

Evaluation of livelihood improvement of women engaged in “*Helabojun*” outlets

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Abstract

Helabojun (Local food) is a concept originated in Department of Agriculture (DOA) to encourage women for profitable self-employment and promote local/indigenous food consumption in urban and semi-urban areas of the country. These *Helabojun hal* provides a range of indigenous foods and drinks at a reasonable price under one shelter that makes available safe and nutritious foods for customers. This program has also become a coping strategy for women to improve their livelihood. Based on Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) and primary data collected from five *Helabojun hal*, a study was conducted to measure livelihood improvement gained by women through participation *Helabojun* concept. Livelihood outcomes were measured by developing a Livelihood Outcome Index (LOI). Paired sample t-test was employed to compare mean income before and after engagement in *Helabojun hala*. Independent variables recorded at the ratio scale were correlated with dependent variable through Pearson's correlation to evaluate the second objective. The LOI indicated that 46%, 30% and 24% of the women have achieved High, Moderate and Low livelihood improvement levels, respectively. Family size, years of schooling, years of experience and working days per month were positively correlated with the livelihood improvement levels achieved by women at $p \leq 0.05$. This study reveals that household characteristics influences livelihood improvement levels of women engaged in *Helabojun* outlets. Additional information collected during the study has also revealed that provision of adequate space and sanitary facilities at *Helabojun* premises is advantageous in attracting more customers.

Key words: Indigenous foods, Livelihood improvement, Women and household well-being.

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