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FINDING A PLACE FOR RESIDENCE; IDPS REMAINING WITH HOST COMMUNITIES: A CASE OF SRI LANKA

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Abstract. Sri Lanka's civil conflict that affected for more than three decades came to end in May 2009 with the LTTE being militarily defeated by the armed forces of Sri Lanka. There are many missed issues that need to be addressed in the present context of Sri Lanka, especially in terms of return and resettlement process. The study focuses on the process of resettlement in North-Central areas in Sri Lanka in post conflict period. The study set out to investigate the varied factors that affected Internal Displaced Persons' (IDPs') willingness to remain with host communities. The aim was to understand factors that attracted the IDPs to remain in the host communities and places. Within this context, the study examines the nature of IDPs' socio-economic and political relationships with the host communities. This study establishes how these social, economic and security factors affected the IDPs to remain in host community/area. Out of various relevant factors, this study has especially considered socio-economic factors. The study finds that there is degree bond which acts as pull factor for the IDPs to be more willing to stay in the host area. There is no single reason affecting the IDPs' decision to return or remain but rather it is a combination of several key factors. The research for this study is based on qualitative methods, and data for the research have been collected using primary as well as secondary sources of data. There are two villages selected (82 IDP families and 124 host families) for the study with host communities among the other villages in the area. The qualitative data were collected in this study through interviews, including long interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. 20 IDP families and 15 host families for long interviews, 8 focus group discussion with IDPs and host families along with 4 key informant interviews. Secondary sources have been used to help interpret the primary data.

INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka's civil war that affected for more than three decades came to end in May 2009 with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) being militarily defeated by the armed forces of Sri Lanka. There are many missed issues that need to be addressed in the present context of Sri Lanka, especially in terms of return and resettlement process. Violence associated with the conflict has led to profound and rapid social changes in people's lives. Displacement of people and the resulting loss of livelihoods are some of the major socio-economic and human costs of the war (Balakrishnan, 2000; Goodhand, Hulme & Lewer, 2000; Sanmugaratnam, 2000; Brun, 2003; Losnaes, 2005). By the end of 2009, there were more than one million people living as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka, while the same number of people was living as refugees and asylum seekers abroad. Many IDPs have experienced being displaced and resettled or repatriated, and displaced again several times (IDP Global Survey 2012, IDMC (2012)). In order to respond to these challenges, the international community and Sri Lankan government formulated strategies to provide comprehensive and

coherent responses to the many problems faced by IDPs (GOSL, 2012) particularly, through providing facilities to resettle people for their return and resettlement to original areas. Although large number of IDPs' was returned to their original areas, another considerable number of IDPs remained with the host communities where they settled after being displaced during the conflict period.

Objective of the Study

The current study focuses on the process of resettlement in North-Central areas in Sri Lanka in post conflict period. The study set out to investigate the varied factors that affected Internal Displaced Persons' (IDPs') willingness to remain with host communities. The aim was to understand factors that attracted the IDPs to remain in the host communities and places. Within this context, the study examines the nature of IDPs' socio-economic and political relationships with the host communities. The study explores how IDPs built their social relationships, economic relationships and livelihoods, and their security among the hosts.

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This study establishes how these social, economic and security factors affected the IDPs to remain in host community/area. Out of various relevant factors, this study has especially considered; why the IDPs still remain in host area/ community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internal Displacement and Resettlement Process

Theories and concepts originally established in order to be applied to refugee situations can often be used also for situations of internal displacement. Many studies have been conducted on refugees' settlement, refugee assimilation, integration, repatriation, reintegration and resettlements. Most of the international organizations and policy makers have emphasized refugee rights protection and assistance and they have proposed some solutions for the refugee and displacements problems as a "Durable Solution". They were called: voluntary repatriation, resettlement in a third country, and local settlement which was also termed as local integration in the country of first asylum. These durable solutions have been developed and promoted by the UNHCR and other policy makers. Anyway, recent studies and policy makers place greater emphasis on seeking a better solution for the refugee problem and there is a big debate regarding these solutions (Jacobson, 2001; Brun, 2003).

