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#### Sommario/riassunto

With an overarching conceptual framework and a synthesis of findings, this book is a unique collection of the experiences of twenty diverse cases of women's collectives, holding critical lessons for livelihood enhancement and women's empowerment. The book is the result of a collaborative project between the development organisation viz, PRADAN, working to strengthen women-led collectives under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), and a group of development and management scholars hailing from the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA). Based on the documented cases using immersive methods and a feminist perspective, the book provides a critical analysis of the agency displayed by women and their collectives with the potential to induce changes in the socio-economic status of women hailing from disadvantaged sections. Inclusion, governance and leadership, financial intermediation, livelihoods, and social action are the major outcome dimensions of the collectives examined in the book, as highlighted under SDG-5 which calls for ensuring women's effective participation and leadership and reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources. While the conceptual framework helps unravel the complex interlinkages visualised between women, livelihoods, and collectives, the cases in themselves and the synthesis objectively depict the lessons and challenges encountered by the collectives given the entrenched gender relations and the neoliberal policy narratives. This book serves as a source of real case studies for teaching and training, a reference work for researchers, and a guidance book for policymakers and practitioners. H. S. Shylendra holds a Ph. D in Economics. He is a Professor in the Social Science area and a member of the Centre for Sustainable Livelihood at the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA), Gujarat. His research and teaching interests span across development theories, rural development, rural sociology, rural livelihoods, gender, local governance, microfinance and SHGs, and cooperatives.

