



COVID-19
Response
Strategy

Applying an Inclusive Lens while Addressing COVID- 19 Crisis

April 2020

1 Overview

The COVID-19 crisis is impacting every single layer of the economy, including actors in the agriculture and related market systems. As market actors mitigate challenges faced due to the pandemic, initial business strategies may need to be adjusted. PRISMA aims to ensure that partners consider COVID-19 related constraints and opportunities that arise for women, men and other market segments. By ensuring response strategies are inclusive and mitigate any potential risk to marginalized groups, PRISMA and its partners can continue to effectively execute interventions even during the on-going pandemic.

2 COVID-19 impacts Women Disproportionately

2.1 Women in The Health Sector Are at Greater Risk of Exposure

The COVID-19 crisis impacts women and men differently. While men make up the majority of those who have died from the pandemic, women make up majority of healthcare workers globally (66%) and nationally (70%). With more women in the frontline, the exposure of risk is overall higher. However, it is important to note that current sex-disaggregated data is incomplete requiring caution against initial assumptions.

2.2 Increasing Workloads and Pressures Place Women at Greater Burden and Risk of Violence

The impact of COVID-19 is disproportionate on women due to increases in care burden. With women completing the lion's share of domestic work in households, they will be overburdened as childcare hours increase. Potential incidence of gender-based violence may also increase with additional financial and emotional pressures that are likely to occur during the pandemic. The UN has reported that, since the pandemic started, women's inquiries for support services has doubled in many countries. Emerging reports from The Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation of the Indonesian Women Association for Justice suggests a spike in domestic abuse reports in the first month of COVID-19 home-quarantine.

2.3 Women in Indonesia's Informal Economy Are Adversely Impacted Due to The Crisis

While women make up 57% of part-time workers globally, in Indonesia 61.8% of women are engaged in the informal sector, compared to only 53.7% of men. Over 4.5 million Indonesian women are also migrant workers, with the majority employed in the informal sector as domestic workers. Women and men with temporary and informal agreements are more likely to lose their jobs, have limited paid leave, unemployment insurance, and other protections. A large proportion of micro-, small- (51%), and medium-sized (34%) enterprises (MSME) are also owned by women, contributing to a total of 9.1% of Indonesia's GDP. Initial reports from the Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises Ministry suggest that approximately 37,000 SMEs have been severely hit by COVID-19 crisis.

3 Agriculture Context: Challenges to Expect for Women and Men Farmers

In agriculture, PRISMA is assessing the impact of changing demand patterns, potential disruptions in transport, logistics and food supply chains. Women have a strong contribution to Indonesia's Agriculture sector and act as farmers, farm labourers and owners of kiosks and agri-businesses.

3.1 Changes in Demand and Consumption Patterns

Changes in demand of fruits and vegetables can potentially impact farmers' ability and willingness to continue production in the upcoming planting season. This in turn can limit income earning opportunities for both women and men farmers.

3.2 Reduced Field Activities to Improve Productivity

The current social distancing measures in Indonesia have resulted in most agri-businesses to put their on-ground promotional activities on hold. Both public and private extension services on field will be limited during the pandemic, urging businesses to consider strategies for online marketing, sales and dissemination of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). The impact of these changes can be more dire for women farmers, as they generally struggle to access quality inputs and GAP knowledge, limiting their ability to increase on-farm efficiency.

3.3 Impact on Women Farm Labourers

Women also make up the majority of labourers for many agricultural commodities. They rely heavily on this job because of limited employment opportunities around the village due to low levels of education and skills. Restrictions on movement due to COVID-19 can impact the supply of labour for farm activities.

3.4 Lower Income Can Risk Household Food Security

When women's income decreases, the household income decreases. Compared to men, not only do women contribute a higher proportion of their earnings towards their families and communities, but the income is more likely to be used for household nutrition, children's education and medical care. During a crisis when additional family income is likely to decrease, women in farming households have limited options to level their income and provide nutritious food for the family.

4 PRISMA's Response Strategies on Gender and Social Inclusion

As PRISMA and partners navigate the on-going crisis, the team will provide technical support and analysis to the private sector, Government and other decision makers to highlight the challenges faced by women in agriculture and identify feasible solutions.

4.1 Collect information and field insights on impact of Covid-19 on women farmers

PRISMA, through its extensive networks and links with farmers and the private sector will deepen its understanding of the COVID-19 impact on the following:

- Access to products and services required by women to continue to remain productive during the crisis.
- Marketing, sales and distribution challenges women may face as agri-businesses switch to online platforms.
- Impact of crisis on women's leadership, networking opportunities and overall Agency.
- Changes and shifts in roles, decision making and workloads for women.
- New opportunities and roles that emerge for women as a result of the crisis.

4.2 Support Partners in Developing Inclusive Marketing Strategies Based on Consumer Behaviour and Market Segmentation

PRISMA's ICT team, is developing an analysis on digital marketing for rural agriculture markets to support partners. The analysis will integrate a gender lens to ensure women can also benefit from these solutions.

- Approximately 78% of PRISMA's current partners are seeking to strengthen their online marketing activities. PRISMA will provide analysis and support to partners regarding consumer behavior and support them to design strategies appropriate for the different market segments.
- The gender digital divide will also be better understood to develop appropriate models. Initial findings suggest that businesses can utilize women and youth in delivering information services to households. The increase in technology for various goods and services will provide an access point for rural women and men that they might not have had before.

4.3 Explore Response Strategies for Inclusivity More Broadly

PRISMA's GESI strategy ensures considerations are made for marginalized groups within its sectors and interventions. PRISMA will also explore risks and potential solutions faced by older women and men farmers during Covid-19, and opportunities to engage youth for sustainable agriculture.