

FOOD INSECURITY AND ARMED CONFLICT IN JAFFNA PENNINSULA

C. Elankumaran

Introduction

The Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka faced a series of armed conflicts, military battles and economic blockades during the last two decades. The noticeable events in the peninsula are, agitation and violence by armed youths of minority Tamils against the security forces of Sri Lankan Government in the 80's, the most significant being the so called 'civil war' in 1983 which spread from the Jaffna peninsula to the whole nation. This political situation turned to a remarkable dimension when the military operations, 'Operation Liberation', conducted by Sri Lankan troops and the 'Operation Pawan', conducted by the Indian Peace keeping Forces (IPKF), in the early part and the later part of 1987 respectively. They were conducted mainly to combat the predominant armed organization 'Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam'(LTTE) at that time (Wiswa, 1994)

This war torn situation has grown year by year with continuous military actions by the IPKF against the LTTE in the years 1988 and 1989. large scale sporadic armed conflicts. battles, and operations prevailed from 1990 till 1994 during the period of previous united national party (UNP) Government, and Renewed battles after the newly elected People's Alliance (P.A) Government came to power in 1994 (Kumar, 1998) are also noticeable. These full scale wars turned to the present worst situation

with 'Operation Rivi Rasa' – stage I. II and III conducted in 1995 and 1996 by the troops of Sri Lankan Government and their continuous search and combat operations from 1996 till 1998. There were no major armed conflicts during early 1999 in the peninsula, and hence the survey related to this article was also to be conducted smoothly. Even though the concentration of war was turned to the Wannai region (see figure) and other parts of North – Eastern province during this survey period we now learn of fresh conflict and war reported in the south eastern corner of the peninsula.

People of Jaffna peninsula have been dynamic since 1983. The degree of displacement of population has increased specifically in 1987, 1990 and 1995. People of the peninsula have been Socially, Economically, Physically, and even Mentally affected due to these continuous military battles and displacements. Many people have died and a considerable number of people have been victimized due to war and became handicap (Daya, 1998). Sporadic displacements between the villages of the peninsula have been common practice at family level, village level and even at Divisional Secretariat's (DS) administrative divisional level. The people of three large islands, calls "Velanai", 'Pungudutuvu' and 'Karaitivu' (marked as islands in the figure) located very close to the Jaffna peninsula, also displaced many times.

Any war is bound to have unfavorable repercussions on the warring parties. But the ethnic war in Sri Lanka, by its very nature, disproportionately affects the minority Tamils more than the majority Sinhalese. Except for those Sinhalese who are directly engaged in war activities and those living in areas marginal to the war zones, the others, until quite recently had scarcely been touched by the direct effect of the war. But, in the case of Tamils, the entire community has directly been hit very hard by the war (Daya, 1998). It will not, in any way, be an exaggeration to say that the entire fabric of Tamilian life has been destroyed, and only the remnants are now left.

The biggest shock for the Tamils has been the partial or total eviction from their own surroundings – homes, villages, towns, and even regions. According to my own estimates during 1987 – 1997, there is not a single Tamil family in the North – Eastern province of Sri Lanka, which would have been in continuous occupation of the same dwelling for the entire decade. A large number has immigrated to different parts of the world, another good proportion has shifted to Colombo (the capital of Sri Lanka) and other major towns within Sri Lanka; and the rest has ended up in refugee camps of one kind or another. Under such a complete overhaul of an entire society, there is no way in which families could continue with the same life pattern and preserve their cherished values.

The major displacement took place in 1995, called 'Exodus 1995', has been a total displacement of people from seven administrative divisions, i.e., the

entire people of Valikamam sector of the peninsula experienced this displacement which severely affected their Economic and Health (See the figure). One out of these seven DS divisions, Valikamam North division, has a different story. The people started moving or displacing from this division in 1987 at family level and then increased to village level in 1994 and the division was almost deserted by 1994 prior to Exodus 1995 (UTHR, 1996). The main focus of 'JAFFNA SOCIO-ECONOMIC HEALTH STUDY' (JSEHS) conducted in early 1999 is to highlight the damage caused to the people of Valikamam sector of Jaffna peninsula in their Socio – Economic and Health status during and after exodus.

