



HUMAN SECURITY IN POST-WAR SRI LANKA

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Human security, in other words, people's freedom from fear and freedom from want, is being overlooked in recent development agendas in Sri Lanka. As a result, Sri Lanka is now experiencing multi-layered human security failures among which increasing poverty is a critical issue. In this backdrop, there is growing consensus that the state should adopt a human security approach in post-development recovery mechanisms in which needs, and expectations of the people are addressed.

Therefore, by using a 'case study research' method with the support of secondary data gathered from extensive desk research, this research examined the ways in which human security of the people have been addressed by Sri Lankan Governments through four national state sponsored poverty alleviation schemes in post-war Sri Lanka (2010 – 2018).

The findings of the research reveal that despite the country's major poverty challenges, the focus of the poverty alleviation programmes of the government have predominately been confined to economic development. The poverty reduction programmes have paid little or no attention to specific human security needs. Human security priorities in post-conflict settings should go beyond relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. It should also look at recovering people's lives and lifestyles, to ensure a future for their families. The fulfilment of these basic needs would address the root causes of conflict.

The findings of the research, therefore, recommends state-sponsored poverty alleviation programs to be aligned with regional (provinces) specific socio-economic data/statistics through which area-specific poverty related issues can be addressed. With province-based poverty reduction goals and programmes, the unique development challenges in the directly war-affected North and East of the country can be gradually overcome. The overall goal setting and policy making of state-driven poverty interventions should be done by a central committee of experts represented by economic, social, cultural and defense sectors with required proportion of gender, and ethnic compositions. Through such an approach, the necessary levels of human security of people will be realized and sustained and current and potential conflict fault-lines among communities can be tackled effectively.

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