

# Resettlement Experience in Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project

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**Abstract:** Involuntary resettlement is a much debated subject worldwide. The World Bank has adopted a comprehensive policy on involuntary resettlement aiming at safeguarding rights and the livelihoods of the people affected by the development projects. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has developed their own policy on involuntary resettlement in a similar perspective. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) too has adopted a similar policy on involuntary resettlement which is expected to be followed by the countries that receive funding for development projects. The Government of Sri Lanka introduced a National Involuntary Resettlement Policy (NIRP) in 2001 to safeguard the affected from involuntary resettlement. All development projects to be implemented in the country are expected to adhere to this policy.

The Resettlement Policy of the Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project (UKHP) was developed strictly in keeping with the NIRP but was not limited to its stipulations.

The UKHP believed that, no development project would be successful without active participation and the blessings of the Affected People. With this belief the Project made every attempt to encourage the voluntary participation of the Affected People from the planning stage through the implementation and execution stages.

The Project has undertaken a very successful resettlement programme implemented in Sri Lanka. This paper describes the process and the challenges in implementation of this resettlement programme in Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project.

**Keywords:** Involuntary resettlement, Project Affected people, Resettlers

## 1. Introduction

The history of 150MW Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project goes back decades and the implementation was delayed due to immense pressure from different political, social and environmental groups. The Project was initially identified in 1967-68 by the Mahaweli Master Plan under UNDP - FAO Study. The Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provided a grant for the feasibility studies in 1985 - 1987. The Engineering Service Study together with Environmental Impact Assessment Study (EIA) was conducted in 1993 - 1995 under a loan provided by the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan.

The Central Environmental Authority (CEA) refused to give concurrence to the approval granted by the Ministry of Power and Energy, the Project Approving Agency (PAA) in 1995. The studies of alternatives and appeal for environmental clearance were done during 1995 - 1998. The environmental clearance was

granted in July 1998. However, subsequent to settlement of a case in the Court of Appeal, the final environmental clearance was received in March 2000. With the Cabinet Approval, the Loan Agreement was signed on March 28, 2002 between Government of Japan and Government of Sri Lanka.

With consensus, agreements, court decisions etc, the construction commenced in September 2005 to provide facilities for resettlers.

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The key for the success of resettlement was winning the affected community by an extensive consultation process at pre-implementation stage and implementation stage.

## **2. Policy Framework of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP)**

### **2.1 World Bank Policy on Involuntary Resettlement**

*(Ref. Involuntary Resettlement source Book, Planning and Implementation in Development Projects, World Bank, 2004. ISBN. 0-8213-5376-7)*

The World Bank officially adopted its Operational Policy on Involuntary Resettlement in December 2001, which aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To avoid or minimize adverse impacts and to conceive and execute resettlement activities as sustainable development programs.
2. To give displaced persons opportunities to participate in the design and implementation of resettlement programs.
3. To assist displaced persons in their efforts to improve their livelihoods and standards of living or at least to restore these to pre-project levels.

### **2.2 ADB Policy on Involuntary Resettlement**

*(Ref. Hand Book on Resettlement-A Guide to Good practice -Asian Development Bank, 1998. ISBN. 971-561-152-4)*

ADB's Policy on Involuntary Resettlement was adopted in 1995 and became operational in January 1996. The Policy requires that involuntary resettlement be an integral part of project design, dealt with from the earliest stages of the project cycle.

The Policy aims to:

- avoid involuntary resettlement wherever feasible

- minimize resettlement where population displacement is unavoidable by exploring all viable project options. If, nonetheless, individuals or communities must lose their land, means of livelihood, social support systems, or way of life they should be:
- compensated for lost assets and loss of income and livelihood
- assisted for relocation
- assisted so that their economic and social future will generally be at least as favourable with the project as without it.
- provided with appropriate land, housing, infrastructure, and other compensation, comparable to the without-project situation
- fully informed and closely consulted on resettlement and compensation options

The Policy also specifies that lack of formal legal title to land is not a bar to compensation and other assistance. This may apply to a range of people affected, e.g. informal dwellers, land users with traditional or customary rights, squatters or those with adverse possession rights but no formal legal title to land and assets. Appropriate assistance provided to address the needs of the poorest affected persons such as female-headed households, and other vulnerable groups such as indigenous people, helps them improve their status.

### **2.3 National Involuntary Resettlement Policy**

*(Ref. National Involuntary Resettlement Policy 2001 - Published by Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Ministry of Land and Central Environmental Authority)*

With the intention of safeguarding the affected community due to involuntary resettlement, the Government of Sri Lanka together with Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Ministry of Land and Central Environmental Authority published the National Involuntary Resettlement Policy in year 2001.

