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**Conflict, Displacement and Post-War Recovery:
A Community Profile of Passaiyoor East in Jaffna, Sri Lanka**

Danesh Jayatilaka, Kopalapillai Amirthalingam and Shiyana Gunasekara



International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES)

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Front cover photograph: *Fishing boat entering the Passaiyoor harbor* by Asela Ekanayake (2015).

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	vi
Executive Summary	vii
Acronyms	xi
1. Location	1
2. History	3
2.1 Pre-Conflict Era	3
2.2 The Conflict, Displacement and Return	4
2.3 Resettlement and Recovery	7
3. Methodology	10
3.1 Location Selection	10
3.2 Data	12
3.2.1 Primary Data	12
3.2.2 Secondary Data	14
3.3 Analysis	15
4. A Part of the City	16
4.1 Landscape of the Village	16
4.2 Economic and Social Linkages	19
5. A Place to Live	20
5.1 Housing and Physical Environment	20
5.2 Violence, Health and Attitudes	22
5.3 Resources, Facilities and Donor Support	26
6. A Social Community	31
6.1 Involvement in Social Life	31
6.2 Formal and Informal Networks	32
6.3 Religion, Caste and Gender	34
7. An Economic Community	37
7.1 Fisheries Industry: Resources, Process and Trade	37
7.2 Migration and Diaspora	41
7.3 Employment, Unemployment, Income and Poverty	45
8. A Political Community	47
8.1 Structures and Representation	47
8.2 Political Views	48
8.3 Community Organizations and Decision Making	49
9. As a Personal Space	50
9.1 Attachment to Area	50
9.2 Memories and Experiences	52
9.3 Aspirations	54
10. Conclusion	55

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Executive Summary

Groups affected by conflict find it difficult to recover due to the extent of the violence they have faced and the scale of losses incurred. The impact of a war spans individual, family and community levels, and with the casualties they lose their lands, homes, valuables, livelihoods and networks, and face challenges accessing assets, health, education, sanitation and more. Shocks, such as forced displacement due to war, can also cause disruptions in social and cultural practices affecting people's traditional ways of life. When displaced groups return and resettle they depend on various means to meet the resources needed to rebuild their fractured lives. These resources, or capital, are human, natural, social, physical, financial and political support, and can be drawn from within themselves, friends and family, community or other actors, such as the government, elected bodies, community-based organizations, NGOs and donors, to be utilized in ways that are most useful.

This study is based on a comprehensive community profile conducted in a war-affected fishing village called Passaiyoor East in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The village is one of twenty-five Grama Niladari Divisions in the Jaffna Divisional Secretariat and the research sets out to understand the scope of the inhabitants' recovery and the strategies they used to achieve it after their resettlement. The study explores the outcomes of various resources across six aspects in relation to area, which include: 1) a part of the city 2) a place to live 3) social community 4) economic community 5) political community and 6) personal space. Principally a mixed methods field research, the study relied on primary, secondary, quantitative and qualitative data to triangulate findings and draw up a comprehensive view of the community. A number of techniques were used to gather data from individuals, households, fishermen, village elders, local societies, clergy, businessmen, health officers, government officials and aid actors. The fieldwork was conducted during 2014 and 2015.

The Passaiyoor East village and its people have a rich history going back to the days of the Portuguese and the last King of Jaffna. It also has a tragic past of conflict where locals were caught in the fighting between the government security forces, the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) from 1983 to 2009. Significant internal displacement, migration out of the country and resettlement had occurred, including the presence of a now-dismantled High Security Zone (HSZ) overlooking the lagoon. There are vibrant links between the locals and the diaspora societies, particularly in France and Germany where the latter provided them with vital support during the war period. They continue to provide remittances, including conducting small and medium scale projects in the village. Passaiyoor was provided with infrastructure support by foreign donors via community level development assistance, where its anchorage-fishing harbor was reconstructed in 2013.

The physical layout of the village is similar to many small townships with a central area, some prominent institutions or constructions, trading and marketing buildings and homes. The nucleus is the harbor and the market area. The religious institutions, schools and playgrounds are situated

nearby, while houses are dispersed throughout the village, some areas more compact than others. The former HSZ stands out due to the numerous abandoned buildings, but is also the proposed location for the diaspora supported library and sports stadium. Passaiyoor East has an administrative border covering its resources and a broader village community boundary maintained by the inhabitants for their integrated social, cultural, economic and political resources.

A number of reciprocal links exist with those outside of the community – many of which have evolved during the last three decades, including the export of fishing, import of equipment, and purchases of building material and luxury goods from the outer areas, among others. Locals also travel to Jaffna town and other nearby locations for banking, medical services, reputed schooling, university and technical education, while non-residents visit the village for its market, sports and cultural functions, and religious events at the St. Anthony's Church. Those who had left for neighboring areas, nearby towns, distant cities and foreign countries do their best to maintain links through regular visits, communication, remittances, financing community activities and more.

The present day population of the village is 364 families, totaling to 1149 individuals, who live in permanent, rented and other types of shelter. When people returned to their village after being dislocated, they used their own labor and financial resources to repair their houses. The houses are generally small and land shortage in the village has led to congestion. While the residents experienced great violence, risk, uncertainty and hardship during the war, they now experience different kinds of violence related to social, cultural and attitudinal changes due to easy access to alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, internet, pornography etc. Alcoholism, in particular, is known to have increased, as have youth violence and gang formation due to factors such as unemployment, and disincentive to work. There were polarized views about sexual harassment, but there were insinuations of increasing aggressive behavior including rape and murder in other parts of the region. A diaspora-funded clinic operates in the village providing services to the inhabitants for minimal payment. The locals are generally quite healthy with high immunity to diseases and few instances of non-communicable diseases. There were, however, occupation-related anxieties and tensions in the community, especially among fishermen, and others who were distressed due to financial issues.

Passaiyoor East has a number of resources that include the sea, skills of the fishermen, harbor, boats, market, a few shops, schools, cultural and sports talent, playground, elders' home, clinic, state poverty alleviation programmes and local and foreign societies. Of these, the harbor, market, church and diaspora play lead roles in the activities of the community. There are reservations about the sea and its rich stock of fish, as the catch has been declining in the last few years. The official services are functioning and the roads, lanes and buildings are in fair condition – particularly after the end of the war, which led to a boom in the construction industry. People received emergency support from the United Nations (UN) and government during the war and have subsequently benefited from the harbor that was built by the

International Organization for Migration (IOM), with the coordination of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and funding by the Australian government. The diaspora is discussing plans to build an indoor sports stadium and library with the potential support of the German government and the British Council.

The village encourages many social events in order to strengthen engagement among locals and visitors. Passaiyoor supports a number of clubs and societies for men, women, fishermen, youth and local development. Kith and kin of the diaspora generally keep in close touch and visit often, in addition to providing regular remittances. The villagers are known for their talent in football, and Passaiyoor has produced a number of national-level players, including a captain of the national team. They also have an inclination for the arts, such as theater, and are well-known for this in the region. Spirituality and religious beliefs are important for the locals who are almost entirely Catholic, except for a few Hindus. Caste differences are limited due to most of the locals being from the same fishing community. There are, however, gendered differences in areas such as education, income and occupation, as women are not treated as equals, which limit their prospects.

The village is famous for the ‘Kalankatti’ fishing technique used to catch fresh fish, which is sold both locally and to outside buyers. Fishing is done most of the year with much of the local economy revolving around the sector, although community members fear the trade is declining. Locals attribute this decline in fishing incomes to climate change and environmental events, saturation of competition in the industry, poaching and increasing costs. People used various means to leave the village during the war, but now, members of the community leave due to unemployment, marriage and overcrowding. The general preference is for foreign migration, with about six hundred of its members in Europe – mainly in France and Germany. The occupational distribution in the village is such that most are fishermen, while the rest are professionals, public servants and traders. Around twenty percent of the people in the village have limited incomes and some find it hard to keep up to par with the cost of living. Widows, in particular, struggle due to income and security problems, though there are safeguards by the state through poverty alleviation programmes and public monthly allowances.

The organizational structure of the village includes the civil service officials from the administrative sector and the elected officials who represent the people. There are also thirteen officially registered community-based organizations that carry out various social, cultural and economic activities amongst the people, while also acting as forums for various groups to highlight issues as well as to discuss and influence decisions. Certain individuals, such as members in the diaspora, the priests, senior members of the fishermen’s society and some businessmen, also wield influence over choices made by the community. Since the research was conducted both before and after the 2015 Presidential Elections, there were subtle differences on how people discussed their political views of the second period, which included criticism of certain previous government practices and optimism of a new governance and political culture.

The locals experience a significant sense of attachment and belonging towards the village as their home. They regularly disclose gratitude for the village, for what it offers and what makes it unique – the sea, harbor, church, sports, drama, and the diaspora as a type of guardian. Many people who were displaced chose to return, and those who migrated did so mostly due to the lack of other options, albeit while continuing links with the village. The inhabitants witnessed violent warfare by different actors and experienced displacement and other losses. While the memories are painful, they try to reconcile it by focusing on religion, family and work, and moving forward with their lives. Yet, there is also the reality of looming issues with livelihoods, education, children’s future prospects, housing space and cultural changes as part of wanting a better standard of living for oneself and one’s family. Migration, ideally to a western country, is not an uncommon option.

The study illustrates how the various resources available to the village converged to help the community recover after the war. The dynamic nature of the resources also implies that many people have asymmetrically accessed and benefitted from the community assets. On the whole, the human, physical, natural, social and financial resources have functioned cohesively, strengthening recovery in the community’s social, economic, political and personal spaces. These resources also influenced the nature of the village as a place to live and as a part of the city. As each asset set off a series of simultaneous reactions with complex overlaps, there were also nuances, such as the local agendas and the people’s needs and issues, that were characterized in the ‘world’ of the community. These are rich intersectional spaces for academics to engage in and points of entry for policy makers and practitioners to design and implement interventions, due to their propensity for multiple impacts.

Acronyms

ADP	Assistant Director of Planning
CBO	Community-based Organizations
CGES	Commissioner General for Essential Services
DfID	Department for International Development – UK
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Australian Government
DS	Divisional Secretary
DSD	Divisional Secretariat Division
DD	Donor Driven
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCE A/L	Advanced Level General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level)
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
HSZ	High Security Zone
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Force
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDRC	International Development Research Centre – Canada
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KII	Key Informant Interview
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MC	Municipal Council
MFG	Microfinance Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
GCE O/L	General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level)
OPD	Outpatient Department
OD	Owner Driven
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
PC	Provincial Council
PAMA	Public Assistance Monthly Allowance
RDA	Road Development Authority
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Location

The village of Passaiyoor East, administratively called J/64, is situated in the Jaffna Division in the District of Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka (see Map 1). It is a small sea-side village adjoining other villages such as Passaiyoor West, Eachchamoddai, Columbuthurai West and Columbuthurai East, on its western, northern, and eastern borders, respectively. The annual general rainfall is 1200 mm and general temperature 28.7 °C, making it largely the same with other coastal villages in the region. The population of Passaiyoor is quite small with 1149 individuals, 564 males and 585 females, distributed across 364 families.¹ The village covers 0.40 sq. km. and the density of inhabitants is considered less in comparison to its neighbors. The people in the village are not very poor with the majority of the populace falling into the middle-class category. According to Divisional Secretariat statistics, there are 412 employed persons in the village, which include thirty-three government servants, 129 individuals involved in private business, 168 self-employed persons, seventeen people who are employed in foreign countries and fourteen who fall into other categories.² There were ninety-eight women-headed families of which sixty-seven of the women were widows.³ Due to Passaiyoor being mainly a fishing village, none of the residents are involved in the agrarian sector. Many of those in the self-employed and business categories are associated with the production, trade or marketing aspects of the fishing industry.

Table 1: Demographic profile of Passaiyoor (J/64)⁴

Sex		Individuals	Families	Ethnicity (number of persons)		
Male	Female			Tamil	Sinhala	Muslim
564	585	1149	364	1149	0	0
Religion (number of persons)						
Catholic	Hindu	Muslim	Buddhist			
1142	7	0	0			
Age categories by sex (years)						
Age	0 - 5	6 - 18	19 - 35	36 - 50	51 - 60	60 +
Male	32	116	192	99	56	69
Female	34	114	181	112	60	84

Source: Samurdhi Office and DSD data, 2014

¹ Samurdhi Office 2014 data for Passaiyoor.

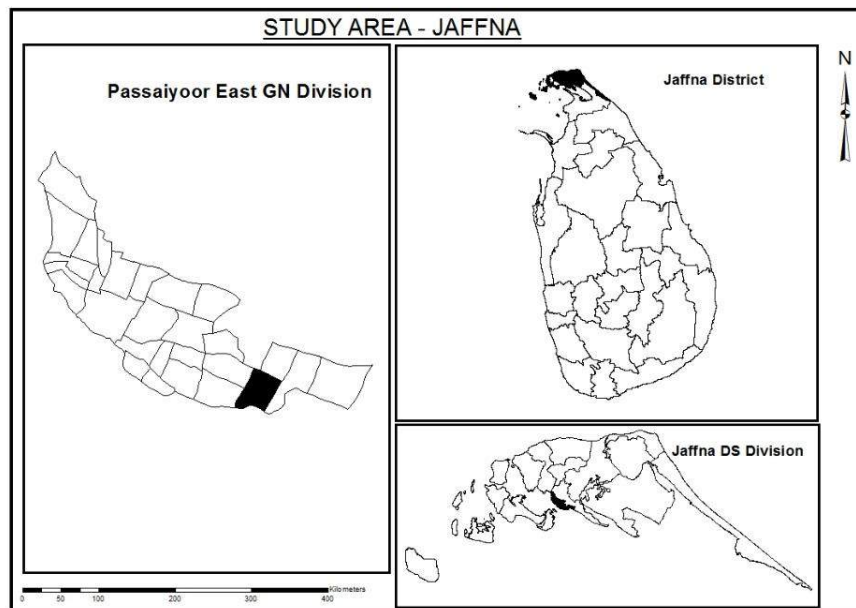
² Ibid.

³ Divisional Secretary Jaffna statistical data 2014.

⁴ Detailed demographic data on the pre-war situation in the village is not available as the census data for 1981 covered only the district and divisional secretariat levels.

The village has a rich natural resource stock in the form of fish from the sea, though the catch has been declining during the last years due to several reasons such as climate change, environmental disasters, saturation of fishing, poaching and so forth.⁵ In relation to housing, there are 364 houses, most of them permanent structures, and other buildings which include the fishing market, harbor, society building, St. Anthony's Church, St. Anthony's Girls' School, St. Joseph's Home for Elders, Fishermen's Association Community Centre, the playground and numerous shops. Locals also use facilities in the adjoining areas such as St. Joseph's Boys College, St. Patrick's College, Holy Cross Hospital, St. Francis Xavier Seminary, the Diaspora Clinic and the post office. Local residents travel to Jaffna city to visit the Jaffna hospital, banks, the public library, the university etc. Non-residents who come to the village do so mostly to visit family and friends, the market – famous for its fresh seafood catches – the church, and for the recreational events such as soccer and dramas, which the village is well known for regionally and nationally. Religion is known to play a strong part in the local culture and behavior of the people as there are polarized views about violence, alcoholism and crime, and there are concerns about the behavior of youth.⁶ Locals attributed this atmosphere to the Catholic religion, where 361 families are Catholic and the other three Hindu, and the people's affinity to get involved with sports and drama during their free time. For a visitor, the first impression includes perceiving a sense of community and belonging in the village with the location being a peaceful, united and progressive place in general, where people have quite structured lives.

Map 1: Location of Passaiyoor East in Jaffna Division in Jaffna District



⁵ For more information on climate change and its impacts, see: http://sdwebx.worldbank.org/climateportalb/doc/GFDRRCountryProfiles/wb_gfdr climate change country profile_for_LKA.pdf and <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs17/Climate%20Change%20and%20Fisheries.pdf>

⁶ Conversations with Church and religious leaders and medical staff at the village clinic.

Despite its quiet setting, the Passaiyoor East village has a tragically violent history of conflict, where many of its inhabitants were displaced at one time or another to other places in the area, in the district and in the northern region. Parts of the village also included a High Security Zone (HSZ) overlooking the lagoon, which has now been dismantled and the lands released to the people.⁷ Those families that were displaced during the various phases of the war, some for short periods and others for longer durations, have returned to their original lands and reconstructed their houses while regaining their livelihoods.⁸ While limited relief aid from the government was available to the populace during the emergency and the immediate return period, assistance provided by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other actors had been sparse, with the exception of a fishing harbor that was reconstructed through aid from the Australian government and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

With the exception of the initial reconstruction-development aid and the poverty alleviation support provided by the state through its Samurधि/Divineguma programme, a considerable amount of assistance had been channeled into Passaiyoor from family and friends living abroad.⁹ Nearly seventy-five percent of the families are known to have contacts abroad, with remittances provided by the diaspora in France and Germany being especially crucial in the day-to-day survival during the war years, the resettlement period and for the overall progress of their kith and kin.¹⁰ These connections had been a backbone of the community's coping efforts during the war as well as during recovery and further post-war development. The common fishing livelihoods, shared interests such as festivals, sports, dramas etc., and the collective suffering the population has experienced along with the networking systems that have arisen have all played major roles in the formation of community among these people in the village and their post-war recovery.

