

THE IMPACT OF FARM FIELD SCHOOL (FFS) APPROACH IN SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF VEGETABLE CULTIVATION IN ANURADAPURA DISTRICT

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The concept of farmer field schools (FFS) was started to use as a tool of agriculture extension in disseminating knowledge. Number of non-governmental organizations used this concept in transferring knowledge on vegetable cultivation. This study tries to assess the impact of such a FFS program launched by International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) in Anuradhapura district.

The study was conducted in Anuradhapura district using 30 participants and 30 non-participants of FFS. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select FFSs and two samples of farmers. At the first stage, 10 FFSs were selected at random and at the second stage, three participants were selected at random from each FFS. Likewise three non participants were selected at random from each FFSs locality. Questionnaire survey was conducted to collect primary data from two farmer groups.

Descriptive techniques along with several indices were employed in analyzing data. Knowledge, practice, education and facilitator indices of participants reported a higher value than that of non participants. Percentage differences of indices are 13, 12, 18 and 14 respectively, between participants and non-participants. Mean income of participant is 6 percent higher than non- participants.

Accordingly, it can be concluded that even though there is a considerable change in farmer perception by means of FFSs, it has not been lead to considerable change in income from vegetable farming in the district.

Key words: Farmer field schools (FFSs), Participants, Non- participants