These conditions have major implications for public health and food safety.

Butchers and fish sellers require specially designed freezer storage facilities. Some are privately owned, but too few of them presently exist, and rent is often high. The few cold storage rooms that market managers have built are inefficient, mostly because of inappropriate design, or do not work at all, for lack of proper maintenance.

Many traders actually live in the markets, which are sometimes the only places where the most destitute households can find food. Street restaurants are essential in markets, but are often not in compliance with fire-or-food-hygiene codes and practices.

Plans to develop wholesale markets away from urban centres are often doomed with failure mainly because of an inadequate understanding of how food marketing channels work and, particularly, of the cost of food redistribution within the city.

The need for few markets and market rehabilitation programmes needs to be correctly understood and analysed in the context of evolving urban conditions. This requires that market infrastructure be adequately integrated into municipal; and city plans because of their need for land,

sale space, water, electricity, sewerage, cleaning services, security and their possible implications for traffic, public health and the environment, as well as for housing and land markets. It is also necessary that they adequately respond to the needs of markets users and that they are properly managed and maintained.

Improved food marketing systems help job creation, notably of women, and therefore family incomes. Improving their efficiency should not necessarily mean the destruction of the small-scale informal sector, which plays an important role in supplying low-cost food to the poorer consumers. There is, of course, an element of contradiction between efficiency and social objectives in terms of employment, although varying levels of economic development may well accommodate different "mixtures" of informal and more modern forms of food distribution.

To achieve this, the role and responsibilities of public and private development actors, particularly municipalities, chambers of commerce and of agriculture need to be recognised. Private trader and consumer associations must be fostered and enabled to engage in a constructive dialogue with central and local government institutions.

The challenges facing decision makers in the years to come, include therefore how to meet the rapidly increasing urban food demand whilst reducing dependence on imports and achieving an efficient and dynamic distribution of nutritious foodstuffs at reasonable prices to the poorest sectors of urban populations, while creating jobs in the food marketing and distribution sector.

Development initiatives should be based on detailed interdisciplinary analysis of the implications that the future growth of urban food demand and city boundaries is likely to have on food supply, on the structure and organisation of food marketing systems and, finally, on the efficiency with which food will be moved to and distributed within urban areas. This should permit the definition of urban policies and strategies and the preparation of development and investment programmes at urban, peri-urban and rural

levels, with clearly identified priorities and responsibilities. Such programmes will reflect the variety of urban situations, specific problems and conflicts, and present appropriate solutions.

This is why the identification and subsequent implementation of development programmes and projects, which span urban and rural areas, require collaboration among research and development organisations as well as among institutions at various administrative levels (local and central).

Particular attention needs to be paid to the strengthening of local technical competence, particularly in the integration of food distribution into urban space management and into the preparation of urban food security policies and development programmes.

THE WORKSHOP

A workshop on *Urban food Security and Food Marketing in Lahore* was held at Town Hall, Lahore on the 10 June 1999. It was organised by The Metropolitan Corporation, Lahore and the Livestock Products Marketing and Grading Department (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Government of Pakistan), under the auspices of the *Food Supply and Distribution to Cities* initiatives of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). The workshop programme is contained in annex 1.

The workshop was attended by about fifty participants, from different Federal and Provincial Governments institutions and Metropolitan/Municipal Corporations of Lahore and Gujranwala. The list of participants is in annex-2.

Mr. Olivio Argenti, Focal Point for FAO's initiatives on *Food Supply and Distribution to Cities*, presented the key note address. His intervention is summarised in the Introduction: *Urban Food security and Food Marketing. A challenge to City and Local Authorities*. He also mentioned that FAO's technical assistance is available, subject to adequate funding, to City and Municipal Authorities to improve the efficiency of food supply and

distribution systems and in protecting urban food security, as well as promoting technical collaboration between twinned cities.

