

SS.ARTS.17

**OBSTACLES FACED BY THE RESETTLED WAR-DISPLACED
PEOPLE IN THE COURSE OF RESTORING THEIR LIVELIHOOD:
A CASE STUDY OF A RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM IN THE
KARACHCHI DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT IN KILINOCHCHI**

K. Sajanthan

Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya

A livelihood includes the capabilities, assets, and activities required for a means of living. The armed struggle between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government induced continuous displacement in the North-East region of the island for about three decades adversely affecting the livelihoods of the displaced people. The dramatic end of the war in May 2009 caused approximately 300,000 internally displaced people (IDP) in the North. Primarily all those IDPs were provided with temporary facilities in many welfare centers in the Vavuniya District and the government took speedy action to resettle those IDPs in different parts of the Northern region. It was announced by the government that everyone except ex-combatants who were being rehabilitated would be resettled by the end of 2012.

The primary objective of the study is to identify the obstacles faced by the resettled people in the process of restoring their livelihoods. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed in the study. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires, semi structured interviews, and key informant interviews.

The study found that these people encountered social, physical and financial insecurity as they proceed to acquire a better livelihood. The existing livelihood condition of these people is minimal. Agriculture is the primary livelihood of the resettled people, but a considerable number of people changed their occupations after resettlement. Further, infrastructural development processes as well as social integration processes were carried out while people were being resettled.

It can be concluded that the livelihood conditions of these people were not restored to normalcy and that there are many obstacles in the resettlement area. Resettlement in new locations, declaration of high security zones, landmines, stoppage of dry rations, unavailability of legal documents, poor infrastructure, discrimination against resettled people, lack of people's participation in both decision making and development process have directly affected the livelihoods of the displaced people in the area under study. Findings of this study can be used to design policies and programs to improve and ensure the livelihoods of the displaced people.