

Influences of Large Scale Projects and Tourism on People in Post-War Areas: Special Reference to Panama, Eastern Province

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Different effects of the war are still prevalent in the Sri Lankan society; especially rural people in the Northern and Eastern provinces seem to suffer from its consequences. The post-war development projects in these areas have a significant impact on village life.

This study mainly focuses on effects of large scale construction projects and tourism promotion projects in the post-war period in Sri Lanka. The study area, Panama in the Ampara district, Eastern province was selected due to diverse inter-ethnic relations between Sinhalese and Tamils. The villagers of Panama directly faced the thirty-year civil war and they are still suffering from post-war consequences. Not only in war period but also in post-war period their sources of income have been at risk.

Primary data were collected through face to face structured interviews. The convening sampling technique was used to select fifty respondents according to Grama Niladhari divisions. SWOT analysis method was used to analyse data.

The society and the natural location are identified as strengths of this study. The disclosed weaknesses are minor road development, lack of productive jobs, non-existence of an effective education structure and isolated rural attitude of villagers. In addition to this, feasibility of tourism, fishing and various land utilization for agricultural gain available are identified as opportunities. Furthermore, as threats, lower participation of politicians, land ownership problems, weaknesses of the infrastructure development, deficient facilities for regional economic industries, dependent administrative structure, land invasion and cultural problems raised through tourism can be identified.

The conclusion suggests that the villagers in Panama have not obtained natural, cultural and economic benefits and they lack social knowledge and awareness of

large scale construction projects and tourism projects. Villagers in Panama are expecting answers from relevant authorities for their current problems.

Key words: *Land utilization, Post-war development projects, SWOT analysis.*