Field Visit Report
Bundala Wewa Rehabilitation (Phase II – CSIAP)
Southern Province

The World Bank financed Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project (CSIAP)
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation

20/05/2025
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Project Management Unit

FIELD VISIT REPORT

BUNDALA WEWA TANK REHABILITATION (PHASE II – CSIAP)

Date of Visit: 19/05/2025
Location: Bundala Wewa, Wilmanna Cascade
Project: Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project (CSIAP) – Phase II
Contractor: W M Siri Construction
Start Date of Work/ contractor mobilized: 02nd May 2025
Visited by: Dr. Sithara Attapattu (World Bank), Ms. Sharmila Shanmuganathan (PMU), the Safeguard Team, and the Technical Team of the DPDO/SP&UP.

Background

Bundala Wewa is one of the tanks selected for rehabilitation under Phase II of CSIAP. The tank lies within a wildlife boundary and is managed by the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWLC). The tank is the final one in a cascade system where water from five upstream tanks accumulates before draining into the sea. Fifteen (15) farmers cultivate approximately 12 acres under this tank. However, due to leakage in the tank bund, Yala paddy cultivation has not been practiced for the past three (03) years, resulting in flood damage, crop loss and economic hardship for the farmers.

Field Observations

1. Construction Status: Work began on 2nd May 2025. Currently, canal works are in progress, although temporarily halted due to heavy rain.

2. Construction materials are stored on-site but, due to rain and flooding, materials are dropped midway to the site within the wildlife boundary as full delivery by heavy vehicles (tippers) is not feasible.

3. Slight vegetation clearance and site clearing were observed.

4. Vegetation burning was noticed in some areas, which must be stopped immediately.






5. Temporary campsite is established. Workers do not stay overnight at the worksite.


6. No fishing activities are present in the tank. Temporary water feeding well (30ft diameter) was established inside the tank to supply water to wild animals during the rehabilitation period. This well is clearly marked and is a commendable practice. It is identified as sustain Wildlife-Friendly Practices.



7. Quality Assurance Inspector also functions as the safety officer in the absence of the designated safety officer.

8. Tank Issues and Wildlife Consideration: The tank bund had severe leakage before the tank rehabilitation commences, damaging one farmer's land heavily.

9. Tree Removal: Five trees were identified for removal, but have not yet been cut. Necessary approvals from DWLC, FD, DS Office, and implementing agencies are pending.

10. SAC Participation and Activity: A five-member Social Audit Committee (SAC) is formed, including 3 male and 2 female farmers. Notably, the two female members are highly active and visit the site daily. Contractors' quality assurance inspector informs SAC members during key construction activities (e.g., concreting), prompting them to visit and monitor quality.

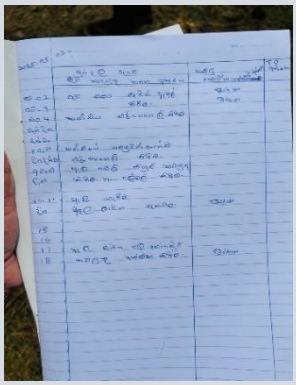



11. Construction Delays Due to Rainfall: Unseasonal heavy rain has significantly impacted work progress. Weather patterns have changed, resulting in more frequent rainy days.



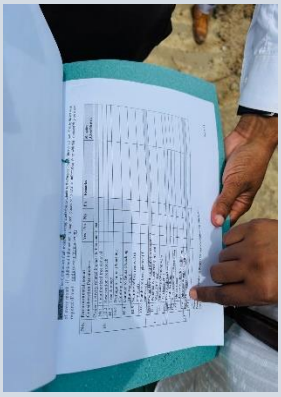

12. Transport and Material Delivery Challenges: Due to waterlogged and inaccessible paths, construction materials are dropped partway to the site, within the wildlife boundary.


13. The SAC maintains a logbook with daily updates on work progress



14. Good practices identified include the implementation of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) measures at the site.






An artificial water drawdown was not carried out at this tank, as the tank bund was already damaged. Farmers did not lose their Yala paddy cultivation due to the tank rehabilitation. Therefore, compensation to the farmers is not required.

Animals not owned by local residents have caused damage to paddy fields and the tank bund. There is no designated area for animal husbandry, and farmers have identified this as a serious concern. Farmers have successfully harvested the Maha paddy crop and plan to resume Maha, Yala, and mid-season cultivation following the tank's rehabilitation. Although Yala cultivation has not taken place in Bundala Wewa over the past three years, farmers continued cultivation in other nearby tanks. The farming community has expressed appreciation for the selection of this tank for rehabilitation.

Recommendations

Contractors must be formally advised and subjected to close monitoring to prevent any future incidents of burning. Regular site supervision by safeguard officer is essential to ensure compliance with E&S standards.

The temporary wildlife water feeding well should be maintained until the full rehabilitation of the tank is completed. Communication between the contractor and wildlife officers should be sustained and to ensure continued adherence to the requirements of the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWLC).

Social Audit Committee (SAC) members should continue to be involved in quality monitoring and reporting processes. Additional training should be provided to SAC members, particularly on the grievance redress mechanism, to enhance their effectiveness in addressing community concerns.

The contractor must display the subproject name board at the site to ensure public awareness and accountability of the works.

Risk Level Assessment

Taking into account that the work is currently underway, it is important to note that the tank is located within a wildlife-protected area, and the required approval for rehabilitation has been obtained from the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWLC). A DWLC officer visits the site on a daily basis once major activities commence. However, due to leakage in the tank bund, Yala paddy cultivation has not been practiced for the past three (03) years, resulting in flood damage. The tank rehabilitation activities were initiated with the full agreement of the farmers not to cultivate Yala due to the bund breach. Potential weather-related delays are considered moderate, although major challenges in material transportation may occur during the rainy season. Since the proposed interventions are confined to both upstream and downstream areas, the site is categorized as moderate-risk, with a high likelihood of completing the rehabilitation on or before 30th September 2025.

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