

WATER USE, WATER LORDISM AND GROWING SOCIAL DISPARITIES IN A MAHAWELI SETTLEMENT VILLAGE

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The settlers in the Mahaweli are expected to enjoy equal opportunity regarding two main resources (land and water) essential for agricultural activity. Water is a very important input in irrigated areas. A specific quantity of water is required at the proper time for a successful crop. Thus, there is keen competition among settlers to get the required quantity at the required time. Certain privileged groups establish control over the distribution of water which ostensibly belongs to the total peasant community. Thus the distribution of water has given way to a kind of 'Lordism'. Due to emergence of this situation, a significant consequence is that the whole process of the original goals of equitable access to resources, equitable development, and hopefully equitable growth of income of the settler families tends to be displaced.

This paper presents the findings of a research study of a Settlement Village in Mahaweli H₁ area which uncovered the trends described above.

References

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