

Impacts on Housing Scheme Activities of Indian Development Cooperation in Northern Provincial of Sri Lanka: Special Reference to Jaffna District

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Abstract

The relationship between Sri Lanka and India has been more than 2500 Years old. The island country has inherited several legacies of intellectual, cultural, religious, and linguistic interactions from India. The recent years have been very significant in bolstering the bilateral ties between Sri Lanka and India. In this aspect, the framework of Development partnership and development cooperation under the rubrics of South-South Cooperation gains immense significance and importance. The emerging situation post-civil war justifies the need for development assistance. It is on record that billions of dollars have been pumped in by the Government of Sri Lanka, benefitting from development partnerships with friendly nations towards rebuilding the Island Country. This research identifies a research area from the standpoint of Governance and Development Cooperation between India and Sri Lanka in the post-conflict situation in the war-ravaged parts of Sri Lanka, focusing on the Housing scheme provided by the Government of India in the Northern Province with a particular reference to Jaffna administrative district. This study attempts to study to what extent the institutions of governance of Sri Lanka, especially on the war-ravaged Northern Province, is calibrated to grasp international assistance and examines the housing scheme programme as a unit of analysis. This humble study is a first of its kind, and the findings shall benefit the people of Sri Lanka besides strengthening the bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and India.

Keywords: Development Cooperation, Post Conflict, Housing Scheme, Civil War

Introduction

This paper focuses on the impact of recent Indian development assistance to Sri Lanka through development cooperation. This study highlights Sri Lankan perceptions on the housing scheme for internally displaced people in the Northern Province, known for the post-civil ravages. The relationship between Sri Lanka and India is more than 2500 years. The Island has inherited several legacies of intellectual, cultural, religious, and linguistic interactions from India. While the Tamils of the North, East, and Plantations have a common language with the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, the Sinhalese language itself has a massive borrowing from Indian languages such as Pali, Sanskrit, and Bengali. These being the traditional factors that integrate the hearts of people of both countries, the recent years have been very significant in bolstering the bilateral ties between Sri Lanka and India. North and East provinces are geographically very close to India. The Northern Province has four districts, namely Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaithivu, Vavuniya, and Mannar. Jaffna district has a large

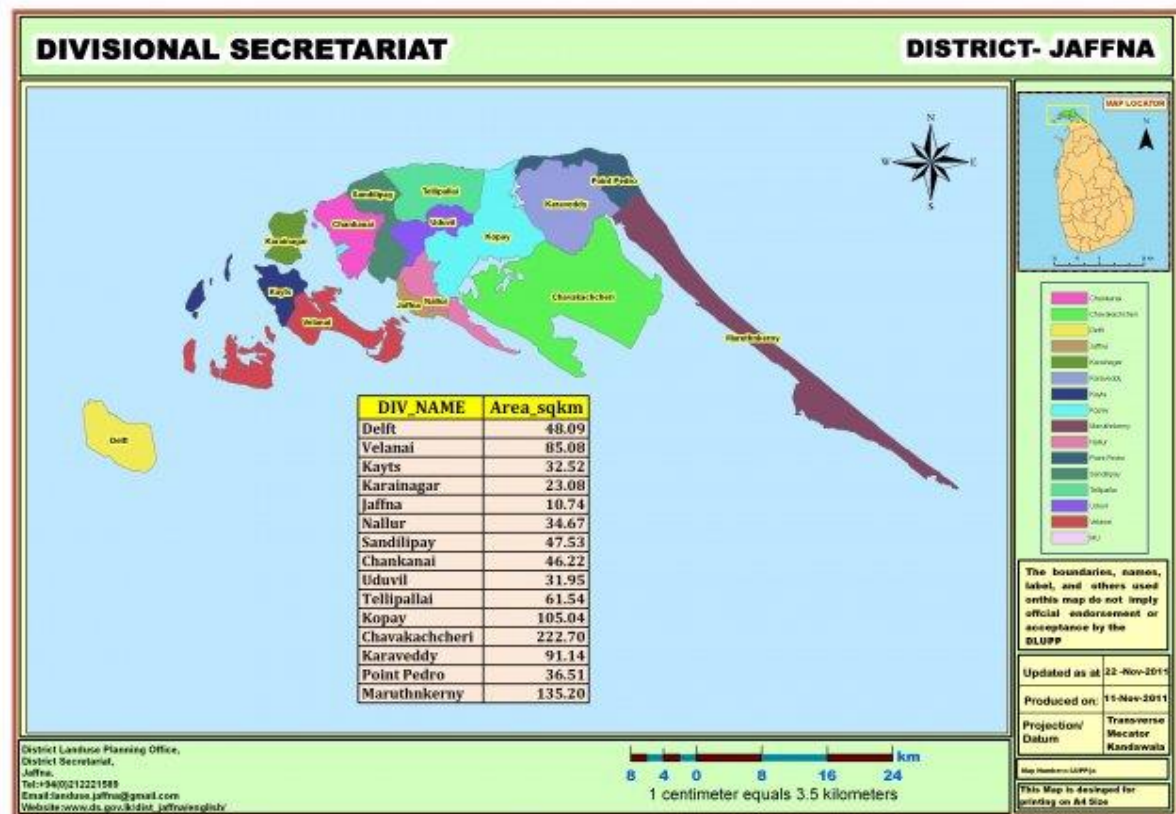
population in Northern Province where Tamil and Muslim people consider the dwelling place their traditional homelands.

