

PRISMA COVID-19 RESPONSE

PRISMA responded swiftly to the outbreak of COVID-19 in three key-ways, by:

1. Creating an Intelligence Task Force (ITF) to expand its information-gathering activities and synthesise data, assess the effect of the pandemic on partnerships with the private sector and operations, and to develop policy recommendations;
2. Pivoting resources to critical agriculture sub-sectors with the highest potential for leveraging efficiencies and fostering recovery, and
3. Transitioning rapidly from response to recovery, providing pragmatic, strategic planning to support the program's partners and exploit opportunities emerging from the crisis.

INTELLIGENCE

PRISMA set up an Intelligence Task Force (ITF) to assess the implications of the emerging pandemic on private and public sector partnerships and operations. The ITF comprises selected staff members all departments. The team collects and maintains contact with partners and farmers on the ground - as well as with associated SMEs, farming households, associations and governments - to ensure that the program is up to date with the obstacles they face. Understanding the changing environment, particularly implications for women, is critical for PRISMA to make informed decisions.

PIVOT

PRISMA then used this intelligence to pivot resources to sub-sectors which demonstrated the greatest potential for safeguarding stability and food security within the parameters of distancing and lockdowns. Leveraging the program's network of private sector actors, rural producers, input suppliers and policymakers, and its strong research and evaluation skills, PRISMA set about using its data to make informed changes. The team then adapted its approach and adjusted collaborations to better address the real-life situation faced by farmers on the ground. Given the particular vulnerability of women farmers, significant effort was made to ensure that all activities were inclusive.

RECOVERY

The third pillar of PRISMA's response involved switching gear from response to recovery. As the pandemic draws on, ensuring that private and public partners are able to plan for the future is critical. The disease remains a threat, but opportunities for recovery remain. As part of its recovery strategy, PRISMA pulled together its expertise in ICT, agriculture, finance, mechanisation and irrigation, and more than a dozen agriculture supply chains in order to identify these opportunities and help partners to navigate them.