The durable solutions were built up for refugees, but they may also be applied in a concept of internal displacement (Bascom, 2005; Brun, 2003). (The Guiding Principles on internal displacement state that return to their homes, integration where they currently reside, or resettlement in another part of the country are the main solutions to the IDP problems). When discussing IDPs, the most accepted solution to the IDP problem is repatriation or return, since most crises of displacement, even protected ones, are regarded as temporary (Jacobsen, 2001; Duncan, 2005). In many cases, such return can occur only when the causes of the displacement have been resolved. However, because of limited situations of safe return, repatriation or return is a poor alternative in many of the protracted conflict situations, which have ended in internal displacement. In fact, the emphasis on repatriation or return as the preferred solution may create false expectations.

Hence, it should be better understood how they have been already prepared for their settlement in their displacement areas or host areas. According to many researches and institutions, there are different types of settlement patterns that can be identified among IDPs, such as self-settlement, assisted settlements, camps or organized welfare centers, local settlement or relocation, etc. (Jacobsen, 2001). As a consequence of these different types of settlements and situations, people raise dissimilar ideas about their situation of living standards, their willingness to return or stay further in a host area or motivation to settle in a new place. The causal relations for the situation would be the IDPs' more attraction or pull towards the host area/community due to their settlement pattern among the host area. For instance, many

scholars have shown that the self-settled IDPs are more attracted to host community/area than camp refugees because of their networks, livelihood situation and security situation which they have built in the host area (Jacobsen, 2001; Hovil, 2007).

Factors Affecting IDPs' Attraction to the Host Community

Although many studies and researches have been conducted regarding the relationships between refugees and the host communities (Chambers, 1986; Kok, 1989; Voutira & Harrel-Bond, 1995; Whitaker, 2002; Duncan, 2005), rather than on IDPs and host communities, the models of analyses in those studies can be used for studying relationships between IDPs and the host communities. General migration theories and refugee studies focus almost exclusively on the push side on the field and tend to disregard or give little attention to the other aspect, which comprises of pull factors (Assal, 2007). Due to the predominance of the categories of the refugees and other displaced persons from 2005, attention has been focused largely on the question of why people are forced to move to a place, rather than examining why they stay further in the host area and are attracted to stay there (Assal, 2007). In this research I use pull factors as attraction to the host community/area and push factors considered as obstacles to return and settle in the original area.

Push and Pull Factors in Displacement, Return and Resettlement

The push and pull perspective has played an important role in research related to labor migration, and up to some extent about refugee and displacement movements (Sorensen, 1996). It differs from the other factors discussed by focusing on the structural causes of movement rather than on the impacts of displacement and resettlement. It highlights the motivations and expectations of migrants or displaced persons. As this research focuses on the factors affecting willingness to stay further in the host area and unwillingness to return to their original villages, the push and pull perspective is relevant to its analysis.

In the last century, a large number of people moved from rural to urban areas. The push and pull model aims to identify those socio-economic and political factors which force people to leave their hometowns, on one hand, and the factors that attract people to the new locations, on the other. Push-pull factors suggest that circumstances at the original place of residence push people out to other places that exert a positive attraction or pull. This model can be approached from two different angles. First, it concentrates on the institutional factors in the socio-economic and political context in which the specific conditions of different areas or regions are shaped. Second, from the perspective of individual migrants, it focuses on the decision-making process in which the different push and pull factors are assessed and acted upon (Assal, 2007).

When it comes to trying to specify the particular reasons for flight, particularly in the context of war-induced or forced

displacement, the pressures mainly include discrimination, violence, real or feared discrimination and experiences of suffering. For many people the decision to start in a new area is not a result of growing local pressures and fear alone. However, it should also be seen as a response to the attractions and promises that the place of destination presents. Among the most regular or common pull factors mentioned in the literature is demand for labor, availability of land and good economic opportunities. For refugees or IDPs, the hope of getting asylum and being able to live a peaceful life are common factors pulling them across borders.

