

Welcome to PRISMA's March newsletter!

This year, a record number of people celebrated International Women's Day on 8 March. Helping to amplify the voices and needs of women all over the world, IWD is also a key moment for PRISMA, which actively promotes inclusive business models and opportunities for women farmers. As you can read below, this has provided a lifeline for women facing the double burden of COVID-19 and African Swine Fever in NTT.

The pandemic has also driven huge changes in technology use among farmers. Our latest survey show that companies such as UPL, a global agrochemical company, are beginning to reap the rewards of investing in it.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and welcome all feedback at info@aip-prisma.or.id.

Nina FitzSimons, Acting CEO

PRISMA's approach towards gender inclusivity and women's empowerment celebrated in Grow Asia webinar and USAID-funded review

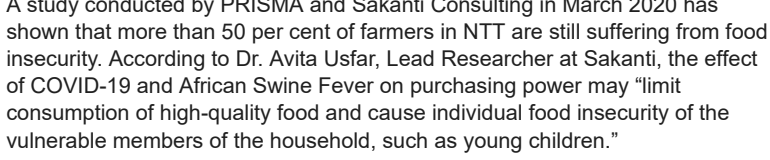


To celebrate women's contribution to agriculture and highlight its works to empower their roles, the PRISMA GESI team participated in two international events on Women's Economic Empowerment this month.

PRISMA joined Grow Asia, Mars, and East-West Seed for the "Gender Mainstreaming in Agri Value Chains in Southeast Asia" webinar on 24 February to discuss the opportunity for rural economic growth through women's increased participation in agriculture. During the event, PRISMA's gender specialists Nisa Usman and Maryam Piracha discussed the program's gender inclusion and women's empowerment approach towards implementing innovative business cases. Click here to watch the webinar recording, here to download the report.

PRISMA's gender initiative was also featured in a recent Advancing Women's Empowerment in the Agriculture (AWE)-led USAID-funded review of women and youth inclusion in 15 international development programs. The review showcased the scale and depth of change in women's inclusion and noted the challenges of measuring and achieving scale. Click here to read the review and here to download the report.

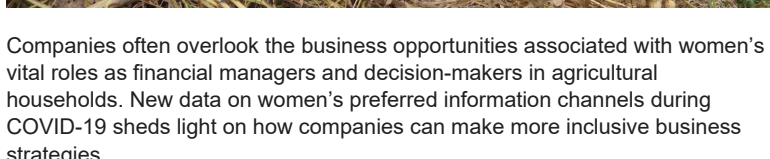
Inclusive business approach offers lifeline to women farmers facing prolonged effects of COVID-19 and African Swine Fever in NTT



A study conducted by PRISMA and Sakanti Consulting in March 2020 has shown that more than 50 per cent of farmers in NTT are still suffering from food insecurity. According to Dr. Avita Usfar, Lead Researcher at Sakanti, the effect of COVID-19 and African Swine Fever on purchasing power may "limit consumption of high-quality food and cause individual food insecurity of the vulnerable members of the household, such as young children."

Low productivity of own farm production is a major factor leading to insufficient food inventory year-round. Women farmers often manage household resources and food inventory, but have limited access to information that can optimize their farm's productivity. PRISMA's promotion of an inclusive business approach in the maize sector has helped to address this in NTT, bringing 7,900 farmers in the province closer to agri-innovation and agricultural services since the pandemic began.

Research reveals opportunity for reaching more women farmers with GAP

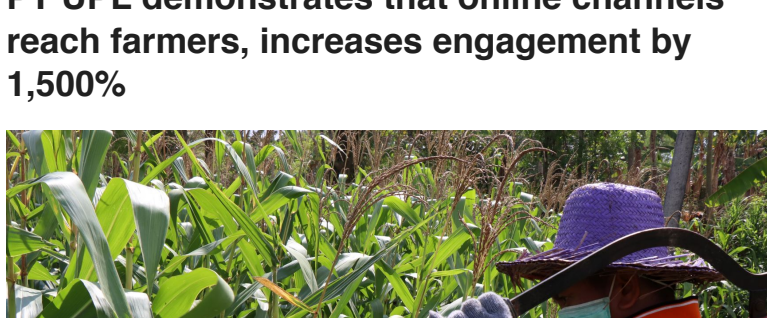


Companies often overlook the business opportunities associated with women's vital roles as financial managers and decision-makers in agricultural households. New data on women's preferred information channels during COVID-19 sheds light on how companies can make more inclusive business strategies.

Surveys conducted by PRISMA between April and October 2020 show that less than 50 per cent of women farmers have access to agricultural information through conventional sources such as extension services and farmer groups. However, the figure drops significantly to 26 per cent for access to information through digital sources. Moreover, initial evidence indicates that women farmers rely more on their peers to get agricultural information.

Inclusive business is a focus of PRISMA when devising marketing strategies to widen partners' reach. By adjusting their strategy to account for how women access information, agricultural companies can reach more of them with GAP information, improving opportunities and income streams. PRISMA will continue to promote and assist potential and existing partners in embedding inclusive business into their strategy.

COVID-19 drives significant uptake of technology in agriculture in Indonesia



PT UPL demonstrates that online channels reach farmers, increasing engagement by 1,500%



In May 2020, PRISMA supported PT. UPL, a global agrochemical company, to use its Facebook page to reach farmers cut off from in-person meetings by COVID-19 restrictions. After publishing a series of creative content, farmers' likes, comments, and shares on the page increased by almost 1,500% over ten months.

As farmers are increasingly engaging through digital platforms, UPL has invested in staff capacity strengthening and developing an online marketing strategy to augment in-person activities with farmers and kiosks. UPL's efforts to expand its reach beyond the current business areas have resulted in the opening of new distribution channels in eastern Indonesia, including Papua.

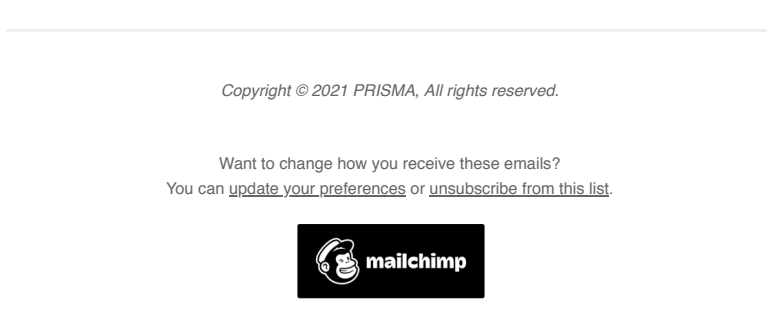
Sharing her optimism about the future of online marketing, Ms Rizkiya, UPL Marketing Executive shared, "we believe that online marketing will enable more farmers to obtain information and education on good agricultural practices, and hence, will contribute to our business."

Differences in information channels linked to significant difference in uptake of animal feed between East and Central Java

A market study conducted by RAD in February 2021 has revealed that Central Java and East Java, which each comprise almost 40 per cent of Indonesia's beef cattle population, use very different amounts of concentrate feed in their herds. 70 per cent of cattle farmers in East Java have fed their animals with concentrate feed in the last 12 months, whereas in Central Java only 30 per cent of farmers have used concentrate feed.

This gap could be explained by differences in how farmers access information about animal feed options. The study found that the primary source of information for beef cattle farmers in Central Java is feed sales representative (23 per cent), but in East Java, close to 80 per cent, or nearly all farmers, still source feed information from their fellow farmers.

The findings provide insights that feed producers can use to adapt their marketing and educational activities and improve farmers' access to quality animal feed.



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