

**INTER-CITY MARKETING NETWORK FOR WOMEN MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS
THROUGH CELL PHONE**
(infoDev Activity ID number: 466-000317)
Implementing organization: Foundation Of Occupational Development (FOOD)
Email: food@XLweb.com

DELIVERABLES 3

Summary of current project status:

Activity	Status
Preparation of operation manual	Completed
Visit to 100 semi-urban areas	Completed
Sensitizing the CBOs	Completed
Conducting orientation program for CBOs	Completed
Survey	Completed
Short-listing products made locally	Completed
Training program for the CBOs in management of the network and marketing	Completed
Coordinating the marketing activity	On going
Organizing regional workshops to create awareness	In progress
Quality assurance	On going
Evaluation	On going

The “Intercity Marketing Network for Women Micro-Entrepreneurs” project was initiated in July 2001.

Out of the project target of 100 CBOs, as on date 54 CBOs have been identified and the orientation and training programs conducted for them.

The activities conducted during this reporting period include training program for the CBOs, coordination of marketing activity and planning of regional workshops to create awareness and share experiences.

Regular training programs were conducted for the CBOs to build their capacity in administration and refinement of business skills and to improve production, packaging and marketing.

Based on their performance each CBO group has been provided with a cell phone to be used by them to get in touch with other groups for placing orders and to network. The group leaders have been entrusted with the responsibility of receiving orders for products and follow up on the procurement of products. Since the cell phone does not require much of functional literacy to operate and maintain the groups did not need extensive training in order to utilize the cell phones. We find that after the introduction of the cell phones the women groups have been able to extend their reach and build social capital. Community-to-community networking has also been made possible through the use of cell phones. By building social capital the women groups are able to promote sales of their products.

While marketing of other products has been going on smoothly we faced problem with one specific product that was in great demand, which is that of toilet soap. This is mainly because it was labeled as “toilet soap”. The word “toilet” in the local context refers to wash places. Hence the community felt this soap was used for cleaning toilets and not for taking bath. This to some extent backlogged the business in the toilet soaps that the marketing groups could do and much of the stock was returned for the labels to be changed to “bath soaps”.

The CBOs have been ensuring quality of products being produced through physical inspection of all stocks passed out to the marketing groups. FOOD has also been overseeing the quality of

products before dispatch as well as at the time of drawing products for marketing through random checks.

FOOD has conducted several group meetings with the CBOs and is also in the process of organizing regional workshops to create awareness about the project and also allow existing and prospective CBO groups to interact.

Description of marketing activity of CBO products:

The details of the products sold by the CBO groups are provided below.

S.No.	Product	Quantity Supplied	Quantity Sold	Ratio Of Sales
1	Bath Soap - 20 GMS	25008	9005	36.01%
2	Bath Soap- 75 GMS	15000	11360	75.73%
3	Neem Soap - 75 GMS	5030	4639	92.23%
4	Shampoo - 5 ML	25000	24302	97.21%
5	Shampoo - 8 ML	10920	10910	99.91%
6	Detergent Cake - 150 GMS	7500	5920	78.93%
7	Detergent Powder - 100 GMS	1000	600	60.00%
8	Cleaning Powder - 100 GMS	1000	1000	100.00%
9	Rice – 1 KG	5925	5925	100.00%

Description of network activity:

At present there are 54 active women groups involved in the project. The active users list and the sales achieved by each group during the month of December are provided below.

Group leader, group name and address	Sales (Rs)
Poongavanam, Tamarai, No.43, Arputhanagar, Tambaram	31,095.50
Navaneetham, Jasmine, No.49/15, School street,kamaraj nagar, Mannurpet, Chennai-50	17,933.00
TamilSelvi, Allipoo, No.105, Savadi street, Korratur, Chennai-80	21,698.00
Malliga, Lilly pushpam, 41A,Bajanai koil st, Mannurpet,Chennai-50	4,483.00
Sabasthiamma, Roja magalir sangam, No.48,1st street, Karimaedu, Vyasarpadi, Chennai-39	3,283.00
Shayedha, Tendral, Annai satyanagar, Ambattur	9,520.50
Vasantha, Thazham poo, No.10, Bajanai koil st, Korratur, Chennai-80	4,533.00
Kasturi, Samanthi poo, No.41,Bothaian koil st, Korratur, Chennai-80	4,533.00
Swamiadiyal, Kuringi malar, No.37,Gangaiamman koil street, Korattur, Chennai-80	4,533.00
V.Jayalakshmi, Mathulai,16/50, 28th Avenue, Banu nagar, Pudur, Ambattur	4,450.00
Pushpa, Red Hills Road, Orakkadam	4,450.00
Gowri, 80 Venugopalasami Street, Mogappair, Chennai – 58	7,050.00
Glory, SHG,group, No.8, Perumal koil street, Thirumulaivoyal, Chennai – 62	3,283.00
Chandra, Kanagambaram Poo, Mallaiathanan koil street.Mannurpet, Chennai-50	4,533.00
Thamizhmozhi, Mullai malar, No.53.Kaniamman koil street, Kachinakuppam, Ambattur Estate	4,533.00
Elizabeth, Gandhinagar, Avadi, Chennai-71	4,450.00

