

FROM CREEK TO EXPORT: THE STORY OF A WOMAN FISHER IN MUD CRAB VALUE CHAIN, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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Background

- The crab value chain in India- predominantly a male-dominated industry, particularly where culture, fattening and trading are concerned.
- This story describes how a rural illiterate woman become a renowned entrepreneur through her active participation in crab culture, fattening, and export from Maharashtra, India to improve living standards of her community.

Objective

- The goal of the study is to examine a rural woman's involvement in aquaculture improves the living standards not only for the family but for a community even at the age of 70.

Gunabai Sudhar:

A woman crab farmer in Navi Mumbai, Vashi, Maharashtra, had been rearing and fattening crabs in the tidal fed ponds of 0.5 ha for the past 20 years.



Technology adopted

Juvenile mud crabs (*Scylla serrata*), fishes like pearlspot, seabass, groupers, etc.), and shrimp seeds are collected during the high tide hours (multitrophic capture-based culture) by setting traditional bagnets in the sluice gates (between the ponds and estuaries).



- The juvenile crabs are stocked in the plastic containers for 40-50 days of fattening while being fed with poultry waste.
- Meanwhile crab seeds (500-1500 numbers) are also procured from local suppliers of Ratnagiri and stocked into the earthen ponds.



- Large crabs of size 1- 2.0 kg are harvested either by handpicking or using traditional bamboo traps or modified scoop nets.



Gunabai is an expert in handpicking of large crabs from the mud during low tide.

- Premium quality crabs are exported to the foreign markets (China, Malaysia, Singapore) via Chennai and Calcutta in thermocole boxes and the rest were transported alive to Mumbai markets in bamboo pots of various dimensions.



1000-2000 kg of crabs is exported each month at a rate of Rs. 600-1000/kg.

- Gunabai started fishing as a family occupation, but she overcame many obstacles to reach her current level of success.
- Nevertheless, today she has the support of her entire family and the community.
- According to her opinion adequate government support, incorporation of training and demonstration will promote crab fattening which in turn generates an alternative livelihood for sustainable development to a huge number of coastal rural women.

- Apart from her farming activities, she also focuses on providing training to a large number of women in her area inspiring them to become small-scale entrepreneurs in crab farming.
- She provides direct employment for eight people, one of whom is a skilled worker for laboratory analysis.





She made a huge impact in the area now, she is a leader and popular in crab farming and export in the entire locality.

Her initiative helped many families in the locality to find a regular income.

Conclusion

- Crab fattening can improve the women's empowerment within household and can provide a better opportunity to them that ultimately could bring change in their decision making empowerment.



THANK YOU