Mr. Khwaja Ahmed Hassaan, Lord Mayor, Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) mentioned that few activities have been initiated in Lahore for improving the supply of food to Lahore under acceptable hygienic conditions. These included the initiative for construction of the slaughterhouse, milk pasteurizing plants and establishment of food testing laboratories. He recognised, however, that the issues at stake are complex and required appropriate attention. He consequently stressed the need to strengthen the technical capacity of the staff of MCL for more technically sound decisions on urban food security and food marketing matters. The Lord Mayor stressed the urgency to count with accurate studies of food supply and distribution systems to Lahore with a view to identify current and anticipated constraints.

The chief guest, Mr. Jahangir Khan Tareen, Chairman of the Chief Minister's Task Force on Agriculture (Punjab), said that the Chief Minister and himself will look with great interest at implementing plans and programmes proposals aimed at improving food supply to Lahore. He stressed the specific need to develop peri-urban agriculture to improve the food supply to Lahore.

Plenary discussions - lead by Mr. O. Argenti, FAO assisted by Mr. M. Iqbal, UNDP-Quetta - touched upon a large number of interrelated aspects, which are summarised below.

Summary of Workshop Discussions and Recommendations

Pakistan is a large country of 145 million people having an average per capita income of about US\$ 500. Lahore is the second largest city with an official population estimated at 5.7 million growing at an annual rate of 4.5 percent. According to unofficial sources, Lahore has a population of 7.5 million, growing at a rate greater than 10 percent per annum. Thus, the population of Lahore is expected to double in 7-8 years time. Such a high growth rate is due to high birth rate (around 2.8 percent) and an

alarming high rate of rural migration to Lahore. As a result, the number of Kachi Abadis (slum areas) is fast increasing and the current level of poverty¹ in Lahore, estimated at 50 percent, is expected to grow further.

Food prices are very high and unstable for the poor in Lahore². The transport costs are high. The marketing margin ranges from 30-100 percent for cereals, pulses, vegetables and dairy and livestock products. The marketing margins are equally shared between costs and profits. No food is grown within urban areas. Almost all poultry meat, less than 50 percent of goat meat and 20 percent of vegetables come from peri-urban areas of Lahore. The remainder comes from distant rural areas.

The city is growing with only limited town planning and management, resulting in inadequate infrastructure and facilities. This is particularly so for transportation and food marketing facilities. There is no wholesale market of cereals and pulses in the city. Out of the three fruit and vegetable wholesale markets, which were developed at least 20 years back, one has never functioned, while the second is functioning only partly. The only functioning wholesale market, that in Badami Bagh, is facing a serious congestion problem due to the high number of lorries as well as poor parking, berthing, storage, drainage water and sanitation facilities. Access roads to wholesale markets are in bad conditions causing traffic congestion and delays in transportation of marketed perishable items. This situation, compounded by inadequate packaging practices, results in poor hygiene and high food losses.

The lack of implementation of existing laws exacerbates the problems. Services and facilities being provided by market committees are insufficient for proper grading, packing and storage of food items. These agencies spend only a little percentage of their earnings on the provision

of required facilities. The high cost of land and non-provision of funds for development of markets by local government will have a further negative impact. Current laws and regulations do not attract private investments.

The Market Committee Act, which governs wholesale and retail market activities, was promulgated in 1939 and has become outdated to adequately address the current food problems to ensure the supply of safe food, under hygienic conditions, to the urban masses. Out of about 20 million litres of milk being supplied to Lahore daily, only 3.5 million litres are pasteurized. The remainder is often adulterated and the Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) is unable to control this situation. The law on food hygiene is also an old one and does not properly penalise the adulterators.

The heavy and slow moving traffic has made Lahore very polluted and a difficult city in which to live. Multiple taxation on different food items to the city makes food expensive. Involvement of a number of agencies for licensing and regulating the food trade, without adequate coordination, makes the retail level food trade a difficult business. Consumers are not aware of their rights nor of the importance of obtaining hygienically safe food. This leads to high rate of occurrence of diet related diseases. The inadequate management of market waste (both organic and inorganic) is an additional source of an unhealthy environment.