According to some scholars, push and pull perspective or framework was being combined with sociological and anthropological approaches that gave more emphasis to the integration processes and to the role of social networks based on kinship relationships or other links with people (Van Hear, 1994; Assal, 2007). However, later many scholars used it to identify the transnational networks among migrant refugees through the

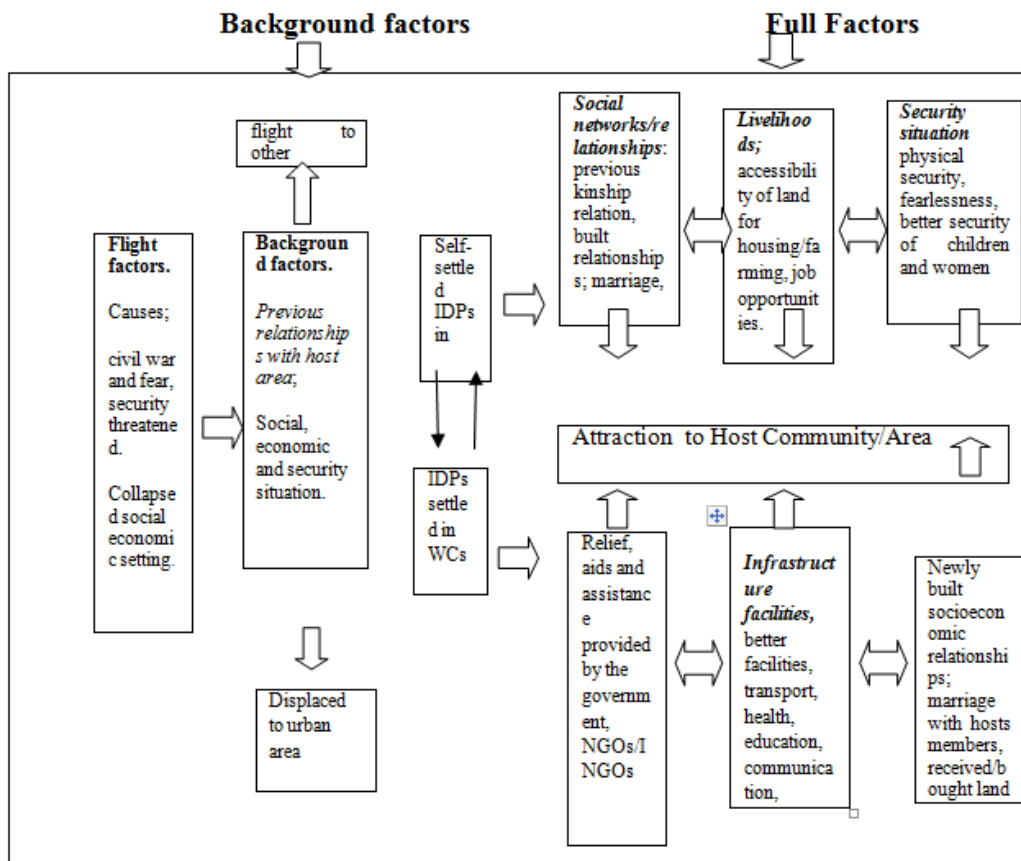
relationships with relatives and friends (Van Hear, 2003; Assal, 2007).

This model draws our attention to the importance of considering the motivation and expectations of migrants, which are closely linked to the experiences and reactions of people displaced or to be displaced in their movement. This framework can be used in analyzing resettlement issues as it emphasizes the linkages that exist between the IDPs' original areas and the host area (destination), but this dimension, which is very important, has been neglected by researchers (Sorensen, 1998). Particularly in the issue of war-induced displacement, mainly in the internal displacement context, push factor can be approached from two different ways. This research, concentrates on the push or dislocation of people from the original areas since fear or intimidation has been created by the conflict. The pull approach is used in this study for identifying the factors which basically affected IDPs' attraction towards the host community/area.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

FIGURE 1

Conceptual Model



The figure summarizes the factors affecting IDPs to remain in host community/area. First, it shows the factors which spur flight

and displacement as background factors. Second, it shows the factors that attract IDPs to the host community/area (pull factors).

In the whole process of return and resettlement contexts will be considered: the situation in the host area. They comprise mainly of factors that IDPs are attracted or integrated to the host community.

As noted earlier, three main sets of factors have been considered in this research: social relationships between IDPs and hosts in the host area; economic relationships comprising livelihood and livelihood strategies in the host area; and the life security or safety within the host area.

Issues of social relationships included kinship relations, marriage ties, caste, and ethnic and friendship relations. The study discovered the degree of the bond of relationship which acted as the pull factor for the IDPs to be more willing to stay on in the host area.