The above mentioned conflicts and displacements have caused significant effects on food supply from Colombo to Jaffna and food distribution to the people at village level within the peninsula. The purchasing power of food items, specifically the nutritional foods, has been substantially reduced due to the loss of income and properties by the people. Both transport difficulties between Jaffna region and the country's capital Colombo and the economic embargo imposed by the Government from 1990, caused the scarcity of valuable nutritional food items to the public of Jaffna peninsula. The supply of locally produced vegetables and pulses has also been substantially reduced due to the war effect on farmers and farm workers.

Perishable and valuable food items were not available in local markets. The poor people who earned low income had to face many types of difficulties to run their daily life. The vulnerable groups of

people such as pregnant and lactating mothers, preschool children and infants had to face a dangerous situation and some of them have died due to lack of food and medical supplies. The consequence of war and conflict includes, reduced and erratic supply of food, nutritional supplements, drugs, vaccines and requirements for preventive health work (Sivarajah, 1993). The purpose of this article is to demonstrate the real situation of the people by placing some facts obtained through JSEHS 1999 with special reference to exodus 1995.

The political climate of a country is an important factor in the maintenance of health of the more vulnerable groups like the children. It affects the development of a child in all aspects including his or her food intake and health behavior. The children belonging to the North - Eastern province of Sri Lanka are severely affected due to these unfortunate socio - political turmoil since 1977, specifically after the 1983 civil war. They live in refugee camps and formed refugee cargo to safe places. The children's reactions to the events in this situation are acute as well as chronic in nature (Sivagnanasundram, 1992). Harmful health practices by mothers on the care of children have been reported due to the conflict and consequent food insecurity and food deprivation in addition to the lack of knowledge.

1. Interrelationship between Conflict and Hunger

It is relevant to discuss the interrelationship between Conflict and Hunger at this stage. We may approach this relationship by three norms which

are; *'Food shortage; Food poverty of Food Insecurity' and 'Food Deprivation or Nutritional Insecurity'*

Food Shortage:

The most obvious way armed conflict affects hunger is through the deliberate use of hunger as a weapon. Food shortages and famine deaths occur where adversaries starve opponents into submission. Acts of siege warfare include seizing or destroying food stocks, livestock and other assets in food producing areas; cutting off marketed supplies of food in these and other areas; and diverting food relief from intended beneficiaries to the military and their supporters. Farming populations are also reduced by direct attacks, terror, enslavement, or forced recruitment and by malnutrition, illness and death. As farming population flee, decline or stop farming out of fear, production falls, spreading food deficits over wider areas. Land mining and poisoning in water supply sources are additional hostile acts that turn temporary acute food shortage into longer term insufficiencies; these acts force people to leave and not return and thus interrupt food production and economic activities permanently. Conflict linked food shortages thus set the stage for year of food emergencies, even after fighting has officially ceased.

Transporting and guarding emergency food supplies in conflict situations also becomes a chief source of livelihood, vehicles, and arms for would - be combatants. A continuing challenge for donors is how to deliver food and other essential aid in ways that can relieve food shortages and renew productive capacities without

refreshing the fighters (Minear, 1997). Food shortages related to conflicts also can be characterized as entitlement failures where political powerlessness or economic destitution, usually both, prevent communities, households, or individuals from getting access to food even where it is available. After being stripped of essential assets including tools, livestock and jewelry, or parlaying them into food to meet immediate nutritional needs, people find themselves without further resources. Conflict related destitution thus created conditions of chronic food insecurity and shortage for households that otherwise may have been temporarily or seasonally short of food.

Food Insecurity:

Less dramatic but more pervasive is the chronic food insecurity created by conflict that usually lingers long after active fighting has ceased. Food insecurity or poverty – related hunger, follows from armed violence that disrupts markets and livelihoods and leaves households without sufficient resources to access food. Armed violence destroys assets of civilians and remove whole communities or selected households and individuals from customary sources of income. Where manufacturing and market areas are bombed, or transport disrupted, livelihoods are destroyed over wide areas. In addition, conflicts disrupt migratory labor and remittance patterns over broad regions.

Multiple year of warfare remove entire age cohorts from formal schooling and ordinary socialization and cause longer term multigenerational under-

employment and under developed peacetime work skills. Poverty related hunger is likely to persist well after the armed struggles have ceased in many countries because more than 20 years of armed violence has under prepared the younger generation for vocation other than fighting. After wars have destroyed natural and social resource bases, people must reform and rebuild communities, regain land titles, reconstruct water works, replant trees, and recruit seeds, animals, and tools to restore livelihoods. None of these are quick turnarounds, and all contribute to under production, poverty, malnutrition, and risk of renewed violence.