All these factors have led to deterioration of an already inefficient food supply and distribution system in the Lahore Metropolis. The Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) is building a new slaughterhouse and a milk pasteurising plant near Lahore which are expected to be functional in 2001. However, there seems to be insufficient coordination between MCL with other Government institutions: Food, Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Health of the provincial Government of the Punjab.

The city of Lahore also needs to develop an efficient and comprehensive food retail system, to cater for the needs of its expanding population. Such a system should accommodate the large number of informal street vendors and promote micro food retail enterprises, thus creating job

¹ The poor are those whose monthly income is less than Rs. 3,000/- per month.

² The prices of food items in Lahore, as compared to other cities of Punjab, are 5-10% higher.

opportunities. Similarly, with respect to meeting value-added food needs. Micro food processing enterprises, which need to be stimulated, will generate income opportunities particularly for women.

At the rural level either no or less farm to market roads exist. The transportation costs for the perishable commodity range from 10 percent to 25 percent of the prices received by farmers. This is even higher when there is a glut situation in the market.

The MCL and the Ministry of Agriculture consider it necessary to increase the flow of food products from peri-urban areas (mainly fruits and vegetables, poultry and livestock) and need to define specific strategies and intervention programmes for the development of peri-urban agriculture.

If an effort is not made to sensitise the local decision-makers and enhance their technical skills to identify and address the problems on time, the whole food supply and distribution system may

collapse. This will not only put at risk the survival of the families of a large number of small traders, market carriers and street vendors, whose jobs depend on food marketing, but it will also endanger the food security of the urban masses and the urban poor in particular.

Synthesis of work-group discussions

Participants formed five groups (see list in annex 3) to discuss the following topics:

- (1) Wholesale Markets;
- (2) Retail Markets;
- (3) Food Trade and the Environment;
- (4) Legislation, Regulation and Private Investments;
- (5) Rural-Urban Linkages.

Each group identified key problems, their expected consequences, and the required interventions. Their findings are summarised below.

Group 1: Wholesale Markets

Key problems	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wholesale market for food grains does not exist in Lahore.• Existing wholesale markets for fruits and vegetables have inadequate space and parking for the vehicles, waste disposal, water and sanitation facilities.• Markets for livestock are insufficient and have inadequate facilities for both traders and animals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a wholesale market for grains.• Remove encroachments, organise/regulate vehicular traffic and improve sanitation including solid waste disposal.• Expand livestock market and improve facilities both for traders and animals in the existing markets.

Group 2: Retail Markets

Key problems	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The city has inadequate retail markets.• Unhygienic conditions of retail markets cause unhealthy environment and health hazards.• Congested retail markets.• Processors/wholesalers do not regularly supply the food items to the retailers.• Retailers do not get warranty of the food being supplied to them by processors and wholesalers.• Interference of different agencies makes the retail level business difficult.• Excessive taxation thereby increasing food prices.• Absence of laws protecting consumer interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proper retail markets need to be developed, which would also accommodate the large number of street vendors.• Improve cleanliness, sanitation and hygiene in retail markets.• Remove encroachments from retail markets and regulate vehicle parking.• Improve business norms and ethics thereby socially obliging processors/wholesalers to ensure regular supplies.• Formulate/enforce relevant regulations.• Clearly define role of institutions/agencies, and avoid duplication.• Rationalise taxation to avoid financial burden on food insecure urban consumer.• Introduce laws protecting consumer interests, such as, Consumer Protection Act.

Group 3: Food Trade and the Environment

Key problems	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dumping of garbage and solid waste both in wholesale and retail market places.• Absence of recycling facilities.• Extensive use of wooden crates packing encouraging deforestation.• Extensive use of polyethylene packing.• Weak quality control allowing entry of uncleaned and unsorted produce into the market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adequate arrangements for timely disposal of garbage and solid waste.• Establish recycling plants.• Encourage use of cardboard packaging.• Encourage use of paper bags and for immediate remedy arrange collection and proper disposal of used polyethylene packing.• Exercise strict quality control.

