

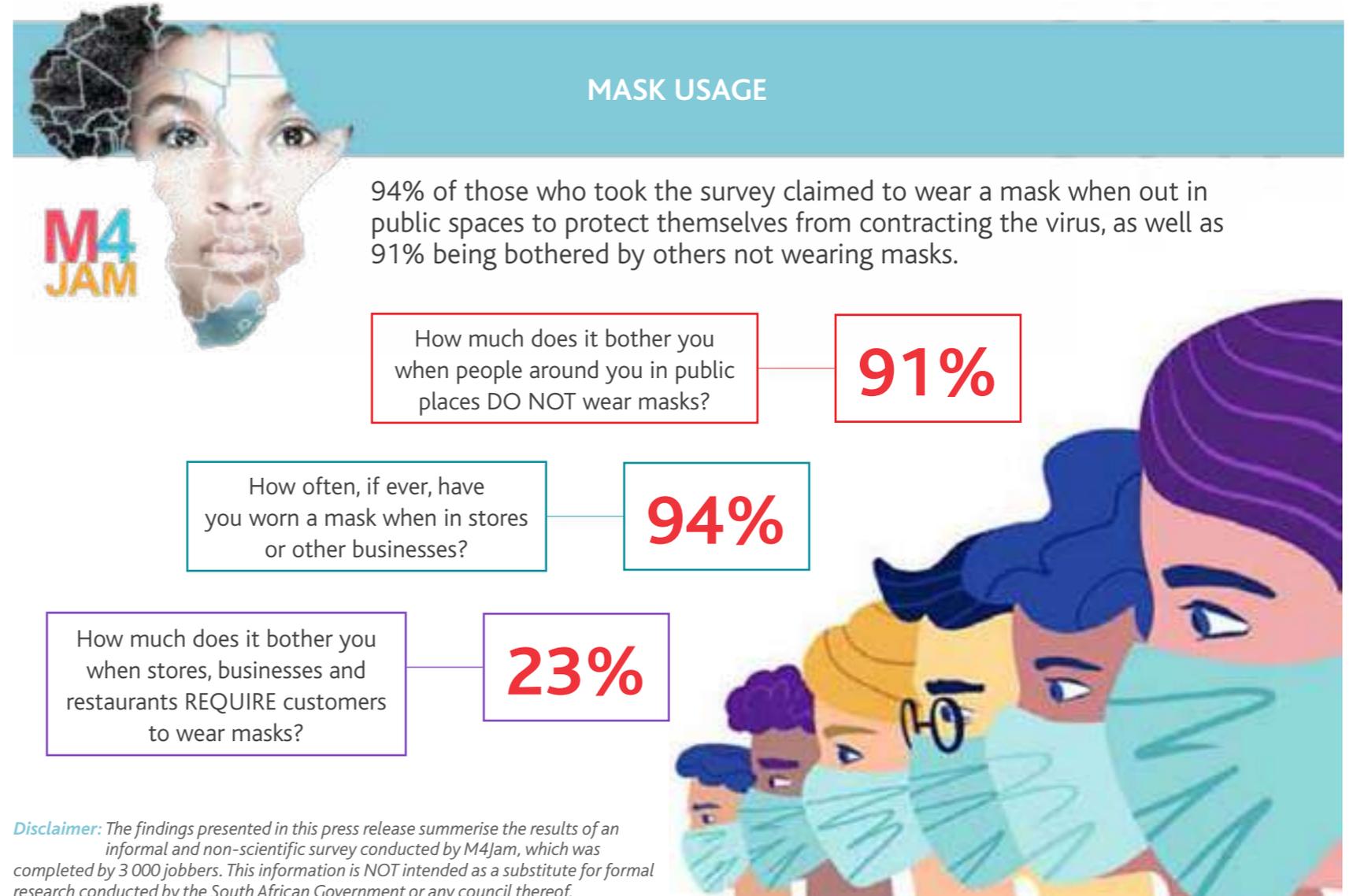
# South Africans mistrust the Covid-19 vaccines and Governments ability to deliver

With the arrival of Covid-19 vaccines a real prospect within the next few months, South Africans remain broadly fearful of the ongoing impact of the virus on their livelihoods. Despite the reprieve from lockdown and economic devastation, the rollout of vaccines may offer, a lack of trust in both the vaccines themselves and the government's handling of the rollout is preventing people from seeing light at the end of the tunnel.

Gig technology company, M4Jam, which provides an important platform for struggling South Africans to make an income by performing temporary, part-time work in a time of retrenchments and downscaling, recently surveyed 3 000 of its jobbers about their feelings toward the rollout of Covid-19 vaccines in the country.