To overcome food insecurity and break cycles of conflict, donors such as CARE have focused on restoring livelihood security through programs that attempt to use food relief for development, and create new employment or entrepreneurial skills through training or micro credit programs. Food is not simply given away but serves as paymeny when people engaged in various rehabilitation and reconstruction activities (CARE – USA, 1995). Good harvests and the improved output of other small industrial products would reduce the food gap but may not create concomitant infrastructure or entitlements to reach all those who were malnourished and too poor to access the additional food.

Food Deprivation:

Individual food deprivation, or nutritional insecurity, refers to protein – energy or micro nutrient malnutrition, which may afflict individuals even in situations where communities and

households appear to be food secure. Women, children, the elderly, or socio-economically marginal members of households such as servants or those of other ethnicity may be deprived of adequate food or suffer malnutrition even where household food supplies are adequate or plentiful. In situations of active conflict, women and children or others who are left behind may have less access to food after men mobilize into armed forces or migrate in search of additional food or employment. They also face elevated risks of illness and malnutrition when health care services and social service institutions are destroyed.

Emergency food rations may be nutritionally unbalanced and insufficient to meet their micro nutrient and protein – energy needs. In the absence of additional markets and sources of food and income, their food, supplies, health, and care are jeopardized. Displaced and refugee populations are particularly vulnerable to nutritional deprivation, related respiratory and gastrointestinal disorders, and violence in the crowded and unhygienic conditions of emergency camps. Men with guns can out – compete civilians, the intended beneficiaries, for humanitarian food aid. Women everywhere are the special targets of violent physical and sexual abuse, and such terrifying experiences interfere with their postwar recovery and return to normal social and economic behavior.

Elevated levels of children's clinical malnutrition and malnutrition – related diseases and deaths persist in war zones even after conflicts have ceased because health services have been destroyed. In

addition, war torn countries are less able to plan and implement nutrition programs to overcome childhood malnutrition. Donors have tried to respond to the special needs of the food deprived by targeting food for refugee areas and by trying to address the special food, health, and psychological needs of women and children.

3. The Extent and Impact of Armed Conflict in Jaffna peninsula.

The contemporary world armed conflicts, mainly in the form of civil wars and their aftermath, put at least 80 million people at risk for hunger and malnutrition. Humanitarian assistance sources located some 30 million people in zones of active conflict, including those in eight developing countries where internal conflicts left more than 11 million people dependent on humanitarian assistance (Table 1). Many of these people are still suffering, to varying degrees, from malnutrition and loss of access to food, although not acute food shortages (famine), as a result of the conflicts (Messer, 1996)

Table 1: *Need for Humanitarian assistance in areas of active Conflict December, 1996.*

Country	Number of People
Afghanistan	2
Burundi	0.4
Iraq	4
Somalia	0.8
Sri Lanka	0.9
Sudan	2
Tajikistan	0.6
Zaire	0.5

Source: FAO 1996, US Mission to the United Nations.

Conflicts in the 1970s and 1980s were fueled in large part by cold war policies that encouraged spending on arms and food as a political tool. Even though Sri Lanka was not involved in the cold war politics, it has increased its military budget year by year from 1983 in order to handle the increasing strength of armed youth organizations. In 1989, hunger was being used as a weapon or existed as a consequence of earlier wars in 20 different areas of the world. This weapon has also been practiced in Sri Lanka since 1990, one year later than the other areas. Largely as a result of the winding down of the cold war after 1989 peace and progress toward free elections have been formally pursued in many countries except in Sri Lanka. In all these cases, however, hunger endures as a legacy that contributes lingering conflicts more positively, a return to food security has accompanied greater political stability in Uganda and Viet Nam. (Ellen Messer, et al, 1998)

These conflicts also underlie the increase in the number of people who cross international borders as refugees. In Sri Lanka, specifically in the years 1983, 1987, 1990 and 1995, the Tamils of Northern and Eastern provinces left to the neighboring country India and to some other Western countries. This resulted in the Indian intervention in Sri Lanka in 1987 (Dipender, 1990). The number of refugees in the world rose to 23 million in 1996 in which Sri Lankan refugees has been a considerable number. The Government of Sri Lanka did not conduct the 'Population Census' in 1991 due to the above, said conflicts and displacements and the refugees were also not in a position to incorporate the

population census because they were driven out from their home villages.

