

**Women's Participation in Socio-Economic Development:
With Special Reference to Kattankudy Divisional Secretariat Area**

Azka, ALF*

Abstract

Social development is a commitment that development processes need to benefit people, particularly but not only the poor, but also a recognition that people, and the way they interact in groups and society, and the norms that facilitates such interaction, shape development processes. Socio-economic development is a process of social and economic development in society. When the role of men become more important to the development discourse, the contribution of women has received less attention in many developing countries. However, the concepts of gender equity, women empowerment or gender development have been discussed by many scholars in various fields, such as; economic, public policy, sociology and law etc. Enhancing women's participation in development is essential not only for achieving social justice but also for reducing poverty. Worldwide experience shows clearly that supporting a stronger role for women contributes to economic growth, it improves child survival and overall family health, and it reduces fertility, thus helping to slow population growth rates. In short, investing in women is central to sustainable development. Therefore, this paper aims to understand women's role in socio-economic development in Kattankudy Divisional Secretariat area. This is basically a qualitative research. Data for this study have gathered from both primary and secondary sources. As secondary data, the articles, magazines, electronic sources and literatures have been used. The primary data have collected through structured interview with key informants, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Finally, this study found that women's participation in socio-economic development has been dramatically enhanced soon after Tsunami and other disaster. Meanwhile, women are empowered in various level in order to extend their contribution in social services, working with local NGOs, develop self-employment, and participated in religious and cultural activities in Kattankudy Divisional Secretariat area respectively.

Key words: Socio-economic Development, Gender Equity, Women Empowerment

To whom correspondence should be addressed: alfazka20@gmail.com

*Department of Social Sciences, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka.