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Evaluation of "Samurdhi" coconut cultivation development programme-2005

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Through the Samurdhi Coconut Cultivation Development Programme (SCCDP), 100,000 seedlings were distributed among 28,030 Samurdhi beneficiaries in 2005. To find out the effectiveness of this programme, a survey of beneficiary households was conducted in three regional management areas representing Gampaha, Anuradhapura and Moneragala.

The objectives of this study were to evaluate the effectiveness of SCCDP and to propose the improvements required for SCCDP. An average respondent in the Gampaha region spends 2% of his weekly food expenditure on coconut whereas in Anuradhapura and Moneragala it is around 3% and 9%. The SCCDP programme aimed at overcoming this expenditure. The results revealed that the target group selection is at a satisfactory level regardless of the region. Only 3% in Gampaha and 1% in Moneragala were reported as incorrect selections. The majority had an interest in coconut home gardening as they look for technology, seedlings and fertilizer subsidies . Fertilizer distribution among Samurdhi beneficiaries is inefficient in Gampaha due to poor packing material and handling. The technology dissemination process has not functioned well. In the Gampaha region around 34% of the respondents did not receive advice whereas in Anuradhapura and Moneragala it was 17% and 8% respectively. As there is a clear difference between advice receivers and non-receivers when practicing each activity in planting a seedling, technology dissemination process needs to be revised. Of the seedlings distributed, 89% had survived in Gampaha, 81% in Anuradhapura and 84% in Moneragala. In Anurdhapura and Moneragala, pest and diseases were the major death factor that contributed to 33% and 45% of the loss. The major cause in Gampaha was cattle damage which contributed to a 30% of the lost seedlings. Drought was a cause of death of 29% of the seedlings in Moneragala and 27% in Anuradhapura. Fertilizer application is poor in all the regions. In Gampaha region 43% do not apply fertilizer and in Anuradhapura and Moneragala it was 72% and 66% respectively. The use of kitchen waste and ash as a fertilizer source is popular among 41% of the respondents in Gampaha region and 20% and 33% in Anuradhapura and Moneragala regions respectively. It could be popularized as a source of fertilizer which can reduce the costs. The present management level of the seedlings is at a satisfactory level and it can be concluded that this programme is a successful strategy to expand coconut cultivation.

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