2. History

2.1 Pre-conflict era

The locals speak of a village with a rich and unique history – a history that goes back to the time of Segarajasekaran, also referred to as ‘Sankiliyan’ who was the last king of the Jaffna kingdom during the 1500s. Originally, the village's location was called ‘Iranguthurai’ and was referred to as ‘Manatti’ by the 1700s. During the early days, an individual by the name of Constanti Braunsa landed in Columbuturai with five hundred armed men in order to stop King Sankiliyan from killing those who had converted to Catholicism under the Portuguese. According to interviews

⁷ A High Security Zone (HSZ) is an area declared as restricted by a gazette notification or by local force commanders due to security reasons.

⁸ For more information on the impact of displacement on livelihoods, see: Amirthalingam, Kopalapillai and Rajith WD Lakshman, “Displaced Livelihoods in Sri Lanka: An Economic Analysis,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2009a): 22 (4): 502–24.

⁹ The Samurधि welfare scheme was introduced by the government in 1994. The programme was renamed as Divineguma by the government in 2013.

¹⁰ Discussions with representatives from France and Germany Passaiyoor diaspora societies and with village community leaders.

with diaspora elders and other members in the village, the king was known to oppose the conversion practice and was actively resisting the Portuguese making colonial inroads into the country.¹¹ Being unable to fight Constanti Braunsa, the king fled and made an agreement with the Portuguese, stating they would not harm him in exchange for his consent to certain conditions, which included Sankiliyan giving them ten elephants and 100,000 peso every year, not hindering the building of churches, not obstructing the preservation of relations with people of other religions and cultures and allowing Manatti to be given to the Portuguese for official purposes.¹² The colonial power was interested in the strategic location for supervising Columbuthurai and the immediate area. The king, however, was eventually captured and executed by the Portuguese. When the British secured control of the country later, they introduced the ‘pass’ system and the administration office was put up where Manatti formerly existed.¹³ The name therefore, became Passaiyoor – “pass-preparing village” (pass + பசையூர் + ஊர்). In Tamil, “paa” means ‘song’, so the name also carried the meaning of ‘song-making village’. During the 1800s, the locals would travel to Passaiyoor to get a pass to go to Columbuthurai in order to then get the boat to Colombo.¹⁴

2.2 The Conflict, Displacement and Return

The Passaiyoor village, like many other villages in the region, was affected by the violence that escalated in the early 1980s. The conflict, rooted in a mix of erroneous state policies, erupted in 1983 with the ambush of thirteen army soldiers by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) and the subsequent anti-Tamil riots across the country by Sinhalese mobs, leaving many Tamils dead and their properties destroyed. In Passaiyoor, some Sinhalese working in bakeries left to Colombo with the help of locals for safety.¹⁵ There was continuous fighting between the LTTE and the national security forces between 1983 and 1984, where after the LTTE carried out smaller attacks generally on members of the Police Services. Intermittent skirmishes continued for the next few years as the security situation deteriorated. Eventually, however, violence grew in intensity and frequency, with civilians of the village occasionally getting caught in the crossfires, round-ups and reprisal raids. Internal displacement of people in the village occurred for the first time in 1987 after the arrival of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF), as a result of the Indo-Lanka Agreement. When fighting flared between the IPKF and the LTTE, residents of Passaiyoor were displaced to Poonakari, since those who had contacts with the LTTE were mostly killed. According to residents, around twenty attacks were carried out on the local populace during that period of fighting.¹⁶ After a small respite after the departure of the IPKF in

¹¹ After migrating to Germany and France, members from the diaspora had researched the history of the village in libraries in Portugal, where they found the original name of the locality.

¹² Interviews with elders in the diaspora.

¹³ Conversations with diaspora and village members.

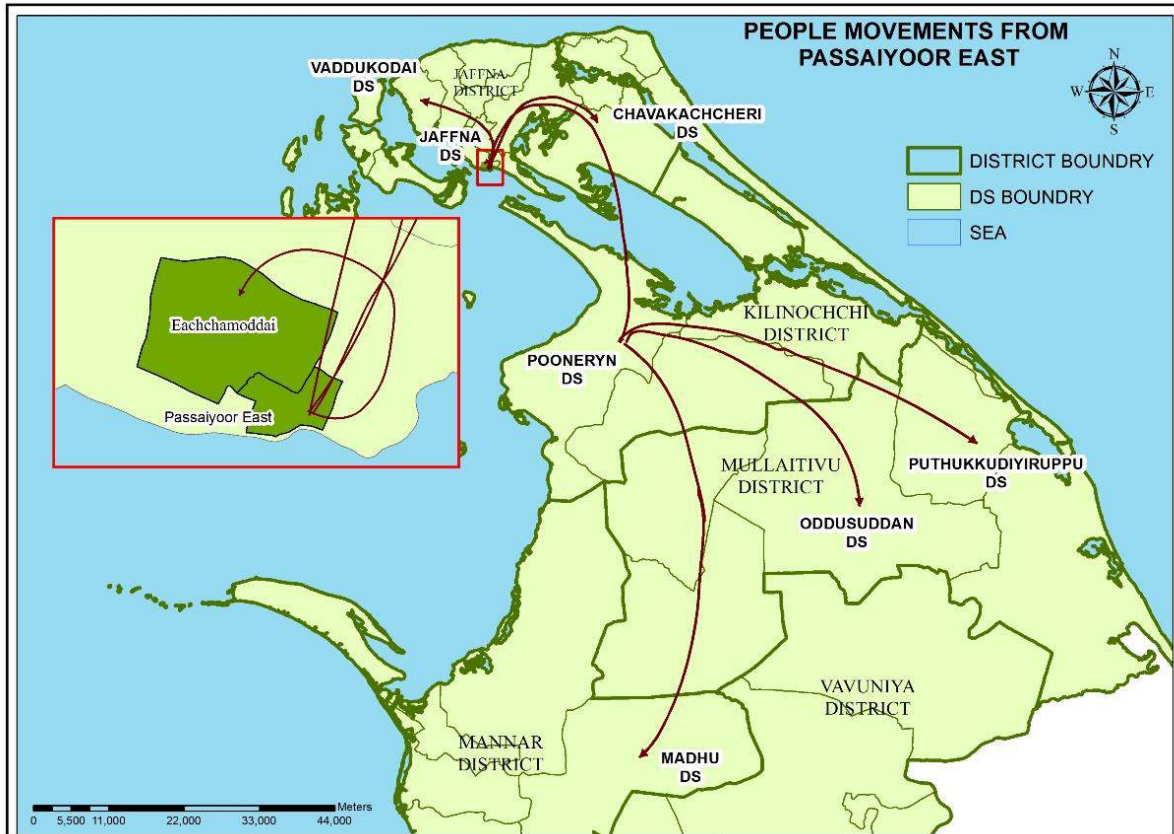
¹⁴ Discussions with the Village Fishermen’s Society made up of elders and leaders.

¹⁵ Recollections by a group of village leaders.

¹⁶ Ibid.

1989/1990, fighting commenced between the government forces and the LTTE, and people were once again displaced. According to individuals who were directly affected, they did not have access to any genuine welfare or Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in 1990, and they had to, more or less, fend for themselves, which also required depending on social networks including friends and relatives.^{17, 18}

Map 2: Displacement movements of the Passaiyoor people¹⁹



The St. Anthony’s Church in the village was shelled in 1995 in the government-launched operation to recapture the Jaffna peninsula from the LTTE. That same year, the forces established the HSZ along the coastal belt in the village (see Photo 1) displacing families who had their homes in those areas.²⁰ The military’s justification was to prevent infiltrations from the other side of the lagoon, which was occupied by the LTTE. At the time of the mass exodus in

¹⁷ For more details on humanitarian assistance and issues with coordination see: Van Hear, Nicholas and Darini Rajasingham-Senanayake, (2006), ‘From Complex Displacement to Fragile Peace in Sri Lanka’ in *Catching Fire: Containing Forced Migration in a Volatile World*, edited by N Van Hear and C McDowell, 45–71. Lanham: Lexington Books.

¹⁸ For information on vulnerabilities and risks due to displacement see: Jayatilaka, Danesh and Robert Muggah. (2004). ‘Where There Is No Information: IDP Vulnerability Assessments in Sri Lanka’s Borderlands’, *Forced Migration Review*, 20: 39–41.

¹⁹ The displacement map was prepared for the report by Sakeena Alikhan and M. M. Alikhan.

²⁰ The HSZ was imposed along most of the coastal belt, including in other neighboring villages.

1995, when the security forces recaptured Jaffna, all of the inhabitants of Passaiyoor were asked to move to Thenmarachchi and Vanni by the LTTE. Many people left their belongings and carried only their cash, jewelry and portables. Those who were forced to move to Thenmarachchi returned quickly but those who were displaced to the Vanni stayed there for six months before being received and encouraged by the Army to resettle. By 1996, everyone had returned to the village.

Photos 1 and 2: Former High Security Zone (HSZ) and damaged houses²¹



According to Passaiyoor residents, they did not receive any state assistance after the 1995 displacement and return. They also speak of being displaced to Vaddukoddai in 2000 and losing their main sources of income. Since many residents were fishermen, leaving the locality central to their livelihoods impacted them severely, while they stayed in rented houses for periods of up to twelve months in Eachchamoddai and the Vanni. A significant number of people also did not return to the village because they had connections to the LTTE by then.²² As time elapsed more people started returning. The government issued passes, similar to an earlier practice in 1995, and the locals were allowed to fish five hundred meters off the shore, but no more than one kilometer away. If they crossed the limit, they could be imprisoned or even killed. As the Eelam War IV was going on, mostly in the Vanni area, small attacks and indirect fighting continued to take place in the locality of the village from 2004 onwards.²³ There were no fresh displacements, however, except those who could not return to their lands in the HSZ. Still, new restrictions were imposed on fishing after 2007, but they were gradually relieved after the war ended in 2009.

²¹ Photographs taken in June 2015.

²² Discussions with village members involved in education and sports.

²³ There were Eelam Wars I (1983-87), II (1990-94), III (1995-2002), and IV (2006-2009), taking into account that there was an internationally backed Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) that was implemented in 2002.

2.3 Resettlement and recovery

As the people returned to their original lands and houses, they relied on a number of measures to reconstruct their lives.²⁴ The pass system that was in place during the various phases of the war curtailed movement and affected incomes, which implicated the scope of financial, physical, natural and social resources on which the Passaiyoor villagers could rely on. The World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) intermittently provided emergency assistance in the form of dry rations and shelter support, in collaboration with the Commissioner General for Essential Services (CGES) and the District Secretariat and Divisional Secretariat (DS) offices. These relief items were mostly used for consumption and other daily needs. Neither formal state nor international aid assistance was provided to the families, who then depended mostly on their own efforts and diaspora support during the resettlement process, which included housing, livelihoods, food, children's education, health needs and other necessities.²⁵

Currently, there are no international or local NGOs active in the village. However, the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) programme, formerly known as "AusAid", and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), provided the funding and implementation efforts, respectively, to reconstruct the fisheries harbor, which provided a boost to the local fishing industry.²⁶ The project was done after consulting the community and was coordinated with the District and Divisional Secretariats of Jaffna, while technical support was received from the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the Department of Coastal Conservation and the Ceylon Fisheries Harbor Corporation.²⁷ The local Fishermen's Society complemented this activity by renovating the market's building and fish auction hall using its financial and labor resources.²⁸

²⁴ For data on displacement and resettlement for Jaffna and Sri Lanka, see: <http://resettlementmin.gov.lk/site/index.php/en/idps/idps-jaffna.html> and <http://resettlementmin.gov.lk/site/index.php/en/idps/idps-statistics.html>

²⁵ For more information on how insufficient resettlement support and poorly designed programming can lead to impoverishment see: Hammond, L. (2008). 'Strategies of Invisibilization: How Ethiopia's resettlement programme hides the poorest of the poor'. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21 (4), 517-536.

²⁶ The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and Hellenic Aid also collaborated with the implementation of the project.

²⁷ For more information see: <http://srilanka.iom.int/iom/sites/default/files/pictures/slides/Passaiyoor-Fact-Sheet-May-2013.pdf>

²⁸ For an example of multi sector assistance to support durable solutions for IDPs after disasters see Sherwood, A., Bradley, M., Rossi, L., Gitau, R., and Mellicker, B. (2014). 'Supporting Durable Solutions to Urban, Post-Disaster Displacement: Challenges and Opportunities in Haiti', Brookings Institution, Washington DC.

Photos 3 and 4: Donor board of Fishing Harbor and plaque by the government and donors



This infrastructure assistance, though not directly related to resettlement, supported the fishing industry by strengthening the economic resource base of the community, which in turn had multiple effects on various other sectors, improving the people’s livelihood opportunities.^{29, 30} Traditional occupations like fishing were strengthened and the industry expanded, providing incomes and savings that could be focused on repairing or expanding houses, refurbishing interiors, acquiring essential assets, sending children to school, settling debts, making investments, etc. As previously mentioned, the diaspora has also been a key resource for the community during the war and post-war period. A network of legal and illegal migration was known to have occurred during the violent periods, and as a result, these individuals of the diaspora provided support by filling the ‘resource gaps’ during the days of emergency using various methods such as ‘Undiyal’, transferring money through Western Union and direct bank transfers, and contributing to the recovery and development afterwards.³¹ This assistance has taken place beyond individual and family levels, with the Passaiyoor societies in France and Germany having built a clinic in Passaiyoor and supporting catch-up schooling and tuition. These societies’ efforts include plans to construct a library and sports center in the village in possible partnership with the British Council and the German Embassy.³²

²⁹ Interview with IOM officials.

³⁰ For more information on post conflict reconstruction, see: Kelegama, Saman. (2010). ‘Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the North and East of Sri Lanka: Programmes and Constraints’, *Economic Review*, People’s Bank, Sri Lanka, February/March: 24–31, see link: [http://dl.nsf.ac.lk/bitstream/handle/1/14248/ER-35\(11-12\)_24.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](http://dl.nsf.ac.lk/bitstream/handle/1/14248/ER-35(11-12)_24.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y)

³¹ In the Undiyal (a form of penny bank or money box) method, the diaspora member gives money to a known agent who in turn instructs his sub agent in Sri Lanka to release the particular amount to a person designated by the client. During the conflict period, people in Jaffna needed to travel through LTTE-controlled areas in the Vanni and come to Colombo and stay in lodges under tense conditions in order to collect the money and take it back. The Western Union method is where the diaspora member will deposit money in Western Union and receive a PIN which will be communicated to a designated person in Sri Lanka, who can then retrieve the money from a local franchise which could be a bank, agency post office etc.

³² Discussions with the diaspora and Fishermen’s Society members.

People who returned gradually recreated their previous living routines with some becoming better off than they were earlier, while others struggled to catch up due to complexities encompassing individual and family capacities, the resettlement process and broader developmental challenges, experienced by many displaced and non-displaced in the region.³³ Available statistics indicate 412 persons are employed out of the total village population of 1149, with the majority of them in the private and self-employment sector. From the 364 families, 207 were receiving Samurdhi benefits and sixty-eight were on the Public Assistance Monthly Allowance (PAMA).³⁴ With the village's 364 houses, of which 284 are permanent, forty-one rented and thirty-nine of other status, there are officially no displaced families in the village or those needing resettlement at present (still, information from the District Secretariat (DS) office indicates around eighty of these structures are temporary shelters, implying housing conditions are not of the best quality). Infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water, sanitation, the local school, public transport and local administration are back in place, indicating the village has come far since the days of the armed conflict, when many public services and projects were at a standstill. The village's reconnection to social networks and political institutions has allowed the community to move forward from a state of emergency into a period of recovery and eventually long term development.^{35, 36}

In spite of these changes, locals feel that unemployment is an issue, as many youngsters who completed Advanced Level in school join the fishing trade unless they find employment opportunities in the formal sector. Additionally, according to the fishermen, the reducing stocks of fish in the sea have threatened the sustainability of the fisheries sector, the central source of the village's economy. The war also left many wounds and memories of tragedies that the residents find hard to forget. They believe their recovery will be holistic once reconciliation happens, where the parties who carried out different aggressions give them space to remember and ask for forgiveness, in order to allow everyone to leave behind the grief and move forward in an environment of complete freedom.

³³ For a detailed account on the issues related to resettlement, policies and practice see: Muggah, R. (2008). *Relocation Failures: A Short History of Displacement and Resettlement in Sri Lanka*. Zed Books, London

³⁴ Samurdhi data 2014. However there is a slight discrepancy with the Jaffna DS data on the number of families and individuals in the village.

³⁵ For more information on the role of assistance and protection for IDPs to recover and recommendations for the way forward see: Ferris, Elizabeth. (2014). 'Ten Years After Humanitarian Reform: How Have IDPs Fared?', Brookings Institution, Washington DC.