Accordingly, preparation of comprehensive Resettlement Action Plan is required where 20 or more families are affected. However the policy is still applied to the cases where less than 20 families are affected. The plan prepared for such cases could be of lesser level.

## **2.4 Newly Introduced Provisions to the Land Acquisition Act (LAA) to Safeguard Affected**

The regulations were gazetted on April 07, 2009 to enhance the provisions for compensation in Land Acquisition Act No. 9 of 1950. The purpose of the regulations was to introduce some safeguards to the affected in land acquisitions for public purposes.

These regulations were not in force at the time of formulating the Resettlement Action Plan of Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project. However, the compensation indicated in this gazette notification under sub headings 3.1 - 3.12 are very similar to the compensation packages in the Resettlement Action Plan in Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project. Accordingly, a disturbance allowance was paid for the resettlers and alternative accommodation was provided whenever necessary. The loss of income, expenses for shifting etc. were paid. The loss of income were paid based on the valuations given by the Divisional Secretaries. The Land Acquisitions and Resettlement Committees (LARC) had been established to assist and sort out the matters related to the land acquisition and resettlement in the Project.

Some of the compensations indicated in sub headings such as expenses incurred in appearing for Section 9 inquiry and other unforeseen disturbances and expenses were paid by the Project under its compensation package with the assistance of LARC. It should be noted that implementation of compensation packages will be very effective and advantages.

The regulation promulgated under Land Acquisition Act is of best used in the development of the compensation packages which should be determined and made effective during resettlement process.

## **3. Resettlement Strategy**

### **3.1 Public Participation**

The affected community comprise of 495 households in 10 community clusters. The affected buildings and lands could be classified as 495 houses, 50 commercial establishments, 12 common amenities, 120 commercial vegetable plots and 25 cattle sheds.

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The UKHP from the very beginning encouraged wider participation of the Affected People and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan from the preparation stage. For this purpose an extensive consultation programme was carried out to create awareness of the benefits of the Project to the country as a whole and the entitlements of the affected people. Housing Committees for each affected community were setup long before the actual implementation of the Project commenced. Housing Committee Meetings were held every month to discuss the resettlement issues. The consultation between the affected households and officials of the UKHP at these meetings, were extremely fruitful. The Project always tried to maintain transparency, and the Affected People gradually built up faith and confidence in the Project (Figure 1).

Wider public participation in the implementation of the development of Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) was encouraged by establishing a Resettlement Committee. Composition of the Resettlement Committee is as follows (Figure 2).

1. Divisional Secretary (Co-chairperson)
2. Chairman, Talawakelle -Lindula Urban Council (Co-chairperson)
3. Religious dignitaries of the Project area

4. Council members of the Talawakelle - Lindula Urban Council
5. Two representatives from each Housing Committee
6. Grama Niladaries of the area
7. Managers of Tea Estates
8. Officials of the UKHP

Meetings of the Resettlement Committees were held every two months and the broader issues going beyond resettlement were discussed at these meetings.

As an example other infrastructure facilities affected, legal and social issues related to the resettlement were also discussed at these meetings.



**Figure 1 - A Housing Committee**



**Figure 2 - A Resettlement Committee**

This strategy was extremely successful and the Project could win the blessings and support of the affected households and other stakeholders, in the implementation of RAP.



**Figure 3 - A Shramadhana campaign at Nanuoya Resettlement Site after the Resettlement**

### 3.2 Preparation of the Resettlement Action Plan

The initial Socio Economic Survey was conducted in the year 1995 to collect data for the feasibility studies and a more detailed census survey was conducted in year 2001 to identify the resettlement impacts of the Project and update the data base.

A further survey was conducted in year 2003 to update the data gathered at the census survey conducted in year 2001. Direct resettlement impacts were identified at these surveys.

On the findings of the socio economic surveys conducted by the Project a comprehensive Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) was prepared in keeping with ADB Guidelines on Involuntary Resettlement and the National Involuntary Resettlement Policy (NIRP) adopted by the Government of Sri Lanka in year 2001.

Very attractive Entitlement Matrix was incorporated in the RAP. In deciding the entitlements of the affected people, the Project was mindful that all the affected people should be better off with the Project.

### 3.3 Special Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project Policies

The following policy frame work was agreed with project affected people in implementation of Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project.

- To locate the entitled house in a minimum of 07 perch land
- All resettlement take place within the Talawakelle town limits and within acceptable distances of their original resettlement areas.
- Each individuals sub-community is offered the opportunity to resettle together in a clearly defined area, avoiding community fragmentation and maintain the ethnic balances and existing social network.
- All households is provided with housing and services that are better than their pre-settlement conditions.
- The Resettlement Plan is prepared through a process of consultation with the local communities and with the resettlement committees.