The study discovered that economic factors were important and influential factors for the IDPs to determine the place of residence. The economic factors included access to land for cultivation and residential purposes, opportunities to continue former occupations, availability of infrastructural facilities, farming and trading, and financial aid and relief. The study found that the availability of these factors in the host area acted as a key pull factor or attraction to the host community/areas.

This study also exposes life (in) security to be another factor that strongly attracted the IDPs to the host areas. The IDPs had to flee to their original villages when their security was threatened. The IDPs realized that they were safer in the host area and thus preferred to stay there. Although security is an extremely wide concept, in this study the term security situation particularly concerns security of life and from armed attacks. The people were displaced from their original areas primarily because their lives were under threat in their original villages. Verbal threats, warnings, harassments, land mines, and air attacks created a sense of uncertainty and risk, and they felt the need to leave the area. The study found that the IDPs had realized they were safer in the host area than in their original area.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research for this study is based on qualitative methods, and data for the research have been collected using primary as well as secondary sources of data. Although some qualitative methods can be quite positivist, here the qualitative methods were used explicitly to recognize subjectivity through their reliance on people's voices collected through interviews, life histories, focus group discussions, and observations. The qualitative data were collected in this study through interviews, including long interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group interviews. These particular methods (of interviews, focus group discussions and ethnographic observations) were selected as being consistent with the overall interpretative (rather than positivist) methodology of this research. The aim was to understand the people's thoughts subjectively. Secondary sources have been used to help interpret the primary data. For secondary data the study has used published

materials such as books, book chapters, research papers, journal articles, research reports, newspaper articles, and internet resources. All the data offer avenues towards uncovering and understanding the multiple interpretations and meanings of IDPs in border villages of Anuradhapura district.

The main research technique used for the study was long interviews with displaced people, resettled people, and host community people. As this is one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory, the aim was to obtain and understand of the IDPs and the content and pattern of their daily experience deeply. The interviewees were selected by using a combination of snowball, stratified and random sampling. The rationale was to obtain a wide range of positions and to gain variation on issues such as age, class, occupation, education and time duration of displacement. 20 IDP families and 15 host families for long interviews, 8 focus group discussion with IDPs and host families and 4 key informant interviews were conducted. Secondary sources have been used to help interpret the primary data.

Long interviews were conducted using an interview guide. These guides were prepared by using secondary literature and informal interviews, pilot interviews in the first round using snowball technique and using other sources of field data. In addition to long interviews this study used focus group discussions. In this research, a series of focus group discussions were used to identify why some IDPs were more willing to stay in host area/villages and what the factors affecting their decisions were. Eight focus group interviews were conducted for this study.

The study areas were selected within the districts of Anuradhapura. Two village locations were selected as host areas for examination. These two villages were selected as a threatened region. Two village locations were selected as host areas for examination. Some of the village names have been changed to protect the confidentiality and privacy of respondents and their villages. Gallengoda and Grevelpitiya represent Sinhalese IDP settlements in Madawachchiya and Padaviya as host areas within the Anuradhapura district.

DATA ANALYSIS

Social Relationships between IDPs and Hosts

In general, the relationship between the refugees and their hosts is affected by a variety of factors such as social and economic impact and security problems and other important ones (Brun 2001). The socio-economic settings and relationships between IDPs and hosts change the stereotype of the category of IDPs (Duncan, 2005). In the case of Northern Muslim IDPs settled in Puttalam in Sri Lanka, the host people had played a significant role during the first stage of the reception because they were of the same ethnic background, and were relatives and friends. But later the hosts were more or less forgotten by the aid agencies as important actors in the processes of displacement and integration. This has pushed the hosts to a state of dissatisfaction (Brun, 2001).

However, the social relationship between IDPs and the host people changed from time to time in accordance with the background situations which remained in the host area. On the other hand, some IDPs and hosts would have a positive relationship, while some others created a negative or neutral one. This section shows both the positive and negative relationships among IDPs and hosts in Madawachchiya, Padaviya host areas. However, this part examines the relationships between IDPs and the host community, how they will impact the IDPs' decision to stay further in the host area or continue their life in the host community without returning and the consequences of the decision to stay or leave.