Group 4: Legislation, Regulation and Private Investments

Key problems	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laws and rules are outdated and not commensurate with the present food supply and distribution system.• Rules and regulations are not known by majority of the traders, transporters and consumers.• Rules and regulations are not being strictly imposed for ensuring the food quality and safety.• Undue harassment by police and other agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and revise rules and regulations to make them commensurate with present and future requirements.• Create adequate awareness about laws relating to food supply, quality and safety.• Strictly enforce food laws.• Role of different agencies to be made clear and facilitative for food marketing.

Group 5: Rural-Urban Linkages

Key problems	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inadequate farm to market roads.• Poor crop planning and marketing in response to market demand.• Lack of processing and storage facilities in production areas.• Food, especially perishables, transported over long distance to feed urban consumers.• Urban food supplies not keeping pace with rapidly increasing demand.• Lack of group activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop farm to market roads network.• Improve marketing extension services especially market information to guide market oriented production.• Develop adequate facilities for primary processing and storage in close vicinity of production areas.• Undertake programmes for the developments of peri urban agriculture.• Encourage adoption of improved technologies to enhance food production/supplies and reduce distribution losses.• Encourage formation of producer and consumer groups and their direct interactions.

Annex 1
WORKSHOP AGENDA
10th June 1999

08:30 – 09:00	Registration of Participants and Arrival of Chief Guest
Opening Session:	Chief Guest, Mr. Jahangir Khan Tareen, Chairman, Chief Minister’s Task Force on Agriculture
0900 -- 0905	Recitation from the Holy Quran
0905 -- 0910	Welcome address by Mr. Saifullah Khan Khattak, ALMA, Islamabad
0910 -- 0940	Keynote Address by Mr. Olivio Argenti, Focal Point, 's Initiatives on <i>Food Supply and Distribution to Cities</i> , FAO, Rome, Italy
0940 -- 0950	Keynote Address by Mr. Khwaja Ahmed Hassaan, Lord Mayor, Metropolitan Corporation Lahore
0950 -- 1000	Opening Address by Chief Guest
1000 -- 1030	Tea Break
Working Session 1:	
1030 -- 1250	Discussion in plenary (discussion leader: Olivio Argenti, FAO, Rome)
1250 -- 1300	Formulation of Working Groups and Their Terms of Discussion
1300 -- 1400	Lunch
Working Session 2:	
1400 -- 1530	Work-groups: 1. Wholesale Markets; 2. Retail Markets; 3. Food Trade and the Environment; 4. Legislation, Regulation and Private Investments; 5. Rural-Urban Linkages.
1530 -- 1545	Tea
Closing Session:	Chief Guest Mr. Khwaja Ahmed Hassaan, Lord Mayor, Lahore MCL
1545 -- 1615	Presentations by Working Groups and Discussion in Plenary of the Conclusions and Recommendations
1615 -- 1630	Closing Remarks by Chief Guest Closure of the workshop

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Annex 3

Discussion Groups' Participants

Group 1: Wholesale Markets

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2. Mr. Ilyas Anjum
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4. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Latif

Group 2: Retail Markets

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3. Mr. Javaid Anwar
4. Mr. Javed Iqbal
5. Dr. Masood Ashraf
6. Ch. Muneer Ahmed

Group 3: Food Trade and the Environment

1. Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque Baloch
2. Mr. Shafiq Ahmed
3. Syed Zakir Hussain Shah
4. Mr. Muhammad Jamil
5. Dr. Hamid Jalil
6. Maj (R) Zafar Hayat Niazi
7. Mr. Khushnood Ahmed Qureshi

Group 4: Legislation, Regulation and Private Investment

1. Mr. Muhammad Sharif
2. Major Muhammad Akram
3. Mr. Sikandar Shah
4. Mr. Jawaad Rafique
5. Dr. Asad-ur-Rehman Bhatti

Group 5: Rural Urban Linkages

1. Mr. Altaf Akbar Khan
2. Mr. Manzoor Ahmed
3. Dr. Bashir Ahmed
4. Mr. Mubashar Hussain
5. Mr. Waheed Butt