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**The living conditions of resettled families due to southern transport development project:
A sociological study**

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The STDP is the largest among all the development projects that have been implemented in Sri Lanka during the recent past. This project consists of a stretch of 124 km, from Kottawa to Matara, and runs through 64 GND and 21 DSD within four districts. A total of 5,683 persons on 951 hectares have been affected due to the construction of this project. The RIP is implemented by the RDA, jointly with the ADB and JBIC. The affected families have been compensated by the government, by granting money and lands. This study examines the livelihoods of the affected people of the STDP. The problem of the study was "How has the livelihood of people affected by the project improved as a result of resettlement by the STDP?" The main objective of this research was to carry out a comprehensive study on the living conditions of resettled families. Apart from that, the sub objectives of the study were to identify the level of infrastructure and sanitary facilities, to identify the conditions of livelihood, to find out the extent of mediation by the government and other organizations to develop these sources of livelihood, and to find out the present socio-economic conditions of the resettled people. A survey method was used for this study while a comparative method was also utilized. A questionnaire technique, interview and an observation technique were used to collect data. In addition secondary data have also been used.

Analysis of collected data revealed that the areas in which people were resettled have not changed so much. Sanitary facilities of the resettled families are of high standards. When their sources of livelihood are considered, it is not so satisfactory and has dropped with time. Most of them have built comfortable houses by using the compensatory funds. The second income generator of the resettled families is the son or daughter, and the majority of them are employed and receive permanent salaries. However, the resettlement has disrupted the business relationships of self-employed businessmen. Obtaining loans by resettled families is high, and most have obtained loans to build houses and not for investments. The RDA has intervened to upgrade their livelihoods. However, it has given priority to counseling rather than practical programmes. The members of resettled families are happy with the existing education and religious relations, but not with the political institute. Taken as a whole, they are happy with the existing social security of the area. A systematic programme is required to upgrade their status with the mediation of the government and non-governmental organizations, by focusing attention on second income generators and self-employment. Also, it should be emphasized that the government should prepare a plan to resolve any problems of land ownership and problems that may be faced by future generations. In addition, the sources of livelihood of the resettled families could be upgraded by creating a suitable environment, which would create positive attitudes among the resettled families.

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