

Women entrepreneurs in coastal villages- How vulnerable they are to disasters



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Women entrepreneurs in Fisheries sector

- World fisheries has become a market-driven and dynamically developing sector incorporating tremendous technological changes.
- Rate of increase in Food fish consumption is higher (3.1%) compared all other animal meat forms including bovine, mutton, egg, milk etc which is 2.7%
- The fish pre-processing & processing, in general are dominantly handled by women

Fisherwomen into entrepreneurship



The FAO figures tell us that Women's fishing activities around the world amount to an estimated 3 million tonnes of marine fish and other seafood per year, contributing significantly to food and livelihood security in all regions of the world. In Post harvest roles, women dominate in majority centres.

Still, women remain the weaker section in fishery scenario.

Further,

Promotion of Entrepreneurship among coastal women is on full swing all over the world as it assures a sustainable economic growth of the sector. In India also, efforts are in full swing.

COVID Pandemic –the real challenge

- As Mr. Bishow Parajuli,(Director, World Food Programme) told, the covid-19 pandemic was initially viewed as a health disaster but in due course it has taken shape of a major economic disaster, food insecurity disaster, livelihood disaster & we all experience its bitter consequences, which will be felt for a long time.
- Being a developing country, India has its impact more severely, especially in its rural economy. Rural sector accounts for two-thirds of India's more than 125 crore of peoples, living in 6.4 lakh villages and earn nearly 30 percent of the country's national income.
- The covid -19 related restrictions have disturbed one or all of the links in the supply chain from production to the end consumer in Fisheries and Aquaculture.

- While the economic and social disruption caused by the pandemic is devastating, within the limitations of the Pandemic period, an effort was taken to have a bird's eye view on the plight of those women who opted fishery based micro enterprises for their livelihood..to see how vulnerable they are.
- Wisner et al. (2004) has defined vulnerability as combination of factors that determine the degree to which someone's life and livelihood is put at risk by a discrete and identifiable event in nature or society
- The study was taken up in the coastal State of Kerala, India

An exploration in the state of Kerala

Why Kerala ..its Unique among 22 states in India

- HDI
- Literacy
- Infant mortality rate
- Marriage age
- Kudumbasree ..
- SAF(Society for assistance to fisherwomen)..Thus
- Women in Kerala are popularly considered as a valuable, healthy and educated resource, who can contribute effectively in all aspects of development of the state



Fisherwomen in the pandemic

- Lack of fresh fish for sale due to restrictions on fishing as well as fish auctions in harbours (To avoid gathering)
- Occupations like fish sorting, fish drying, pickle making etc also hampered (Done in group in crowded place)
- Work in prawn peeling centres is lost (Big Groups work in close proximity)
- Whatever little product they make, access to resources stopped (have to get from crowded landing centres)
- Fish vending in market stopped (Crowded places)
- Reverse migration leads to unhealthy competition from more womenfolk or men in the occupation



women enterprises during the Pandemic..

78 enterprises were contacted through indirectly
Fish based- 44% , Tailoring unit- 23%, Provision stores-
26%, garment units-7%

- Total Closure - 66 percent (**86% of Fish based enterprises**)
- Temporarily closed - 24 tpercent
- Diversified - 6 percent

Some socio-personal details

- 74 % of the women were co-owners
- Most(66%) of units were formally registered
- 67% of the enterprises got initial invest support from SAF, Dept of Fisheries
- 72% reported no financial aid during pandemic for units

Confidence level to build up	Fishery enterprises(%)	Non-fishery enterprises(%)
To get Finance	74	62
To acquire new/ improved skills	38	60
To get sufficient raw material	44	79
Get assured market	12	68
To reinstate the enterprise	12	38

Perceived factors with fishery enterprise making it more vulnerable

- Price undulation
- Undulation in fish availability
- Changed rules for getting fish
- Fish not an essential commodity/daily use
- perishability
- Have to gather /aggregate to procure, process and sell

Suggestions

- Technology solutions are very important:
- Women friendly Technologies
- Digital literacy
- Information literacy
- Networking small scale units -
- Women friendly business models

They are not entrepreneurs..consider that and hand hold long..not only financially ...



Women enterprises examples



Few of the variety of products



- Modifications to make technology solutions adaptable for work from home for women safe modes/devices/systems for raw material procurement, processing, display of products, sale of products etc
- Measures for addressing the digital divide
 - Awareness, skill enhancement
 - Decentralised facilitation centres by educated youth in villages
- Financial assistance for meeting emergency needs and relaxations on micro-credits etc

- Long term plans keeping the possible permanent changes that can occur in the supply chain mechanism and markets like skill development | product diversification, digital marketing, social media use etc
- Provision of assistance for procurement essential devices and subscription charges if any applicable
- Business models different from SHG/ group based ones to individual based and provision of suitable technology guidance and equipment

• **THANK YOU**

“She sells seashells by the seashore.” The
tongue-twister



Thank
You!