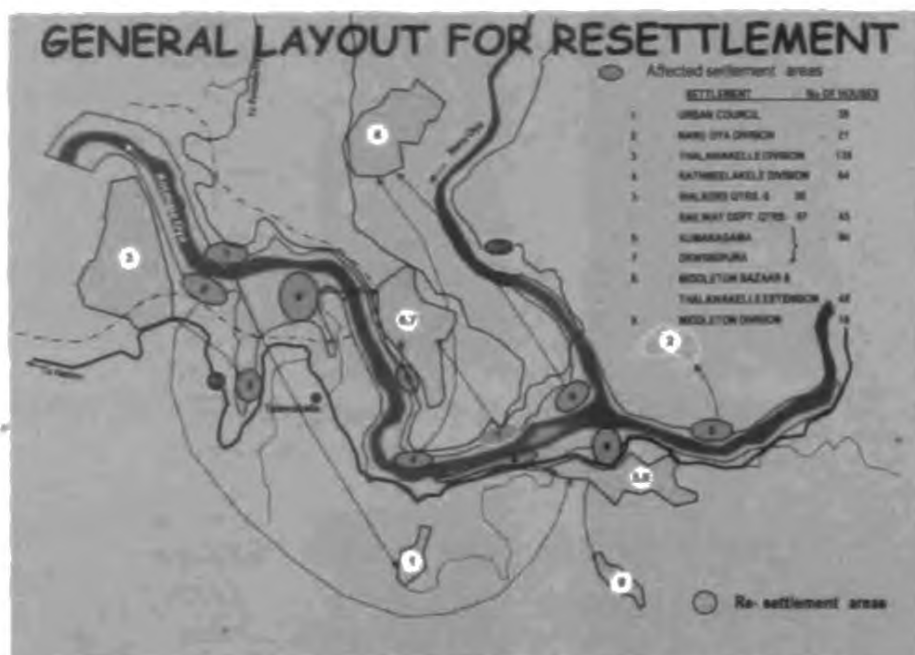


Figure 4 - General Layout of Resettlement Sites

## 4. Results of Socio Economic Survey

### 4.1 Nature of Project Affected

The project affected area falls within the administrative boundaries of the Talawakelle - Lindula Urban Council limit. There were a total number of 10 separate community clusters identified during the Socio Economic Survey (SES) (Table 1), and the profiles are given in following charts.

The majority of the affected population are Tamils, mostly from the plantation sector, and then followed by the Sinhalese and Muslims.

Figure 5 - Ethnic distribution of affected households

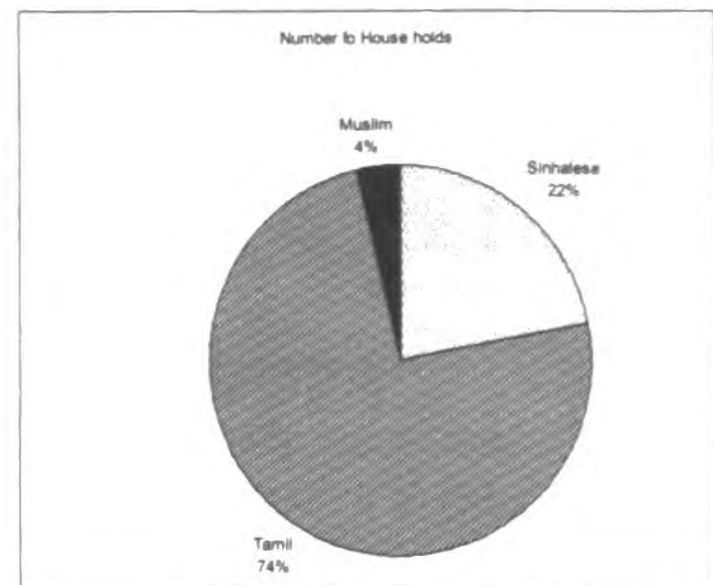
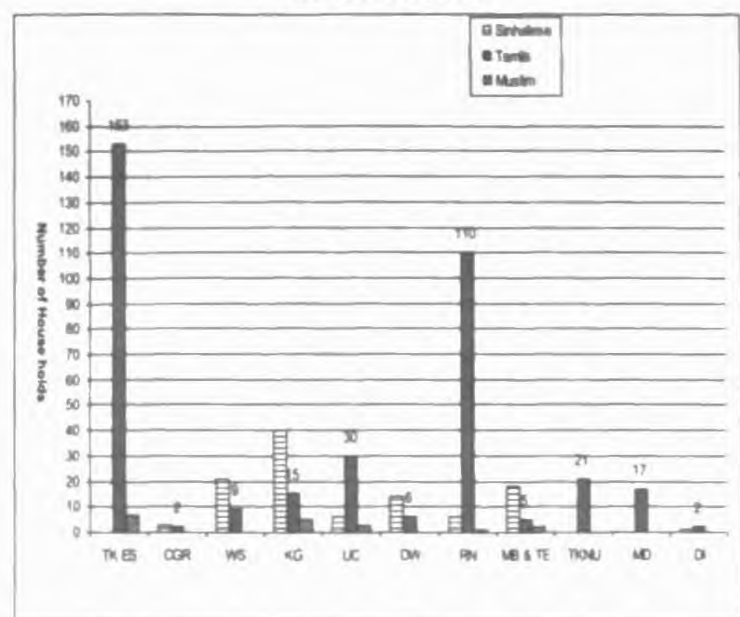


