

**An analytical study of changing pattern of
banana cultivation in Angunakolapalassa.
(A case study of Uda Walawa Block 10 - Murawasihene)**

D.M. Karunadasa Dissanayake
Department of Geography,

Key words: banana cultivation, paddy cultivation, fertilizer susidy, prices.

Banana cultivation was the crop of the Angunakolapalassa D.S. Division since 1985. Angunakolapalassa is under the “Uda Wdawlawa special Mahaweli area”. Initially the project was designed for paddy cultivation.

The Uda Walawa left bank covers an area of 37,000 ha. Out of that area banana had been cultivated around 50% while paddy cultivated in the rest. However, at present, the cultivation has decreased around 25% when compared to earlier figures.

At the initial stage of the Udawalawe project, paddy cultivation was very profitable and therefore it was widespread in the area. However during early 1980s the price of paddy had decreased gradually, and the cost of the inputs of paddy cultivation had increased, due to the introduction of the liberalized economic policies to Sri Lanka.

As a result of those economic policies, farmers had converted paddy fields into banana cultivation in late 1980s. They could get an opportunity to earn high income from banana cultivation than that of the paddy cultivation. However, very recently land area of the banana plantation is decreasing due to some reasons. Thus the land use pattern of the Uda Walawa basin has been changed gradually. This study attempts to examine the changes of land use in the Udawalawe area.

Most of land under banana cultivation is now gradually converting into paddy fields. The reason behind such changes are due to the fertilizer subsidiary given by the government only for paddy cultivation. In the meantime, price of rice is also has an upward trend while price of banana is going in a downward trend during last few months. The main objective of this study is to examine the future trends of the banana cultivation in the Uda Walawa basin.

To achieve the set objectives, primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data were obtained from a questionnaires survey, field observation and focus group interviews. The secondary data were collected from different government agencies; Mahaweli Block office -Murawasihena, Institute of legume and Oil seeds research and development-Angunakolapalassa, Uda Walawa Mahaweli head office –Ambilipitiya.