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Sustainable Aquaculture for a Secure Future

Title: Role of Aquaculture in Poverty Reduction and Empowerment of Women in India through the Medium of Self-Help Groups

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Abstract: Aquaculture remains as a suitable avenue in India for augmenting fish production, which is easy, cost effective and sustainable at the same time. It provides livelihoods to rural people through generating income and employment and reduces poverty by developing and strengthening community based approaches. The expansion of farmed fishery development in community water tanks and other water bodies makes remarkable additional contribution towards the nutritional well being and socio-economic advancement of rural farmers including women. This augurs well for the sustained development of these areas wherein fish can play an important role in providing required thrust in their economy and in the improvement of the economic status of the people living in the surroundings. In recent times, self-help groups (SHGs) have emerged as an alternative mechanism to promote savings habit among poor and to provide small and short term loans to its members at lower interest to meet their necessities, consumption and income generation activities like aquaculture. Women are considered as appropriate tool for implementing community and self-development programmes. Against this background, an attempt is made in this paper to review and examine the relevant literature regarding the efficacy of SHGs and other programmes and their impact on the fisherwomen and other stakeholders and also on aquaculture. Research results show that the SHGs are very successful as can be judged from the fact that a large number of people have accepted the system and taken up fish production as their main means of livelihood and source of main or additional income.

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