Role of Kinship Relations

According to some experiences in the context of displacement and settlements process, social relations with kith and kin and friends have played a vital role in providing protection in the process of displacement and settlement (Evans, 2007). There are various forms of networks formed among relatives for material and emotional support during both displacement and settlement. The decisions to move to a certain destination or to stay further are affected by the presence of relatives or friends. There were also many examples in the case of Sri Lanka.

In the case of Sri Lanka, Sinhalese people from traditional rural villages (threatened villages) in Vavuniya-South became IDPs in similar villages in Madawachchiya area. Former kinship relations created a favorable situation for them as they were welcomed as 'their people' by the host community. According to their relationships, the more important background factor was their former relationships such as caste and kinship relations.

Those who lived in Varikuttuoruwa were our own people. When the LTTE started creating problems to them they could not stay there any longer. Some of them came to our village. They are our relatives and our caste members. So we allowed them to settle down here. Life is valuable regardless of to whom it belongs. We did not have any difference with them (Int16/MS/H/GMW).

Displaced people from many traditional villages had relationships with other villagers in safer areas. The point of view of some host community member was that they were not against the arrival and the staying of IDPs with them as a result of the former cordial relationships among the two groups of people. Particularly the willingness of the key groups of people in the host community was a very important factor for accessing the host community to stay over a long period. The relationship of the host community was very important to the IDPs, particularly to select the destination after their displacement (Assal, 2007). Preexisting relationships between the host community and IDPs, such as caste, kinship and marriages and friendships provided to build a bond between the two groups of people which was stronger than before.

This point was echoed by a number of IDP informants as well. I selected one example from the self-settled rural area.

We have had a blood relationship with the people from this area for a very long time. But we couldn't continue that relationship closely throughout the period because of many reasons. But we kept on feeling that they were "our people". At last we met again. We could save our lives because we had a place to go. Otherwise, we could have remained in a refugee camp and survived on food offered by the others. Thanks to our relatives, today we need not depend on others for our food and other needs. They (relatives) helped us a lot (Int1/MS/ID/GMW).

What IDPs indicate as "our people" means people of the same caste and same kinship group. Relatives' support has been crucial to many IDPs staying in the host area. Providing accommodation, particularly during a desperate situation, is a more important factor than reaching an unknown destination. Reasons directly concerning livelihoods were cited least; at displacement, the most immediate needs of IDPs were safety, shelter and food. These were fulfilled by flight to the homes of relatives, while earning their own living was of a lesser concern (Evans, 2007). Many self-settled IDPs in Madawachchiya rural and traditional villages have taken their relatives' support to find a place to settle down with safeguards. There were also some cases where the IDPs had self-settled through using other social relationships with the host community or an area, such as friendship and help of other relations. But in the urban part of the area IDPs have used their other relationships and ability to settle down in the area. Some persons (with their families) had used former economic relations with people in the host area, to come and settle there while a few other families had taken their own decision to settle down in the area after buying lands from the host area.

Creating New Social Relationships

However, regardless of the nature of the environment that prevailed during the early stages, due to the long period of living in the host area, it had been possible for IDPs to build up various new social relationships with the hosts. During the prolonged stay with the host community, IDPs had created new kinships and other social relationships.

Although the support of relatives was a crucial factor for IDPs to find a place to self-settle, to continue their relationship with newly created relationships became equally or some times more important for continuing to live in the area.

My elder daughter is to be married to a rich family in this area" (Int1/MS/ID/GMW). "Both my brother and sister are married here (in this village). Even earlier they were our relatives" (Int9/MS/ID/GMW). "In our home area we had a close relationship with our Tamil friends. Now here we have Sinhalese friends (Int77/MT/ID/SW).

Newly built relationships between host and IDPs were an important factor for IDPs to be attracted to the host area. Protracted situations often provide the basic environment to create these types of relationships within the host community. According to some scholars, shared identity such as cultural,

linguistic and ethnic or kinship affinity are other main factors affecting relations among refugees or migrants and host communities (Bascom 1998; Jacobson 2001). Self-settled IDPs in Madawachchiya used their former background of kinship and caste relationships to build new relationships. Many IDPs show that they have been engaged in new networks within the host community and the area through friendship as well as marriage. Marriage ties are important to build new kinship relations and often it decides their further residence in a place. Particularly, these types of new social relationships were more important to WC IDPs for living in the host area. It was a cause for WC IDPs to create new bonds with the host communities.

