

**An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Granary Area Programme: A Case Study in the Areas Irrigated from the *Weerwila* Reservoir in Hambantota District**

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**Abstract**

The Granary Area Programme (GAP) was designed to enhance the productivity of rice farming in areas with high potential for rice cultivation in Sri Lanka and was implemented between 2003 and 2007. The programme focused on developing farmer groups based on *yaya* and the provision of a package of extension service for these groups. The purpose of this study was to assess the impacts of the programme interventions. The philosophy underpinning this research is the constructivist paradigm of inquiry that believes the reality is constructed by multiple perceptions of different stakeholders. The research methodology is based on both qualitative and quantitative approaches including various data collection methods. The findings of this study suggest that this programme was unable to make a significant contribution to productivity enhancement in the paddy sector. Also this programme has not made a marked contribution to increase the farmers' adaptability to new agronomic practices. However, the GAP has provided more farmer training opportunities. It has also contributed to the development of the extension system.

**Keywords:** evaluation, extension, farmer groups, productivity, rice