



Section F

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Impact of livelihood training programs on women: Evidence from tsunami-affected women in the Batticaloa District

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The tsunami of December 2004 had affected the livelihood activities of many households in the Eastern Province, which resulted in many families losing their traditional income generating activities and were forced to live in abject poverty. A study was conducted in the Batticaloa District in 2008/2009 to assess the impact of training programs conducted by an international NGO to improve the livelihood skills of women affected by both the tsunami and the ethnic conflict and also to identify the weaknesses of such programs. Women who had undergone livelihood skills training conducted by an NGO were randomly selected from the Palameenmadu village in Batticaloa District for the study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect information from the women on the types of training undergone and the impacts of it on their livelihood activities. Based on their marital status, the women were stratified into two groups for analysis. A non-parametric test (Mann-Whitney) was performed to ascertain the impact of training programs on these two groups of women.

Results indicated that the training had no impact on increasing living standards, reducing dependency on external assistance, self-employment skills gained and the earning capability due to increased knowledge gained in the two tested groups. But the training had a significant impact on increasing income and self employment skills of married women, and on increasing employment opportunities of unmarried women. The results have implications on the type of training that is given for livelihood activities of women. The types of training imparted helped married women to increase their income from the current self-employment activities they are involved in and also on unemployed and unmarried women to engage in self-employment. However they need support facilities for this purpose. Hence, there is a need to correctly identify the training needs of different people and also to probe into the employment opportunities available or expectations related to the training provided to them.