PRISMA

Reaching Women Farmers
Tips for Indonesian Agribusinesses
Overview

PRISMA is an innovative partnership between the Government of Indonesia and the Government of Australia to grow agricultural markets in rural Indonesia. PRISMA’s investments seek to change how the private sector does business in rural Indonesia so that poor smallholder farmers can increase farm productivity, ultimately leading to more inclusive growth.

The tips, insights, and recommendations within this document are informed by nearly a decade of experience helping the private sector tap into new market segments by implementing effective sales and marketing activities that engage women.

Inclusive business strategies to reach women farmer customers:

- Creative sales strategies

- Translating strategy into actions:
  - Reaching women within communities
  - Women-friendly marketing activities
Creative sales strategies
Agribusinesses often miss out on an important market segment by failing to engage women farmers in sales and market activities.

The following offers a step-by-step engagement strategy for agribusinesses to cost-effectively expand their market:

1. **Option 1**
   Conduct lean market research that identifies levels of women’s and men’s involvement in farming activities.

2. **Option 2**
   Instruct field agents or agronomists to map each sub-district in the district in which the business operates or aims to operate. Through observations or short discussions during farmers’ visits, inquire about the extent to which women are involved in the on-farm physical labour or making decisions pertaining to farm activities.
Analysis

If women are heavily involved in on-farm labour, especially in the specific activities related to your products/services’ features, then include them in your promotional activities and adjust your key message of promotion according to their needs in that area. If women are more involved in influencing decision-making regarding which products are purchased for the household or influence their community, explore the extent and area of their influence for your strategy.
Market segmentation strategy

Targeting both women and men farmers as part of your sales and marketing strategies will expand the customer base, especially when there is high women’s involvement in the agricultural products or services you market and sell. If women’s involvement in farming activities is low, utilize women’s influence by targeting their social networks or community groups that may be beneficial to your business.

For example, if you sell maize hybrid seed in Madura Island, East Java, and have identified women who have high level of involvement, you should target women farmers as potential consumers in your promotional activities. You may share educational information regarding seed quality, the potential increase in income from high productivity, and how it improves the livelihoods of their household.
Translating the strategy into actions
Reaching women within communities

Existing community-based groups and women’s groups serve as natural entry points for sales and marketing activities.

Utilise existing networks

Community groups or women’s groups can be effective conduits for businesses to promote and sell agricultural products to women.

These groups, such as women farmers’ groups, PKK (family welfare community in Indonesia), pengajian or church communities, artisan groups, and other women-based communities can be entry points for businesses to conduct marketing activities that will reach significant numbers of women farmers who may be members of such communities/groups.

Businesses can utilise these groups as a point of entry to invite women farmers or educate them to become key opinion leaders for other (women) farmers.
Employ more women staff

In some contexts, women farmers do not feel comfortable interacting with men field agents. Women field agents are as effective as their male counterparts, but bring the following benefits:

- Women sales and marketing agents are equally trusted by both men and women farmers.
- Women sales agents have a wider reach within women farming communities.

Businesses can also engage women farmers with appropriate incentives as part of the women agents’ network scheme for better product distribution and promotion.
Women-friendly marketing activities

To effectively reach women, tailor activities in a way that encourages women’s participation and engagement in events such as inclusive or women-only farmers meetings or customise messaging to be more relevant to women’s interests.

Farmers meetings

Mixed-gender meetings

This approach can be especially effective if the businesses want to target women as influencers (of the decision making on agriculture investment or agricultural product and service purchasing). Engaging and informing women farmers or women members of a farming household can lead to investment in the agricultural products or services that the businesses offer.

The businesses can make their marketing events inclusive by:

- Considering the time and place where both women and men are available to attend the event
- Clearly communicating that women are invited
- Engaging and encouraging women to actively participate in the discussion
Women-only farmers meetings

This strategy can be useful if businesses want to target women as their main or one of the main customer segments.

Commercial reasons for conducting women-only farmers’ events include:

- Women tend to participate more actively in an all-women setting.

- Women tend to share the information within their network or community when they get more comprehensive information from an all women’s event.

- Tailoring messages and content to a women-only audience can result in more effective engagement. For example, including a rice tasting or demo cooking from the harvest of quality rice seeds or information on nutrition-balanced meals can result in more active participation and knowledge sharing among women.
Customised messaging

Tailor the promotional message by connecting the use and benefits of agricultural products or services with the needs and aspirations of women. Some examples include:

- **MAIZE SEED**: This quality maize seed can enable you to have more money to save for your children’s education!
- **RICE SEED**: This hybrid rice seed not only will increase your harvest, but your family will love the improved taste!
- **PIG FEED**: Is the burden of gathering plants and fruits for your pig too great? Reduce your workload by using this quality pig feed!

Agribusinesses often fail to engage women farmers in their farmers’ outreach activities, such as promotional and marketing campaigns, resulting in a missed market segment. This exclusion leads to missed opportunities for businesses to tap into a significant market segment. These tips can be useful for agribusinesses to improve their engagement strategies with women farmers. By actively involving these farmers in sales and marketing activities, businesses can not only expand their market cost-effectively but also contribute to building more equitable and inclusive agricultural systems.

About PRISMA

PRISMA is an innovative partnership between the Government of Indonesia (Bappenas) and the Government of Australia (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, DFAT) to improve the productivity and income of smallholder farmers. Increased productivity contributes to food security and builds farmers’ resilience to market uncertainties and agricultural challenges, including climate change.

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