

POST WAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF AMPARA DISTRICT IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE OF SRI LANKA

SM. Abamed Lebbe

Introduction:

Eastern province is located in the east part of coastal region of Sri Lanka. It is one of the richest provinces in terms of its resources during pre-war situation. Eastern province is included three districts as Batticaloa, Ampara and Trincomalee and it has an area of 9950 km² with a 2010 population of 1,561,000. This province contributes 15 per cent and 7.5 per cent of total area and total population of Sri Lanka, respectively. GDP contribution of eastern province is 6 per cent to the national level in 2010 (Central Bank, 2011).

Ampara is one of the three districts of the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Ampara district, until 1961, was the south eastern part of Batticaloa district. Then, in 1961, Ampara was carved out as a separate district. Ampara District has an area of 4431.4 km² with a 2010 population of 668,170 consisting of the Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil communities. These ethnic communities are living in the district with ethnic ratios of 42.53 per cent Muslim, 38.88 per cent Sinhala, 18.39 per cent Tamils and 0.20 per cent others. The main livelihood opportunity of the people in the district is agriculture, especially paddy cultivation. As Ampara district is situated in the dry zone of the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka, the conditions of climate are varied on the basis of their physical aspects. The mean temperature in the district was 28.3° C in 2010. Rainfall is the main source of water available in the district of Ampara, with an average of 1600 m.m-2500m.m rainfall in a year. (Planning Secretariat, Ampara, 2010).

The main livelihood opportunity of the people in the district is agriculture, especially paddy cultivation. The total cultivable area under paddy is 55,000 hectares and the average production is 250,000 metric tons in a season. It is equivalent to a fifth of the country's requirement. Maize and cowpea are the other two crops and a good number of farmers have engaged in livestock rearing also (Planning Secretariat, Ampara, 2006). However, adequate potential for industrial are available for economic development. Being the rice granary, there are nearly 200 rice mills to process the paddy harvested and a certain segment of the population is also engaged in fisheries, brick making, ready-made garments, metal crushing, carpentry, masonry, service centre, black-smithy and other categories of cottage industries on village based resources.

Fishing (Inland and Marine) is the next important livelihood. About 92000 populations from 17000 families are involved in fishing. Business Enterprises Self-employment Projects and Public Service (Government Service) are the other occupations (Planning Secretariat, Ampara, 2010).

Tourism is another aspect which has began to boom in the district following the MOU where local and foreign people in large number arrives to various destination in the district to spent their holidays. The world famous Arugambay is a good potential place for holidaymakers.

With regards to rural development the NEIAP (North East Irrigated Agriculture Project), NECORD (North East Community Restoration Project), NEERP (North East Emergency Rehabilitation Project), CAARP (Conflict Affected Area Rehabilitation Project), NECCDEP

(North East Costal Community Development Project), NEHRP (North East Housing Reconstruction Project), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan Bank International Cooperation (JBIC), German International Cooperation (GTZ), DCB (Decentralized Capital Budget), World Bank and Asian Development Bank are some of the donor agencies that involved in economic development of the district in Eastern Province.

The government expects to promote agriculture and industrial base of the district through its economic reform policy such as privatisation and price control system where the government presently purchases paddy at reasonable price from producers. Fisheries are also a livelihood of some people and nearly 10000 MT of fishes are annually caught and 80% of which are transported and marketed out side the district. This industry is given various incentives in small scales. Some families have also engaged in cattle farming and milk production and to boost this industry, collecting and selling centres have been established by the government in the district. Likewise other industries as mentioned early have also been given promotion for their betterment in the district.

This district was able to contribute immensely to the national development of Sri Lanka. This district was one of the popular regions for tourism industry in Sri Lanka. However, during the war, this district suffered a huge set-back in terms of the economic development. Agriculture, fishing, livelihood and tourism were severally affected. Ampara, a district which is taken as a case study for this research, was one of the districts affected terribly by civil war.