People in neighboring countries suffer losses in entitlements and access to food when fighting spills across borders. This disrupts regional commerce, or introduces refugee streams who must be fed. Sri Lankan refugees created these types of problems in South India. Refugees, everywhere in the world, create naturally, scarcities of water, fuel, and food for local populations. Their sales of cattle and valuables, and sometimes of labor distort regional and local exchange economics, again placing livelihood and subsistence at risk for residents. Additional economic disruptions accompany conflict related sanctions. The above said facts were expressed by many respondents during the 'Jaffna Socio - Economic Health Survey'. Regional conflicts distort most national economics in a region, whether or not their governments are directly involved in the fighting. Contributing to meeting the food needs of refugees places a particular burden of recipient communities where food security is already marginal.

Additional demands by newcomers for food, water, land, and fuel can reduce households that were only marginally food secure to acute food shortage. In bad years, when households are forced to sell assets or buy food, they often find markets disrupted, forage areas stripped, and buffers such as livestock reduced in value because refugees are also unloading their animals. During 'Exodus 1995', the people of Valikamam moved to Thenmaradchi (see the figure), two

major sectors of Jaffna peninsula, were seen selling their properties, animals etc, to fulfil their food requirements. Such conditions turned seasonal or chronic food insecurity into acute famine and cause deaths far from the fighting.

Siege is a war tactic used deliberately to destroy food supplies and productive capabilities and to bring besieged populations to submission. Recent siege tactics include prevention or diversion of food aid, economic sanctions, and donor policies that selectively withhold food aid and ban commerce. In this last case the goal is the removal of a leader or regime, not the submission of opposing population. Asset stripping that enriches and empowers aggressors over victims is another deliberate tactic with long term and devastating consequences (Keen, 1994). If a person who lived in Jaffna peninsula prior to the year 1987, visits now, he will see the ruins of damaged buildings, abandoned paddy fields, cash crop, vegetable gardens, etc. These are the symbols of war effects and consequences.

Deliberate destruction of health facilities, educational services, community leadership, and social structures are intended to deprive younger folk of customary socialization, access to food and medicine, cultural knowledge, and intergenerational nurturance. These tactics were used not only in Jaffna peninsula, but also in the entire North - Eastern province of Sri Lanka. Other losses are the inevitable or incidental outcomes of the ways wars are waged. Rural cropping patterns and units of food production inevitably change as national markets become inaccessible.

Rural food insecurity usually increases because local food production can not rise to a level sufficient to replace market food sources plus feed populations swollen by refugees from urban and other rural areas who also need to live off the land.

The food insecurity that accompanies market disruptions may be an incidental rather than a deliberate outcome of hostilities. Livelihood suffer inevitably where migratory labor unrelated to a particular conflict is cut off from reaching sources of employment and income. Crops inevitably suffer in war zones. Annual crops may not be sown, tended, or harvested, and longer - term agricultural investments may be lost, particularly where perennial crops are destroyed. But wage and trade losses usually far exceed those of agriculture as rural households are cut off from urban markets and networks that ordinarily provide them with diversified livelihoods and buffers against scarcity. Poorer households also suffer because conflict encourages a kind of predator merchant class that benefits from the suffering of most others.

The war in the peninsula (and indeed in the entire North - Eastern province) has been insidious. So had been the decline of the health services and the health of the people of Jaffna peninsula. The prolonged conflict has resulted in a serious dislocation of the health infrastructure that once, prior to 1977 general election and change of government, served this area. This war has resulted in damage, destruction and closure of provincial hospital in 1990 and then in 1995 and 1996 due to exodus

1995. It also resulted in damage destruction and lose of medical equipment, displacement and evacuation of medical practitioners, disruption of power supply and shortage of fuel and breakdown in training of paramedical and field health staff (Sivarajah, 1997). The conflict and war has a direct effect that was observed from the people resettled from Wannu region after the exodus.

