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Promoting Fish Farming by Women in Africa: Women in Small-scale Aquaculture in Malawi

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Abstract

African women considered the main producers of food for family. Rural women carry on traditional fishing activity. The participation of women in aquaculture in Africa has good reason. This work describes the roles of women in tilapia farming in Malawi. It also aimed at Malawi where women are already active in farming activities as fish spawning, stocking fish in ponds and feeding. Therefore, a better understanding of this role may provide clues on how women might benefit from the implementation of fish farming. Unfortunately, no attempt was made by the Malawian government to inform the women about the change or to introduce them to farming. In Malawi, private fish farm at Blantyre contains 30 working women working on feed preparations, fish spawning and stocking. These women have been the targets of training and extension. The great majority of female fish farmers are wives and mothers, and their primary preoccupations are their families and their crops. Extensive fish farming in the rural areas must be viewed within the real constraints of the life of the target populations. The lack of training and credit are the main constraints preventing African women practicing farming. The government must promote fish farming by Malawian women. There is a definite need for recognition of women's contributions to the development of aquaculture in Africa. A number of constraints must be recognised which limit the participation of women as owners/operators. The constraint of land ownership is common, but it is especially difficult for women to resolve. Credit is important constraint and failure to recognise the contributions and constraints of women in the development of aquaculture in Malawi can have significant effects on their position. Introducing fish farming into some key areas may involve the introduction of new species for higher value markets. Access to fish ponds often liberates women from other fishing duties, and offer opportunities to obtain fish regularly throughout the year.

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