Although there are number of development initiatives carried out by various agencies such as the government and NGO's, the magnitude of the work and its effectiveness has not been focused yet. Actually, this is a study aimed at exploring those aspects. Furthermore, some of the NGOs have made use of people and their resources in the projects they did, particularly in housing. This was a new experience for the people as it provided an ownership of the works that actually prevented a waste and additional expenses. Involving the people or community based organization in the economic development of the district was a phenomenal of the feature of NGO's. This must analyzed to find out how far the NGO's have involved the people in their projects in the study their effectiveness of the work to the people.

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study are given as follows.

1. To explore the trend of post war Economic Development in the Ampara district.
2. To identify how far stakeholders carried out economic development during post-war in the study area.
3. To find out the challenges encountered by these stakeholders in the post war economic development in research area.

Research Methodology:

This study is based on primary and secondary data. Collection of data was done by personal interviews on the basis of pre-determined and structured interview schedule. Almost 15 interviews were carried out with government stakeholders, NGOs, professionals and village leaders.

Secondary data were collected from the government official such as Kacheri, Ampara, Divisional secretariats in the Ampara Districts, NGO's records, report of previous research and other relevant documents.

Results and Discussion:

This section clearly explains the findings of this study. Post-war economic development initiatives of the government and NGO's are explored in Ampara district. It also explains in the different sectors of economic development that these organizations involved in the district, how far these stakeholders carried out their economic development in the district. Moreover, it focuses on the challenges faced by these stakeholders when it comes to them developing the district in the post war situation.

It is the responsibility of the government to look after the well-being of the affected people during the post war situation. In this backdrop, the government along with NGOs have engaged on the economic development in the post war situation in the Ampara district. This can be discussed in the following aspects.

Agriculture

Ampara district is one of the major paddy producing regions of Sri Lanka Table 1.1 shows the shown extent and paddy production in the two seasons-the *Yala* and *Maha* from 2005 to 2008.

**Table 1.1
Extent and Paddy Production in Ampara District**

Year	<i>Yala</i>		Year	<i>Maha</i>	
	Extent (Hectare)	Total Production (Metric Ton)		Extent (Hectare)	Total Production (Metric Ton)
2005	46,600	231,922	2005-06	63,200	29,318
2006	49,382	246,196	2006-07	59,939	282,361
2007	49605	259,929	2007-08	62,211	281,888
2008	49908	25,952	2008-09	67,608	270,432
2009	46227	214,941	2009-2010	69,840	358,274

Source: Planning Secretariat, Ampara District 2006

Considering the variation between pre and post war situation there was an improvement in total paddy production and extent of paddy cultivation in Ampara district. Paddy production has increased by 44658kg in 2009 than in 2006. Likewise, extent of paddy cultivation has gone up by 6746 hectare in 2009 than in 2006. Avenge yield per hacterare also increased in the post war period. It was 4713kg., 4523kg. And 4720kg. Per hactare in 2004, 2005 and 2006 respectively. However, after the war it has increased as 4964kg, 4894kg and 5166 in 2007, 2008and 2009, respectively.

Fisheries

Fisheries is also a prime sector in this district. More than 17000 families and 80000 populations are involved in this field. The Table 1.2 shows the details of fisheries of this district. Comparing with 2007 fishing families has increased from 1756 to 1736 in 2008. Like wise, active fisherman also went up from 18039 in 2007 to 18324 in 2008.

**Table 1.2
Details of Fisheries in Ampara District**

Year	2007	2008
Fishing families	17156	17316
Active fisherman	1803	18324
Fish Production (MT)	4358	7731

Source: District Statistical Information Hand Book – 2008

Fish production (coastal fisheries) also increased in 2008 than that of year 2007. Total fish production was 4358mt and 7731mt in 2007 and 2008, respectively.

