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ABSTRACTS



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Coastal indebtedness and impact of microfinance in marine fisheries sector of India

**V.P. Vipinkumar*, R. Narayanakumar, C. Ramachandran,
Shyam S. Salim, P.S. Swathilekshmi and B. Johnson**

Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute

Post Box No. 1603, Ernakulam North P.O., Cochin - 682 018, India

*E-mail: vipincmfri@gmail.com

In the coastal belts of Indian marine fisheries sector, the microfinance institutions (MFI) and self help groups (SHG) play a pivotal role in reducing the coastal indebtedness among marine fisherfolk. The study assesses the extent of indebtedness among marine fisherfolk in India and the role of microfinance institutions in redeeming the debt. The study was undertaken in the entire coastal belt of India covering four zones such as Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest zones comprising a total of 8 maritime states. Situational analysis was done through Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) in the selected potential maritime locations and the fisherfolk from the various strata such as mechanized, motorized and traditional sectors were drawn as representative samples. Data were gathered through personal interview with a pre-tested and standardized data collecting protocol from members of 12 selected MFIs in each state and non-members in marine fisheries sector comprising of 600 respondents from each state to assess their impact on indebtedness level, supply of credit and empowerment. The results of the study revealed Odisha as the state with highest level of indebtedness (89%) and Maharashtra with the least level of indebtedness (78%). The study also showed that the level of indebtedness of members of MFIs was less compared to the non-members. Though the indebtedness was more in certain cases, the level of repayment

was found to be significantly improved in MFIs. In the traditional, secondary and tertiary fisheries sectors, there is an extreme necessity of strengthening the MFI ventures. It was also found that the MFIs ranked better in most of the major attributes in the perception of stakeholders compared to banks and non-institutional credit sources.

Keywords: Microfinance institutions, self help groups, indebtedness, credit.