

Field Visit Report

Bakmeegama Wewa Tank Rehabilitation (Phase II – CSIAP)

Trincomalee, Eastern Province

The World Bank financed Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project (CSIAP)

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation



30/05/2025

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FIELD VISIT REPORT

Bakmeegama Wewa Tank Rehabilitation (Phase II – CSIAP)

- **Date of Visit:** 26/05/2025
- **Location:** Backmeegama Wewa, Bakmeegama Cascade
- **Project:** Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project (CSIAP) – Phase II
- **Contractor:** S.M.S. Enterprises
- **Start Date of Work / Contractor Mobilized:** 16/04/2025
- **Visited by:** Mr. G. Jayantha, and Dr. Sithara Attapattu (World Bank), Ms. Sharmila Shanmuganathan (PMU), Mr. T.Sekaran (SSO/DPDO/EP), and the Technical Team of the DPDO/EP

1. Site Preparation and Access

- Work commenced on 16/04/2025.
- Site clearing and material storage were observed.
- No rainfall was recorded during the visit.
- On-site, SAC members, FO members, machinery, four laborers, and one supervisor were present.
- Active community involvement at this site is assessed as moderate.
- The name board was not displayed.
- The contractor must install the name board to ensure public awareness and accountability.
- Construction work had already started.



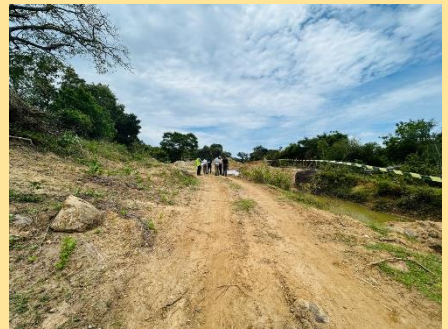
2. Construction Activities and Infrastructure Improvements

- A Technical Officer from the Department of Agrarian Development (DAD) was present at the site.
- Scope-based construction work has commenced, and concrete work is currently in progress.
- Artificial water drawdown was not carried out, as farmers did not agree to forego Yala 2025 cultivation.
- Only one machinery unit was observed on-site.
- Community involvement is assessed as moderate.
- Close monitoring by the DPDO and the Implementing Agency is essential.
- Heavy soil erosion was observed at the earth canal works, as earthwork was carried out without proper turfing.
- The community mentioned that it may take approximately 1½ months to complete paddy harvesting.
- Both the community and the contractor indicated that artificial water drawdown cannot be done all at once, as it could adversely affect nearby households.
- Furthermore, it may take an additional two months to complete the artificial water drawdown and for the land to dry adequately before construction activities can commence at the site.



3. Environmental and Ecological Impacts

- The site is located outside any environmentally sensitive area.
- No tree removal was noted; however, slight vegetation clearance was observed.
- Flooding had occurred previously at the site, and soil erosion was identified as a major issue.
- Occasional elephant presence was reported.
- The environmental risk is assessed as moderate, primarily due to soil erosion.
- A site office was set up, but workers do not stay on-site.



4. Social and Livelihood Impacts

- Farmers did not agree to forego Yala 2025 cultivation for the rehabilitation; therefore, the tank rehabilitation may be delayed by approximately 1½ months.
- No one lost their livelihood due to the tank rehabilitation.
- A rented house was arranged to accommodate the laborers.
- Four local community members were hired for unskilled work.

5. Stakeholder Engagement and Community Participation

- FO and SAC members were present and moderately engaged during the visit.
- Weak coordination was noted between the contractor and farmers. The quality of work is questionable, as major soil erosion was observed.
- SAC logbooks were not available at the site.
- No grievances were reported, possibly due to limited community participation.
- An ESMP awareness program had been conducted for the contractor.



6. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Camp Management

- A temporary shed was established at the site.
- A permanent elephant fence was also installed.
- No machinery was functioning on the day of the field visit.
- Workers engaged in site activities were wearing PPE, and a labor registry was available at the site.
- A first aid box and grievance box were placed at the campsite.
- Safety signboards were inadequate; they should be displayed in color for better visibility.
- Material storage was properly arranged.
- OHS measures require significant improvement.
- ESMP, COC-GBV, GRM, and awareness materials were available at the site.





7. Risk Level Assessment

Taking into account that construction work has commenced according to the approved scope, the **artificial water drawdown** has not yet been done due to the ongoing Yala paddy cultivation. Earth canal work was completed; however, **heavy soil erosion** was observed, and **dredging materials** must be properly disposed of. The contractor mentioned that the materials will be **disposed of on FO lands**, but the **exact location** has not been identified yet. The SAC, along with the Implementing Agency (IA) and the DPDO, should facilitate identifying a suitable location for **timely disposal** of the dredged materials. The **earthwork was done without turfing**, which must be addressed properly to **prevent further erosion**. Technical guidance and quality supervision are essential during implementation. As the tank is **comparatively large**, artificial water drawdown cannot be done all at once, as it may **affect nearby households**. The **paddy harvest** will take approximately 1½ months, and it may take an additional 2 months to begin **bund works** and **transport materials** to the tank bed. Although **no rainfall** was recorded in recent days and **dry weather** persists, the contractor should **prioritize work based on effective logistical arrangements**. Soil erosion has caused **moderate environmental damage**, which could **hinder progress** if not managed properly. Based on the current conditions, the site's risk level is elevated from moderate to high. Close coordination and monitoring by the Technical Team of the IA and the DPDO must be ensured, and **work quality** should be strictly maintained. There is a **potential risk** that the work may not be completed by 30th September 2025 if delays persist.