From the above discussion, there appear two interrelated understandings of the background setting for the attraction of IDPs into the host community/area that clearly affect long-term displacement and settlements. It is clear that they are related to the category of self-settled IDPs and their relation with the host community; reception and providing assistance with accessing land and giving material and emotional support by the host community.

Livelihoods and Coping Strategies

Concerning the attraction or pull factor to the host community/area social relationships such as kinship and family relationship were more important at the beginning or the initial stage of access to the village and to settle down there. Besides these social relationships, economic relationships with livelihoods and coping strategies of IDPs among hosts are also important factors for attracting IDPs to the host area/community. Many IDPs self-settled in villages in Madawachchiya area, after their arrival and settlement in separate lands in the host area and through building their own houses tried to establish and improve their living conditions gradually. For the creation of this situation, many of them referred to their coping strategy to create their own status and the building of economic relationships with the host community and with the host area through using other sources. According to some researchers, many self-settled people in the border areas, developed their own coping mechanisms, and became partly self-sufficient, but to varying degrees (Van Damme, 1999). However, it depends on the degree of close relationships and integration with the host population.

Accessibility of Land and Former Occupation

Economic hardship among IDPs is a related concern. Loss of access to agricultural land is a recurrent factor undermining the livelihoods of displaced people. In rural reception areas, this is sometimes mitigated by the capacity of local social and economic structures to provide alternative access to land or other productive resources (Black & Sessay, 1997; Leach, 1992).

Analyzing livelihood activities in detail, access to productive land is of great importance to the livelihoods of IDPs (Porter et al., 2008). In the case of self-settled IDPs, although there were some

inconsistencies between some IDPs and some of the host community people, many of them had background kin relationships for providing moral support and some assistance to settle down in the villages. This support did not last and hence IDPs had to find other sources of livelihood by themselves. In addition to background kin support, other key economic factors supported them to self-settle in the new area. One thing is the accessibility of arable land. According to Jacobson (2001) "the availability of arable land increases refugees' economic productivity". As I mentioned earlier, although there were some difficulties when some of them were getting land, many of the IDPs from Vavuniya arrived and self-settled in Madawachchiya rural areas as they had access to land for building their own houses and some extent of high land for cultivation of crops. But later discontent emerged between IDPs and the host because of land problems, particularly as IDPs were going to stay permanently in hosts' land and started cultivation. This is because, land is a limited property.

Finding New Occupations and Depending on Aid and Assistance

IDPs who self-settled and WCs were used to develop their livelihood or depended on finding new occupations and receiving aid and assistance from the institution of the government, NGOs or INGOS. It was one of the reasons for their attraction or pull as IDPs into the host area/community.

A considerable number of self-settled IDPs had found new jobs instead of sticking to their former occupations. The majority of the IDPs were farmers and most of them were experienced market-oriented producers. In addition to cultivating rice, they used to grow vegetables. There were a very few individuals who were small-scale traders in the village, such as being an owner of a boutique or contractor, and some worked as carpenters, fishermen and government servants. However, almost everyone in the area used to work as a farmer to cultivate paddy and other crops; hence farming was the main livelihood system in these rural areas and so arable land was a very important factor of their coping strategy. Even if they could not get land comparable to what they had in their native areas, some of the IDPs had developed and received or bought sufficient plots of land for cultivation while others were continuing their former occupations while some others had started on new jobs such as being carpenters, fishermen and small traders in the host area for earning their livelihood. Some IDPs took part in jobs on a temporary basis in the informal sector such as buying and selling vegetables and other provisions, either because it was more profitable or simply because no other work was available. At the beginning, most of the IDPs, however, had to begin their lives in the host area by working as casual farm laborers, and wage employment still remains to be the major source of cash income for the majority of the displaced families. The women were

prepared to work as casual laborers as well. Very few people have found some unskilled jobs in Madawachchiya town.

Under these circumstances, IDPs could not engage in their former occupations and had found some other related jobs within the host area. Many IDPs expressed their idea that occupations and livelihoods in the host area were better than living in WCs, particularly depending on food rations.