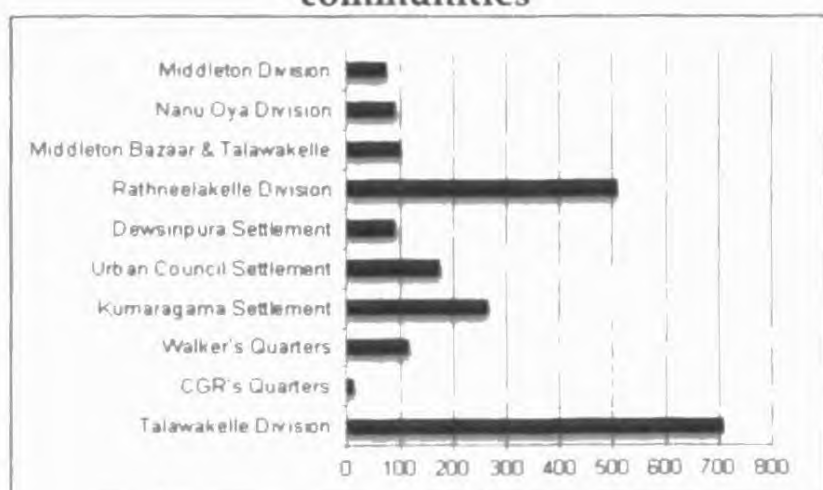
Table 1 Household, Population and Family Size

No.	Affected Communities	Households					Population			Average
		Total (No.)	Male-headed (No.)	(%)	Female-headed (No.)	(%)	Total (No.)	Male (No.)	Female (No.)	Family Size (No./family)
1	Talawakelle Division	160	143	89.4	17	10.6	708	358	350	4.4
2	CGR's Quarters	7	6	85.7	1	14.3	15	6	9	2.1
3	Walker's Quarters	27	26	96.3	1	3.7	119	71	48	4.4
4	Kumaragama Settlement	61	52	85.2	9	14.8	266	140	126	4.4
5	Urban Council Settlement	39	37	94.9	2	5.1	177	92	85	4.5
6	Dewsiripura Settlement	20	20	100.0	0	0.0	94	47	47	4.7
7	Rathneelakelle Division	117	107	91.5	10	8.5	509	243	266	4.4
8	Middleton Bazaar & Talawakelle	26	24	92.3	2	7.7	102	59	43	3.9
9	Nanu Oya Division	21	20	95.2	1	4.8	93	47	46	4.4
10	Middleton Division	17	17	100.0	0	0.0	78	43	35	4.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>91.3</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>2161</b>	<b>1106</b>	<b>1055</b>	<b>4.4</b>

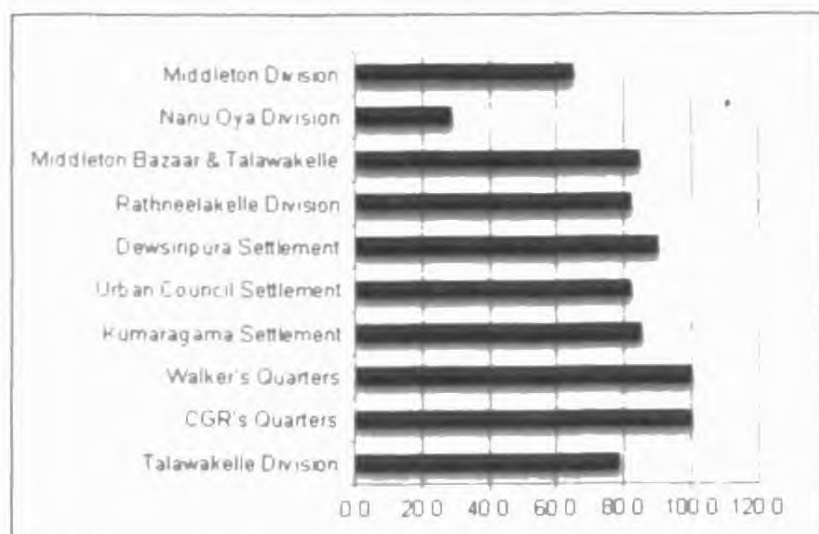
**Figure 6 - Ethnic distribution in affected settlements**



