

Role of NGO on livelihood development and gender mainstreaming; A case of mushroom value chain

A.M.S.M.R.S.G. Bandara* and D.A.M. De Silva

Department of Agribusiness Management, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri-Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka

Abstract

This research intends to explore the facilitation role of NGO in rural livelihood development and to measure the outcomes of livelihood development opportunities. Household food and nutrition security, income generation, employment opportunities, space for women, human resource development, market opportunities and wellbeing created by a local NGO through initialization of mushroom farming. Primary data collection tools were structured pre-tested questionnaire, two in-depth interviews with key informants, and participatory mapping. A Sample of 87 both funded and non-funded mushroom farmers was selected through simple random sampling technique from Hambantota district. The sample included 61 female farmers of three categories low income, disabled and female headed. Data analysis techniques included descriptive statistics and paired sample t-test. Facilitation role of NGO can be categorized into two main sections; provision of tangible and intangible assets. Financial capital for initiation of mushroom cultivation and develop necessary facilities help to empower resource poor families. Training on mushroom production, packing, processing and record keeping strengthen the human capital of the low income, disabled and female headed households. Facilitation on business registration, continuous monitoring and evaluation of the process and establish community plus local institutional network ensure the sustainability of the venture. Results revealed that funded female farmers have enhanced their household wellbeing, nutrition security, open up employment opportunities for the housewives, strengthened women participation in family income generation and link farmers into markets. Further, venture creation improves household economic status, enables their savings culture in both formal and informal ways, and generated investment opportunities. Further, COVID-19 pandemic badly affected on most vulnerable rural livelihoods but NGO assisted farmer groups were able to manage the situation positively compared to non- supported farmers.

Keywords: Livelihood development, Mushroom farmers, NGO

***Corresponding Author:** bandara.ruwini@gmail.com