

Tool 5.2: Provide market-linkage support to the existing women users

Facilitating market linkages establishes end-to-end value chain support for women micro-entrepreneurs. It enables consistent income for women users and helps in their repayment of loans (if any). In addition, it instills confidence among financiers and enhances the technology's credibility and brand recognition.

Tool objectives

- To establish the organisation's brand recognition as a comprehensive solution provider, achieve scalability, and enhance trust and credibility among ecosystem stakeholders.
- To ensure a steady and sustainable income for women users to contribute to their financial stability, leading to positive word-of-mouth recommendations and testimonials.
- To enable ecosystem support for sustainable livelihoods to women users.

Action plan

Step 1: Identification of market-linkage challenges of users

- ☐ Conduct dipstick research to evaluate the market-linkage challenges. Develop a questionnaire comprising the key indicators:
 - ☐ Type, quantity, and rate (per unit) of raw material required (per month) to produce final commodities
 - ☐ Type, quantity, and rate (per unit) of final commodities produced (per month)
 - ☐ Primary customers of the final commodities
 - ☐ Access to markets beyond the immediate vicinity
 - ☐ Challenges faced in accessing new markets or expanding customer base
 - ☐ Networks with any intermediaries or middle persons to reach customers. If yes, then what are the challenges faced?
 - ☐ Use of technology (mobile apps/online platforms) to reach potential customers
 - ☐ Infrastructure (transportation/storage) challenges in procuring raw materials or taking final products to market
 - ☐ Support required to overcome market-linkage challenges
- ☐ Analyse the collected data and identify key challenges such as limited mobility, poor transportation, poor quality due to storage facilities and others.



Step 2: Provide market connections to sell the finished products of the women nano-/micro-entrepreneurs

- ☐ Build linkages with market partners and e-commerce platforms. A few market-linkage channels are Amazon Fresh, Amazon Saheli, Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), and BigBasket, or with government marketing platforms such as Government e-Market Place, Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED), National Agriculture Market (e-NAM), Government e Marketplace (GeM) portal and others.
- ☐ Social enterprises and development practitioners can buy back the final products produced by their existing women users and sell them in the market.
 - ☐ Create clusters of women users engaged in similar livelihood activities, such as producing similar final commodities. Connect them using WhatsApp groups.
 - ☐ Document a statement of purpose for the buy-back process by listing the products, their selling price, incentives to the women users, and quality standards. The following are a few indicators to consider:
 - ☐ Highlight the specifications of the product's characteristics, including product size, colour, texture, and aroma.
 - ☐ Prepare checklists on the production processes, such as harvesting, processing, packaging, and storage to ensure that the quality, production efficiency, and environment sustainability aspects are maintained.
- ☐ (Optional) Include mechanisms to trace the origin of products (such as barcoding and RFID (radio frequency identification) tags, product labelling, and QR (quick response) codes) from farm to market to enable transparency and accountability in the supply chain.

Indicative: Required resources and cost and time implications

Resources: Human resources for market research, unlocking partnerships with suppliers, vendors, local institutions and others; logistics for training on quality standards; software for tracing the products

Indicative cost heads*	Cost implications Low: USD 0–2,500 Medium: USD 2,000–5,000 High: USD>5,000	Time implications Low: 1–3 hours/week Medium: 4–5 hours/week High: >5 hours/week	Frequency of expenses
Salaries to human resources	Low	-	Monthly
Partnership cost	Low	Medium	Yearly
Logistics for in-person training	Low	High	Recurring
Software	Low	-	Yearly

**Note: This calculation provides an overview of the primary cost categories associated with the implementation of this tool. Minor expenses may also be incurred.*

Source: Authors' analysis

Potential indicators to measure success

- Number of existing women micro-entrepreneurs who received market-linkage support (both backward and forward market linkage).
- Increase in the net annual income of women users who received market linkage support.
- Number of market linkage partnerships unlocked.

Success story

[Raheja Solar Food Processing Private Limited](#) (RSFP), a solar dryer manufacturing enterprise, enabled market linkages for rural entrepreneurs in Andhra Pradesh; however, it has significantly impacted women users. Due to limited mobility, rural women faced the challenge of proper market linkages. With the market-linkage support offered by offering buy-back guarantees for the produce manufactured by these women using solar dryers, Raheja helped 120 women farmers realise sustained income.



Image: Source: CEEW/Emotive Lens

Women farmers from Sri Gayathri Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) in Andhra Pradesh use solar dryers to add value to their farm produce

Similarly, [Resham Sutra](#), a solar-silk manufacturing enterprise, set up cocoon banks and addressed raw material procurement challenges for women silk reelers in Chattisgarh. They employed skilled persons to ensure proper cocoon procurement, storage, and safety. Currently, 30 women have been trained in the cocoon bank to run the solar silk reeling machines and initiate their business using the technology.