Selvi, December poo, No.3,Perumal koil street, Mannurpet, Chennai-50	4,533.00
Clara, White rose, Periyar nagar, Korratur, Chennai-80	4,533.00
Jeyabacikam, Gandhinagar, Chekkadu, Avadi, Chennai – 71	4,450.00
Theresa, Kulakkarai St, Avadi, Chennai - 54	4,100.00
Shanthi, Chinamman koil st, Avadi, Chennai - 54	4,100.00
S.Muniammal, Samudaya marumalairchi iyyakam, No.65, 4th Street, Kakanchi nagar, Chennai-39	10,725.00
Joice, Pengal pothunala amaipu, 123,Mallipoo colony, Vyasarpadi, Chennai – 39	3,900.00
Lalitha, Pengal podunala sangam, No.223, MPM street, Chennai – 11	3,900.00
G.Kanchana, Pengal podunala sangam, No.18,Jagadambal street, Perambur, Chennai – 11	3,900.00
M.Kasturi, Tamarai pengal kuzhu, No.29,Abirami nagar, Tiruverkadu, Chennai-77	4,450.00
Chokammal, Pengal podunala sangam, No.7,Kadumpadi amman koil street,Kaviarasu kanadasan nagar, Chennai-118	3,825.00
Girija, Pengal podu nala ammaipu, No.22, Dr.Ram st, Perambur, Chennai-11	3,825.00
Kumari, Pengal podu nala ammaipu, No.224, Nehru nagar, Vyasarpadi, Chennai-39	3,825.00
Vasuki, Mullai, Venugopala swamy street, Perambur	3,825.00
Padmini, Pengal podu nala Sangam, No.9. Tiruvallur street, Kaviarasu kanadasan nagar-118	3,825.00
Saroja, Pengal podu nala Sangam, No.93, Dhamodar nagar, Vyasarpadi, Chennai-39	3,650.00
Soundari, 185, 3rd St, MGR Nagar, Chennai – 39	3,650.00
Jeyanthi	3,650.00
Andal, Pasumpon Magalir Sangam, 4A, Perumal Koil St, Kallikuppam, Ambattur, Chennai – 63	2,670.00
Rosy (A) Rojammal, Thenmozhi Magalir Sangam, 5, M.T.H. Road, Kamarajpuram, Ambattur, Chennai – 53	2,670.00
Rupavathi, Indra Naga Society, W/o N.Ganesan, 30, 3rd Cross St, Anna St, Kallikuppam, Chennai – 63	2,670.00
T.Mariammal, Roja Magalir Mandram, Muthapudupet, Avadi, Chennai - 55	5,427.50
S.Anthony Clancy, Annai Mahalir Sangam, #10, 3rd Cross St, New Colony, Saidapet(W), Chn-15	4,100.00
M.Suriyalatha, Saraswathy Magalir Sangam, 11, 3rd Street, New Colony, Saidapet(W), Chn-15	4,100.00
S.Mahalakshmi, Sri Ellaiamman Mahalir Sangam, 9/19, 3rd St, New Colony, Saidapet(W), Chn-15	4,100.00
G.Ramani, Malligai Mahalir Mandram, Mangalapuram, 82, Bajanai Koil St, Ambattur, Chn-53	4,325.00
Padma, Sivalingapuram Magalir Kuzhu, No.B-31, Housing Board, Sivalingapuram, K.K.Nagar.	3,750.00

Due to provision of the communication link the producer groups have been able to keep in direct contact with the marketing groups and respond fast to opportunities that arise.

Outline of plans for Regional Workshops:

FOOD has planned to organize various regional workshops to motivate the community groups and identify new groups that are interested in becoming a part of the network. It is proposed to organize 10 regional workshops and the locations where these workshops will be conducted are

being finalized. The participants to the workshop will be people from urban and semi-urban areas as well as the existing CBO groups in the project.

The focus for the workshop will be to disseminate information about the micro-entrepreneurs marketing network through the use of cell phones and also take the participants on field visits to show examples of the network in action.

The tentative agenda for the workshop is as follows.

- Introduction to the project
- Self-motivation
- Group dynamics
- Entrepreneurship
- Group perspective
- Group formation
- Leadership qualities
- Practical implementation
- Group Networking
- Self-evaluation by existing women groups
- Marketing by building social capital

Lessons learnt:

We find the progress on the project has been encouraging as expected. We have been able to shortlist 54 CBOs who were willing to participate in the project either as producers or marketers. Further all of these CBOs have been sensitized and orientation/training programs conducted for them.

The main lesson learnt during this reporting period is the while large companies spend money and resources in building and reinforcing their brand image through large scale advertising to ensure sales and sustainability of their company, a micro-enterprise functioning with little resource has to focus on building social capital in order to be sustainable. Once they build social capital the marketing of their products becomes easier. If the micro-enterprise is by an individual (e.g. a marketing group member) then that individual has to build her social capital among the community. If the micro-enterprise is promoted by an organization (e.g. the Gandhigram producer group or women cooperatives) then that organization has to build social capital among the community. E.g. we found that after Gandhigram group successfully built linkages with the marketing group and the buyers in the community any product produced by them was readily accepted by the marketing groups and sold in the community.

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