

**HOME GARDENING FOR FOOD SECURITY AND INCOME  
GENERATION OF WAR AFFECTED WOMEN-HEADED FAMILIES IN  
CHEDDIKULAM, SRI LANKA**

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Home gardens (HG) are dynamic and sustainable food production systems, which have been reported as an older land use system next to shifting cultivation in Sri Lanka. It plays a vital role in supporting households through providing foods, fuel wood, building materials, fodder for livestock, and generation of income. Home gardening was introduced as a viable strategy to ensure food security and income generation method among unemployed women-headed families in *Cheddikulam*, Northern Province of Sri Lanka to mitigate the effects occurred due to lasted civil war in the area. This study was conducted to assess the role of HG in food security and income generation of war affected women-headed families in *Cheddikulam*. Hundred home-gardening women-headed families in *Cheddikulam* divisional secretariat were randomly selected. Primary data were collected through pre-tested questionnaire, key personal interviews and focus group discussions and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Both Shannon Wiener diversity index (SWDI) and Simpson's diversity index (SDI) were calculated. The SWDI obtained a value of 0.6723, while SDI obtaining a value of 0.4999 eliciting higher agro biodiversity in HG. Further, paddy was reported as the most dominant annual crop species (SDI = 0.1994) and banana was recognized as highest dominant species (SDI = 0.0743) among perennial in HG. Results revealed that contribution of HG for the monthly income of the households is 24.45%, which is a considerably a higher value. Further, average household dietary diversity score (HDDS) of the population was 7.31 and 66% members belonged to highly food secured group (HDDS>6.5). Results conclude that the contribution of home-gardening for food security and income generation is considerable in women-headed war-affected families in *Cheddikulam*. Hence introducing home gardening to potential other rural localities would be a worthy investment for ensuring food and income security of rural livelihoods in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** Food security, Home gardening, Income generation, Women-headed families