After the civil war, Sri Lanka faces war crime issues and human rights violations during wartime at the U.N. level; at the same time, a large number of citizens in the northern provincial became houseless and landless people because of ethnic conflict and civil war, Sri Lankan government could not challenge these two issues alone. India needs to control Sri Lanka to maintain its regional power. Hence, India and Sri Lanka became the closed development partners for their own interest "For the Indians, Sri Lanka is a major concern point in their foreign policy and confuses the island nation's ability and proximity in the matter with larger issues of bilateral cooperation and Sri Lanka's sovereignty rights to choose their development and strategic partners. This was a complex reality that is influencing the Indian diplomatic community. Somehow, the history of the relations between two nations suggests that it is subject to various political ambiguities. Hence, bilateral relations between India and Sri Lanka are neither systematic nor identical. Although these bilateral relations are subject to constant changes, most of the instances prove that relations between two countries in the politically sensitive areas are controversial and subject to various ambivalences." (Padmakumara and Senanayake 2019 p.203) at this junction, Sri Lanka needs to implement reconciliation and resettlement programmes, including releasing private lands, building up new houses, trying to fully implement 13th amendment of 1978th constitution, demilitarisation, and ensuring the freedom of democratic activities in north and east provincials. This study analysis builds up new houses for internally displaced and houseless people with the support of the Indian Government. Both countries have decided the development cooperation to chair their development assistance, experience, handle regional crises and matters related to foreign policy. "Since independence, development cooperation has been an integral part of India's foreign policy, especially with Sri Lanka. Though an ideological and political rationale guided India's development assistance in the early years, it is increasingly dictated by strategic, economic, and commercial considerations." (ISDG-Oxfam Report 2016) in this scenario after 2009, India pumped billion dollars to build new houses in the northern provincial for civil war ravaged people through development cooperation.

Study Area

This study area is Jaffna administrative district, which is mainly affected by civil war and has a massive population in the northern province; some families become homeless because of civil war and internal displacement. This study area politically and geographically concerns places for India and Sri Lanka. It consists of the peninsula and seven inhabited Islands; the district's north, east, and west boundaries are the Indian ocean, Jaffna lagoon, and Kilinochchi district.

"The total land area including inland waters is 1,025.00sq.km. Jaffna district is divided into four sub-regions; they are Islands, Valikamam, Thenmaradchy, and Vadamaradchy. The government agent/district secretary is an executive officer for the entire district—the government administrative workers at the central, provincial, district, division, and village levels. Jaffna district is divided into 15 administrative divisions, 435 grama officers' divisions in the district. Seventeen local bodies (Municipal Council – 01, Urban Councils – 03, and PradeshiyaSabhas – 13) are functioning in the Jaffna district. The total population of the Jaffna district is 616,462 consisting of 197,133 families. The female population accounted for 51.49% of the total population, 611,249 persons are Tamils, 335 persons are Sinhala, 4,878 persons are Muslims, 84.1% are Hindu, 15.05% Christian, 0.79% are Islam's, and 0.049% are Buddhists." (Statistical Hand Book Jaffna District 2020).



