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Short Communication

Obstacles Encountered by Women in Aquaculture Activities

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DESCRIPTION

Aquaculture, or the farming of aquatic organisms such as fish, shellfish, and algae, has become a significant component of the global food production system, contributing to both food security and economic development. Women around the world play a vital role in aquacultural activities, especially in developing countries where they are often responsible for various aspects of the farming process. However, despite their centrality in this sector, women involved in aquaculture face numerous challenges that hinder their ability to fully participate in, benefit from, and lead the industry. This article examines the challenges faced by women involved in aquacultural activities, ranging from access to resources and technology to social, cultural, and policy-related barriers.

Limited access to resources

One of the primary challenges faced by women in aquaculture is limited access to critical resources such as land, capital, credit, and technology. In many parts of the world, women do not have the same access to property rights as men, which significantly limits their ability to own or control the land needed for aquaculture activities. In regions where aquaculture is practiced in rural or coastal areas, land tenure is often patriarchal, with women being excluded from ownership or control over the resources that support their livelihoods [1,2].

Technological barriers

The adoption of modern aquaculture techniques and technologies is another significant challenge faced by women in the sector. Aquaculture practices often require access to specialized knowledge and advanced technologies, such as water quality monitoring, automated feeding systems, or breeding technologies. However, women may face barriers to learning and adopting these technologies due to limited educational opportunities, lack of technical training, or cultural norms that discourage their involvement in technical fields [3,4].

Workload and time constraint

Women involved in aquaculture often bear a double burden, balancing the demands of aquaculture work with their responsibilities in the household. In many communities, women are expected to handle the majority of domestic chores, including cooking, cleaning, childcare, and fetching water and firewood. These responsibilities can leave them with little time or energy to focus on aquaculture activities, especially if the work involves physically demanding tasks such as maintaining ponds or harvesting fish [5,6].

Climate change and environmental stress

Women in aquaculture are also vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly in regions where aquaculture is practiced in coastal or freshwater environments. Changes in water temperature, salinity, or the frequency of extreme weather events can affect the productivity and sustainability of aquaculture systems. Women, who are often responsible for managing and harvesting fish, may face particular challenges in adapting to these changes due to their limited access to climate change information, technology, and support systems [7].

Policy gaps and lack of support

Finally, policies related to aquaculture often fail to take into account the specific challenges faced by women. National and local policies related to aquaculture tend to focus on boosting production or enhancing technological innovation without considering the gendered aspects of the sector. This lack of gender-sensitive policy frameworks results in the exclusion of women from key economic and decision-making processes in the aquaculture sector [8-10].

CONCLUSION

The challenges faced by women involved in aquaculture are complex and multifaceted, stemming from a combination of social, cultural, economic, and policy-related factors. To address

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these challenges, it is essential to adopt a gender-sensitive approach that recognizes and addresses the specific needs and barriers faced by women in the sector. This includes improving access to resources, technologies, and training, promoting gender equality in decision-making, and advocating for policies that support women's involvement and leadership in aquaculture. By empowering women and ensuring their full participation in aquaculture, we can unlock the full potential of this sector to contribute to sustainable food production, economic development, and gender equality.

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