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**RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL
EXCLUSION:
“A CASE STUDY OF NELUGAMA VILLAGE IN
SRI LANKA.”**

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Abstract

Nelugama, is a traditional village located in Anuradhapura district, organized around kinship ties and isolated for many years. The inhabitants of the village experienced an influx of new inhabitants due to a mega irrigation project, the Yan Oya project launched in 2016. The introduction of the Yan Oya project brought significant changes to the village such as integration with surrounding communities, socio-economic development, demographical changes, and the emergence of new social relations and social structures. The study's main purpose is to understand rural dynamics, social processes, and social relations that impact social, cultural, and economic changes in Nelugama and how original and resettled families experience those changes and adapt to the new situation. The research followed the qualitative approach, and it is a single case study considering the village as the unit of analysis.

The research is a descriptive type of case study and multiple methods are used for the data collection. Data collection tools used for the study are field notes, interviews, Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) tools (Mapping, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Observation, transact walk), and data recording was done through field notes, interview transcriptions, computer files, and audio recordings. The influx of resettled families from *Yan Oya*, influenced the village economy and social structure, in a way that the whole village is physically and socially divided into *Parana Gammanaya* (Old Village) and *Nawa Gammanaya* (New Village). The favourable conditions and facilities provided for the resettled families for better housing, income generation, and land ownership made the situation more complicated and created tension among original and resettled families. Geographical, social, and economic separation experienced by original families under different circumstances, has created breeding grounds for comparison, social exclusion and a sense of deprivation. Within this context, social changes experienced by original and resettled families are contextual and complicated and impact the village economy, social life, and political and social structure.