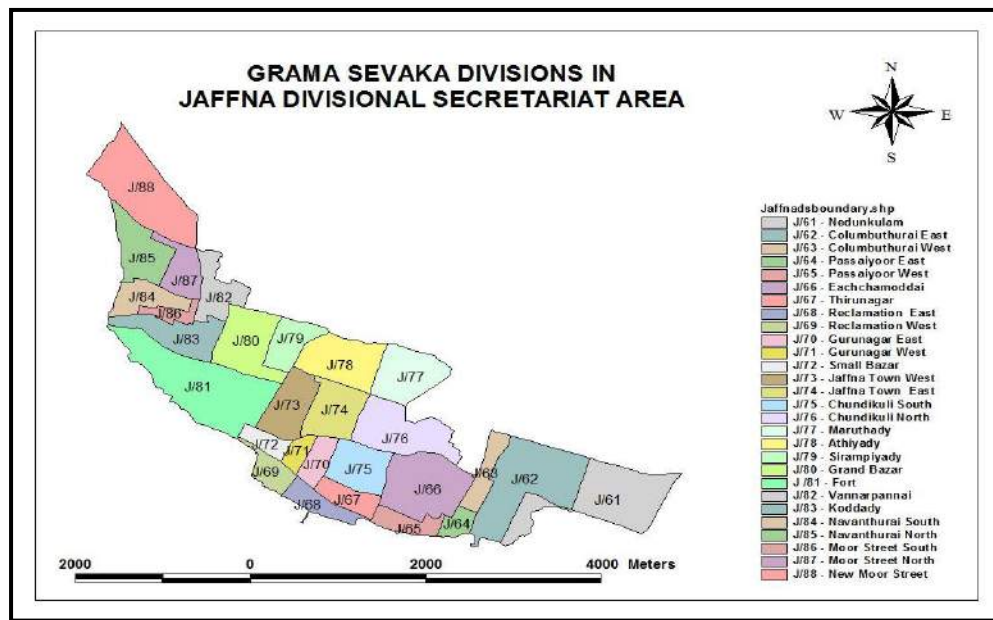
³⁶ The understanding of 'Recovery' itself had also been rather vague with academics and agencies advancing various interpretations of the end goal. For details see Maier, R. (2010). 'Early recovery in post-conflict countries: a conceptual study', Clingendael Conflict Research Unit, see link: http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/20100201_cru_paper_rmaier.pdf

3. Methodology

3.1 Location selection

The study is part of a larger three-year research project where a survey on IDPs and non-IDPs was conducted in 2013 with the support of the Divisional Secretary, Assistant Director of Planning, and Samurdhi/Divineguma officers in two Divisional Secretariats in the Jaffna district.³⁷ The Jaffna and Nallur divisional secretariat divisions were identified as urban areas due to being located within Jaffna Municipal Council, their population density and proximity to the city of Jaffna. A thousand household-level interviews were done among twenty-five Grama Niladari (GN) divisions, or villages, where data was gathered on housing standards, losses, violence experienced, assets, income and expenditure, civic behavior, social networks, assistance received and happiness. As the community profile was to be conducted within this area, a choice had to be made to select one or two villages that were rich in information, while also representing the population of interest. Selecting the most suitable village was a challenging task, as the general survey area had differences in occupations, poverty levels, religions, castes, coastal and inland differences, degrees of displacement, and infrastructure damage due to the war – all of them with diverse narratives to offer to a community profile.

Map 3: Grama Niladari Divisions in Jaffna Divisional Secretariat

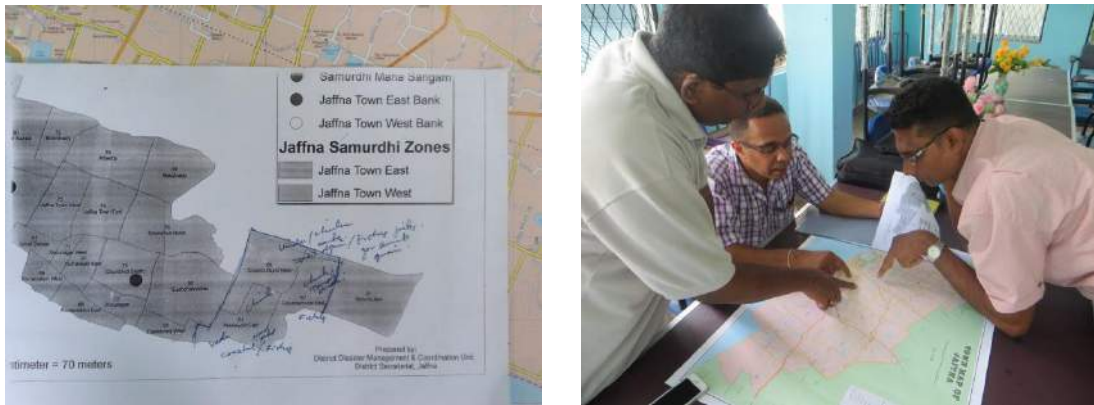


After discussions with the Grama Niladari and Samurdhi/Divineguma officers, Passaiyoor East (J/64) was selected as the research site – a village with a conflict backdrop and narrative of

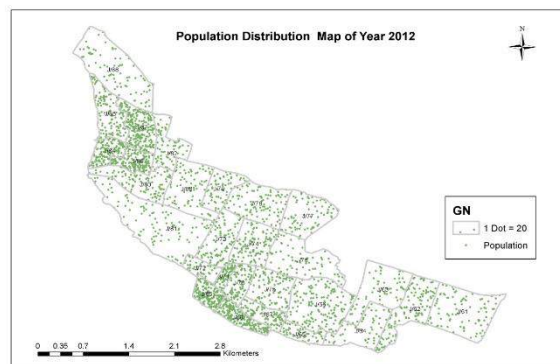
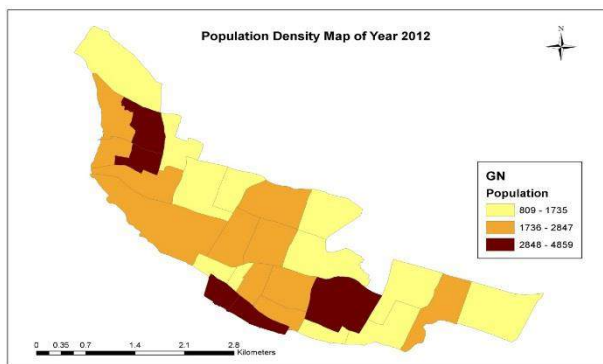
³⁷ See 'Involuntary Resettlement: A Cross-Country Study on Urban Inequality and Poverty' at <http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Documents/SAIC-107361-EN.pdf> and <http://www.ices.lk/a-cross-country-study-on-urban-inequality-and-poverty/>

recovery. During joint discussions with community leaders in the village, researchers were able to secure the full cooperation of the village representatives through the Passaiyoor Fishermen’s Society, where they agreed to assist in providing information and logistical requirements for the study.³⁸ It is a fishing village, with its own fisheries harbor and market. Most of the locals can be described as of the Catholic religion, in the fishing trade and from associated castes. Significant displacement and resettlement had occurred including the presence of a now dismantled HSZ overlooking the lagoon. The experiences of violence and damage to infrastructure were generally uniform, as was the resettlement process. The area’s vibrant links to the European diaspora and internationally funded reconstruction projects were focal points to understanding the impact of financial and aid injections into the community. While the population density in Passaiyoor was itself not extremely high, it was adjoined by some of the densest and urbanized villages in Jaffna, making the selected site a peri-urban location (see Maps 4 and 5). The combination of reasons made the village an interesting and suitable place for the community profiling research.

Photos 5 and 6: Area selected and site discussions by researchers with local partners



Maps 4 and 5: Population density and distribution among GN Divisions in Jaffna Divisional Secretariat / Source: Jaffna Divisional Secretariat



³⁸ A transparent and participatory approach was practiced from the beginning, where researchers shared all of the details of the study with members of the village committee and other representatives, including, but not limited to, its objectives, scope and limitations, and the reasons why Passaiyoor was selected.

Community Profiles are intended to be extremely broad in order to cover resources, needs and other issues that affect the community. The guidelines created by Christakopoulou et al (2001) look at different characteristics of people's lives in relation to each other and recommends six key aspects to scrutinize in relation to area, these being examining the area as: 1) a part of the city 2) a place to live 3) social community 4) economic community 5) political community and 6) personal space.³⁹ The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) suggests mixed methods for such studies and provides a number of techniques for information to be triangulated.⁴⁰ Scholars have highlighted that while different methods have their respective advantages and disadvantages, it is worthwhile to combine methods – quantitative and qualitative data, primary and secondary data – as this can result in richer information and a more well-rounded view of the community.⁴¹

The study in Passaiyoor relied mostly on primary data which was then supported by secondary data. The combined approach was advantageous to draw up the holistic picture of the village while analyzing the various features that constituted the community and its post-war recovery. Further, since the research looked at historical, economic, social, political, geographical, infrastructural and administrative contexts which covered the past, the present and elements of the future, a broad methodology was necessary. Accordingly, the researchers used a series of tools to engage a cross-section of households, community members, community and religious leaders, community-based organizations (CBOs), aid actors, the business community, in addition to administrative and elected local government members. These interactions included various types of methods, including focus groups discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews, household interviews, ranking exercises, seasonal calendars, timelines, observations and village walks, including Google Earth imaging and GIS mapping as well as photography.

The study required considerable design and planning, which took place during the period of April to June of 2014. Fieldwork commenced in July 2014 and was largely completed around June/July of 2015. The preparation of the report started at the beginning of 2015 alongside the data collection and was concluded in August 2015.

3.2 Data

3.2.1 Primary data

The researchers used a number of qualitative techniques to gather primary data using a cross-section of approaches. The techniques were established for specific purposes and were meant to examine the various aspects of the community. Table 2 below lists the distribution of the activities and the tools that were used.

³⁹ See Christakopoulou, S., Dawson, J., & Gari, A. (2001). 'The community well-being questionnaire: Theoretical context and initial assessment of its reliability and validity'. *Social Indicators Research*, 56 (3), 319-349

⁴⁰ See 'Doing the Community Profile' at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/006/y5084e/y5084e06.htm>

⁴¹ See Hawtin, M., & Percy-Smith, J. (2007). *Community Profiling: A Practical Guide: Auditing social needs*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Table 2: Tools Used to Gather Primary Data on Specific Aspects

Aspects Covered	Information Sources	Tools
Area as a Part of the City	DS, ADP, GN, Municipal counselors, PC members, community leaders	Interviews, small group meetings, KIIs
Area as a Place to Live	Divisional Secretary (DS), Assistant Director of Planning (ADP), Grama Niladari (GN), community leaders, households, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	Interviews, physical observation, Google Earth mapping, photographs
Area as a Social Community	Community leaders, religious leaders, youth organizations and Community-based Organizations (CBOs)	Interviews, small group meetings and FGDs
Area as an Economic Community	Households, GN, DS, ADP, Samurdhi managers and animators, business community	Interviews with households, interviews with administrative officers, small group meetings and FGDs, ranking exercise, seasonal calendar
Area as a Political Community	Municipal counselors, Provincial Council (PC) members, community leaders	Interviews, small group meetings, KIIs
Area as a Personal Space	Households, KIIs	Interviews, physical observation, KIIs, timelines

Partners on the ground, especially the Samurdhi/Divineguma officers and the Fishermen's Society representatives, were vital for gathering the information and providing the researchers necessary access to the community and village. As seen in the table, certain categories of information needed to be gathered from multiple sources, as was the need to use combined techniques with similar respondents to corroborate and strengthen the quality of data. Community profiles generally call for strong community involvement, and in the present case, these partners were consulted during every step of the study, with many of the activities conducted in joint fashion. Scholars have said that participatory approaches help ensure the research is firmly rooted in the 'real world' and local agendas, engaging local issues and needs.⁴² The table below lists the cross-section of respondents who spoke quite openly and at length during the twenty meetings, credited to the levels of trust that were formed. Creating strong networks and, through them, engaging the respondents undoubtedly plays a major role in community studies. The relationships and mutual respect that were forged during the exercises stand as evidence for such applications.

⁴² Ibid

Table 3: Details on meetings and interviews done

Meetings / interviews	Details	Numbers
Community leaders (elders, village president, church leader, Fishermen’s Society leader)	Small group meetings (3 to 4 people) and interviews	1
Religions leaders (priests, etc.)	Interviews	1
Youth organizations (sports clubs, vocational training organizations)	Small group meetings	1
CBOs (very small community organization e.g. women’s groups, fishermen groups, lions club, micro finance groups, livelihoods empowerment groups)	Small group meetings (3 to 4 people)	2
Samurdhi managers/ Samurdhi development officers	Interviews	2
Same	Small group meetings	1
Business community (traders organization, chamber of commerce, businessman)	Interviews	1
Same	Small group meeting (3 to 4 people)	1
Households (resettled and non IDP houses)	Focus groups, women (4 to 6 people)	1
Same	Focus groups, men (4 to 6 people)	1
Political representatives (PS, MC, PC etc.)	Interviews	1
NGO/INGO/Donor involved with village	Interviews	1
Divisional Secretary (DS)	Interviews	1
Assistant Director of Planning (ADP)	Interviews	1
Grama Niladari (GN)	Interviews	1
Health officers	Interviews	1
Diaspora society members	Interviews	2
Total		20

3.2.2 Secondary data

Secondary data, quantitative or qualitative, are generally readily available, though in most cases not in the specific format needed or for the precise location. In such cases, some desk reviewing is required, or in qualitative instances, taking photographs, analyzing publicly available maps or using software to draw in maps and details on existing templates. There were four kinds of quantitative secondary data:

1. Statistical Handbook for the Jaffna District– provided by the Jaffna District Secretariat
2. Resource profiles – provided by the Jaffna and Nallur Divisional Secretariat Division
3. Samurdhi/Divineguma data for Passaiyoor – provided by the District and Divisional Samurdhi/Divineguma offices
4. Passaiyoor village data – provided by the Grama Niladari (GN) of the village

In addition to collecting the above resources, researchers also visited the Survey Department of Jaffna to obtain various types of area maps. Transect walks were done within the village and included observations, such as the daily fish catch and its unloading, the bulk auctioning and distribution and retail sales in the public market. Numerous photographs were taken to capture the lifestyles and livelihoods of the people, along with those depicting key institutions and buildings, which form the backbone of the community. With the support of community members, the researchers also prepared hand-drawn maps of the village with landmarks and details on the topography, which were converted into GIS maps and cross referenced with Google Earth, to develop a picture of how the community functioned as a whole.

Map 6: Hand-drawn map, using the village walk method, of a section of the locality



3.3 Analysis

Community profiles make efforts to understand people, contexts and interactions thoroughly in order to disclose who is in the community and what they do by bringing light to their livelihoods, traditions, practices etc., when the research is completed. The broad and contextual approach that was used in Passaiyoor allowed researchers to gather a rich cross-section of data. Separate analysis was conducted for the qualitative and quantitative data while triangulating the information within and across the data types. Researchers spent significant time sorting and organizing the records so they could be meaningfully analyzed and the various strands of the community profile developed. Material was stored in electronic and physical forms including shared data folders amongst ten researchers and five key staff of the project.

Analyzing the largely secondary quantitative data took the form of desk work, where the data was mined to emphasize essential information including summary data, descriptive statistics etc. Some of the reports provided by state officials were also useful in understanding the backdrop of the village, i.e. demographic, poverty and occupation details by the DS and Samurdhi/Divineguma offices for drawing comparisons with neighboring villages and the

district, or the verbal reportings of investment-cost structures of fishing and pricing of the catch etc., to understand stakeholders' profits and revenue. There was no rigorous statistical analysis during the community profile and a household survey was not specifically conducted for the exercise.

The array of qualitative data from the range of sources was explored using content and thematic analysis approaches. Researchers noted the key and related matters taking into account the specific context and the source of the information, as well as their interests and relationships with others. Emerging themes were categorized twice over and arranged in line with the six areas of study concerning place, so researchers could identify issues, evolving concepts and patterns in the responses. The picture that was taking shape was accompanied by other sets of specific data relating to chronology, processes and key events, much of which was based on the voices and memories of the local people at individual, family and community levels.

By engaging the data in a layered fashion and triangulating at regular intervals, a colorful story of the village emerged. Given the limited assets and resources the people of Passaiyoor were navigating, and how they strategized and maximized their opportunities nimbly in the given setting, the Department for International Development's Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) in particular was useful as an analytical framework during the analysis. The assets pentagon in the framework with its five livelihood capitals (human, physical, natural, social and financial) helped conduct deeper analysis into the multiple factors that were affecting livelihoods and the effect that institutions and processes had on local development. It was possible to search for causality and recognize how the village and its people functioned and what was strengthening or restricting their recovery and development.⁴³

4. A Part of the City

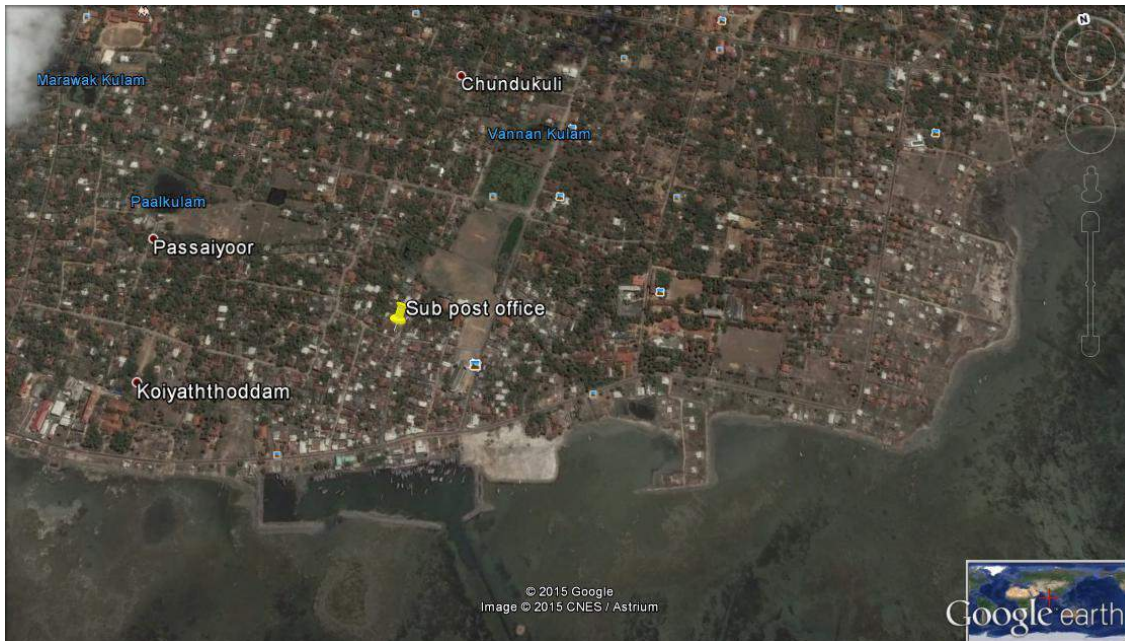
4.1 Landscape of the Village

The village of Passaiyoor East is located south of Jaffna city approximately two to three kilometers from the central bus stand in Jaffna town.⁴⁴ It would take between five to forty minutes for a person to reach the village from Jaffna town, or vice versa, depending on their mode of transport: car/motor bike (five to ten minutes), bus (fifteen to twenty-five minutes, depending on availability and the route the bus takes), bicycle (fifteen to twenty minutes) and walking (thirty to forty minutes). The village sits at the edge of the land, overlooking the lagoon – its most predominant structure being the harbor (see Map 7).