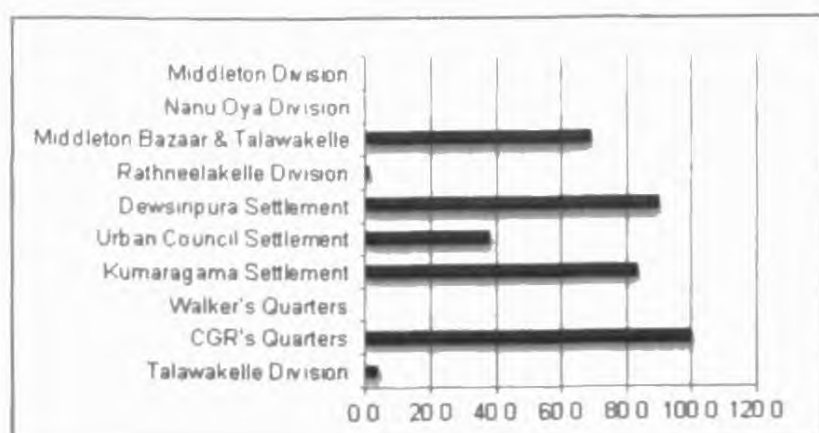
**Figure 7- Population profile of the affected communities**



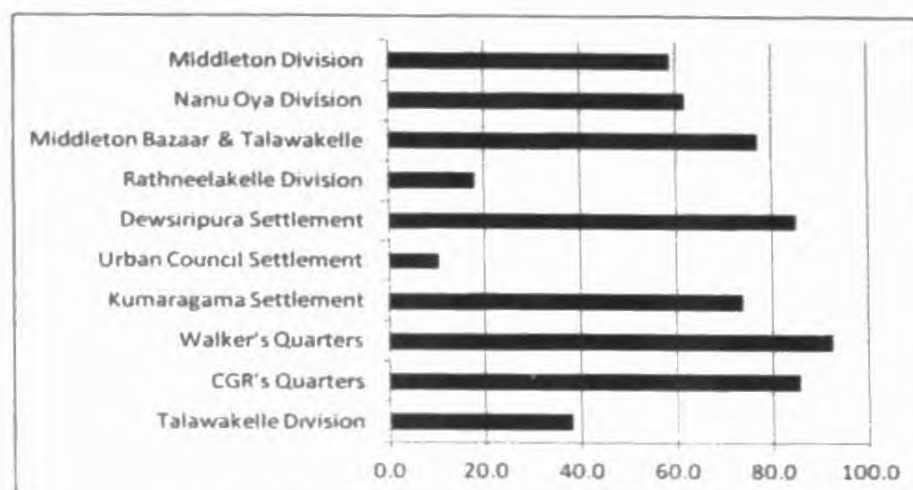
**Figure 8 - Literacy of the affected population**



**Figure 9 - Safe Drinking water to the Affected Community**



**Figure 10- Electrification of the Affected Households**



### 5. Housing Entitlements

Except for a few cases majority of the affected houses are very small in size and lacked even the very basic facilities, such as electricity, safe drinking water, sanitation and access roads. Sanitation levels were extremely poor. Most of the affected line houses had common toilet facilities.

Most of the affected community used river water directly for their daily usage. About 82 percent of the affected houses were with floor area of less than 400 sqft. Majority were living in line houses provided by the tea estates (Table 2).

**Table 2: Existed floor areas of Houses**

Floor Area	Number of Houses	%
Houses with floor area less than 250 sq.ft.	197	45.6
Houses with floor area of 250-400 sq.ft.	157	36.3
Houses with floor area of 401-600 sq.ft.	78	18.1

The policy adopted by the Project is to provide alternative houses in lieu of all the affected houses with much improved facilities (Table 3).

All the houses were provided with separate toilets with pipe borne water. Accordingly, the Project has changed the practices of the affected community increasing their sanitation levels.



**Figure 11: Affected Houses at Kumaragama Place, Talawakelle**

The following entitlements were decided based on the floor area of their affected houses.

**Table 3 - Entitlement of houses as per the floor area**

Type	Affected floor area (sq. ft.)	Floor area of the house provided by the Project (sq. ft.)
A	<400	624
B	401-600	818
C	601-800	1003
D	801-1000	1308
E	1001-1200	1435
F	1201-1500	1530
Special Types	>1500	Special design as appropriate



**Figure 12 - A Church constructed at Rathneelakelle**



**Figure 13- A Crèche constructed at Rathneelakelle**

Out of 495 houses affected by the Project, 430 have already been relocated at new resettlement sites. Common amenities such as places of worship, crèches, community centres, libraries and play grounds have been and are being constructed.