Number of fisheries Co-operative societies also has increased in the post war situation which is a significant change. These societies are seen in the coastal divisions of the district only because of that this society is related to marine fish. Total number of societies was 98 in 2005. However, it has increased 129 in 2008. Fresh fish centres were 62 in 2007 which increased to 66 in 2008, post war situation.

Therefore, considering the above figures, fisheries sector shows that it has improved considerably in the post war situation compared to that of the previous stage.

Small industry

The industry is given various incentives in small scales. Some have also engaged in cattle farming and milk production and to boost this industry, collecting and selling centres have been established by the government in the district (District Planning Secretariat, Ampara, 2008). The following Table 1.3 shows the milk collection of the district from 2006 to 2009.

Table 1.3
Milk Collection of Ampara District, 2006 – 2008

Year	Milk Collection (Litre)
2006	3,793, 123
2007	5,475,178
2008	7,058,370
2009	8,592,845

Source: District Statistical Information Hand Book-2009

According to the table, milk collection was 3793123Lt, 5475178Lt and 7,058,370Lt in 2006, 2007 and 2008, respectively. Furthermore, milk collection has rapidly increased to 8,592,845 Lt in 2009. Therefore, post war situation has rapidly increased milk collection of the district. This shows that there was a healthy room for small industrialists to increase their products in the post war situation as the district was experiencing peace and harmony. One of the peculiarities of this industry is that the production of milk was mainly done in the war affected areas such as Thirukovil, Pottuvil and Lahugala division of Ampara District and of course the people involved in this industry were able to engage and produce high volume of milk in the post war situation. Therefore, the figures of fisheries sector show the improvement post-war situation.

Livestock Population

There are number of families engaged in livestock in Ampara district. Neat cattle, Buffalows, goats, pigs, cockeries, pullets, briers and other poultries are under the livestock. Allocation for livestock development under the Consolidated District Annual Implimentation Programme (CDIAP) has been gradually increased from 2007. The allocation amount was Rs.492, 297,000, Rs. 527,519,000, Rs.603, 758,000 in 2007, 2008 and 2009, respectively. Therefore, concentration of the development of livestock in the district especially post war has increased.

Health

It is to be noted that status of health in Ampara district has improved significantly in post war situation. The following Table 1.4 shows the details of health that prospered in the post war situation compared to that of previous period.

Table 1.4
Health Status of Ampara District, 2006 – 2008

Year	2006	2007	2008
Crude Birth Rate	16	16.3	15.7
Crude Death Rate	-	-	-
Infant Mortality Rate	11.6	11.4	14.8
Maternal Mortality Rate	27.07	Not received	0.35

Source: District Statistical Information Hand Book-2008

Crude birth rate after the war has decreased from 16.3 in 2007 to 15.7 in 2008. Maternal mortality rate also decreased from 27.07 in 2006 to 0.35 in 2008 which is a progressive development in terms of health in the post war situation. However, since unavoidable reasons infant mortality has increased in 2008 by 0.4 than that of 2007.

As per the figures, bed strength in the hospitals of Ampara district has also increased. It was 416 and 824 beds in 2006 and 2007, respectively under the RDHS, Ampara, but it has increased to 854 in 2008. Under the RDHS, Kalmunai areas there were 1217 beds in 2006 which rose to 1218 in 2007, respectively. Surprisingly, this increased to 1496 in 2008, the post war situation. This figure shows the tremendous improvement in the health sector in the post war situation in Ampara District.

Percentage of household with adequate Latrine Facilities especially in the rural area went up from 43 percent in 2006 to 58 percent in 2008 (included both Kalmunai and Ampara RDHS). Percentage of household with availability of safe water especially in rural area has also increased from 34 percent in 2006 to 58 percent in 2008 (included both Kalmunai and Ampara RDHS).