Table 2: *The results of medical investigation from the sample of people resettled in Uraththi village, Vaddukoddai of Jaffna peninsula.*

Type of Morbidity	Percent of people affected
Malnutrition	66.0
Anaemia	55.5
Scabies	15.3
Avitaminosis	13.9
Malaria	9.7
Worm infestation	9.7

Source : Sivaraja, 1997

From the above table, we can observe that the percentage of people affected by malnutrition and anemia being 66 and 55 percents respectively. We are aware that these two morbidity are directly connected to food intake pattern of the people. More than one half of the resettlers in this village have been affected. The extent and impact of conflict on food insecurity and food deprivation could be imagined with this information. Apart from the above consequences, Sivarajah (1997) highlights the prevalence of Malaria by the resettling refugees from the Wannu region. He has also highlighted the war

injuries and mortality due to various types of conflicts and war.

4. Methodology and Data

Jaffna Socio – Economic Health Study 1999

A cross – sectional study named 'Jaffna Socio – Economic Health study 1999' (JSEHS 1999) was conducted by the author from 16th March 1999 till 14th June 1999. The study area, Valikamam sector, includes six administrative divisions, called Divisional Secretariat's (DS) divisions, of the Jaffna peninsula. These six DS divisions which experienced the major displacement 'Exodus 1995', was considered for the study. A two stage systematic – random sample of 1172 families was drawn from 34 Grama Servaga (GS) divisions which represent 34 villages of the study area. A G.S division is the smallest administrative division in Sri Lanka. Every administrative district is divided up into a number of DS divisions and they in turn are further divided into GS division.

The preliminary investigation and pilot study carried out in January 1999, prior to commence this survey revealed that a total of 256, 791 persons belonging to 73, 302 families were registered and living in the study area, which constitutes six DS divisions namely Jaffna City (JAFF), Nallur – City suburbs (NALL), Valikamam South West (VASW), Valikamam West (VAWE), Valikamam South (VASO), and Valikamam East (VAEA). The survey information on these six DS divisions, i.e six zones, are given in the following table (Table 3)

Table 3: Details of Population, Sample and Period of Jaffna Socio – Economic Health Study 1999.

Zone Code	Population (No. of Familles)	Second Stage Sample (No. of Familles)	Period of Survey (Dates 1999)	Not-Responded (No. of Familles)
JAFF	12,303	173	16/05 to 09/06	6
NALL	16,102	238	13/05 to 14/06	14
VASW	10,691	164	16/03 to 01/06	7
VAWE	9,131	172	18/03 to 12/05	4
VASO	9,859	193	24/03 to 09/05	8
VAEA	15,216	232	24/03 to 13/05	10
Total	73,302	1,172		49

Teams of data collectors headed by the author (as researcher) conducted the data collection process. Direct and Indirect investigation methods were adopted to gather information and statistics from the families sampled. A fifteen page questionnaire, having different headings on Social, Economic, and Health concepts, was used in this survey. The data collectors recorded the information from the respondents of the families while the author conducted the direct oral investigation with the respondents. The response rate of the survey was 95.82% according to the information given in the above table. The collected data is, hereafter, referred to as 'JAFFNA DATA'. The information used (from this survey) for the purpose of this article is associated with the issue of 'Nivaranam' which is the assistance given by the Government of Sri Lanka to the displaced, affected and economically backward families.

The 'Nivaranam' is defined as an indirect payment or subsidy by the Government to its Village food supplier, called Multi – purpose Co – Operative Society (MPCS), for the purchase of

essential food items by the family. The amount of payment is decided depending on the size of the family (Table 4). This scheme was introduced by the Government in 1990 with various forms and criteria depending on the nature of war. The scheme introduced and implemented by the UNP government prior to 1994 has been replaced by the PA government after 1995 in different forms. Due to the large scale conflicts from June 1990, many people have lost their shelter, paddy fields, vegetable and Jaffna lagoon. Hence, the government was forced to introduce such a rehabilitation program.

Table 4: Assistance on food subsidy (Nivaranam) given to Jaffna families.

Size of Family (No. of Members)	Monthly Payment To MPCS (Rs)
One	336
Two	616
Three	840
Four	1008
Five or More	1260

Source: Secretariat records, Jaffna District, Jaffna (Unpublished)

The family in a household is characterized as having three sub families which are nuclear, extended and depending families. The information on Nivaranam has been collected to these three sections of Family. The issue on Nivaranam is considered to the Sub - Families separately depending on the occupation and income of the members in those sub-families. The author examined the food ration cards of the families which are issued by GS divisional officers. The Sri Lankan government had also offered Rs 5,000 (Sri Lankan rupees) as resettlement fund and Rs 25,000 as rehabilitation fund to rebuild the small houses damaged during the battles. Each family received either Rs 5,000 or both Rs 5,000 and Rs 25,000 or none of them. The JAFFNA DATA contains these information and the Nivaranam data is subjects' to investigation in this paper.

