CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Conclusions

The population of Ampara district, as represented by the surveyed sample, is shown to carry out multiple livelihood strategies to sustain their life during a year. Paddy farming and fishing are the major livelihood strategies that directly or indirectly had the impact on other livelihood strategies such as non-farm wage employment and self-employment. Paddy farming and fishing are seasonal and under the influence of natural factors. Most of the people are also wage earners. The wage earners are affected more due to the unexpected incidences in paddy farming and fishing. During the unexpected incidences on these main basic livelihood strategies, the whole society is affected. Mainly during the latter months of a year, most of the families became more vulnerable in terms of income and food. This represents the traditional rural nature of the society in terms of productive economic activities that is usual in the rural parts of other agriculture based developing countries. Except paddy farming, agricultural production and diversification are far below than local demand for these produce along with very low level of adoption of sustainable, resource saving agricultural production practices. These conditions aggravate situations of vulnerability and make them to spend more money on food purchasing.

Non-farm wage employment has higher impact on this society. The percentage of households adopted such strategy and income contributions were found higher than other types of livelihood strategies. When the livelihood strategies looked into two

major different categories of agricultural and non-agricultural strategies, their respective contribution to the studied sample became equally importance. Therefore both sectors should be developed to improve the growth of this region.

Among the components considered which representing different livelihood assets extreme situation observed among the households. This reflects the situation of high disparity in terms of asset ownership. The average operating land ownership fort his studied sample is less than one acre. Households have had the opportunity to participate in social-organizations as the NGOs are working here.

The calculated gini index reveals un-equality of income distribution in the studied sample. This value is quiet nearly to country's gini index. It reveals that even though the rural society is poor, there is variation in income distribution. The stratified household types resulted from cluster analysis presents two household types, namely, partially commercialized and subsistence nature. It means that the households who have had higher money value of productive tools, additive borrowing and the continuous employment pattern are good enough in economic security condition. The economic security is determined by these variables to the studied sample. These household types which representing the nature of partial commercialization and subsistence are distributed among all types of livelihood strategies except livestock production.

Based on the food sufficiency score 28% of the households were food insecure. Based on the income sufficiency measure 66% of the households were below national official poverty line. Therefore, 38% of the households were food secure but still categorized below the official poverty line. Most of the households went through expenditure related strategies. Gender aspects missed to explain some

of the expected traditional features of livelihood analysis. This is because of the adult working members' contribution to the households even with the presence of female headship.

The econometric models showed that households which had continuous employment opportunities, higher productive assets and higher additive borrowing capacity had the higher economic security at 5% significant level ($p<0.05$). Increase in education level would significantly ($p<0.05$) increase economic security. Female headed households were found to be food secure, but had significantly ($p<0.05$) lower income level than male headed households. Income sufficiency is also determined by age of the household head and the presence of adult members. Age of the household head and young adult ratio has the negative relationship with the logit of income sufficiency.

These results should be taken into consideration before implementation of any development project or strategy. The utilization of results depends on the objectives of aid agency and policy makers. When evaluating the results on economic security situation, the households which are food insufficient and buying rice from outside should be the highest prioritized groups. The second highest prioritized groups are households which are food insufficient but access to rice only by their own employment strategies. Subsistence households, income insecure households and finally households adopting certain coping strategies would also be given attention by policy makers.

7.2 Recommendations

Based on the study results, the following are the recommendations of the study.

7.2.1 In order to reduce the incidence of food insufficiency, those vulnerable households should be identified and special agriculture package(materials and skills) such as short term income generating activities such as bee-keeping, mushroom cultivation, poultry production, should be introduced , such activities should also be beneficial for those households, which do not have big landholding size. This kind of agriculture activities could be able to generate continuous employment pattern throughout the year.

7.2.2 Since the study area is basically under the subsistence farming; even households did not utilize their available landholdings with the improved agricultural practices, therefore their productivity is also very low and increase the vulnerability of outside spending for foods. In order to resolve this problem, agriculture extension programmes such as trainings, demonstrations, improved seed and equipments distribution should be carried out more effectively to reach every vulnerable households.

7.2.3 There is an opportunity for coconut and palmyrah based small and medium level activities. These types of skills should be enhanced so that locally people will be able to get employment and can make some extra income. Planting and development of these trees should be enhanced.

7.2.4 Development focus on human capital

Knowledge generation should be based upon a broad understanding of the current livelihood strategies of the poor and the internal and external factors that may

cause these to change. (Education is the common determinant of various economic hardships considered in this study). Investment in knowledge generation and special training as opposed to general education are considered in terms of the contribution that they make to human capital, it is immediately apparent. Knowledge generated must be relevant to the potential feature of livelihood strategies. Participatory process of knowledge generation that build upon and complement existing local knowledge and use of resources should be adopted without exploiting local resources. If the local environment is more complex e.g. the problems, the greater the importance of knowledge. What are the information sources, whether they are valuable in the sense to target group, if any excluded from access, what measures should be made to include them should be considered during the establishment of this human capital. Therefore vocational training centers to improve nonagricultural activities and agriculture based on small scale industrial diversified production technologies should be introduced.

7.3 Further research

      7.3.1 Assessment and comparison of the economic security situation based on spatial/environmental factor difference

      This study assessed the rural poor population which is near to sea coast and near to paddy field areas. Both of them are environmental (spatial) factors contributing or influencing the people's livelihood. What are the situations of those (poor groups) who do not have nearby access to these environmental endowment factors? Therefore, this same study can be extended to other areas of the country to propose development package.

      7.3.2 Also, studies should be conducted among different ethnic groups.

      7.3.3 What is the result if the assessment unit is individual instead of household? This study results are based on the variation among households as the single study unit is household. If the single study unit is individuals or different age groups, the study results could be more specific.