⁴³ See Department for International Development (DfID) Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) on <http://www.eldis.org/vfile/upload/1/document/0901/section2.pdf>

⁴⁴ It is 2.3 km via Enchchmaddi road and 2.5 km using Columbothurai road according to Google Maps

Map 7: Google Earth view of Passaiyoor East



The land area of the village is 0.40 sq. km. with the space taken up by residential properties and public and private structures.⁴⁵ The land is flat and there are a few trees throughout the locale in spite of its crowded nature. The layout of the village is similar to a typical small village that includes a central area, some prominent institutions or constructions, trading and marketing buildings and houses. The hub here is the harbor and the market-auction premises. They are situated next to the water, the structures adjoining each other and facing the road. The line of shops and restaurants, including the fishing equipment repair places, are on the other side of the road in a row, making it quite convenient. The Fishermen's Society building, the local community center, is next to the harbor and auction area, overlooking the sea and dock. The building will also house the new Grama Niladari office. There is a cabana-type outdoor hall close by that was built by the Society along with local youth so people could meet and discuss issues in an open-air venue.

The St. Anthony's Church is not far down the road, away from the central hub area, towards the city with the priests' residences at a separate location. The main playground, where the numerous soccer games are played and the cultural and arts events are held, is next to the church, allowing the clergy to witness and support the events when required. There is a small empty water tank, which the villagers hope to fill at some point. The St. Anthony's Girls' School is also up the road, away from the trading area, close to town and the church. The St. Joseph's Home for Elders and the Father Mathives Memorial Hall are also located in that area – all of these institutions within a four- to five-minute walking distance from each other. The houses are

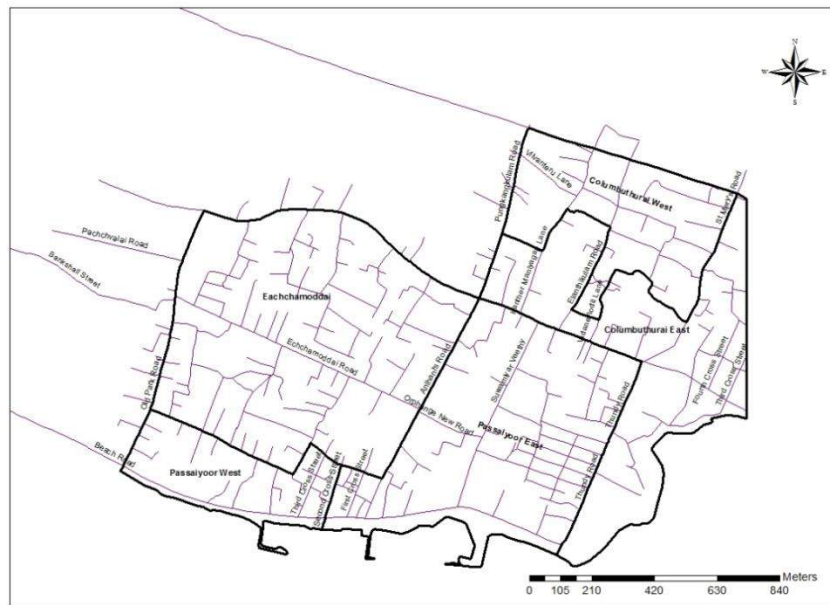
⁴⁵ Data from Jaffna Divisional Secretariat. The total land area of Jaffna Division is 10.92 sq. km.

scattered throughout the village with some, such as the homes close to the market, more compact than others. As previously mentioned the houses are quite small except for the few belonging to well-off families.

There are many damaged and abandoned houses on the former HSZ belt, along the coast, next to the road, covering the entire length of the village. Though there are owners for all of these properties, very few of them had been repaired because most of the titleholders have left the areas or migrated abroad. The proposed French Diaspora-sponsored library building, which is a rather large property, is situated among these edifices. The planned indoor stadium is in an open land near the outdoor community hall and close to the library. The former Navy camp also was situated inside this HSZ area, next to the harbor and fishing market. The main roads in the village are the Beach Road, St. Anthony’s Road, Orphanage New Road, Swamiyar Road, 1st Cross Street, 2nd Cross Street and St. Sebastian Road.

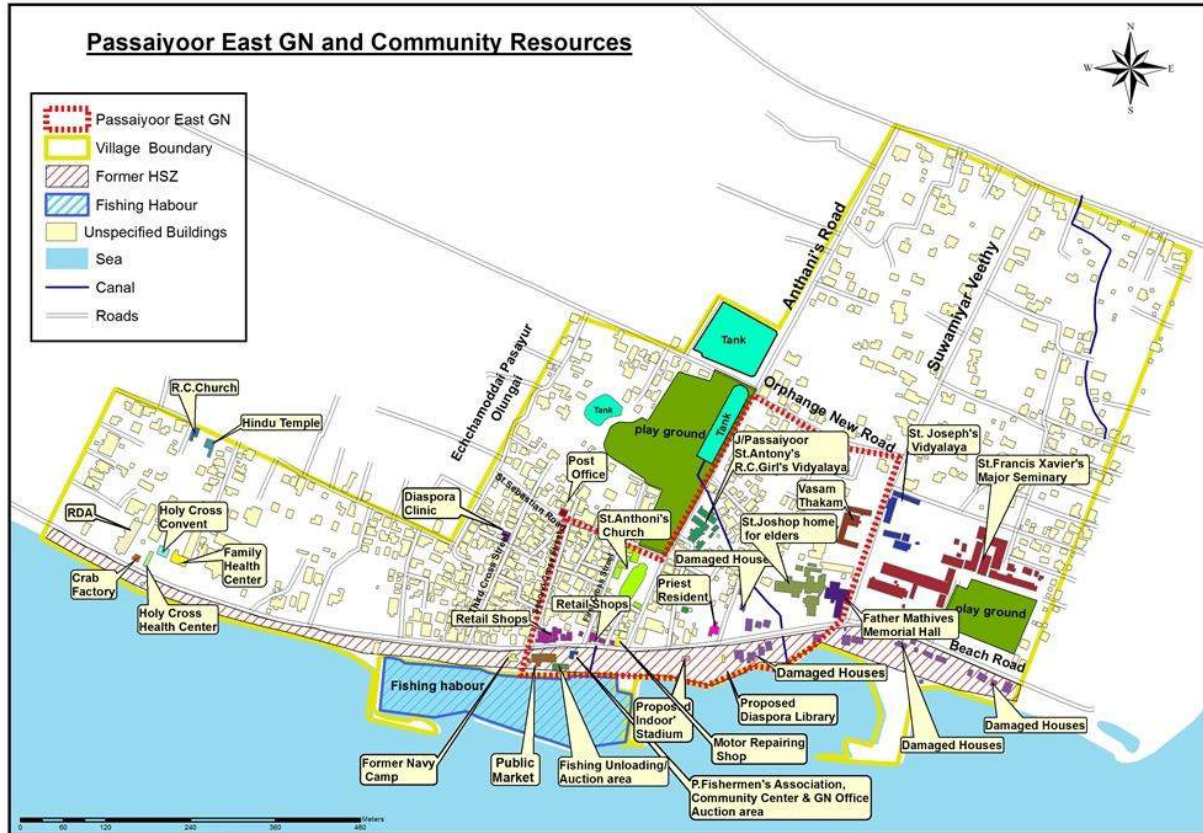
The border of the village is an interesting feature, as there is the official boundary and the ‘imaginary’ area people consider as their community. The first kind – the administered village – is based on official demarcations by the Divisional Secretariat and the Grama Niladari division for administrative purposes. The second type – the community village – is where local people improvise and stretch these boundaries for their community’s social, cultural, economic and political purposes. In this case, the people of Passaiyoor East identified the administrative areas of Passaiyoor East, Passaiyoor West and parts of Columbothurai East as one single village for their day-to-day community living, while the DS and GN maintained the original borders for their administrative purposes.⁴⁶ Maps 8 and 9 illustrate this difference along with details of the interrelated resources:

Map 8: Village border of Passaiyoor East and adjoining villages



⁴⁶ The survey department prepares the digitized boundary maps as per the instructions from the DS office.

Map 9: Passaiyoor East GN division and details of community resources⁴⁷



It is along the concept of a community village that key resources, like the Diaspora clinic, are included as part of the village. Other visible institutions include the St. Joseph's School, St. Xavier's seminary and a playground on the Columbuturai East side of the village, and two other health centers, a Hindu temple, Holy Cross Hospital, a Roman Catholic church, a sub post office, the Road Development Authority (RDA) office and a small crab factory on the Passaiyoor West.

4.2 Economic and social linkages

The community's economic and social external links have evolved during the last thirty years. There were numerous blockades during the war, both on goods and movement, which curtailed interaction.⁴⁸ The people in the village are fairly happy with the quality of the local infrastructure.⁴⁹ There is, however, the problem of the harbor not being able to accommodate big boats due to the rocks under the water, discouraging non-locals with larger boats from using the harbor. The unique fishing methods used by the people had also meant they do not require large boats or advanced technology, and instead rely on their skills while working in small cohesive

⁴⁷ The community resources map was prepared for the report by Ms. Sakeena Alikhan and M. M. Alikhan.

⁴⁸ Interviews with religious leaders

⁴⁹ Discussions with Fishermen's Society and women's group

groups. Three hundred families in the village used to export prawns, crabs and cuttlefish to Colombo in 1983. Businessman would also travel from Colombo to buy fish in bulk and take them back. Nowadays, buyers arrive from Navanthurai, Jaffna town, Puttalam, and other cities in addition to Colombo.

The special ‘Kalankatti’ fishing method was well regarded by locals and outsiders alike.⁵⁰ Individuals who relocated to the village learned the technique and since some of the locals would work in outside areas, offshoots of it were known to have spread to places like Iranaitheevu, Palaitheevu, Puttalam, Chilaw and Mannar. The fishermen in the village usually rely on external sources for fishing accessories, though a wider variety of vendors are now coming to the village. The ropes, however, are still ordered from Colombo due to their higher standard and better price. Technicians are also known to visit intermittently to repair boat motors, despite the fact the village has several mechanics.⁵¹ The residents keep links with Jaffna town for a number of reasons. They make short visits to the city to do their banking, purchases such as building material, furniture, electronics, cloth etc. and for medical needs at the Jaffna teaching hospital. Students travel to attend well-known schools like St. John’s College, Chundikuli Girls’ College, Central College and Vempadi Girls’ College while young adults will go to the University of Jaffna and the Jaffna Technical College. People from neighboring villages and Jaffna town visit the village to see the sports and cultural events and take part in religious events at the St. Anthony’s Church.

There is medium and long-term migration of people to neighboring areas, nearby towns, distant cities and foreign lands due to both social and economic factors. People are also leaving to nearby villages and cities in Jaffna and Colombo for work. Marriage is also compelling locals to go to places such as Iranaimadu, Manippay and Mandaitheevu and others in Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar and Colombo. These individuals keep links with their families and the village, visiting on weekends or on monthly basis. Those who have left to countries like France, Germany, Australia, Canada and the UK, becoming members of the Diaspora, find it harder to visit frequently due to the distance, and substitute the physical presence with regular communication, remittances, finances for community activities and annual, bi-annual, emergency and special-occasions visits.⁵²

5. A place to live

5.1 Housing and physical environment

Considering its peri-urban nature and modest size, the village has a physical environment that is supportive of the lifestyle of its occupants.⁵³ According to official data, all of the houses in the

⁵⁰ The ‘Kalankatti’ method is where fishermen would set up wooden logs and nets similar to a ‘fence’ in the ocean and set a trap, where fish can be caught and retrieved alive in the morning.

⁵¹ Conversations with fishermen

⁵² Discussions with members of the women’s group and Fishermen’s Society

⁵³ For more information on defining the peri-urbanism, see <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/x8050t/x8050t02.htm>

village, barring one, have regular lighting since they all receive electricity and also have access to functioning toilets and water.⁵⁴ There are three hundred water sealed toilets for 343 families and four common toilets shared by eight families, with eighteen families yet to receive facilities. Pipeline water from ten common taps is used by 163 families and 173 families have access to 172 open private wells. There are eight common wells benefitting twenty-five families, including eight tube-wells used by eight families.

Of 364 houses in the village, 284 are permanent, forty-one rented and thirty-nine are stated as “others” according to the Samurdhi/Divineguma data. The DS office stated that eighty of these residences are of the temporary shelter type made of tin sheets and wooden planks, with some cement blocks and are open to the elements, suggesting that not everyone has adequate shelter and housing. The land properties belong to the locals and most have the necessary title documentation. Most houses are generally rather small, with one or two bedrooms, a hall, kitchen and an indoor or outdoor toilet, although some of the wealthier houses have more rooms and are more spacious. There is very little residential land in the village, and it is not unusual for two or three families to live in the same house on certain occasions. While this has meant a high level of congestion in the village, a positive feature of the closely-knit housing is that, according to residents, there are very few robberies.

The people were accustomed to renting houses in other places in Jaffna and in the Vanni during intermittent displacement. Upon return, they pawned their jewelry, took loans, and received help from friends and family, both locally and from abroad, to rebuild what was damaged or destroyed. Those who could not rebuild their houses stayed in the houses of their relatives or neighbors.⁵⁵ The Passaiyoor residents received very little housing compensation, though twenty-five Indian housing units were distributed to the neighboring villages.^{56, 57 58} Locals are known to leave the area due to insufficient land, but they hesitate to shift too far or for too long, as it may harm their livelihoods. Those who do permanently migrate leave at the cost of their social

⁵⁴ There was no electricity supply to Jaffna peninsula during 1990-1995. There was intermittent supply after the forces captured Jaffna in 1995. After the end of war in 2009 there was regular supply with some power cuts, similar to other places in the country.

⁵⁵ For more information on how people themselves financed internal displacement see: Amirthalingam, Kopalapillai and Rajith WD Lakshman, ‘Financing of Internal Displacement: Excerpts from the Sri Lankan Experience’, *Disasters* (2010): 34 (2): 402–25 and Korf, B. (2004). ‘War, Livelihoods and Vulnerability in Sri Lanka’, *Development and Change* 35, 275-295

⁵⁶ These houses were allocated to Columbuturai East. See <http://www.unhabitat.lk/project13.html>

⁵⁷ The provision of donor housing had at times led to issues such as increasing debt, see Romeshun, K, Vagisha Gunasekara, and Mohamed Munas (2014), *Life and Debt: Assessing Indebtedness and Socio-Economic Conditions of Conflict Affected Housing Beneficiaries in Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts*. Colombo: Centre for Poverty Analysis.

⁵⁸ For further research on debt among housing beneficiaries see Gunasekara, V., Nadhiya Najab, and Mohamed Munas (2015), *No Silver Bullet: An assessment of the effects of financial counseling on decision-making behavior of housing beneficiaries in Jaffna and Kilinochchi*, Colombo: Centre for Poverty Analysis.

networks due to the increased distance to the village. Further, they experience the insecurity of having to take up new livelihoods and make new homes in a new place.^{59, 60}

5.2 Violence, Health and Attitudes

The people of Passaiyoor experienced severe violence and hardship during the war. Skirmishes, bombardments, abductions, arrests, extortions and threats, as well as the general unpredictability and uncertainty all contributed to the danger. According to religious and community leaders in the village, life was uncertain during the period and there was a shortage of goods due to the blockade imposed by the security forces. With the restrictions and difficulties, people, mainly the young, had their activities restricted. Displacement, such as to Vaddukoddai in 2000, also meant many lost their livelihoods, leaving the families with no income.⁶¹ These people encounter a different kind of violence now with the ongoing post-war transition from what they experienced during the war. The Navy camp that was in the village, like so many other camps in the region, has been dismantled.⁶² So has the HSZ that displaced families in the village. With the reduced tension, freedoms of movement and liberalization of the economy, and the general ‘opening up of the region’, new shades of violence have sprung up and disrupted the traditional culture in the form of social, folk and attitudinal changes among people. The new issues are broadly connected to how people behave and relate to each other, and find origins in alcoholism, drugs and unemployment – much of which have resulted in emerging youth violence, crime, harassment of women and abuse. Alcoholism and drugs, in particular, are on the rise since the cessation of the earlier security issues, with young people having easy access to liquor, drugs, cigarettes, mobile phones, Internet, movies, and pornographic material or adult (blue) films.