Some of the common amenities have also been re-located. Among the re-located common amenities, Talawakelle - Lindula Urban Council Building and the Tamil Maha Vidyalaya have become centres of attraction.



**Figure 14 - Old Tamil School Building after shifting being vandalised**



**Figure 15 - Old Urban Council**

The Tamil Maha Vidyalaya previously housed in an abandoned tea factory which was in an extremely dilapidated condition has been provided with three new buildings with all modern facilities. Few more buildings for the Tamil Maha Vidyalaya are under construction.

The Talawakelle - Lindula Urban Council was functioning in a building shared with the Rest House in an old dilapidated building had no adequate space and facilities for the staff and the public who visit daily seeking various services. The Project has already constructed a three storied building with all the facilities for Urban Council. A separate building is now under construction with all the facilities for Talawakelle Rest House.



**Figure 16 - Talawakelle - Lindula Urban Council Building**



**Figure 17 - Rest Inn Building**



**Figure 18 - Buildings Constructed for Tamil Maha Vidyalaya**

The Project will provide the people of Talawakelle with a full-fledged play ground overlooking the Upper Kotmale Reservoir.

## **6. Details of Implementation of Resettlement Programme**

In the implementation stage, the Project had to face difficulties in acquiring some estate lands for the resettlement purposes. In one case the land acquired for resettlement was abandoned due to protests from Estate Worker Trade Unions.

There were also cases where some of the re-settlers refused to move to new resettlement sites. They insisted that their house be built in their original locations after reclamation. Accordingly, to implement the other project activities such affected families had to be resettled temporarily. In February 2008, the first set of 21 houses in Nanuoaya Resettlement Site was handed over to the re-settlers. This was the first resettlement implemented by the Project. Once the resettlement was completed, the Project organized Shramadana Campaign with the re-settlers in Nanuoaya Division to clean the area. (Figure 3)

Since then up to August 2009, 430 families were resettled from the total of 495 affected. Religious ceremonies were held at every resettlement site at the time of shifting to new houses with the assistance of the Project. Remaining 65 families were temporarily relocated until the reclamation work is completed. These houses are now under construction and will be handed over to the re-settlers before April 2014.

The affected religious places such as churches, kovils are also relocated in new resettlement sites. In the case of temporary relocation, the affected parties were given the opportunity to select temporary places on their own. The Project either paid rental for the new locations or rental valuation for their affected houses or business places to find temporary places. Almost all commercial establishments are relocated temporarily and around 50 buildings are now under construction for Middleton Bazaar shopping complex creating a new shopping centre close to Talawakelle Town.

### 6.1 Income Restoration and Enhancement Programme (IEP)

The Project in keeping with guidelines of ADB, JICA and the World Bank on resettlement and the National Involuntary Resettlement Policy (NIRP) is in the process of implementing a livelihood development program for the benefit of the Project Affected People.

The majority of the affected people are estate workers and they continue to work in the tea estates where they have been working. However, the UKHP made a special effort to improve the living standards of the people who are living in extreme poverty. To accomplish this task the UKHP launched an Income Enhancement Programme (IEP) covering all the affected households. To achieve this goal the following strategies have been developed.

- Restoration of Commercial Vegetable Plots

- Occupational Skills Development Training (OSD)
- Micro Financing Scheme
- Home Garden Programme

### 6.2 Restoration of Commercial Vegetable Plots

A considerable number of households were engaged in agriculture either on commercial basis or as home gardens. Compensation for the loss of income from the vegetable cultivations were introduced with the approval of the CEB Board of Directors. For consecutive 04 year period compensation for loss of income was paid. More than 95% of the alternative vegetable lands have been handed over back to the cultivators. Extensive training programmes were conducted to improve the cultivation methods with water and soil conservation measures under the guidance of Department of Agriculture and other related organizations.

### 6.3 Occupational Skills Development (OSD) Training

With a view to empowering of affected people, the Project conducted several OSD Training Programmes which paved the way for them to engage in gainful income generating ventures. The following training programmes were conducted by the Project.

**Table 4 - OSD Training Programme conducted by the Project**

Field of Training	Number of Participants	Place of Training
1. Heavy equipment Maintenance	13	CETRAC - Battaramulla
2. Electric welding	15	CETRAC - Battaramulla
3. Electric wiring	15	Technical Training College - Nuwara Eliya
4. Plumbing	10	Technical Training College - Nuwara Eliya
5. Dress making	15	Singer Sri Lanka - Hatton
6. Advance course of Dress making	27	Singer Sri Lanka - Hatton
7. Mushroom cultivation	15	Horticultural Research and Development Institute (HORDI), Gannoruwa
8. Computer literacy	20	Talawakelle

It is interesting to note that almost all the youth received training at CETRAC and the Technical Training College at Nuwara Eliya found employment mostly within the Project.