However, for some IDPs who had the potential to continue their former occupation or find new jobs in displaced area it was more important to settle as self-settled families and finding employment that would help them to continue their livelihoods without difficulties. Self-settled IDPs who came from Vavuniya to Madawachchiya area on their own managed to find new occupations or continue their former occupations with the introduction of their techniques and adding new technology particularly for highland cultivation, and they were able to change the former situation of the villages.

Creating a New Socio-Economic Setting

According to other sources presented by the Divisional Secretariat Divisions in Madawachchiya, when rural villages in Madawachchiya division are compared with the other urban and rural areas in the country, it can be recognized as an area with few facilities (DS Division Data 2005). And even examined from the viewpoint of job opportunities, there were relatively low employment opportunities in the area. However, the majority of displaced persons were farmers, and the existence of space to engage in agriculture, had made the displaced persons to develop a view that there could be working opportunities. However, after considering all the relevant details, it can be concluded that these areas offered few employment opportunities and few working opportunities.

However, according to many self-settled IDPs, instead of thinking about former good life and then feeling frustrated, they thought that they should start a new life with their self-effort and with whatever assistance they received after reaching the host area. Hence, many people tried to build their new life while facing new challenges. The main challenge was to find land to continue their former occupations. Since the majority of the people were depending on agricultural farming as their livelihood, they had to convert their skills in farming in a proper way to operate their highland crop they had received with experience from the original areas.

Many people who were self-settled IDPs indicated a deep interest to work hard and also they had developed some skills to successfully cultivate highland crops in their former village through experience of working with Tamil people in the border areas. One farmer said:

When we came here in 1987, relatively poor conditions were prevailing here. Now this is a prosperous area, but those days this was a poor-looking area (Int6/MS/ID/GMW).

From the IDPs' point of view, in 1986/87, when the Vavuniya southern people arrived at host villages in Madawachchiya Division, the economic situation of the village was poor. The majority of rural people in these particular villages were considered as backward both economically and educationally. It was merely because the villagers had no interest to improve their own economic conditions or to put up a good dwelling for their living. After earning some money from doing labor work, they would stay at home till the earnings were over, and would go for work again, and there were no savings at all. They would go to the road or a boutique and waste their time. They had no entrepreneurship skills at all. If there was sufficient rain they would cultivate a paddy field. They mostly engaged in chena cultivation. But often chena cultivation ended with losses. Under such conditions the economic conditions within the village were at the lowest level. No one was interested in planting a coconut or an arecanut seedling. Their lands remained as neglected, unused wastelands.

But the points of view of host community members show a different picture regarding the reasons for their economic deprivation or poor living conditions in the villages and other negative situations the people in villages faced in reality. They mentioned that natural disasters such as droughts and damage from wild animals were the main reasons for the poor situation of their living conditions. Nevertheless, those factors are very common in many rural areas in the district. There are many reasons for some villages being rich and prosperous while some being poor. Generally, progressive living depends on the availability of resources in the village. Particularly in a village in the dry zone, a tank or an irrigation water system and fertility of land in the village are very important for achieving a good level of living by the people of a traditional agricultural village.

However, this is depending on the attitude or effort of people who inhabit in the village. At that time there were other reasons that also affected the situation of these villages' economy. These traditional host villages comprised of one particular caste (nakathi) with their specific occupation as tom tom beater. Then, they generally used to practice and provide their service for all other people in the area for making their livelihood. But it was not considered as a well-off occupation and income was very little and they should have done other work additionally or alternatively to gain a better income. Many of them did paddy cultivation and chena cultivation to maintain their livelihood. On the other hand, the majority of the Madawachchiya population consisted of another caste, which was the goigama caste, and it is considered by some as a higher caste than nakathi. Hence, at that period the people including those in the particular caste in the host villages were more backward than the other majority higher-caste people in the area as they had less power politically, socially and economically. Therefore, the background situation and setting of the host area were different compared with the border villages and living with other ethnic communities.