The important occupations affected or paralyzed are Farming, Small industries, and Fishing, In the later part of 1998, the Government announced that the Nivaranam would be withdrawn or limited from January 1999, but changed its decision later due to the protest and agitation by the public. However, there is an indication of doing so in the future.

5 Conclusions and Remarks

The above survey reveals that 'Food

Table 5: The frequency distributions of Nivaranam for all the six zones studied.

Nivaranam (Rs.)	Number of Families (Zones)					
	JAFF	NALL	VASW	VAWE	VASO	VAEA
0	93	118	26	48	57	76
840	8	12	9	12	13	16
1008	13	28	30	24	39	26
1260	53	66	92	84	78	104
Total Responded	167	224	157	168	187	222
Percentage Depended	44.31	47.32	83.44	71.43	69.52	65.76

insecurity' or 'Hunger' is a threatening issue at present for the backward segment of the society. The free food supply scheme mentioned above is given only to the families which do not have a member with occupations in Government or Semi - Governmental sectors. The minor staff employed in the Government sector and semi-Governmental sectors were denied this Nivaranam even though their economic status are similar to the other poor families, while many small scale businessmen get this Nivaranam because they are not registered occupation holders. Hence, the food security is unbalanced.

The devastating aspect is most of the people have lost their occupations due to this armed conflict and living mainly with the aid of this Nivaranam. This scheme is the only immediate rehabilitation given by the Government to the public. It is confirmed from this survey that the withdrawal or limitation of Nivaranam will cause severe effect to most of the families and they will fall in to 'Hunger' and Famine'. The information (collected from the survey about receiving Nivaranam by the nuclear family of the sampled household, in which the chief occupant belongs to, is summarized across DS division in the following table. (Table 5)

The above table reveals that higher percentage of families are depended on Nivaramam. The Nivaramam given as 0 in the table indicates that the number of families related to it are not eligible and hence not given Nivaramam. Other values, 840, 1008 and 1260 indicate that the number of families related to them are eligible and received Nivaramam. This is because none of the members in these families possess government and semi-governmental occupations and at the same time they have lost their traditional occupations or occasional occupations due to the conflict and war. It is clear from the last row of the above table that the last four rural zones (VASW, VAWE, VASO and VAEA) have higher percentage of families who received Nivaramam.

The first two zones (JAFF and NALL) are urban and urban suburb zones respectively and most of the families living in these zones have at least one member with occupations in government or semi-governmental sectors. Most of the large scale businessmen also living in these zones and they are not eligible to receive Nivaramam. This is why the percentage of families depended on Nivaramam in these zones are about 45 to 50 percent. These are also significant percentages to be discussed. It clearly shows that Nivaramam is the important factor which safeguards the food insecurity and food deprivation to the people of this region at least temporarily.

Everyone responded in the survey expressed their view that this Nivaramam is not adequate to eradicate their hunger and famine. Some of them said it did not rehabilitate them but discouraged the

intention of resettling to their home villages and restart their economic activities. The medical practitioners and community health experts in the region say that the food items issued in MPCs though Nivaramam are not nutritional supplement to the people, but only helped to reduce the degree of hunger and famine. I observed and heard from some of the families that they sell the dried milk products issued to them because of the poverty and they need money to buy medicines which are not given in the government hospitals.

The prolonged conflict situation has paved the way to the people to undergo permanent chronic malnutrition and hence the future of the children of poor Tamil is questionable. More micro analytic results are expected on the analysis of JAFFNA DATA later.

Specific Experiences observed in the Study.

The specific observations that could be highlighted from this survey are as follows;

- (1) More than 75% of the farming population of the Valikamam area have either fled the peninsula and got shelter in Wannai area, which is another part of North-Eastern province in the mainland, or displaced and living in non-farming area without any farming work or resettled and living in the native villages, but unable to do farming. The reason for farming people not returning to the peninsula from Wannai area is not merely for political reasons but because they are economically deprived from their land, resources, properties, etc.

