

Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication
University of Oklahoma
V Infpoverty World Conference
Issues Paper for Conference Seminar
“New Digital Perspectives in Fish Farming”
May 12, 2005
Time: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
23rd Floor Conference Room DC-2 (2 UN Plaza)

Background

One of the greatest challenges facing the most impoverished villagers throughout the world is a sustainable source of quality protein in their diets. Historically, agriculture has been responsible for supplying a reliable protein source for the world’s residents with increasing capacity in many regions. More recently, eating habits of even the most impoverished groups have evolved due to improved preservation and transportation systems for all types of food.

Much of the growth in demand for protein is now for fish and fish products. The production from both fisheries and aquaculture is at the highest level in history and continuing to grow. According to the FAO, although human consumption of both capture fisheries production and aquaculture production have grown, the rate of aquaculture growth is higher and continues to grow. Total aquaculture production, which is growing faster than all other animal producing sectors, must double in the next decade to keep up with population growth.

The challenge for the most impoverished villages is to introduce sustainable practices that result in a reliable source of high quality disease-free products in sufficient quantity to satisfy demand. This will require using proven practices for production, creative marketing and exercising sound business practices to ensure local employment and long-term success for each enterprise.

In many parts of the world lessons have been learned and local practices have evolved to the point where sustainable fisheries and aquaculture are on the horizon. We must grow these business enterprises capitalizing on lessons learned by the many others who have been successful over many years in making aquaculture work in their villages.

Issues:

- 1) What are the greatest challenges faced by rural villagers in introducing a fish-farming enterprise to supplement dietary protein needs?
- 2) How can local villagers access training and technical assistance to begin sustainable aquaculture production?
- 3) What are the challenges beyond aquaculture that must be addressed to ensure long-term success in small-scale aquaculture production and agribusiness development?

- 4) What are the financial challenges and opportunities faced in agribusiness development?
- 5) How can ICTs be used to ensure that the best scientific practices are used for maximum efficiency and effectiveness of small-scale local aquaculture operations?
- 6) What are the regional employment opportunities available in aquaculture and fish farming and how can they be integrated into the local economy?