Sours: website of district secretariat Jaffna

The problem of the study

Contemporary debates around good governance advocate for building and strengthening the institutions of governance, augmenting capacity building among the stakeholders, fostering transparency and public accountability in governance, and addressing the long unattended human security issues. The civil war is over before a decade, and development assistance worth several billion dollars have been spent rebuilding the Island Country. This study wishes to study to what extent the institutions of governance of Sri Lanka, especially of the war-ravaged northern Province, rebuilt with new and repaired houses to internally displaced people through development assistance offered by India in the Jaffna district from 2010 to 2019.

Literature Reviewed

Indo – Lanka relations study is essential, significant, and interest that's why many scholars did their research in this area, but very few researchers did the study on development assistance from India to Sri Lanka. This paper deals with housing schemes as development assistance to strengthen both nation's historical relationship with the study area of the Jaffna administrative district of Sri Lanka.

Abraham George and Hasantha Gunaweera researched India – Sri Lanka development cooperation with special focus on Indian housing project for internally displaced persons supported by OXFAM India. This research deal with historical relations between India and Sri Lanka, foreign policy of both nations, Indian development cooperation activities and development assistance, an Indian

housing project for internally displaced persons- features, effectiveness, and impact in Sri Lanka. This kind of analysis and discussion was done here by researchers.

S.C.Padmakumara and S.M.D.H.Senanayake wrote a research paper on contemporary India – Sri Lanka relations from Sri Lanka Perspectives. This study primarily focused on India – Sri Lanka relationship and its importance. From the independence, India provides development assistance to Sri Lanka for enhancing their historical relationship. "While sharing common historical ties, India and Sri Lanka both enjoyed privileges of cooperation from countries. Geographical proximity and cultural and religious ties have corresponded to generate solid and healthy relations between countries in different spheres, such as economy, politics, diplomacy, and culture. These historical narratives have been shaping how Sri Lankans perceive Indo – Sri Lanka relations in multiple ways."(Padmakumara and Senanayake 2019 p.21) Authors make four Such kinds of arguments with evidence.

Ph.D. research bureau with Dr.S.P.Sharma, Chief Economist, and Mr.Rohit Singh, Research Associate, prepared a research paper on India – Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations: Reinforcing Trade and Investment Prospects. This paper discusses trade between India and Sri Lanka. Identified areas that have to be developed with cooperation are agriculture, education, health, science and technology, tourism, telecom, automobiles, apparel, banking and financial service, and space. This paper analyzed Indo – Lanka relations by giving importance to economic factors.

Several research articles on the title are Deepening Economic Cooperation between India and Sri Lanka edited by IndraNathMukherrji and KavitaIyengar. This edited research focuses on trade agreements, investment linkages, and trade in services between India and Sri Lanka. These economic development activities healthily direct both nations' relationship, but both countries face some negative experiences in deferent political events and periods. We can gain knowledge from this kind of argument with trade agreements and impact assessment outputs.

India Sri Lanka Partnership in the 21st Century, this publication edited by AdluriSubramanyam Raju with some selected research articles which are dealing with a historical perspective of India - Sri Lanka relations, ethnic conflict and crises of Sri Lanka, refugees issues, assessing maritime security relationship, Indo-Sri Lanka economic relations and partnership. This book discusses several vital areas which essential for enhancing both nations' association. It gave some ideas and information to develop this paper.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out to what extent the Indian housing project reached to civil war victims of Northern Provincial and
2. Suggest policy recommendations to the Government of Sri Lanka and highlight the importance of development cooperation activities, especially the Indian housing project.

Methodology of the Study

This research mainly depends on secondary data, but Some basic primary data collected from the district secretariat - Jaffna and secondary data will be collected through the studies and reports, research articles, available government documents and publications, and media publications at regional, national levels. Historical and comparative method was used.

