

**Terms of Reference (ToR) for engaging External Agency to undertake a
Market Research study on Farmer Producer Organisations in Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka**

About Us

S M Sehgal Foundation (SMSF) is a rural, grassroots implementing NGO that operates in about 1000 villages across 10 states of India, reaching over 2.5 million people and counting. The organization's mission is to achieve positive social, economic, and environmental change across rural India. S M Sehgal Foundation has five main program areas: Agricultural Development, Water Management, Outreach for Development, Local Participation and Sustainability, and Transform Lives *one school at a time*. The organisation's head office is located in Gurgaon, Haryana with field offices across Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh in India.

As part of its project "Bolstering Farmers Producer Organizations", operational in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh and Kolar, Karnataka, SMSF seeks to hire an agency to study the scope and market opportunities for selected FPOs in these two states.

Project Details

Organizing small and marginal farmers into farmer producer organizations has emerged as one of the most effective strategies for more sustainable and profitable agriculture returns. FPOs when managed effectively, mitigate challenges such as low market price, high input costs, limited access to technologies and markets, among others. A collective approach can empower farming communities gain improved access to technology, affordable inputs prices, social capital, and markets.

Further, women producers are most often excluded or have limited participation in such organizations due to cultural norms that prevent them from accessing productive agricultural inputs, knowledge, technologies, and finances. Additionally, majority of FPO members follow traditional agricultural practices and have limited or no access to advanced agriculture knowledge and/or technologies that can improve their crop productivity.

With this background, SMSF is implementing a project to strengthen and build institutional capacities of existing farmer producer organizations. This will be coupled with providing training to their members on better agricultural practices and technologies to improve the quantity and quality of their produce, and backward and forward linkages for their produce. Along with this, the interventions will include a cross cutting approach on the inclusion and empowerment of women farmer producers.

Objective of the Study

To this end, SMSF seeks to engage an external agency to undertake a study on assessing the market/business potential and product specific market channels: existing and new, for the selected farmer producer organisations in each state.

Geography:

Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka (2 districts, Prayagraj and Kolar)

Scope of Work:

- Attend brainstorming and review meetings to discuss methodology and sampling design with team members of SMSF (weekly)
- Conduct research study on the status, challenges and business potential for FPOs in the identified region
- Identify product specific market opportunities and channels for long term business sustainability and scaling over time
- Provide information and recommendations to improve market accessibility of FPOs
- Provide raw data and interview transcripts, along with audio-visual attachments and/or photographs as necessary
- Finalise and submit the report

Duration of the study:

Three-months from the date of signing the agreement

Indicative Budget:

Approximately Rs. 4 - 4.5 lakhs

The agency should have relevant thematic experience of working in the social sector (at least 5-6 years), specifically on Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Producer Organisations. Experience of working with non-profit organisations, international donors is desirable.

Interested organisations are requested to submit a proposal

Submission Criterion:

- Proposal for the study – to include objectives, methodology, timeline, team credentials and budget
- Credentials of the organisation and projects handled

Interested agency should submit the proposal by **October 4, 2021** to sh.singh@smsfoundation.org