

# Economic empowerment through self-employment initiatives: A groupwork experience based on a Sri Lankan village

Shamila Sivakumaran<sup>1</sup> and Jeevasuthan Subramaniam<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** *This article looks into the application of groupwork in Sri Lanka with a group of women-headed households (WHHs) to empower them and promote a sustainable economic development through self-employment initiatives. This particular groupwork was carried out in an underprivileged rural village, in Sri Lanka. Participants were divided into three groups based on their interest in the following livelihood activities; home gardening, tailoring and handloom work. They were facilitated with different activities for the period of six months. The significant changes were; improved skills in selected area, leadership and team work, documentation, mutual support, internal harmony among the community members, marketing skill and self-confidence.*

**Keywords:** WHHs; groupwork; group work; social work; economic empowerment; self-employment; Sri Lanka

1. School of Social Work, National Institute of Social Development, Sri Lanka

2. Dept of Sociology, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

**Address for correspondence:** [shamilasivakumaran@gmail.com](mailto:shamilasivakumaran@gmail.com)

**Date of first (online) publication:** 11th September 2020