Findings and Discussions

Geographically India is a significantly closer neighbor and friendly nation to Sri Lanka, and both countries share their experience on politics, economics, military, religion, culture, and education. India has a solid and stable economy. It needs to capture its permanent seat and stand in the U.N. security council, so India economically helps South Asian countries, especially Sri Lanka, received a large number of development assistance in the civil war period post-war. One of the significant development assistance is the Indian housing project for internally displaced persons in the civil war that affected the north and east provincials of Sri Lanka. India - Sri Lankan relations are not stable; there are ups and downs. "The historical picture of political relations among two states has experienced ups and downs in several situations. For instance, in the 1980s, the Tamil question led to some adverse effects on bilateral relations, and the same trend has been pronounced in recent years regarding the fisheries issue. The central belief of Sri Lankans regarding Indian's involvement in the Sri Lankan conflict lies in the Tamil Nadu political dynamism. Its political pressure on the central government of India."(Padmakumara and Senanayake 2019 p.211) Sri Lanka maintains relations with India in several ways. In recent years, China invests billions of dollars in Sri Lanka, which is very close to India. So India wishes to have more influence on Sri Lanka towards the betterment of India.

With this kind of present background, India needs to invest more in North, East provincials, and Upcountry Tamil issues. The housing project is helpful in Sri Lankan beneficiaries, but the big question is Indian housing scheme whether is reached fully or not in civil war hit north and east. "After three decades of armed conflict, Sri Lanka requires development assistance from the international community and organizations to recover the economy, make sustainable peace, and achieve long-term development. India could play a prominent role in helping Sri Lanka achieve these goals. As India's development assistance to its partner countries is demand-driven, it has the potential to be more effective and meaningful to address the needs and requirements of its partner."(Abraham and Hasantha 2018 p.44) India is a meaningful partner of Sri Lanka to achieve infrastructural development and economic development; India has been involved in the housing project for internally displaced people since 2005. The Indian housing project, with an initial commitment to build 50,000 houses in the civil war-affected areas and estate workers in the plantation areas, is the government of India's flagship grant project in Sri Lanka; overall commitment of INR 1372 crores makes it also one of the largest project undertaken by the government of India abroad.

Mr.S.Raveendran from Tamil Nadu, India, was appointed as a facilitator for an Indian housing project. Mr.K.Niroshanathan, a development officer from the Jaffna district secretariat, is a subject officer of the housing project. Every district secretariat can decide the beneficiary of the house using their administrative structure. There are some people not satisfied with the selection of beneficiaries by district secretariats and their selection system.

Table I : Construction of Permanent Houses (Year wise) - (2010 -2019)

S.N	Divisional Secretariat	Total	Construction of Houses									
			2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	M/Resettlement	8,652	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,008	1,699	-	2,945
2	NHDA	5,937	177	*230	230	130	41	1,001	101	500	1,900	1,627
3	NEHRP	2,591	2,591	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	M/Disaster Management	8	-	-	-	-	5	3	-	-	-	-
5	Samurahi	398	90	93	170	20	-	-	11	4	7	3
6	Indian Housing	6,266	-	150	386	2,331	2,183	1,216	-	-	-	-
7	Dept. of Social Services	63	-	-	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	NGOs	4,005	1,279	513	599	1,035	565	14	-	-	-	-
Total		27,920	4,137	756	1,448	3,516	2,794	2,234	4,120	2,203	1,907	4,575

Source: District Secretariat Jaffna

From 2009 to 2019, India has built up 6266 new houses for internally displaced people and places lost people in the Jaffna district. Each house value is SLR 5,50,000.00; this amount is divided into three phases are 2,00,000.00, 2,00,000.00, and 1,50,000.00; these allocations were delivered to beneficiaries on the satisfactory progress of construction and construction works observed by Indian government representatives and Sri Lankan Red Cross Officers by the requested of the Indian government. Initially, 150 houses were built by involving directly Indian government officers with 06-inch stones, but other houses were built by Sri Lankan government with 04-inch stones; every house has two rooms, one kitchen, and visiting hall. At the same time, the Sri Lankan government has built up 21,654 homes through several housing programmes with government funds and other financial recourse, including chinses financial assistance and loans. But still, 30,512 houses need for houseless people who are in several parts of the Jaffna district of Sri Lanka. People of the north and east expectation is that India should involve more in the resettle and re-habitation activities because India officially involves in Sri Lankan ethnic issues from the latter part of the 1980s.

India influences Sri Lanka for the betterment of minority people as well as its regional power interest. After the civil war, India has more responsibility to rebuild war-affected areas with financial and moral support. Fourteen thousand five hundred nine houses were repaired from 2010 to 2019. However, only 235 homes were repaired by Indian financial assistance in the Jaffna district,

where many people still live without a proper house. People's expectations and requests are that India should focus on repairing homes damaged by civil war directly and indirectly.