‘The consumption of alcohol is continually on the rise, and the North is known for alcoholism,’ (Religious leaders)

Locals and non-residents working in the village had differences of opinion on the levels of alcohol consumption in Passaiyoor. Some regard alcoholism as being very low (twenty-five percent) due to the religious backdrop of the village, others say it is mostly among the elderly, due to the difficulties and strenuous nature of their work, while others say it is prevalent and dangerously rising particularly among youth, who in turn get involved in fights or criminal

⁵⁹ Sri Lanka has a history of providing Owner Driven (OD) and Donor Driven (DD) housing due to displacement caused by conflicts, natural disasters and development projects. The losses and benefits for recipients are complex during these occasions, see Vithanagama, R., Alikhan, M., Jayatilaka, D., and Lakshman, R.W.D. (2015). ‘Planned relocations in the context of natural disasters: The case of Sri Lanka’, Brookings–LSE Project on Internal Displacement, Washington DC. Link <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2015/06/planned-relocations-climate-change-sri-lanka-cmr-d>

⁶⁰ Studies have also shown the provision of a house does not necessarily mean people have been provided a ‘home’, as the home goes beyond the floor, walls and roof. For more information, see Brun, Cathrine, and Ragnhild Lund (2009), “‘Unpacking’ the Narrative of a National Housing Policy in Sri Lanka”. *Norwegian Journal of Geography* 63 (1): 10–22.

⁶¹ Conversations with members of the Fishermen’s Society.

⁶² During the conflict the camp was occupied by the Army, whereas the Navy replaced them after the war ended.

activities.⁶³ The Grama Niladari (GN), in particular, pointed out a direct link between liquor and youth violence and criminality, while others felt the smallness of the village meant there was no room for theft or crime, with the exception of a few incidents by “outsiders”.

‘A neighbor of mine has a son who is a drug addict. Apparently they get the drug in the form of toffees while away in school.’ (Member from Passaiyoor’s Fishermen’s Association)

According to the Women’s Association, there are about six hundred unemployed youth in the village area and they spend most of their time idling or watching movies. The majority, however, does not necessarily cause law and order issues. Words such as ‘spoilt,’ ‘wrong path,’ ‘undisciplined,’ ‘drinking,’ ‘smoking,’ ‘no respect,’ ‘catcalling,’ ‘immature,’ ‘gangs,’ ‘knives,’ ‘threats,’ ‘bad language’ and ‘very bad’ were used to describe young people who stirred trouble as well as the overall situation. Some pointed out that the youth were deliberately corrupted by the security forces and local politicians.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the frequent remittances from kith and kin abroad as well as the prospects for migration were also considered disincentives for committing to a steady vocation and employment.

‘Robberies do not take place here since houses are built closer together.’ (Staff at the Diaspora Medical Center)

Locals have noticed negative changes among the families, such as increasing aggressiveness and family quarrels, rising domestic violence and higher divorce rates. The residents believe these changes have occurred mostly after the end of the war. Still, open fights among people in the village are limited, for the time being, which may be why most individuals describe the village as a peaceful and quiet place.⁶⁵ There are allegedly no cases of reported sexual assaults/harassment of women in the village *per se*, though respondents insinuated harassment by youths and are aware of serious incidents in the region, and the breakdown of conservative practices among people.⁶⁶ Some people are concerned about the loose approach of the Police and Army as potentially being partly responsible for perpetuating these problems.

Residents are particularly critical of the Police, saying their role is ineffective and pointed out the case of the rape and murder of a young girl by a gang of local youths in Punkudutheevu, Jaffna.⁶⁷ While they blame the gang members who carried out the criminal act, the cultural changes, isolation of the settlements, the scrub, forests and abandoned houses, as a result to large scale

⁶³ Discussions with various individuals (men, women, Grama Niladari (GN), religious figures and medical staff)

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ The lack of externally visible violence was corroborated by the medical officer and village leaders who said there were only 2-3 open fights in the last three years and that people did not exhibit bad habits due to their involvement with religion.

⁶⁶ See <http://www.ceylontoday.lk/51-93657-news-detail-pornography-takes-toll-in-the-north.html>

⁶⁷ <http://nation.lk/online/2015/06/27/report-on-sexual-violence-against-children-in-jaffna-district/> and <http://www.dailynews.lk/?q=features/watchful-eye-under-palmyra-grove>

inbound and outbound migration have also been put at fault. Locals also hold the Police responsible for allowing the group, and other such violent groups, to operate quite freely in the open.⁶⁸ The frequent transfer of Police officers, due to political considerations, has also been a problem in the area for maintaining law and order consistently.⁶⁹ However, as per some interviews, these situations may be in the process of changing in a positive direction since the elections on January 8th, 2015, and local people are hopeful that these incidents will not happen in the area of their village.

'The senior Police officer who is currently in charge here has told us to inform him if policemen are not doing their job properly. He assured us that he will take action first against such policemen. He will also go to every village and hold meetings with the people.' (Community leader)

The health clinic, sponsored by the French diaspora, began operations on 15th May 2004.⁷⁰ It operates in a rented house three times a week from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.⁷¹ Two senior medical workers come to the clinic and work with the help of three nurses and four other staff. Approximately twenty-five patients come in a single day, tallying an average of seventy-five patients per week. The doctor involved with the clinic feels the Passaiyoor people have good health, due to the regular consumption of seafood, hard work and not indulging in bad habits (such as consuming alcohol and smoking), though some other respondents expressed different views on this.⁷² These views were partially corroborated by the women in the village who say their men have very high immunity to diseases while non-communicable diseases were also low. The women say there were over fifty or so individuals who suffer from ailments such as high blood pressure, diabetes, high blood cholesterol, rheumatism and heart disease. These ailments, they say, were caused by anxiety during the war.⁷³ ⁷⁴ Cancer is currently a rare sickness, along with dengue; however, a few cases of respiratory infections and tuberculosis are still evident.

⁶⁸ See <http://www.newindianexpress.com/world/Post-War-Systemic-Breakdown-Blamed-For-Jaffna-Rape-and-Mayhem/2015/05/22/article2827962.ece>

⁶⁹ According to interviews with a community leader over a 100 Police officers would have been transferred during the past 5 years.

⁷⁰ Discussions with diaspora members and clinic staff.

⁷¹ The timing is important here because fishermen return to the shore in the morning and sleep. They wake up by noon and cannot go to the Jaffna teaching hospital by evening because the Outpatient Department (OPD) section will not function during late evening and nights. So the Passaiyoor clinic which operates from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. is extremely convenient for them.

⁷² The conflicting views on alcohol consumption could mean that the middle-aged and older groups the doctor occasionally saw did not consume much alcohol but it was the younger generation that did so.

⁷³ According to the doctor, there are no suicides in the village, and he had not come across any Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) cases. It is also possible he did not have the specialized training to detect individual or collective trauma, especially since there were increasing alcoholism, family quarrels, divorces, unemployment and the desire to leave the location and travel to other countries as a way to solve the problems.

⁷⁴ For more information on mental health in Jaffna see Somasundaram, Daya and Sambasivamoorthy Sivayokan. (2000). *Mental Health in the Tamil Community*. Jaffna: Transcultural Psychosocial Organization.

Fifty families are believed to have been affected by floods and risked sickness during the rainy period.⁷⁵

Photo 7: Diaspora Health Clinic



The women and clergy note that people's habits are changing with cultural depravity occurring, and blame it on development, i.e. the hotel industry, prostitution, and access to communication and media devices. According to them, students are also known to go to Colombo and become corrupted and in turn teach inappropriate behavior to their friends in the village.⁷⁶ All those who were interviewed unanimously agree that more goods and facilities are available now than during the war due to the region connecting to trade with the rest of the country. Yet, it also means the circumstance encourages people to become materialistic and vulnerable to fluctuations in resources, labor and forms of exploitation. According to local leaders, most things can be bought or leased nowadays, and people, due to new consumerist attitudes, want to imitate others. However, due to their lack of understanding and simplicity, these individuals make poorly planned decisions, do outright purchases or buy outside of their means, do leases and bad investments, and consequentially fall into a debt trap with various struggles.⁷⁷

'People want to be like others. For instance, if someone has an LED TV, then the others also want to own one.' (Religious leaders)

'The number of people in Jaffna is low, but there are many banks. They compete with each other by offering loans without considering the income of the people. The people take loans because they want to live in comfort after the thirty-year war. The banks utilize this and offer many loans. In the end, the people sell their property because they are unable to repay.' (Religious leaders)

⁷⁵ According to data compiled by the Jaffna DS office (2014) there were fifteen disabled people in the village, nine males and six females.

⁷⁶ Discussions with religious leaders.

⁷⁷ See <http://www.sundaytimes.lk/141207/news/north-in-a-debt-trap-131679.html>

Both the rich and destitute live in the village. Mr. Raja, Mr. David and Mr. Sebastiampillai are a few of the rich businessmen and influential politicians whom people refer to with admiration and respect.⁷⁸ Inhabitants see these people who implicitly and explicitly control the functioning of the village as role models for the community.

Most of the destitute live in Puthukudiyiruppu, near Passaiyoor, due to the large number of widows, families with many children and high levels of unemployment.⁷⁹ Occupation-related difficulties, daily meals, schooling and issues related to loans are foremost in their day-to-day anxieties. Previously, during the war period, fishermen were allowed limited fishing access, and while the restrictions have been lifted, what were once lucrative incomes have now fallen to a fraction, due to saturation and poaching by local and Indian fishermen⁸⁰. Those who had taken up underwater fishing now have to go deeper (up to thirty feet) to catch fish, causing illnesses and other health problems among both the older and younger generations.⁸¹

'There may be a situation in the future where we may have to leave the industry. We are in a real fix because everyone is ready to come here to fish.' (Passaiyoor Fishermen's Society)

The competition also means locals have to travel further, to areas they are unfamiliar with, and resort to different and expensive techniques to gain the daily catch, while also negotiating territorial issues with other fishermen.

5.3 Resources, facilities and donor support

Passaiyoor has a number of human, financial, natural and physical resources. These include the sea, the harbor, boats, the market, fishing acumen, schools, a playground, an elderly home, clinic and diaspora societies. The residents give a lot of credit to the diaspora due to the remittances that continue to be provided for day-to-day living, furnishing of houses and the monetary assistance to support the hospital, education programs, purchasing of fishing equipment and start-up costs for small- and medium-scale entrepreneurial activities. The church also receives help from the diaspora in France, Germany and Australia. Around fifty percent of the families in the village receive foreign remittances, and the general opinion was that life would be – and would have been – very difficult if it were not for the foreign assistance from friends and family.

⁷⁸ The names of the respondents have been changed throughout the report to maintain confidentiality.

⁷⁹ According to the Department of Census and Statistics (2012), the North, including Jaffna, has a higher proportion of unmarried, widowed, divorced and separated women compared to national figures: unmarried (National 22%, North 27.4%, Jaffna 29.1%); widowed (National 8.7%, North 11.4%, Jaffna 12%); divorced (National 0.3%, North 0.2%, Jaffna 0.2%); and separated (National 1.1%, North 1.9%, Jaffna 1.9%). See link <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PopHouSat/CPH2011/index.php?fileName=Northern&gp=Activities&tpl=3>

⁸⁰ For more information on the impact of displacement on fishing see: Amirthalingam, Kopalapillai and Lakshman, Rajith (2015), 'Impact of Internal Displacement on Agricultural Livelihoods: Evidence from Sampur, Sri Lanka', *Migration and Development*, 4 (1): 143-162.

⁸¹ The local fishermen do not use oxygen cylinders due to the shallow fishing they are used to and because they cannot afford the equipment.

The people of the village speak openly about receiving little or no assistance from the government, NGOs or private organizations, and that it was the diaspora funding that kept them afloat during the war. According to interviews with members of the diaspora, there are around one hundred families from Passaiyoor in Germany and 250 families in France. The Global Societies of People who were formerly from Passaiyoor are also found in fairly new societies in Australia and Canada.

‘We are not struggling, thanks to these people. The monetary assistance we received from abroad was of great use during the war.’ (Passaiyoor Fishermen’s Society)

Along with the specialized fishing skills, which make up the foremost human resource of the village, the harbor and the market are the most significant physical resources in the locality. The harbor was first established in the 1930s and 40s by the then-powerful politician, G.G. Ponnambalam, and was soon renovated by foreign aid actors together with the government after the war, while the Fishermen’s Society refurbished the market and auction hall. In spite of their disappointment with donors, the community understands the values of these assets and their implications for livelihoods. The harbor has been useful for the safe and secure anchorage of boats, and the market functions throughout the week. There are a number of motor repair and accessory selling shops, a boat yard and a place that makes boats in the town, all of which cater to and service the fishing industry. Boat motor companies are also known to come once in six months for servicing and selling purposes. Still, since there is no proper factory or storage facility, the fishermen are neither able to preserve the fish caught nor do any value additions in the production chain.⁸² Hence, most fishermen feel they lack the opportunity to expand their incomes and develop the sector, while wholesale buyers and middle-men continue to make larger profits.⁸³

Photos 8 and 9: The Passaiyoor fishing harbor-anchorage and the market



⁸² According to interviews, the local industry does not receive any support to develop the sector.

⁸³ According to the fishermen, prawns were sold at Rs. 700 a kilogram at the auction while the same would be sold for Rs. 1500 in Puttalam by the outside buyers. This type of margin also applies to crabs (sold at Rs. 500 per kilogram) and tuna (Rs. 600 per kilogram). The fishermen have tried to increase the prices, but the volume sold would decrease substantially.

The St. Anthony's Church is a key social, spiritual and physical resource in the village. The late Reverend Delan built the two hundred fifty-year-old famous institution and his body is buried underneath the church. The people fondly remember him for his remarkable service to the village.⁸⁴ Passaiyoor's people are satisfied with several of the villages' physical resources such as the roads, the hospital-clinic and the schools (St. Anthony's Girls' School in the village and the nearby St. Joseph's Boys' School). The St. Joseph's Home for Elders caters to the needy in Passaiyoor and other villages. The diaspora clinic has been a particular boon to the residents, due to its subsidized cost and work hours alongside the schedules of the fishermen.⁸⁵ The clinic's functions are largely financed by the diaspora and the patients are charged only a token fee. The set-up cost for the clinic was Rs. 260,000 with the monthly expenses costing Rs. 160,000, which includes the monthly salary of each doctor (Rs. 25,000), the nurses (Rs. 3500), and the workers, (Rs. 3000). Plans are in line to donate twenty-five pairs of spectacles to the elderly during the year. The Diaspora sends money every month to buy medicines and cover some of the operation costs. St. Joseph's Home for Elders functions directly under the supervision of the Bishop and the church, and receives support locally and from abroad. Only a few Passaiyoor people are in the elders' home, with the majority of the occupants being from other villages.

The locals have concerns about their natural resources, which include the sea and its rich stock of fish. The depleting catch of fish in recent years is attributed to the 2004 Tsunami, the 2008 Nissa cyclone, poaching by Indian fishermen and climate change issues that have caused higher concentrations of mud in the area. The Indian poaching is known to take place fifteen to twenty km away using trawlers that damage the coral reefs.⁸⁶ Local fishermen refrain from going to sea during Monday, Wednesday and Friday, as those are the days the Indian trawlers come. The Indian fishermen's big boats had, on earlier occasions, damaged the fishing nets according to the Passaiyoor fishermen. The locals do not own big fishing craft because they are unable to afford them, and the seabeds in the shallow waters near the harbor are too rocky. The local fishermen have been distressed by the fact that their government, provincial council and minister provided almost no support or any meaningful direction to protect and promote the local resources, while the Indians continued to exploit them and preserved their own resources.

'In India they do not go to sea during the month of July, because that is the season when fish multiply. During those times their government assists the fishermen. It will be very good if that method can be adopted here.' (Mr. Raja, businessman involved in fishing)

⁸⁴ The late Reverend Delan came from France and built the famous church. He also helped with livelihoods by introducing the unique fishing technique. Today, both the church and the particular fishing method play key roles in the people's lives.

⁸⁵ The charge at the clinic is just Rs. 100 (whereas Holy Cross clinic would charge Rs. 350 – 400) and everything else is provided free of charge. Furthermore, since fishermen do their work in the night and sleep till about 3 p.m., and are unable to access the government OPD in Jaffna town after 4 p.m., the clinic functions in the evening providing them a convenient service nearby, saving time and money.

⁸⁶ Conversations with fishermen and their wives.

While there is a cluster of shops in town selling various odds and ends that provide income for local men and women, people spoke of additional income-generating areas that could be promoted. Suggestions included sewing shops, cooking utensil renting shops, poultry rearing, rope-making and fishing net production – all of which could draw on available human resources in the village, while diversifying livelihoods. Currently twenty percent of the people in the village have limited incomes and are struggling. Therefore, the Samurdhi/Divineguma programme has been a necessary financial support base for locals where groups are eligible for loans on a rotational basis.⁸⁷ These programmes have been an important safety net for the poor and vulnerable, especially for the widows living in the village.⁸⁸

Photos 10 and 11: Women’s group involved with microcredit programmes and the girls’ school in the village



There are a number of tarred main roads and lanes in the village helping mobility and transport of goods – their upkeep being reasonably satisfactory according to locals. The public and semi-private buildings in the village, ranging from the church, market, society building, school and elders’ home to the various businesses, are of a mixed nature – neither well-maintained nor dilapidated – but functioning in that they provide services to the people. Residents occasionally travel to get services from St. Patrick’s College, St. John’s College, St. Bosco College, the English Convent, the Jaffna Teaching Hospital, banks and the Jaffna Library. Locals speak of community problems related to the local environment, where they have had to clean up the coastal moss and other vegetation using their own finances during the Southwestern monsoons.

