

100 GOOD PRACTICES FROM THE TERRITORIES FOR A BETTER WORLD

LEDS Kerala (India): HOMESHOP VALUE CHAIN

BACKGROUND

LEDS has joined hands with 'Kudumbashree', a 3.5 million strong women empowerment movement in the state of Kerala, India for strengthening the former's local economic development programmes. Small and micro enterprises owned and operated by 'Kudumbashree' women are important tools for poverty alleviation and local economic development in rural Kerala. However, the success rate of these enterprises has not been very encouraging, the key challenge being the inability to tap the potential of local markets through effective marketing mechanisms.



DESCRIPTION

In partnership with Kudumbashree, LEDS has established an all-woman, local-to-local value chain in rural Kerala, christened the 'Homeshop' value chain, in an attempt to strengthen local economic development. The Homeshop Value chain comprises of a self-sustaining and interdependent cluster of women-owned production, marketing and management enterprises, all located within a village, linking local small producers to local consumers. The value chain is centered around a network of women sellers who procure agricultural produce/ value added products from local small producers and markets them to consumers of the same locality, with logistics support from a distribution agency. The Homeshop network promotes production and consumption of local produce, and has knock on effects on self employment, food security, as also social & gender empowerment



THE ADDED VALUE

Under the Homeshop initiative, LEDS functioned as an incubation agency that provided handholding support to all three components of the value chain- producers, sellers and management agency, such that the value chain functioned effectively as a whole. In the production side, women farmers and microentrepreneurs were provided services such as training, access to finance and technical inputs. In the marketing side, LEDS identified, trained and positioned 5-7 below-poverty-line women as sales personnel in each village. Each woman seller would procure fresh produce (milk, fruits & vegetables etc) & value added products from local small producers and supply to around 50-70 households in her neighbourhood. 1200 women sellers were positioned in this manner across hundreds of villages. They were able to reach across and transact with around 70,000 households. This exchange of goods was facilitated and coordinated by a distribution agency, which again was trained and positioned by LEDS.

RESULTS

Effective tapping of the significant demand for local, farm fresh foods through the homeshop value chain has helped enhance livelihood opportunities for local women entrepreneurs (both producers and sellers) as also stimulate local production. It also helped local consumers gain access to fresh and locally grown products as against store-bought food. On a broader perspective, the value chain helped strengthen the self-reliance and resilience of local economies, reduced food miles, promoted gender empowerment and fostered community relationships.

The Homeshop value chain was rolled out in 200 villages spread across six districts of Kerala. It helped provide self employment to more than 400 producers and 1200 sellers, all of whom are women. Monthly business volumes have touched 6 million Indian rupees. All of this has helped pave the way for a healthier and more sustainable way of strengthening local economies.

TO LEARN MORE: http://www.ledsonnet.com/6_kudumbashree_projects.html