Table II : Repairs of Permanent Houses (Year wise) - (2010 -2019)

S.N	Divisional Secretariat	Total	Repair of Houses									
			2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	M/ Resettlement	1,140	-	-	-	-	-	-	745	395	-	-
2	NHDA	5,058	29	277	481	188	91	442	1,924	49	1,182	395
3	NEHRP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	M/ DisasterManagement	7,449	-	-	-	1,392	1,384	-	2,378	411	1,421	463
5	Samurdhi	319	-	-	-	-	-	153	38	52	52	24
6	Indian Housing	235	-	-	-	-	25	210	-	-	-	-
7	Dept. of Social Services	308	-	308	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Ministry of Nation Buildings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		14,509	29	585	481	1,580	1,500	805	5,085	907	2,655	882

Source: District Secretariat- Jaffna

If improving the lifestyle and standard of life of people living in war-affected areas, the Sri Lankan government must focus on fulfilling the basic needs of war victims by supporting its development partners, especially India, and enhancing the effectiveness of housing projects Indo-Sri Lanka development cooperation. India housing project should keep an eye on good practices for the cost of effective and better quality construction, more decentralization for greater effectiveness, improving the selection of beneficiaries, need more community-based supports, "A permanent solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem will be attainable only if there is equal opportunity for all its citizens, including disadvantaged groups like war-displaced persons to participate in the country's economic growth." (Abraham and Hasantha 2018 p.4) From the independent, India play a significant role in Sri Lankan ethnic issues and economic development through development cooperation programme.

Table III : Requirements of Housing - 2019

S.N	Divisional Secretariat	Housing						
		Resettled Families		To be Resettle families	Vulnerable families		Total	
		Fully	Partly	Fully	Fully	Partly	Fully	Partly
1	Delft	23	16	2	7	2	32	18
2	Islands South	223	-	-	477	14	700	14
3	Islands North	343	150	3	248	82	594	232
4	Karainagar	233	-	119	389	-	741	-
5	Jaffna	208	129	426	514	-	1,148	129
6	Nallur	254	32	133	1,118	164	1,505	196
7	Valikamam South West	346	43	5	1,264	100	1,615	143
8	Valikamam West	991	34	1	809	654	1,801	688
9	Valikamam South	162	25	10	1,585	323	1,757	348
10	Valikamam North	723	160	729	726	92	2,178	252
11	Valikamam East	4,062	203	45	1,076	47	5,183	250
12	Thenmaradchi	-	-	130	4,530	426	4,660	426
13	Vadamaradchi South West	813	187	33	999	526	1,845	713
14	Vadamaradchi North	501	74	30	1,156	336	1,687	410
15	Vadamaradchi East	672	119	27	341	88	1,040	207
Total		9,554	1,172	1,693	15,239	2,854	26,486	4,026

Source: District Secretariat, Jaffna District.

Conclusion

People of the north and east and their democratic representatives are satisfied and thankful to the Indian government for the Indian housing project. There are also four similar housing programmes for constructing 2400 houses across Sri Lanka. Overall, India has so far committed to building close to 62,500 houses in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka increasingly depends on non-rational donors like China to finance post-civil war reconstruction of social and economic infrastructure. This kind of financial assistance got through commercial borrowings at high rates of interest and short-term repayment periods." While Sri Lanka is apprehensive of India's hegemonic domination as a regional power, India has severe concerns about Sri Lanka's growing ties with China and for abetting Chinese

military presence in the region poses a significant threat to India."(Abraham and Hasantha 2018 p.4) Geographically, Sri Lanka is located in a sensitive place which is very important to India and China to maintain their hegemony and regional power, so every step of Sri Lanka is seriously watched by both nations. Promoting development cooperation like housing projects is essential for India and Sri Lanka to reap mutual gains and achieve stability. This kind of development partnership project should produce transparency and accountability, increase public participation, create employment opportunities, and improve bilateral relations with partner countries. Finally, houses for internally displaced people by civil war given by Indian housing project is the basic need fulfilled, but need more houses for war victims in north and east provincials of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka should maintain a healthy relationship with India and obtain a lot of development assistance through development cooperation activities from India. India is the first country that unconditionally contributed to rebuilding the north and east with non-payable billion dollars; the Sri Lankan government should be thankful to India and take any political decision before thinking about Indian regional power and interest.

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