Infrastructure Facilities

All infrastructure facilities especially transport development have rapidly improved in the district as well as other districts in north and eastern provinces. According to CDIAP report allocation for road development in Ampara district was Rs. 49.2 million in 2007. However, it has been increased 52.7 million and 60.3 million in 2008 and 2009. It is to be noted that this expenditures being utilized for Main Street, the ways of agricultural development, hospitals, markets and rural roads of the district. This figure demonstrates the fact that infrastructure facilities have tremendously improved in the post war situation than that of earlier situation in the ampara district.

The NGOs also engaged in the economic development in the post war situation to uplift the life standard of the people in the Ampara District. This can be elaborated in the following manner especially in the district in the post war situation.

The researcher found through direct observation that the government is in the process of constructing 186 houses in Mettuwatta area for the tsunami affected people. Mettuwatta is an empty area to the North of Maruthuamunai village where the government is building houses for the rest of victims lived within 65 metres (now declared as Coastal Conservation Zone (CCZ)).

Sri Lankan Red Cross Society with the funding of French Red Cross Society under the support of the government had constructed 179 housing units worth 1.5 million for the tsunami victims. People are resettled there at present (Red Cross Society, Ampara: 2009)

NECCDEP has constructed 05 buildings such as community centres and park, pre-school and full-fledged market with the complete support of the government. The government has also constructed an Ayurvedic hospital in the village. UNICEF has constructed 2 Gramodaya Health Centre with the fullest support of the government. Significantly, the government has completed the construction of highway main road in the village with the funding of Japan government. Kalmunai Municipal Council has established many benches in Maruthamunai beach to enable the people to spend their leisure time comfortably with their families (Planning Division, DS Office, Kalmunai, Municipal Council Kalmunai, 2008 & 2009).

In addition, Zams Central College, a school fully washed away by tsunami, was completely relocated by UNICEF with the approval of the government and Pulavarmani Sarifudeen Vidiyala was also one of affected school in the village has been reconstructed in the same place by Norwegian Refugee Council(Zonal Director of Education, Kalmunai: 2008). Merlin relocated a Peripheral hospital completely affected by tsunami in the village (DPDHS Kalmunai: 2008).

Water supply and drainage facilities were provided by the government structure. Almost 11 roads were renovated under GAMA NEGUMA project of the government which is a commendable infrastructure physical development made by the government (Planning Division, Kalmunai DS office: 2008). In addition, the government has constructed tsunami and multi hazards early warning tower which is a significant physical development of the government in terms of the area. It is clearly shown in the following picture 4.4.

The above economic development of the government in the district shows quite coherently of depth of the involvement of the government and NGOs.

Furthermore, the following categories of International NGOs and Local NGOs focused on the economic development in the district. The findings reported that Islamic Relief (an Islamic religious based INGO) and UN Habitat constructed houses (flat housing scheme) for tsunami victims in the district.

Moreover, Islamic Relief introduced blocks of flats for the victims. The first flats built in this village. The housing scheme comprises of 96 flats. Each flat has 5 rooms including kitchen, bathroom and toilet. Caritas EHED, which is a Christian based organization, supported Muslim beneficiaries in terms of housing reconstruction and livelihood assistance in the district. It is a local NGO funded by Sweden, has resettled almost 318 families under their owner-driven and full finance construction of houses. This is a significant finding in this study as those NGOs supported the tsunami victims regardless of the ethnic boundaries in the district.

The challenges faced by the government and NGOs in developing the Ampara District economically

Threat of Para military groups

Although the government took an initiative of disarming all the paramilitary forces in the Eastern province including Ampara District in the aftermath of eradicating the terrorism in 2007 in the province, there are some paramilitary groups operating under the blessing of government that has turned out be an obstacle to economic development initiatives in the

district. In fact, the government and NGOs indirectly find it difficult to engage economic development activities due to the presence of these groups. In a way, it has become an impediment for the abovementioned purpose.

Lack of foreign and local investment

As this district was severely affected by war situation, more investments are needed to develop all sectors in the district. Although the investment opportunities are high in the district, less enthusiasm is shown by local and foreign investors to contribute economic development in the district.