⁸⁷ According to the Women’s Microfinance Group (MFG) of the Passaiyoor Fishermen’s Association, there are forty-eight micro-groups in the village. Each group has around five members, who each pay Rs. 20 every week. They receive interest from the Samurdhi bank. If there is Rs. 25,000 in the account, then all can get loans of up to Rs. 100,000 on a rotational installment basis. The interest is calculated at five percent for the deposit and eight percent for the loan.

⁸⁸ Subsidies are paid on a monthly basis by Samurdhi. If there are more than six members in the family then Rs. 1500 is paid, and if there are less than six members, Rs. 750 is paid.

Proximity to the lagoon and low land also means fifty or so houses are affected by floods during the rainy seasons.

Photos 12 and 13: Main road and by roads in the village



As discussed earlier, there has been limited donor involvement in the community, with the exception of the harbor. The intervention was also at the community level, rather than individual or family level. While there were no NGOs operating in the village during the time of the study, agencies such as UNHCR and WFP had provided some emergency assistance together with the DS office during the war. The DFAT, IOM, UNOPS and Hellenic Aid together with Ministries and Departments jointly reconstructed the fisheries harbor with the project lasting from June 2010 to June 2013 at a cost Rs. 59,000,000.⁸⁹ The aid actors chose to provide community-level support rather than individual-level assistance, as the former was thought to be more effective via consultation with the local people.⁹⁰ The government programmes, mainly poverty alleviation exercises, were operational on the ground, but there were mixed views about their effectiveness in addressing the core needs of the people. Some of the respondents feel discrimination was still practiced five years after the end of the war, and that Sinhalese are favored for government posts and recruitments in various development projects.

‘There is only one Tamil officer at the railway station and some government documents are still printed in Sinhala.’ (Religious leaders)

In this light, the Diaspora’s continued engagement with the community has created an active network that has been a powerful social resource. It has helped locals with networking and psychological support, in addition to the financial and material assistance. One could even consider the diaspora as having acted as the donors for the village due to circumstance. Along with the German and French diaspora societies that have been very active in the village, a new

⁸⁹ The DFAT funding to the IOM for the harbor was provided through the Australian Community Rehabilitation Programme (ACRP).

⁹⁰ Discussions with IOM officers.

society by the name of Passaiyoor Education Arts Culture Development Society will soon be launched with the society President from Germany, Vice President from Australia and the Secretary from France.

The French and German societies are currently discussing two key projects for the village: the construction of an indoor sports stadium and the opening of a library. The German embassy in Sri Lanka has offered to help construct the stadium, according to diaspora members, which would cater to and promote athleticism and appreciation for sports in the area. According to these same members, the British Council had promised to help renovate the old British building that was originally built for issuing visas, and grant the wishes of the French diaspora by opening a library, using thirty thousand books provided by German supporters with land donated by an individual donor residing in Canada. This would allow local children to remain close to home as opposed to traveling to Jaffna town in order to access a library.⁹¹ These books were collected from Jaffna and transported to Germany by a local person during the wartime. Now the well-wisher is donating these books to the proposed library to be used by local people. More details on these ventures are discussed later in the report.

Photo 14: The proposed building to be renovated as a library by the diaspora



6. A Social Community

6.1 Involvement in Social Life

The village has a number of main social events that take place throughout the year (see Table 4 below). These activities generally play a key part in strengthening social interactions among the villagers and outsiders. The fish market and the church attract a lot of people with many coming to the daily fish auction while visiting the church on Tuesdays. Vendors also come from other

⁹¹ Discussions with diaspora members, village leaders and members of the Sports Society.

villages to sell products like vegetables, plastic goods, fishing equipment, sports material and products needed by the church at the market.

Table 4: Calendar of main social activities in the village

Event	Time
Sports	January, April and June and December
Feast of St. Anthony (Church)	June 1 – 13
Drama and Music	June, August (after Feast)
Festivals	December (Christmas), January (New Year)

The residents of Passaiyoor consider themselves united and supportive to each other. The shared occupations, similar interests, devotion to religion, collective suffering, migration and diaspora connections could partly be the reason for the healthy attitude. A number of societies in the village that facilitate such social cohesion include the Youth Club, Women’s Development Society, Fishermen’s Society, Church Club, French Society, German Society and the Divineguma Club. Youth networks focus on sports (St. Anthony’s Sports Club) and other developments, as well as activities to meet local needs. Additionally, groups often socialize with each other at informal networks in road junctions and various corners. The formal groups, however, function separately, as opposed to before the war, when joint meetings would take place. Further, members generally do not know about the activities of other groups.

Photo 15: Village Community Center



6.2 Formal and informal networks

The numerous societies have helped anchor people to the village, while also helping them bond with each other. This applies to both the local and foreign societies, and also to those people who had left the village. The Fishermen’s Society, founded in 1954, currently has 650 members, each

paying a monthly subscription of Rs. 50, with a new committee appointed every two years.⁹² The organization's mandate includes supporting the local fishermen, helping the maintenance of their boats, managing the functioning of the harbor and market, resolving conflicts, etc. They are also tasked with preserving their industry. Aware that more people are leaving the industry, due to the growing challenges and people's eroding confidence in the sector, the Society generally tries to encourage others to stay by offering adequate support.

'When some fishermen leave the industry, the others are also forced to leave because they do not have enough people to undertake fishing. If their friends leave, others also will leave.' (Divineguma officer)

The diaspora societies and individual personalities of the village, such as the successful business people (fish retailer/exporter) or the influential Provincial Council member, create social awareness and influence linkages in the village.⁹³ The French and German diaspora societies have been helpful in preserving some of the cohesiveness of the community. Besides the relief and development support, they have assisted in running night schools and financially supported forty-six students in their tertiary education (attending University of Jaffna etc.).⁹⁴ According to diaspora members, these students, now adults, are helping the community and foreign groups do similar activities in the village. They have also supported dowries by helping individuals migrate to France and Germany in order to earn incomes and provide reasonable dowries for their sisters' or daughters' marriages.⁹⁵ Kith and kin in the diaspora usually keep in close touch informally and visit the village for various reasons such as annual visits, special events, funerals, illnesses and to visit their parents.⁹⁶

The village soccer games and dramas have always been a popular pursuit next to fishing. According to members in the sports club, fishermen would go out to fish in the shallow seas at 4 a.m. and return by 8 a.m., back in the earlier days. They would play football afterwards and became known for their prowess in the game, with the village producing a number of national level players.⁹⁷ The Sports Club was established in 1934 and two groups of sports teams originated from two villages. These villages, Passaiyoor and Kurunagar, were known to compete back in 1940s. This spilt between the two villages resulted in various competitions between members and new strands of friendly rivalry between the two groups in the form of folk-drama,

⁹² The organization has its own finances and built the Fishermen's Society building using three million rupees of its funds.

⁹³ According to interviews, there are about five hundred people from the village who live in European countries. Of those who left, ten percent live in the Middle East and ninety percent are in Europe.

⁹⁴ Night schools were run during the war to help students catch up with their education. They recruited four teachers and paid each Rs. 2500 per month.

⁹⁵ Forty members from the Passaiyoor French Society assist low-income families, where they have each pooled ten Euro each per month for the past twelve years and continue to do so. These funds are used to help anyone in the village who urgently needs money for an emergency, wedding, sickness etc.

⁹⁶ Interviews with diaspora members and the Women's Society.

⁹⁷ Six villagers are known to have joined the National Squad for soccer at various times.

art, singing and playing drums.⁹⁸ As the local talents and excellence in sports increased, official annual competitions began to take place.

Photos 16 and 17: Sports ground and statue of filmstar and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran (MGR)



The Passaiyoor people's aptitude for the arts is also well known in the region. They have been placed first in Kovalan-Kannagi and state drama competitions; first in the 2014 folk-drama competition in Jaffna and third at the provincial level that year.⁹⁹ Though practicing drama was difficult with the security restrictions and disruptions during the conflict and displacement, drama has been commonly taught at school, from preschool-level onwards. The dramas are known to take place till dawn every year during festivals where children, youth and adults alike get to test and exhibit their talents. According to the Women's Society and village leaders, these periods are generally very exciting for the villagers, with rehearsals taking place in houses and the community mobilizing support for the events.

'Many poets were created as a result of our dramas. We created the entire story and presented it though song and dance.' (Sports Club members)

6.3 Religion, Caste and Gender

The majority of those who live in the village are Catholics, the rest being a small number of Hindus. Ninety percent of the people are Roman Catholic and nine percent belong to Non-Roman Catholic churches. There are roughly ten worshipping places in the village with the almost-two-hundred-year-old St. Anthony's being the main church. The other churches, such as the Jehovah's Witness church, Pentecostal churches and Protestant churches, are around thirty-five years old.¹⁰⁰ People in the village are very connected to their churches, especially to St.

⁹⁸ Discussion with sports club members.

⁹⁹ The village was placed first out of 153 competitors in the national drama competition in 1965. They also staged dramas three times in the international arena.

¹⁰⁰ Interviews with religious leaders.

Anthony's Church, with three masses held on Sunday hosting close to one thousand people from both within and outside the village.¹⁰¹ A similar number is known to attend the service on Tuesdays. According to the Passaiyoor Women's Society, which includes members of the church group, it is compulsory to attend Sunday mass, and local people are expected to strictly observe the commandments of the religion. Generally, over ninety percent of the people attend mass, with the men attending the evening mass due to their work, and the women taking part both in the morning and evening.

Photos 18 and 19: St. Anthony's Church and Mass



The locals say that the war brought them closer to religion and strengthened their belief in God. Religion has also informed them of how to live life and has helped them stay motivated, perform their duties and stay interconnected. Being strongly religious, many people lead structured and quiet lives with few deviations. They generally try to stay pious, help their family, friends and fellow villagers should the opportunity arise. The parents teach their children positive values, both as moral principles and cultural practices, though there are contentious views on the scale of alcohol and drug use among youth.¹⁰² The church conducts various outreach activities discouraging alcoholism, quarrels and family breakups. The affinity to spirituality most likely created the bedrock for the lifestyle and attitudes of the locals, such as their focus on work, attachment to family, relationships, sports and culture. It may have also been influential in helping people overcome their previous experiences, heal their wounds and move on from the past, peacefully supporting the community's recovery and social rehabilitation process.

¹⁰¹ See St. Anthony's feast in Passaiyoor <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTluCccX8lw>.

¹⁰² The low consumption of alcohol and smoking in the village is attributed to the deep involvement with religion.

'Our area is one blessed by God. We have marine resources, arts, education and music here.' (Passaiyoor Fishermen's Society member)

There are no visible caste differences in the village due to the locals being from the same fishing community. Due to such little variation in caste and religion, there are close relationships between all of the families and marriages. Since they do not generally encourage association with people of different castes, there are few inter-caste and inter-religious marriages.

People admit that women, particularly widows, are struggling.¹⁰³ The one hundred women who had lost their husbands face situations related to both income and protection, and are forced to depend on their children.¹⁰⁴ The majority of the interviews indicated that issues such as assault, abuse and domestic violence were not prevalent, and that those were not the primary problems women faced, though there were others who said domestic violence and assaults were on the rise. Respondents pointed out that young women were finding it difficult to find suitable employment. Accordingly, many who had completed their Ordinary Level (O/L) and Advanced Level (A/L) were unemployed and staying at home.¹⁰⁵ Further, while more girls are studying now, their enrollment in the universities is low.¹⁰⁶ Parents and elders in the village blame emerging bad influences and distractions such as television and mobile phones for the failing academic interests.¹⁰⁷ Protecting the girls from any risks was also a principal factor; parents were reluctant to send them out for education or work due to the presence of the Army and unruly youth in the area.

Dowry practices among the Tamil community in the region have also been changing since the war.¹⁰⁸ The customs have evolved in various ways, some of it problematic to those in Passaiyoor, particularly when they have to negotiate with grooms abroad. There is already a land and housing shortage in the village and the locals generally do not have much money and jewelry to give. The poor have been especially disadvantaged, though there are some instances where the diaspora had come forward to help with the dowry. Sometimes, grooms abroad do not ask for dowry, but may request some type of small cash (or jewelry) dowry and mostly wish the girl to

¹⁰³ For an account of gendered impacts of displacement, see: Amirthalingam, Kopalapillai and Rajith WD Lakshman. (2012). 'Impact of Displacement on Women and Female-headed Households: A Mixed Method Analysis with a Microeconomic Touch', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 26 (1): 26-46.

¹⁰⁴ For more information on gendering disasters, the disproportionate impacts women face and their coping strategies, see: De Mel, Neloufer and Kanchana N. Ruwanpura. (2006). *Gendering the Tsunami: Women's Experiences from Sri Lanka*. International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka

¹⁰⁵ For information on women's labour participation patterns, see: Gunatilaka, Ramani (2013), *Women's Participation in Sri Lanka's Labour Force: Trends, Drivers and Constraints*, ILO. Link http://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_215445/lang--en/index.htm

¹⁰⁶ According to interviews, ten years ago twenty-two girls attended the university, and now only five attend.

¹⁰⁷ Discussions with the Women's Society and microfinance group.

¹⁰⁸ The practice of dowry has undergone complex changes in the Tamil community due to conflict, displacement and migration, and is continuing to evolve. For more information, see: Jayatilaka, D., and Amirthalingam, K. (2015). 'The Impact of Displacement on Dowries in Sri Lanka', Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement, Washington DC. Link <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2015/02/04-dowries-displacement-sri-lanka>

join them. The village's people believe the problems started largely after families began receiving remittances from abroad, which was a new form of wealth. One example of an unforeseen externality were increased land prices, which were perceived to be a result of increased remittances. In an interview, village leaders stated that the education rates among males are low compared to females, the main reason being that males go to work in order to solve family problems relating to finances. The chances for men to find work are also higher than they are for women, so when boys fail their A/Ls, they start working immediately in either fishing or another trade. In the respondent's opinion, men generally search for employment in the private sector while women are keen on state employment, due to the latter being perceived as being more respectable.¹⁰⁹ The Development Officer for the village felt there was a visible male-female differentiation. Many women have studied and are working in good jobs; however, according to discussions with the officer, even if women go to work and earn, they are not often treated as equals.¹¹⁰

7. An Economic Community

7.1 Fisheries Industry: Resources, Process and Trade

Fishermen in Passaiyoor use the 'Kalankatti'/ 'Sirahu valai' (wing net) method. The technique originated in the village and it allows the locals to catch and sell the fish while they are still alive. The particularly desirable method is known to keep the fish fresh.¹¹¹ The small, shallow-water fish from Passaiyoor are also considered tastier than those at other locations. Due to their popularity in the region, the fishermen do not generally catch big fish, for which they need to travel to the deep sea. The modest jetty is also conducive to the fishermen's use of small boats, which they use to do their fishing according to a seasonal calendar (see Table 5).¹¹²

Table 5: Seasonal calendar in Passaiyoor

Incident	Period
High amount of fish	March – April, November – December
Low amount of fish	June – September
Heavy rain	October – November
Intense sunshine/heat	February – August
Winds	April – November
Growth of moss/less fishing	April – September

¹⁰⁹ Interview with village leader.

¹¹⁰ For details on barriers to women's growth, see Sarvananthan, Muttukrishna. (2014). 'Impediments to Women in Post-Civil War Economic Growth in Sri Lanka'. Point Pedro Institute of Development, Point Pedro, Jaffna, Sri Lanka, 2014.

¹¹¹ The method is used since there is muddy soil in Passaiyoor and the water is not deep. The fishermen are able to catch and sell fish while it is still fresh. They may even manage to sell the fish while the fish are still alive, or within one hour of dying. The method is particularly useful as it can be used in shallow areas of the sea.

¹¹² The local fishermen have intimate knowledge of the patterns and behaviors of the fish.

According to interviews with fishermen, their wives and government officials, some amount of fish is generally available throughout the year, except for the months of June and July, and sometimes August and September. The catch is known to be especially high during the end of the year, because of the rainy season, and sometimes in May, due to the winds. The weather change in the middle of the year always reduces the amount that can be caught.¹¹³ The locals believe their special method of catching fish has spread, where other villages have learnt the art, and sometimes modified it using baskets in waters that are of low depths.