**Figure 19 - Plumbing Training**



**Figure 20 - Welding Training**



**Figure 21 - Dress Making Training**



**Figure 22 - Mushroom Cultivation**

#### **6.4 Micro Financing Scheme**

Action has already been initiated to provide micro financing for the members of the affected households at very low interest rates enabling them to engage in income generating activities. Loans are provided through the Peoples' Bank and the Bank of Ceylon on the intervention of the Project. Recoveries of loans are on installment basis after a grace period of one year. Under the Micro Finance scheme a group of affected people from the all seven resettlement sites were provided soft loans through Peoples Bank, Talawakelle. The recoveries of soft loans are successful according to the bank officials.

#### **6.5 Home Garden Programme**

The UKHP has already launched a home garden program covering all the affected households, in their new resettlement sites. Each household are being provided with a basic set of agricultural implements, seeds and fertilizer, free of charge. Arrangements were made to introduce pears and mandarin cultivation in the homesteads of the new resettlement sites. Plants and fertilizer were provided free of charge.



**Figure 23 - Distribution of Fruit Plants**



**Figure 24 - Distribution of Seeds and fertilizer**



Figure 25 - Harvest from a Successful Home garden

## 7. Social Development Programme

Most of the affected households have been deprived the opportunity to improve their social status. Majority of them were living in line houses provided by the tea estates. Their living conditions were pathetic. Their health and sanitation standards were far below the accepted levels.

Vector borne diseases are very common among these people. Lack of education, health and sanitary facilities have worsened the situation. Alcohol addiction is alarmingly high in these families. Females are treated subordinate to the males and abuse against women is a common phenomenon. It is learnt that the most number of abortions (in the Island) are reported in and around the Project area.

In the above circumstance, the Project considered that it has some obligation to improve the living standards and social status of these people. With this view in mind, the Project decided to implement several programmes for their benefit.

### 7.1 Health Camps

The Project has made arrangements to conduct health camps on regular basis. Three health camps at Nanuoya Resettlement Scheme, Kumaragama Resettlement Scheme and Rathneelakelle Resettlement Scheme were held in 2009, 2010 and 2012 respectively. The attendance for the health camps were 350 at Nanuoya Resettlement Scheme, 210 at Kumaragama Resettlement Scheme, and 220 at Rathneelakelle Resettlement Scheme.

This programme helped to pre-investigate the health conditions of attended people. In one case, doctors encountered a girl of 16 years with a severe heart weakness. The preliminary investigations and the ECG reports helped to diagnose this weakness. Doctors advised her mother to consult a specialist for further advice.



Figure 26 - People awaiting to get medical advice and treatments



Figure 27 - A Doctor examines a patient

### 7.2 Assistance given for upliftment of social status of affected community

With the intention of implementing proper garbage disposal system (to maintain sanitary land fill) in Talawakelle Urban Council Limits, a small size bulldozer, a tractor with a trailer and a gully bowser were provided to Talawakelle Urban Council for the use of affected community.

To upgrade water supply system in Talawakelle town, the Project provided funds worth of Rs. 60 million to the National Water Supply and Drainage Board to install pumping station water treatment plant etc.

This system upgrade was identified to cater to the increased demand for pipe borne water with the establishment of new settlements.

The Figure 9 indicates the status of water usage in pre-implementation stage. However, after the Project for except for 21 isolated houses, all other houses were provided with pipe borne water from the town supply. These 21 houses were provided pipe borne water through gravity fed system.

### 7.3 Senso Hakoshima Scholarship Fund

The Senso Hakoshima Scholarship Fund was established under the patronage of Mr. Senso Hakoshima, former Project Manager of J-Power, the Consultant, who donated Rs. 1 million for the purpose. The fund meant to be used for assisting the needy children of the affected community in their education.

The selections of candidates was restricted to the children of Project Affected Persons and selected through the housing committees and public notices among the PAPs. The first batch was selected in 2008, and three eligible candidates were selected including one university student and two advanced level students. It had been decided to pay Rs.2000.00 for university students and Rs.1000.00 for advanced level students.

The details of number of students awarded scholarships from each settlement and for each batch are given in Table 5.