Competition among local politicians

This is also a major obstacle for the development of the district. This is a normal feature of the developing countries like Sri Lanka. As every politician tries to popularize among the public, this is a stumbling block for the development of the study area.

Lack of participation of the people in economic development related initiatives

This is also one of the characteristics of the people in under developed countries. Hence, this is not exception of the Ampara district. But, participation and corporation of the people in the community is very essential for the economic development of the district. Thus, the people should think that this is our property and we have to contribute to our best for the betterment of the district and country as a whole.

Harsh treatment towards the NGOs by the government

The treatment of government towards NGOs in the aftermath of the eradication of terrorism in the country is very horrendous and strict. Of course, it is very difficult for the NGOs to get permission from the government to start the work. Therefore, government should support the investors. So that it could help to eliminate delaying process of the work and to induce more investors in the country.

Less number of trained technicians and skilled labours

Well drained technicians and skilled labourers are inadequate in developing countries like Sri Lanka. Even if there are some experts they are attached to the private department or foreign countries.

Strikes in various sectors and many holidays become impediment to economic development

There are, at least, two holidays per month, since multi ethnic group live in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, more strike and harthal against to the government or institutions or another society is normal practice in Sri Lanka. These features lead to delay of the working process in the study area.

Conclusion:

This is a study undertaken by the researcher on the role of government and NGOs in the economic development in Ampara district of Sri Lanka. Although this district was considered a densely populated district in the Eastern Province, it is predominantly occupied by Muslim, Tamils and Sinhala community and it was badly affected by civil war and tsunami devastation.

It is quite clear that from the above finding and discussion that the government and NGOs have played a tremendous role in the post war situation in the district especially in terms of economic development. Thus, in the light of above analysis following conclusions can be made from this study.

- The government activities such as fertilizer subsidies and other services have uplifted the agricultural production specially paddy production.
- The investment of government and NGOs has also increased the development on fisheries and small industries sectors.
- The government constructed houses, community centre, market, pre-school, hospital, road, drainage and school under the economic development in Ampara district.
- In addition to the construction of the government, it also directed and guided all the NGOs for their effective services to the affected community in the study area.
- Most of the NGOs focused on the housing, school and hospital construction in economic development.

Although the development process has been initiated by the government and NGOs in the district, these organizations encounter some enormous challenges that obstruct the development initiatives in the end. Further, these organizations will have to expedite their economic development activities on top gear compared to the previous situation so that the district will be in a matured position in terms of economic development in the future.

References:

1. Central Bank of Sri Lanka, (2008), Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka, Central of Sri Lanka
2. District Planning Secreteriat, Ampara, (2006), District Profile, Ampara District, Kacheri, Ampara.
3. District Planning Secreteriat, Ampara, (2007), Consolidated District Annual Implimentation Programme, Kacheri, Ampara.
4. District Planning Secreteriat, Ampara, (2008), Consolidated District Annual Implimentation Programme, Kacheri, Ampara.
5. District Planning Secreteriat, Ampara, (2009), Consolidated District Annual Implimentation Programme, Kacheri, Ampara.
6. District Statistical Information Hand Book, (2008), District Planning Secreteriat, Kacheri, Ampara.
7. Fisher, J., (1998), *NGOs and the Political Development of the Third World*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press.
8. Marit H. (2006), " *The tsunami aid delivery system: A view from six districts in Sri Lanka*" Norwegian Institutue for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR).
9. Princen, T and Finger, M, (1994), *Environmental NGOs in World Politics. Linking the Local and the Global*, (London: Routledge)
10. Weiss, TG and Gordenker, L., (eds.), (1996), *NGOs, the UN and Global Governance*, (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner)
11. Tafren (2005): Task Force to Rebuild the Nation, ADB, Asian Development Bank, UN:United Nations, CHA: Consortium for Humanitarian Agencies.