‘Since this method is used in shallow waters everyone wants to use it... there is a demand for fresh fish here, and our fish are tasty.’ (Fisherman)

The specialized Kalankatti method requires little investment, and the local fishermen have not shown interest in other techniques. While there are numerous other technologies used in the region, this one is comparatively less expensive, with an initial investment of around Rs. 1,000,000, which is broken up into Rs. 300,000 for the boat, Rs. 300,000 for the motor and 400,000 for the nets, in addition to the recurring fuel, labor and repair costs. There are 250 boats in the village, almost all of them owned by the locals. The owner of a boat can earn at least Rs. 40,000 a month, minus the running expenses and sunk costs, whereas a laborer may earn Rs. 15,000 a month, of which around Rs. 5000 would go for expenses.¹¹⁴

Passaiyoor is foremost a fishing village and, therefore, much of the local economy revolves around the sector. Shops, which sell nets and products related to fishing, are open seven days a week. Additionally, ten small shops sell household goods to the fishermen and their families, where the owners earn a profit of around Rs. 20,000 a month; five small restaurants that serve the locals; two ‘fancy goods’ shops that also sell sports equipment, which earn Rs.15,000 or so a month; and two or three boat and motor repair shops. Two houses in the village are known to produce dried fish, earning approximately Rs. 30,000 a month. The turnover and profits of these businesses are usually closely correlated to the incomes of the fishermen, a general trend in which the shops also suffer when the catch of fish is poor and do well when the catch is generous.

The market – the main hub of the village – opens at 7 a.m. every day and functions till noon. It has about fifty stalls, each occupied by one or two fishermen or members of their family. There are generally a number of vegetable sellers and other vendors marketing their products on the roadside, making the market area crowded and very active during the mornings. The auction building adjoining the market sees the distribution of fish taking place in two ways: either retail merchants buy the fish on a small scale at the auction to sell to households, or the price is decided by the auction and the fish is sent to other areas on a large scale on vans and trucks.¹¹⁵ Since the market operates next to the auction hall, at times limited stocks and particular varieties

¹¹³ Discussions with members of the Fishermen’s Society.

¹¹⁴ Conversations with fishermen and Samurdhi/Divineguma officers.

¹¹⁵ Interviews with fishermen and government officers.

of fish are sold there. The fishermen try to set a standard of selling live fish, with most of the fish sold locally and the crabs, cuttlefish and prawns sent to Colombo or to places that are closer.¹¹⁶ Generally around 150 people are present at the auction and five to ten auctioneers continue to call for prices as the fish are brought in.¹¹⁷ These auctioneers are not necessarily fishermen, and often assist the actual fishermen in small ways by giving loans or acting as financial backers to them, so that the profits are shared.¹¹⁸ This collection of photos shows how the boats arrive and how the fish are unloaded, auctioned and sold at the market. It also depicts local door-to-door fish sellers or non-residents who come from the city and other districts.

Photos 20 to 23: The fishing activities sequence



¹¹⁶ Exports to Colombo are generally done when there is a large volume, otherwise the catch maybe sold locally or to buyers in the region.

¹¹⁷ The process is very rapid where a new batch of fish gets sold in just a few minutes, as the boats keep pulling in and unloading their stock.

¹¹⁸ The rich businessman has fifty boats under him and gives the fishermen money for their business and interest free loans. He receives a commission of Rs. 8 for every Rs. 100 of fish sold.

The locals admit that their fishing industry is changing. One hundred percent of the people in the village were previously involved in fishing. It has reduced to around ninety percent, with increasing numbers finding secondary occupations or thinking of completely leaving the sector.¹¹⁹ A combination of higher expectations, declining income and the rising cost of production has been the main problem. Those who do make better incomes say the profits do not keep pace with the increasing cost of living, leaving them smaller disposable incomes for consumption, reinvestments or savings.

'We used to catch 100 kg worth of fish, but now we only catch about 50 kg. Our income has fallen due to this change in volume.' (Fisherman)

The fishermen fear the stock of fish in the sea is depleting and is unable to regenerate itself. Many were of the opinion that the situation would become worse if they continue to fish. There is a common belief that the Tsunami and the cyclone Nissa affected the sea and fish habitats, forcing fishermen to travel further out to sea, incurring greater expenses while competing with other fishermen and bigger vessels. Respondents also felt certain types of nets and techniques of catching fish – such as bottom trawling and dynamiting – were unsustainable and destroying fish habitats and needed to be banned completely, with tighter restrictions and new regulations introduced.¹²⁰ Accordingly, while certain guidelines are in place, they are relaxed during election times or poorly monitored in general.

The saturation of the fishing industry has been a problem since the government lifted fishing restrictions after the end of the war, due to more fishermen catching more fish. Some local trawlers from Kurunagar, Thalaimannar and Pesalai are known to fish within two miles of the village coast, but have been temporarily stopped. Local fishermen also feel bitter about the poaching done by the Indian fishermen and say the Indians should take some of the blame for the declining incomes and livelihood insecurities of the locals. Passaiyoor people have no communication with these foreigners who come to fish fifteen to twenty km away, but are aware that the big trawlers, with their bottom trawling, are playing havoc with the ecosystem's population, the reefs and vegetation and, in effect, turning the naturally rich ocean floor bed – the Passaiyoor people's most important resource – into under-water wastelands.

'We are in a fix because everyone is ready to come here to fish. We do not get any assistance from the Provincial Council. Neither do we receive any assistance from the Minister.' (Fisherman)

¹¹⁹ Discussions with members of the Fishermen's Society.

¹²⁰ Such illegal nets and bottom trawling methods also referred to as 'dragging', where a large net with heavy weights is dragged across the sea floor scooping everything in its path, which are known to destroy spawning populations, the corals and the other places that the fish are in.

'The Indian fishermen come to fish about 15-20 km away. The stock of fish declines because they use trawlers that damage the coral reefs and marine vegetation.' (Passaiyoor Fisherman's Society)

While local fishermen are ready to take loans to develop and protect their livelihoods, repayments are problematic because of their unfavorable incomes.¹²¹ Knowing the future may be bleak, many locals are worried, and contemplate alternative options to their fishing livelihoods. As the craft is generally done in groups, when friends and known members leave the occupation, their network is also affected. They may become demoralized, helpless or even consider following suit.¹²² According to the Samurdhi/Divineguma officer, while people do still join the sector, about twenty-five fishermen leave the trade every year to join other occupations, leave the area, migrate, retire and so forth. The rising fragility of the fisheries sector has prompted more and more parents to encourage their children to study well, so they can pass their exams and find employment outside of fishing.

7.2 Migration and Diaspora

According to the people, about six hundred of their members have left the village and migrated to other countries.¹²³ They estimate the numbers as ninety percent to Europe and ten percent to the Middle East.¹²⁴ Around five hundred individuals from Passaiyoor live in European countries, mainly France and Germany, while the remainders of diaspora members are in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom.¹²⁵ Besides those who left due to the war conditions, marriage has become a popular reason for people to leave. They may go to countries like France or Germany, or migrate to locations within the country such as Colombo, Jaffna town, Mannar, Vavuniya, or other areas such as Iranaimadu, Manipay and Mandaitheevu.¹²⁶ The shortage of residential land in the village has been a continuing problem with instances of two or three families living in the same house. This overcrowding issue and insecurity in their occupations put pressure on people to move to interior locations in Jaffna. The general preference is for foreign migration as

¹²¹ Interviews with religious leaders.

¹²² According to interviews, five fishermen would go in a boat before, but now it has reduced to three.

¹²³ According to diaspora members, there are one hundred families from Passaiyoor in Germany and 250 families in France officially registered with their societies.

¹²⁴ For more information on outbound migration, see: Institute of Policy Studies (2013), Migration Profile: Sri Lanka, Institute of Policy Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Link http://www.ips.lk/ips_migration/publication/migration_profile/migration_profile_ips.pdf

¹²⁵ Interviews with doctor at the clinic, corroborated with village elders.

¹²⁶ For more information on migration to Colombo see: Collyer, M. (2011). *When Does Mobility Matter for Migrants to Colombo? In The Migration-Displacement Nexus: Patterns, Processes, and Policies*, (Eds) Khalid Koser and Susan Martin: 61-78, Berghahn Books: New York.

opposed to internal migration, due to the better standard of living and employment opportunities.^{127, 128}

Still the remittances from abroad have been very useful for meeting income gaps, living expenses and paying off debts among locals. According to interviews, the culture of saving is not very prevalent and people tend to spend the entirety of their disposable income.¹²⁹ At such times, finances sent by members abroad can be of great help. It is common nowadays for families to receive regular money from their contacts in the diaspora because of the declining income in fishing, and it is said fifty percent to seventy-five percent of the families receive remittances with peak amounts during the June and December festival season, and when their income falls in June and July's slower fishing season.

Photo 24: Discussions with diaspora members from France and Germany



Most migration out of the village began after the 1977 economic liberalization of the country, when the then government turned it into a free (open) market model pursuing western-style capitalism. Those who left were known to use a combination of methods to reach their final destination. Some who left to countries such as France secured work permits and encouraged others to migrate and join them. Others would share details on methods and easy routes so family and friends could also make the trip easily. One method required individuals, or small groups, to travel to Italy but do a transit in France, where on arrival, they would apply for asylum. Another method, used mainly during 1985 and 1990, was to travel to East Germany. East Germany did

¹²⁷ An individual who decides to leave the village, to work in, for example, Colombo, can earn a wage of around Rs. 30,000 while it will be far higher abroad (the wages depending on the person's level of education, skills and whether the person works in the Middle East or Europe).

¹²⁸ There is a 'tipping point' for crisis migration where a sudden 'trigger' event will interact with pre-existing stressors. Isolating one cause for the movement is difficult — it is generally a sequence and combination of events. For more information, see McAdam, Jane. (2014). *Conceptualizing 'crisis migration': A theoretical perspective, in Humanitarian Crisis and Migration: Causes, Consequences and Responses*. (Eds) Martin, Susan F and Weerasinghe, Sanjula and Taylor, Abbie, 28-49, Routledge.

¹²⁹ Discussions with local businessman.

not provide political asylum but allowed migrants to cross the border and reach West Germany. Upon arrival in West Germany, they would remain or travel by road to France where they would be apprehended by authorities, who would eventually set them free with permits to stay.¹³⁰

During the war period, diaspora groups used such ways to help locals leave the area, and these individuals would in turn help others to join them. Members of the diaspora would ensure the new arrivals found employment, so they could support their families back home and often worked jointly in an organized manner.¹³¹

'We went as individuals and stayed ten people to a room. Due to this we got to know what problems each person had. We used to collect 10 Euro per person and offer it to anyone who needed the money urgently – sister's wedding or supporting a brother/sister to migrate – groups would take turns to help different members with their needs.' (Diaspora member)

The diaspora societies are known to conduct social awareness programs encouraging people to manage their financial, land, education and other problems. They also facilitate numerous schemes so that they can send money. According to diaspora elders, they used to 'line up' to send money continuously during the war. It was first sent through American Express, then drafts after 1983, and MoneyGram after the Cease-Fire Agreement. Nowadays, HSBC is used, because the whole amount can be sent with no bank commissions.¹³²

'Those who have been affected by the war have been able to survive and recover from the war through our money. We are one hundred percent certain of that.' (Diaspora member)

These two case examples show the overall commitment and extent to which diaspora members go to support their people in Passaiyoor:

'In 1980, we used to earn fifteen hundred francs, of which we would send home five hundred francs. One franc was Rs. 3.50 at the time. Now we send one hundred Euros, each Euro being the equivalent to around Rs. 150. I send one hundred Euros every six months to my mother and sister and send it on rotation with my other five siblings in France. We send money mostly for food and clothing. We send extra money only for medical and urgent needs.' (Diaspora member from France)

¹³⁰ According to the IOM low income and livelihoods problems were some of the main reasons for illegal migration.

¹³¹ Thousands of Tamils claimed asylum in western countries, with Canada, the United Kingdom and France hosting the largest number. The Tamil Diaspora numbered around 300,000 in the year 2000 and rose to around 1,200,000 by 2008.

¹³² Interviews with diaspora members.

Forty of us from Passaiyoor who are now in France got together as a society and we have been assisting low-income families. We pay ten Euro per person per month, and have been doing this for the past twelve years. It was in order to support the hospital and meet other needs. We have come here now to build a park for the children.’ (Diaspora member from France)

There is a great deal of appreciation for the assistance the diaspora provides and what they continue to do.¹³³ The support given for food and daily expenses has been very advantageous, along with the regular stream of monetary aid coming to support the hospital, children’s education, religious events, cultural functions and the purchases of fishing equipment. The diaspora also tries to support small projects and local entrepreneurial activities to promote organic development, and are generally open to inquiries by interested external parties. As discussed, plans are afoot to construct an indoor sports stadium and a library of considerable size with the potential support of the British Council, the German embassy and diaspora families in France, Germany and Australia.¹³⁴ Yet, not all ventures have been successful and, as indicated in the case below, members have improvised when they have failed.

‘One hundred of us in Germany run a society together, and we offer assistance for educational activities through it. We collected fifty Euros from each person, but that turned out to be a failure. After that we put up dramas and sold cassettes, and managed to support education through that. Some gave ten Euro, others gave fifty.’ (Diaspora member from Germany)

The doctor at the village clinic was also of the opinion that much had been accomplished with the money sent from abroad: medicines are purchased, sewing machines and other assets are purchased to support widows, night schools are set up and classes are held, fishermen are assisted, and more.¹³⁵ There are also twenty students attending university, quite a few of whom are getting support from the diaspora; however, whether they will remain in the village after university is debatable. He believes that the diaspora’s influence was essential for the sustainability of the village, especially due to the dearth of other constant development support for its growth. While the diaspora may not have contributed in a large scale to businesses and other enterprises, it has supported the social and economic development of the village in multiple ways. By providing remittances, supporting dowries, investing in education and health services, and contributing to religious and sporting activities, it has added to the economic and social growth of the village and become a key factor in driving the development process.

¹³³ Statements from religious leaders, society leaders, village elders and households.

¹³⁴ An individual from Canada donated the land for the library while others are contributing thirty thousand books, some of which are dating back to the 1800.

¹³⁵ The clinic was set up at a cost of Rs. 260,000 with a running cost of Rs. 160,000 per month. Four teachers were recruited in 1989 to conduct classes, at the cost of Rs. 2500 each.

7.3 Employment, Unemployment, Income and Poverty

According to the Samurdhi/Divineguma officer, fishermen make up eighty-five percent of the population, and of the rest, fourteen percent are working in the public and non-profit sector and one percent to two percent are in the trade sector. There are a number of educated professionals: two lawyers, six doctors (three of whom are abroad while three are in Jaffna town and Kandy), four engineers (two are working and the other two studying) and four bank managers. Twenty students are also studying various subjects at the University of Jaffna. With regard to salaries, government servants, such as teachers and administrative officers, receive Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 30,000 per month, while doctors, lawyers, bank officers and engineers earn significantly more.¹³⁶ While there are no NGOs in the village, those who work in the Non-Governmental Organizations earn around Rs. 30,000 per month. Individuals in the trade sector can earn between Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 30,000 every month.¹³⁷ The fishermen's incomes are seasonal and can still fluctuate.¹³⁸ A fisherman who owns a boat can earn Rs. 30,000 a month on average, though they say there have been times where it has shot up to Rs. 100,000. There are eight main fishermen-businessmen in the village – some of which are family-run – who earn much greater amounts due to the possession of significant capital, material, labor and contacts.¹³⁹

'This is my father's business, and I continue to run it now. There are fifty boats under me, and I have given them money for their business. We receive money by sending cuttlefish, prawns etc. to a company in Navanthurai. There are eight others who also run similar businesses. I am the only one who owns a Toyota Allion car.' (Mr. Raja, Businessman involved in fishing)

Photos 25 and 26: Employment activities in Passaiyoor



¹³⁶ Interview with Samurdhi/Divineguma officer.

¹³⁷ Discussions with fishermen, their families and government officers.

¹³⁸ Sometimes fishermen will not make any money and will barely cover the cost of the boat fuel.

¹³⁹ The fishermen can be categorized into four types: the main businessman, fishermen that work under them, the independent fishermen and the part-time fishermen whose main income is another occupation.

According to Mr. Raja, outside of six hundred unemployed youth in the village, twenty percent of the villagers in general are struggling without incomes. The most destitute people are known to live in an area called Puthukudiyiruppu near Passaiyoor, where one can find a large concentration of widows.¹⁴⁰ ¹⁴¹ Women in the village find their situation particularly dire. Since girls find it harder to get jobs than boys after completing their Ordinary and Advanced Level school examinations, many resort to self-employment such as producing sweetmeats, selling firewood, producing chili powder and preparing food parcels.¹⁴² The micro-finance and Samurdhi loans have been predominantly useful as start-up capital for these ventures, which include expansions, since banks generally ask for mortgages or collateral which are difficult for the local borrowers to provide. They may also take up particular tasks in the fishing sector to support their husbands and supplement the household income or to pay off debts to banks, societies and so forth.¹⁴³

'I operate a small business with the loans I receive. I started all of these with the initial Rs. 10,000. I have been functioning for two years now. Next, I will get Rs. 50,000 and will use it to expand the business.' (Member of Passaiyoor Women's Society)

'After I finish the sweetmeat orders I go to the market to cut fish. I get a profit of Rs. 300 to Rs. 500. Selling firewood will earn a profit of Rs. 200 a day. Producing chili powder earns Rs.500 to Rs. 700 a day, and five to six food parcels will earn Rs. 200 a day.' (Housewife)

Women are also known to take up domestic sewing with around ten houses in the village involved in the industry. There is a preference for the occupation as it does not require much investment and they can work independently while managing their homes. The women can generally earn Rs. 500 a day and twice as much during the festival season or around Rs. 20,000 during the New Year. If capital is available, the women will be able to put up shops in the street or do other income generating activities such as renting out cooking utensils, rearing poultry, making and selling icing cake, producing rope and making fishing nets.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ It is a new area so low-income families are moving to the locality. Widows also do not need to be close to the sea in Passaiyoor, unlike the fishermen. The government provides widows Rs. 250 a month, and if anyone is over seventy years they get Rs. 1000. The families in this area have received houses under the Indian housing scheme.

