

Intra House Hold Food Allocation Behaviour of Up Country Tea Plantation Workers in Sri Lanka

R. M. D. P. Kumari¹, K. G. M. C. P. B. Gajanayake² and G. A. P. Chandrasekara³

Nutrition insecurity among plantation workers is a critical problem today in Sri Lanka. Adequate Nutrition security enhances physical health, thereby improved labor productivity. This paper examines the patterns of food allocation among up country tea plantation workers with particular focus on gender differences. This paper also aims to explore social and economic factors affecting the dynamics of intra-household food allocation process in the state sector where homogeneous socio economic conditions are prevailing.

A cross sectional study was conducted using randomly selected sixty household in Nuwara Eliya and Badulla districts. Calorie adequacy ratios of elders, fathers, mothers and children were used to compare the adequacy of calorie allocation among family members within the household. Relative calorie allocation of individuals was regressed with socio economic variables to find out the determiners of the intra-household calorie allocation. Result showed that there was a significant difference among calorie adequacy ratio of elders, fathers, mothers and children. Elders showed the lowest calorie adequacy ratio and fathers showed the highest calorie adequacy ratio. Regression results indicators that family size has a significant negative impact on the relative calorie allocation of the mothers. Favorable economic position of women showed a positive affect on the food allocation among their children. Economic position of other members in a households as a positive effect on father and mothers relative calorie allocation.

These results suggest that economical support for women may reduce the nutrition insecurity of up country plantation workers in Sri Lanka.

Key Words: Calorie intake; recommended daily allowance; Calorie adequacy ratio; Relative calorie allocation; Nutrition insecurity

¹Dept. of Plantation Management, Wayamba University, Sri Lanka. E-mail: dinesharajaksha2004@yahoo.com

²E-mail: cpbgajanayake@yahoo.com

³Dept. of Plantation Management, Wayamba University, Sri Lanka.