



Local farmers still farming despite Covid-19

PRISMA works with the private and public sectors to ensure farmers in Eastern Indonesia have access to agricultural inputs and knowledge to effectively farm and ensure their commodities reach the market. To understand the issues being faced by farmers, input suppliers, and off-takers as a result of Covid-19, PRISMA is undertaking a staged phone survey. The findings from this survey will assist PRISMA in fine-tuning their Covid-19 recovery strategy and offer the best business plan solutions to the private sector.

The result of the farmer-level survey in Central and East Java, NTT and NTB indicate that farmers are still farming and employing social distancing measures. Ninety-five percent of farmers surveyed will continue to farm, with only 7% planning to shift their planting times as a result of labour shortages. Farmers acknowledge there are fewer off-takers for their harvest and a decrease in commodity price as a result of Covid-19 travel restrictions, but only 9% of farmers state they plan to change their commodity as a result. The largest shift, in terms of changing planting times and commodities, was in NTT with 20% of farmers planning to shift to new crops, and 35% of farmers planning to change their planting time.

PRISMA is using the findings from these surveys to assist private sector partners to adjust their marketing strategies in the short-term and adapt business activities with the least disruption in the coming six to twelve months.

Central Java and NTT Governments turn to PRISMA to assist in post-Covid revival

PRISMA has been asked to provide input to the Central Java and NTT provincial government's Covid-19 mitigation plans in the food and agricultural sector.

On May 5, 2020, PRISMA business consultants shared ideas and market knowledge with the Central Java Regional Development Planning Board, Bappeda. The Head of Bappeda, Prasetyo Ariwibowo, stated that "we requested PRISMA to provide insights as we are finalising the formulation of the 2021 Provincial Government's Activity Plan (RKPD). The agriculture sector is a vital backbone of Central Java's economic revival post-Covid-19".

Inputs from PRISMA will also be used in the revision of the 2020 provincial program budget, and formulation of the 2021 regional budget.

Earlier this year, Governor of NTT Viktor Laiskodat (left) and Governor of Central Java Ganjar Pranowo (right) hosted PRISMA to discuss potential collaboration opportunities.



Photo: minews.id



Photo: jawapos.com

PRISMA partners offering financial relief to farmers during the pandemic



With the downturn in global markets as a result of Covid-19, access to finance for smallholder farmers is increasingly difficult. PRISMA is working with several financial institutions to develop lending products for farmers and to customise post-Covid recovery products. These products are aimed at easing farmer's cash flows, reducing loan non-performance, and allowing small businesses to remain open.

One such financial institution, Crowde, in partnership with PRISMA, has initiated a new product to allow farmers to repay their loans using their agricultural yields.

PRISMA is assisting another partner, Corteva Agriscience, to promote a new lending product for maize farmers in East Java. PRISMA is providing risk mitigation strategies to partners to test these products for on-going use.

Women lead the way in seed home-delivery

Studies were undertaken by PRISMA clearly show that women have a strong influence over purchasing decisions in farmer households. In 2016 PRISMA pitched an idea to our partner, Corteva Agriscience, to employ female sales staff. In 2019 a new idea was initiated to use female agents for door-to-door canvassing of maize agricultural input products in Madura. This initiative was such a success, that it was scaled-up in Central Java in 2020.

As a result of social distancing restrictions and the closure of many kiosks selling input products as a result of Covid-19, Corteva is using its women front-line sales staff to continue selling maize seed products to farmers in need of quality seed.

In Wonogiri district in Central Java, six female Corteva sales front liners have sold 900kg of Corteva's seed products to 150 farmers. The mobile sales force has contributed to overcoming market limitations as a result of Covid-19.



Covid and drought – potential double jeopardy for farmers in Indonesia

While farmers are struggling to cope with the impacts caused by Covid-19, they are facing another grim outlook – drought.

Weather forecasts predict Indonesia will be hit by drought during the coming agricultural season. This has prompted the President of Indonesia to release several directives, including securing the availability of water in farming areas. source.

As farmers lack access to key agricultural inputs as a result of Covid-19, one real medium to long-term impact on the agricultural sector is a reduction in food security. This impact will be compounded if weather predictions for an impending drought are accurate.

PRISMA's work with the private sector to keep farmers farming during the pandemic will put farmers in a good position to tackle the issue of food security.

Besides, PRISMA is working with private companies to promote the improved design of irrigation services in East Java - a key food-producing region in Indonesia. This work is continuing during the crisis period and will assist farmers in drought mitigation during the upcoming planting and harvesting season.



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