However, arrival of the IDPs into the host area has contributed to change the former socio-economic and political situation of the host villages. One of the respondents explained his role in building the livelihood of the family after their arrival in the area. According to him, the largest challenge for farming in the village was to obtain irrigation water for crop production. He was determined to dig a well with the help of his wife, because when they settled in the village, the water stored in the village tank could be used only once in two years for irrigation and that was also only to irrigate paddy cultivation. The tank would hold water only just sufficient to cultivate paddy and also to satisfy domestic water requirements. In his former village, they had realized that unless a farmer had a reliable source of water for irrigation, the best benefits from farming could not be achieved. Therefore, the first step he took to start farming in the host village was to dig a well to obtain groundwater for irrigation and it was called an "agro-well." (Diffusion of agro-wells in Sri Lanka has been growing steadily since mid-1980s). The government of Sri Lanka was instrumental in initiating agro-well development program by providing subsidies for agro-well construction. Agro-well development was seen as a potential source to bridge the gap in water availability in dry and intermediate zones of Sri Lanka during the dry seasons (Karunarathne & Pathmarajah, 2002). The wells were used mainly for agriculture. The introduction of agro-wells to the area was a central point of change in their cultivation methods and strategies.

Security among Host Community/Area

In the case of self-settled IDPs in the study area, a similar picture is shown but in a different way with these concepts. As discussed earlier, the improved security situation was one of the main factors that led IDPs to choose to reside in safer areas. In fact, many IDPs interviewed stated they felt safe in their current location.

At present we have no worry about our security. However, the future is unpredictable. But I am reluctant to go back to the former village. Now I have new relatives and strong relationships. Now this area is like my own village (Int1/MS/ID/GMW).

As I discussed earlier, although there were some disputes among both community members, and IDPs, in general, relations with the host community in safer areas appear to be relatively good due to many reasons and events that happened later on. As both quotations show, many of the IDPs reported that they had been received well by the host community; this is thought to be due to existing relationships in the area. The IDPs' feeling of protection mainly depends on their experiences in their native villages and the contemporary security situation of the present area. Most of the ideas they expressed compare well with the situation in their native villages and the situation of the host area or villages. However, as discussed previously, pre-existing relationships particularly their kin relation with host community people have been a positive background of the security for the influx of people

within the host community. During focus group discussions, many people indicated their attitude towards their security situation within the host community. The arrival and the presence of a large number of outside people happen suddenly in a village, it inevitably generates rumors, suspicions and some discrimination towards the newcomers.

Sometimes, it would cause tension and hostility, due to overcrowding and increased demands on common properties (Hovil, 2007). Nevertheless, such tensions were localized and minimized or were there only for a short period and it was more tolerable than a threat for their life from the rebel groups. A large number of self-settled IDPs in the study area said that they felt free of threats to life after their arrival in the host area.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study stress that those factors should be considered in finding alternative solutions to the IDP problem. The policy-oriented studies indicate that there are three types of solutions to end the displacement problem. They are: returning to the original villages, becoming relocated in another area or integrating with the host community.

On the basis of the findings of this study, for solving the problems of IDPs a single solution cannot be directly proposed as appropriate for all the IDPs. The reason is that this study identified that specific situation, location and time periods are important for giving solutions for the IDP problem. For example, for each of the ethnic groups the appropriate solution is likely to differ. In addition, the duration of being displaced, time period spent in the host community/area, the various relationships and networks established during that period, the social, economic and political situations that prevailed in the host area, are some of the many factors to be considered.

The study has revealed varied factors that have influenced IDPs' decision to return or remain in the host areas after a long period of displacement. For the explanation of this situation, the study could not identify a single leading variable. The research has examined multiple independent variables (i.e., social, economic and security factors), which together affected the dependent variables (i.e., decisions to stay or return). Hence, the research takes a multidimensional approach to explore multiple variables which affect the IDPs' decision to return or to remain. Consequently, the research has identified the factors that are very complex and that influence each other. For understanding of the functions of variables and the impact on the decision to return or to remain, the study applied a push-and-pull perspective.

The study has shown that long-term displacement can cause creating a new life within a new place, such as making new socio-economic relationships and new environments among their host community. It may be seen as an attraction or integration of IDPs into the host area/community by creating those relationships during their period of living in the host area/community. Particularly, self-settled IDPs had made a new environment

within the host area/community by themselves than WC IDPs. attracted to the host areas and elevate their unwillingness to return
The study emphasized this factor as a pull factor of IDPs to be to their original areas.

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