- (2) More than 75% of the people who had engaged on livestock production prior to exodus have given up their production after resettlement. When they left their houses during exodus many of them had to leave their poultry and cattle farm without any arrangement of feeding them. It is only after six months they returned to their homes and found nothing remains in the farm sheds. About 25% are now taking measures to restart the livestock production. But 50% are not in position to do so, they say, they are fear of renewed conflicts in the future.
- (3) The families who don't have at least one occupation in the government of semi - governmental sectors are receiving Nivaranam. About 50% of such families do not have any other source of income and incapable to do their traditional occupations as they are economically deprived and their health is affected not only physically but also mentally. Among them about 20% are living under poverty and the withdrawal of Nivaranam will cause nothing but hunger and famine to the entire family.
- (4) More than 50% of the labor force migrated to the places where no farming or manufacturing or small industrial production are held. Most of them have changed their traditional occupations which provided them more income. Most of them are also now dependents on Nivaranam. An adverse effect of Nivaranam to the people here is that, an adult who is capable to do labor work has now changed his mind and going for labor work for maximum of ten to fifteen days in a month to cover his balance cost of living.
- (5) Fishermen are prevented to go to the deep sea as frequent conflicts are also reported in the sea. About 50% of the fishermen did fishing prior to exodus have changed their occupation after exodus. The one half of the rest are continuing fishing daily but they are allowed to go the sea within five kilo meters from the land. The time of fishing is also limited by the security forces. The remaining half of them are engaged only on occasional fishing or in the inner lagoons of the peninsula. The sea food, most of the Jaffna people eat as protein intake, has come insecure during the conflict period throughout.
- (6) Many people have failed to saw or harvest of their annual and seasonal crops from 1990 till exodus. They also did nothing during and after exodus. Hence their long term agricultural investment and profit were lost.
- (7) More than 50% of toddy tappers have given up their tapping work, since the local liquor shop and other toddy distribution centers donot accept more toddy from them. Unless they tap more toddy and supply to the markets, their income will be inadequate. This situation is due to the unlimited supply of imported liquor from Colombo into the peninsula after exodus.
- (8) The structure of entire cohort of children below 18 years old has changed after exodus. Many children who left peninsula with their families

into Wannai area and India, have lost their education. Many of them have returned to the peninsula but some of them are reluctant to continue their studies and left uneducated and unemployed.

- (9) Even though the Government of Sri Lanka is trying to do rehabilitative work with the unsettled political turmoil, people are less attractive or contributive to those programs due to the fear of fresh clashes and conflicts.
- (10) 'Health for all by the year 2000.. (HFA/2000), though primary health care (PHC) approach adopted by world Health Organization (WHO) at its Alma Ata charter in 1978 will not be achieved in the Jaffna peninsula in the year 2000, the beginning of a new millennium. (Elankumaran, 1999a)

6. Recommendations

Even though we feel that the entire problem will be settled or solved only after a permanent negotiated political settlement, at least for the temporary solution, I propose the following for the purpose of reducing food insecurity or food poverty in the Jaffna peninsula.

- a) International agencies, NGO coalitions and donors in partnership with communities and independently with the contending parties on armed conflict, should organize early warning systems that incorporate socio-political, and socio-economic factors that also underlie food crises.
- b) District administrators and Divisional secretariat officials should incorporate conflict prevention in to policies,

programs, and project planning, implementation, and evaluation. Zones of high conflict potential should receive high priority for peace sensitive social and economic assistance.

- c) The necessity for structural change is impressed with the prerequisites; Equally accessible health services, Preventive rather than curative emphasis, Adopting appropriate technology, Active participation by the community, Purified water supply, Nutritional food supply to the vulnerable groups, Education to all children, and Abolition of child labor force (Elankumaran 1999b)
- d) Where possible, programs should be structured so that they create openings for active participation by men and women from affected zones to participate in reporting, surveillance project planning, implementation, an evaluation.
- e) During active conflict situations, emergency aid should incorporate conflict mitigation that should be delivered in ways that demand accountability of those delivering assistance in active combat situations.
- f) During post conflict situations at local, divisional, district, and provincial levels, efforts should be made to work closely with emerging communities, especially in identification for rehabilitation of agricultural production.
- g) As a whole, to rehabilitate the people or to achieve the above said remedies it is essential to find a peaceful negotiated political settlement immediately either direct or by the

involvement of third party to eliminate and deprive the ethnic crisis.

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