Ab168

Restoration of livelihoods in former war affected areas in Sri Lanka

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The Government of Sri Lanka commenced a post-war reconstruction process in order to build a sustainable peace as soon as the civil war ended in May 2009. The government considered restoration of livelihoods as the second step of early recovery needed to provide relief to the IDPs to complete the resettlement process successfully. Since the majority of people in the Northern and the Eastern provinces depend for their livelihoods on agriculture, fisheries, and animal husbandry, the government made arrangements to set up an environment conducive to the restarting of their livelihoods. Because of this government policy, the people were able to commence their usual livelihood activities in their own villages.

The aim of this paper is to determine the effectiveness of the government's assistance to the restoration of the livelihood in the former war affected areas in Sri Lanka. The primary and secondary data have been based on this study. The primary data was collected from in depth interviews with resettled people in the northern and the eastern provinces and the field observations. The secondary data were collected from the government reports and non-government documents.

The government policy appears to have produced positive results because a significant increase in paddy production and fishing harvest in the Northern and Eastern provinces has been reported in the last five years. Although the government supported the farmers and fishermen in various ways, some problems have arisen in some areas of the Northern Province. Although the government has been involved in promoting their livelihood prospects in different ways, the majority of people in the North suffer from absolute poverty and deprivation.

Key words: *post war reconstruction, restoration of livelihood, agriculture, fishing, daily wage earners, vocational training*

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