Name Of the Resettlement Site	Number of University Students					Number of A/L Students					Total Number of Students
	Batch No.					Batch No.					
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Talawakelle Division					2			2	2	2	8
Rathneelakelle Div.			1						1		2
Kumaragama place			1			1	4	1	3	3	13
Dewsiripura						1		1	1		3
Walkers							1	1	1	1	4
UC settlement	1										1
Middleton Division							1				1
Nanuoya Division							1				1
Upper Choicy									3		3
Niyangamdora								1			1
<b>Total number of students awarded scholarships as at June 2013</b>											<b>37</b>

Table 5 - Number of scholarship awardees from each settlement



Figure 28 - Group of Scholarship awardees with Project Staff

Batch No.	University Students	A/L Students	Payment Period	Total Amount Paid
1st	1	2	January 2009 to July 2010	43,000.00
2nd	0	7	September 2009 to July 2011	92,000.00
3rd	2	6	February 2010 to June 2013	227,000.00
4th	0	11	January 2011 to July 2012	179,000.00
5th	2	6	January 2012 to June 2013	193,000.00
<b>Total amount paid as at June 2013 for 37 students</b>				<b>734,000.00</b>

Table 6 - Number of scholarships awardees from each batch

A total number of 5 university students and 32 advanced Level students have been awarded scholarships.

A total amount of Rs.734,000.00 has been disbursed to award the scholarships. The sixth and seventh batches of students are being selected by the committee for the scholarships.

It is noted that the out of the five university students who received scholarships, one has completed her first degree. From thirty two Advanced Level scholarship students, all 32 Students have sat for the GEC A/L examination including the last batch of August 2013 and 20 (62.5%) of them have got through the examination.

Three students (9.25%) who received the scholarship during their A/Ls got the university entrance and they are now continuing to receive scholarships for university education.

Next batch of scholarship awardees, which include four (04) A/Level students has been selected. Award of scholarships will take place shortly.

## 8 Grievance Redress Mechanism

Although the Project has addressed all the aspects of good resettlement practices and taken every step to safeguard rights and well-being of the affected people, the Project was of the view that there could still be grievances which need attention.

Therefore, the Project recognized the importance of having a mechanism to address these grievances and thus a Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) was established under the Project.

The GRC consists of seven members appointed on the recommendation of the Divisional Secretary which includes four (04) religious dignitaries to represent different religions and ethnic groups and two retired principals of schools. The Additional District Secretary, Nuwara Eliya functions as the Chair Person.

The GRC has examined 22 grievances at 06 meetings. Certain grievances were examined in details and there were 46 hearings. The decisions made by the GRC have been implemented by the Project.

Solution for all the grievances could not be found within the Resettlement Policy. Some were not bona fide requests. Grievances over the ownership issues among the members of the affected families were solved by persuading them to arrive at by mutual consensus. In certain cases the GRC recommended the CEB to consider relief measures on sympathetic ground.

## **9 Post Evaluation of Resettlement**

In post evaluation of the Project implementation, it is hard to believe that the number and nature of challenges the Project had to deal with for successful completion of this project.

Even though a post evaluation survey is not conducted in the Project, it will be worthy to note the observations of the post implementation.

- Majority of the resettlers are satisfied with their new houses and available facilities in new settlements.
- Living standards of the affected community is enhanced.

- High morale among young community for education and skill development due to the improved living conditions is noted.
- Improved health and sanitation level has changed living conditions of the affected estate workers according to the information given by the Estate Medical Officer. Accordingly percentage of early childhood diseases has come down.
- With the implementation of the Home Gardening Program more than 70% of the households are maintaining a good productive homestead.
- Improved solid waste management by providing compost bins for the affected community and the assistance given to the Urban Council to manage sanitary land fill using a tractor, gully bowser and bulldozer (provided by the Project) has upgraded the cleanliness of the city.
- Well designed day care centres provide shelter to children in the affected community in a safe and healthy environment.
- The community centres in the new settlement have provided opportunity to the community for gathering and attending to welfare activities.
- The land value of the area (eg. Devsiripura and Kumaragama) has increased dramatically with the improvements in infrastructure in the area.
- The improvements in water supply system (funded by the Project) has provided reliable water supply to Talawakelle - Lindula Urban Council area. Newly established pumping station and treatment facilities have improved quantity and quality of water respectively.

## 10 Conclusion

The Upper Kotmale Hydropower Project was implemented amidst tremendous pressure and opposition from many quarters. However, the Project considered these deterrent factors as opportunities rather than challenges.

Vigorous consultation and continuous interaction with the affected communities helped built trust and confidence about the Project and its management. Affected people were encouraged to actively participate in the planning through implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan of the Project.

It was a great encouragement that the affected people were part and parcel of the Project and their enthusiasm and cooperation was the driving force behind successful implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan.

Project's efforts to improve socio economic status of the affected communities in an equitable manner irrespective of their former social background were welcomed and appreciated by all concerned parties. It will be interesting to witness the improvement of social status and contentment of affected people in their new environment.

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