

**WATER RESOURCES OF THE MAHAWELI GANGA BASIN : THE NEED
FOR RE-ASSESSMENT**

by

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It is now thirty years since the publication of the report of the 'Mahaweli Ganga Irrigation and Hydropower Survey', often referred to as the 'Mahaweli Master Plan' by a team of UNDP/FAO experts. The estimates of water resources for this survey were based on hydrological data available up to the mid-1960s and on some synthetic data generated for the purpose. Since then a considerable amount of work has been accomplished in the development of water resources of the Mahaweli Ganga, both during the first phase of the project in the 1970s as well as under the current accelerated development programme.

The objective of the present study is to attempt a comparison of the data base of the Master Plan with the subsequent hydrological record in order to ascertain whether the estimates of the UNDP/FAO survey were realistic. It is also proposed to examine the impact of recent water resources development activities on the flow regime of the Mahaweli Ganga as reflected in the current streamflow records. The analysis is however, confined to a few selected years of the record and is intended to be only the preliminary stage of a comprehensive statistical investigation to be followed.