The respondents ranged from ages 18 – 64, with an average household income from zero to R12 800 per month. The findings show that the fight against Covid-19 has been made even more difficult through inconsistent and inadequate messaging.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (84%) felt that the worst is yet to come, rather than the arrival of vaccines being a cure-all. Only 9% of respondents believe the treatment of patients with the virus has improved since Covid-19 began



presenting in South Africa. 39% believe that patients with Covid-19 are now actually worse off. 83% said hospitals and medical centres near where they live are struggling to cope with the number of people seeking treatment for the virus.

Though 94% of those who took the survey claimed to wear a mask when out in public spaces to protect themselves from contracting the virus, as well as 91% being bothered by others not wearing masks. When asked if they would take the vaccine

should it become available only 32% would, 58% prefer to wait and see whether it worked for others, and 10% flat-out refuse to take it.

“This shows that although most South Africans are extremely worried about contracting the virus, the fear of the unknown is great enough to prevent widespread acceptance of the vaccine,” says M4Jam CEO Georgie Midgley.

Ranking their concerns about the vaccine, respondents cited the following as the main issues: possible side-effects (68%), lack of trust in the government to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine (50%), concerns that the vaccines are too new (39%) and fears of actually contracting the virus from the vaccine itself (29%).

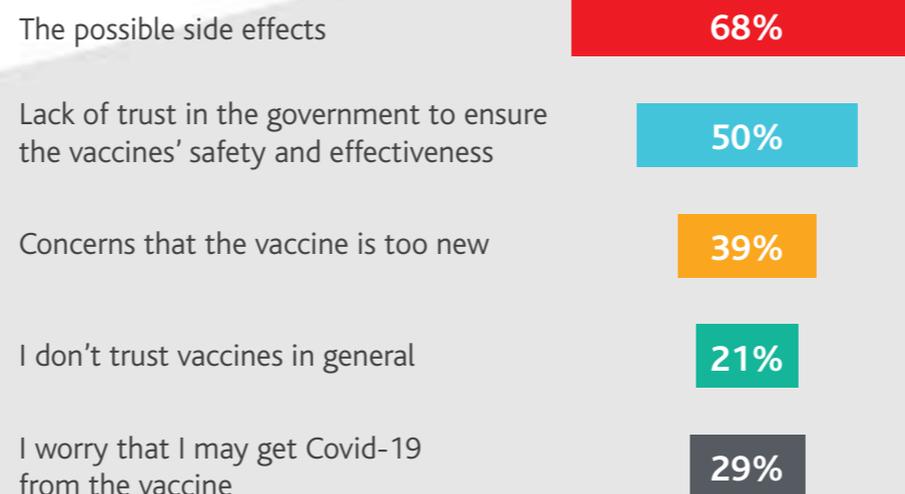
“It is clear that misinformation – or a lack of consistent, accurate messaging about the virus – will impede efforts to reach the government’s herd immunity and vaccination targets. This may prolong the negative impact on our economy, which would be extremely unfortunate. Some responses, such as the beliefs that 5G technology is responsible for causing Covid-19, or that its spread is related to air quality, illustrate the need for an extensive communication campaign,” adds Midgley.

93% of respondents said they would get tested if they detected any symptoms, despite their fears of obtaining a positive result, but 93% also said government should issue the vaccine for free, only 34% said they would be willing to pay for it and 60% felt moving back to Level 5 lockdown would be an appropriate response to slow the spread of the virus.



## WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST CONCERNS ABOUT TAKING THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

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*Disclaimer: The findings presented in this press release summarise the results of an informal and non-scientific survey conducted by M4Jam, which was completed by 3 000 jobbers. This information is NOT intended as a substitute for formal research conducted by the South African Government or any council thereof.*

“Given the clear and obvious devastation to the economy, the country could not sustain such a move and I am surprised to hear so many would rather opt for prolonged lockdown than a properly trialled vaccine. Rather, the best option seems to be communicating both the realistic effectiveness of suitably trialled vaccines and the plan for rollout. To have an effective vaccine available,

only to struggle rolling it out would certainly be a travesty,” says Midgley. **SR**

### About M4Jam

M4Jam is a Gig technology company that connects organisations to communities through its mobile platform. The platform enables businesses to quickly and cost-effectively evaluate, activate and optimise new or existing markets, even in the hardest to reach informal communities. M4Jam is a subsidiary of DN Invest.

