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RESEARCH REPORTS

Sustainable Aquaculture for a Secure Future

Title: Understanding the Role of Fish Farmer Associations as Intermediaries for the Commercialization of Aquaculture in Uganda

Author(s): Emily Stutzman¹, Joseph Molnar², Gertrude Atukunda³ and John Walakira³

1. Lipscomb University, 1 University Park Drive Nashville, TN 37204, USA

2. Auburn University, 203 Comer Hall Auburn, AL 36849, USA

3. Aquaculture Research and Development Center-Kajjansi, National Fisheries Resources Research Institute-NARO, Kampala, Uganda

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Abstract: Aquaculture development commentary supports the formation of fish farmer associations or producer organizations as avenues for cultivating small- and medium-scale commercial farmers. However, little is known about the types of associations that facilitate commercialization. This research presents four qualitative case studies, based on semi-structured interviews, profiling existing associations of commercial fish farmers in Uganda. We conclude that the umbrella organizations under which local fish farmer associations vertically align themselves have important implications for fish farmer production. Aquaculture-specific umbrella organizations contribute to the success of local member association's more than general umbrella organizations do. Successful fish farmer associations accept government assistance only when it directly improves their fish farm operations. Other farmer groups seemed to wait for direct subsidization. Training fish farmers, providing quality information, cost sharing, and advocating for the aquaculture sector, not donor seeking, are the top priorities in productive fish farmer associations.

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