¹⁴¹ While mobility maybe a coping strategy after disasters, it can also be the other way around where events can reduce mobility, which forces the marginalized to become 'trapped'. This would be a form of enforced immobility due to multiple constraining factors. For more information see Collyer, Michael and Black, Richard. (2014). *"Trapped" populations: Limits on mobility at times of crisis, in Humanitarian Crisis and Migration: Causes, Consequences and Responses.* (Eds) Martin, Susan F and Weerasinghe, Sanjula and Taylor, Abbie, 287-305, Routledge.

¹⁴² Interviews with Passaiyoor Women's Society members.

¹⁴³ Usually the repayments for the banks need to be made within twelve to twenty-four months, depending on how the loan has been negotiated.

¹⁴⁴ Conversations with members of Passaiyoor Women's Society.

The standard of living is generally agreed to have increased after the war ended. Nevertheless, there are issues regarding individual and family income and keeping up to par with the cost of living. According to interviews, while the income of one working person was enough before the war, two people working are now insufficient. A family of four to five members requires about Rs. 1000 for a day, to meet their food and other essential expenses, and additional costs toward loan repayments, if needed. When there are additional expenses, and if earnings are low, it is common practice to take loans, cut down on food expenditure or reduce luxury spending.¹⁴⁵ The habit of saving is also not common among the people, with the general practice being to invest the money on gold and jewelry for women.

'There is no proper savings among the people. If they earn more, they spend more. If they earn less, they spend less... every family is in some kind of debt all the time.' (Divineguma officer)

Population expansion in the village has led to congestion and scarcity of land and housing. Multiple households are known to live in houses and others rent, where the cost of rent has added onto immediate costs of living and burdened parents with long term questions of dowries for their daughters.¹⁴⁶ The money sent by relatives and diaspora members has filled the gap between incomes and expenditures, but many individuals feel it is not something that can continue for a long time. The diaspora is also not able to address all the problems of the people in Passaiyoor. The first, second and, perhaps, even the third generations may have attachments to the village, but there is no guarantee that the future generations will feel the same.

8. A Political Community

8.1 Structures and Representation

The organizational structure of the village includes numerous institutions and individuals from the administrative (civil service) and elected (people's representation) sectors. It is administered at official level by the Grama Niladari who reports to the Divisional Secretary, similar to other places in the country. During the conflict period, the officer helped the DS distribute relief material to displaced people, whereas once the war ended, the officer assisted with the rehabilitation and development of the market and harbor. The officer's duties as a public servant include facilitating official documents, keeping records, monitoring programs and streamlining poverty reduction and economic development activities with the Samurdhi/Divineguma officers. The officer is also generally tasked with resolving conflicts within the village and carrying out support duties during elections.¹⁴⁷ There are also elected public officials from the Provincial Council (PC) and Municipal Council (MC) whose officers are involved with development and infrastructure-services' upkeep activities. Due to their operating from a peoples' (or political) mandate, the PC and MC members are usually closely involved with the community and

¹⁴⁵ While some people own bankbooks, they are not used to saving anything, so they do not use the bankbooks.

¹⁴⁶ Discussions with parents and members of the Women's Society.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with the village Grama Niladari.

immersed in their day-to-day activities. The villagers believe these individuals to be influential. The residents expect the officers to ‘voice’ the pressing issues in the village and are pleased to have a member from the PC residing in the village and representing them.¹⁴⁸

8.2 Political Views

As sections of the fieldwork were conducted in both 2014 and 2015, researchers were able to observe certain changes among the inhabitants after the January 2015 elections.¹⁴⁹ These subtle differences were mainly in relation to how people discussed their political views, as they were ready to criticize certain aspects of the previous government. According to interviews, while there was shared gratitude and relief that the war was over and people could now go on with their lives peacefully in reasonable comfort, there was also disapproval of how certain things were conducted during the previous administration. The issues highlighted included interfering in administration, politicizing interventions, nepotism and intimidation. Respondents said they were at times not allowed to go about their work freely and make independent decisions, even on issues such as recruitments or disbursements of livelihood support funds, due to the interferences and the overarching culture of patronage that prevailed.¹⁵⁰ There was also disillusionment about the conflict and the high level of violence that took place at the end of the war. While many people did not raise it as an issue, one individual pointed out intimidation by the Army – though not necessarily in the Passaiyoor area.

‘When we were creating a list of people who could qualify for benefits related to livelihood, some politicians would change the list according to their wishes... or force us to adjust them to favor people they know. Therefore, there were problems that arose between us and the people. We were in a situation where we could not tell the people any truth.’ (Government officer)

‘It is true that people like us got employment opportunities during the former President’s time, but the loathing toward him exists even to date. Our loathing began because of the war they carried out on Mullivaikkal.’ (Focus group discussion with men)

For the moment, people are optimistic about the new government. They are hopeful that a new political culture and governance approach is good for both their community and the country. A number of new administrative changes have already taken place, where officials can now work

¹⁴⁸ There is a member of the Provincial Council living in the village. The villagers consider his presence in Passaiyoor a bonus as he could bring attention to the needs of the village. Nevertheless there are differences of opinion on how effective the PC is and its ability to address issues.

¹⁴⁹ The Presidential election took place on 8th January 2015, where the former President Mahinda Rajapaksa was replaced by President Maithripala Sirisena and the government changed from a UPFA coalition to a UNP coalition-led government.

¹⁵⁰ For information on the political economy of the north, state vision and issues in governance structures and practice see Saparamadu, Chamindry and Aftab Lall. (2014). ‘Resettlement of Conflict-Induced IDPs in Northern Sri Lanka: Political Economy of State Policy and Practice’. Working Paper 10. Colombo: Centre for Poverty Analysis.

without external interference. The politicization has been reduced, and members who took part in individual and group discussions were confident that the government would implement projects beneficial to the most disadvantaged. The villagers are aware of a number of new community development plans, loans and repayments schemes that have been introduced.¹⁵¹ There is also a scheme to provide Rs. 1 million to every village with the people making an in-kind twenty-five percent contribution either in cash or labor, to promote ownership, with the scheme allowing people to decide how best to utilize the grant.¹⁵² The visit by the new President to Punkudutheevu in Jaffna to meet the family of a girl who was raped and killed by a local gang, and his promise to provide an immediate solution for the injustice, made a strong impression on the local people. While the visit could have been a gesture, to the people in Passaiyoor, it showed empathy and was symbolic in a powerful way.¹⁵³

8.3 Community Organizations and Decision-Making

According to official data from the DSD there are thirteen officially registered community-based organizations in the village. These include: two community centers, seven Samurdhi/Divineguma societies, one woman's rural development society, one youth club, one sports club and one children's club.¹⁵⁴ These organizations carry out numerous social, cultural and economic activities to improve the living conditions and personal development of the people, while also acting as forums for the village's various groups such as fishermen, women, widows and youth to highlight issues and affect decisions. The organizations generally function separately from each other, and the coordination that used to be there earlier is not present now. However, while formal cooperation is lacking, there is generally an underlying sense of understanding and shared goals as most people are related to each other or are friends, neighbors or associates of some kind.

'We did not get any assistance from the government. If assistance is needed we can only approach the government through our common society. To our knowledge, we received no assistance or special compensation for fishing from the government.' (Political representative)

The diaspora societies also conduct numerous small- and medium-sized projects in the village, with some of their memberships and activities overlapping with the registered organizations. The diaspora exerts a strong sway among the populace due to the remittances, other financial inputs and their long engagement with the village. The church is a key institution in the village, influencing the disposition of the members, both male and female, in all the parts of society. The priests in the church are regularly consulted for advice on new developments and issues affecting the village. Some of the village elders and commonly accepted leaders come from the Passaiyoor

¹⁵¹ There were revisions in the loan conditions including reduced interest rates.

¹⁵² Interviews with the Development Officer and Grama Niladari.

¹⁵³ Discussions with a community leader.

¹⁵⁴ Community-based organizations data, Jaffna Divisional Secretariat, 2014.

Fishermen's Society, which is one of the two community centers in official records. The President of the society, in particular, wields considerable influence in the community due to his role in protecting and promoting the local fishing sector. Businessmen such as Mr. Raja and others are widely respected for their business acumen and success, and get involved in political and developmental affairs of the community inconspicuously.

9. As a Personal Space

9.1 Attachment to Area

The people of Passaiyoor are generally very attached to the village and identify it as their home. The sense of belonging comes across quite clearly in their constant references to the past and present, and their commitment to develop Passaiyoor.¹⁵⁵ This is in spite of their anxieties about livelihoods, prospects for their children and the ongoing migration out of the village.¹⁵⁶ The elders, in particular, consider migration as a last resort, and said those who left as asylum seekers or refugees, did so due to the lack of other options, although they continue to maintain strong links with the village. Many people who were displaced to neighboring locations and areas of the Vanni chose to return to the village when the security situation started stabilizing.¹⁵⁷

Interviews with those who had returned and individuals who never left disclosed a deep sense of appreciation for the village, for what it offered and what made it special. Features of the community help form the identity of the people and connect their ways with the village's character. Along with the ancestral ties, assets and connections they have in the village, people are grateful that they are by the sea and said fishing, in spite of its problems, will always save them. The common fishing occupation encourages locals to face their problems collectively and reap the benefits together. In a community homogenous in religion and caste, there are strong connections that link people together, and they will generally help each other. The locals are proud of their quiet and progressive lifestyle, crediting much of it to religion and their church, and feel it is a healthy environment to live in and have a family. The diaspora, acting as the 'guardian' of the village, is a great advantage as well, providing people with safeguards and resources for new opportunities.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ For information on the relationship between the material and non-material parts that make up home and belonging see Brun, Cathrine and Ragnhild Lund. (2008). 'Making a Home during Crisis: Post-Tsunami Recovery in a Context of War, Sri Lanka'. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 29 (3): 274–87.

¹⁵⁶ Discussions with various individuals.

¹⁵⁷ Though there were some who did not return due to their connections with the LTTE, according to members of the Fishermen's Society.

¹⁵⁸ Interviews with community leaders.

Photos 27 and 28: Houses and neighborhood in the village



The Grama Niladari refers to the village's people as being generally privileged, and feels most people are in fact quite happy and comfortable, despite their outward challenges.^{159, 160} There are no HSZs or camps, all of the land has been released and many of the people have returned to their own homes, while some are known to live with their relatives. While there are indeed poor people in the village, such as the two hundred or so families receiving Samurdhi benefits, the official's view is that many are quite well-off and have regular incomes and own assets.¹⁶¹ There is also a steady stream of remittances supplementing the regular wages that help diversify the livelihood risks.¹⁶²

'In their minds, the people of Passaiyoor are poor, but in reality they are all rich. I say they are all rich because they purchase jewelry, build big houses and live a glamorous lifestyle... it is difficult to find those who are struggling (financially) here.' (Grama Niladari)

The sports (i.e. soccer) and dramas were also aspects that continued to strengthen attachments to the village.¹⁶³ The village has produced five national-level sportsmen, one of whom by the name of 'Francis' played for eleven years and also become captain of the Sri Lankan soccer team.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ The measurement of happiness or subjective well-being is complex as it is a mix of factors which include absolute income, relative income, reference groups and times, aspirations, economic expectations of the future etc. For more information see Knight, John and Gunatilaka, Ramani. (2011). 'Does economic growth raise happiness in China?' *Oxford Development Studies*, 39(01): 1-24.

¹⁶⁰ For more information on the material, social and cognitive aspects leading to how people feel and function and how they evaluate life, see: Pouw, N., & McGregor, A. (2014). "An Economics of Wellbeing: What Would Economics Look Like if it were Focused on Human Wellbeing?" *IDS Working Papers*, 2014(436), 1-27

¹⁶¹ Accordingly, while the houses are small, people have numerous assets and luxuries, and cash on hand with access to more when required

¹⁶² The Grama Niladari may have also wanted to downplay the problems of the people, as the officer was responsible for the area.

¹⁶³ Discussions with members of the Sports Society and the diaspora

¹⁶⁴ The person, Francis, now resides in London.

Still the inhabitants are quick to point out that such national selection has not taken place recently, even though the village continues to produce skillful players. The good performance in sports has helped the youth in their identification with the village and attachment to the clubs and societies. Engaging in sports energizes them, while also providing a setting for personal and family recognition. Cultural events such as dramas and musical shows also have similar impacts on young people and their families alike, since it allows them a type of ownership of the village in being a part of its evolution. The village's history of taking part in national drama competitions, including a number of international performances, has been scripted in the history, religion, life, family and events of the village.¹⁶⁵

9.2 Memories and Experiences

The people in the village recollect the first troubling event as what happened in 1974, where a small problem spiraled out of proportion resulting in a number of deaths.¹⁶⁶ The ethnic riots that took place in 1983 did not directly affect the village but led to the departure of a number of Sinhalese families with whom the residents of the village had associated. The first events of violence happened after the arrival of the IPKF, where local people got caught in the crossfire between the IPKF and the LTTE, and then saw further fighting between the government forces and the LTTE. They experienced displacement for the first time during the 1987 to 1990 period.¹⁶⁷ People remember family members and friends providing them with shelter, as there were no specific camps for displaced people.

'There was continuous fighting and we were displaced with no real camps available.' (Community leader)

The locals remember when the St. Anthony's Church was shelled in 1995. It was also the year when the army established the HSZ, dislocating a number of families, to prevent the LTTE from infiltrating through the lagoon. That year was additionally hard as the inhabitants were forced to go to the Vanni by the LTTE with little more than their cash, jewelry and portables. The return and resettlement after six months in 1996 was uneventful, except that there was no assistance from the government or any other party.¹⁶⁸ There was another incident of displacement to the Vanni for six months in 2000, with some people deciding not to return to the village. Those who returned struggled with their livelihoods due to the movement restrictions including those on fishing, fuel, capacity of outboard engines etc., and generally carried out their work under

¹⁶⁵ The French diaspora was known to support dramas and other cultural shows. See a children's show supported by members in France <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqVFqBcg4kw>

¹⁶⁶ This was a meeting on the subject of the Tamil language. When the Army had asked people to disperse, events had got out of hand, resulting in a number of deaths.

¹⁶⁷ Discussion with elders and community leaders.

¹⁶⁸ Interviews with members in the Fishermen's Society.

dangerous conditions.¹⁶⁹ Some incidents took place in 2004 when more restrictions existed, until they were slowly relaxed when the war concluded in 2009. Now, new challenges from the post-war recovery have replaced the earlier ones:

'After the war everyone started coming here. The Navy replaced the Army. Our fishermen were affected by the Indian fisherman being allowed to fish here... they use trawlers and local fishermen from other areas use dynamite.' (Community leader)

For the inhabitants, the war left many wounds and tragedies on the bodies and minds of people. It disrupted families and destroyed their livelihoods, forcing many to flee the village to safer places abroad. Those who fled remember the difficulties and risks they had to face so they and their families could survive. The traumatic memories of the bombs, killings, disappearances and sleepless nights are particularly difficult to forget, though many try to reconcile them by focusing on religion, family and their work, and in general, moving on.¹⁷⁰ They know that if problems occur, regardless of where it happens, there will be bans on fishing movements ruining their traditional livelihoods, which they hope will never happen. While they recollect the bad events, the locals are also concerned about the new cultural, social and economic obstacles that are emerging due to the area opening up to outside influences.

'Relationships between girls and boys are forming when they attend tuition classes now. There is a gradual change in these relations. Children also use phones a lot... love marriages take place frequently.' (Focus group discussion)

'People's habits are changing here. There is much exploitation and cultural depravity taking place. All of these take place through development. For instance, with the growth of the hotel industry there is the increase in prostitution.' (Religious leaders)

The priorities and interests seem to have changed during the last few years and locals are nostalgic about the more simple days before the war. One of the elders, who is also a community leader, conveyed this sentiment in one of his statements.

'When I was a boy they used to stage dramas every Friday. It used to take place throughout the night. We created entire stories and presented it through song and dance... it's different now.' (Village elder)

¹⁶⁹ For more information on embargos, see Muttukrishna Sarvananthan. (2007). 'Economy of the Conflict Region in Sri Lanka: From Embargo to Repression'. *Policy Studies* 44, East-West Centre. Link <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/ps044.pdf>

¹⁷⁰ Interviews with religious leaders.

9.3 Aspirations

The village elders and staff in the clinic said they feel that many people in the village want to go to France, Australia, Germany, Canada or the United Kingdom. The biggest worry parents have is educating their children, as it requires significant amounts of recurring and consistent payments. While the main industry has been fishing, they admit that it is in decline and hence, has become a difficult livelihood, in which the incomes have not been increasing while expenditures have been going up. Some individuals openly state that fishing is not an occupation through which society can develop and that other options must be found to keep pace with developments in the outside world. The men and women in the village agree on the common problems but differ when it came to prioritizing the issues (see Table 6 below).

Table 6: Ranking of Main Issues by Men and Women (1 being the most serious)

Rank	According to men	According to women
1	Income from fishing reducing	Lack of housing space
2	Youth unemployment	Raising children (protecting from bad influences)
3	Drinking/aggressive behavior	Husband's income
4	Overcrowding (housing)	Future prospects of young people
5	Lack of facilities	Society changing rapidly

Though many people feel an attachment and sentimentality to the village as their home, there is also pragmatism. The interviews disclosed that while there are newcomers joining the industry, there are around twenty-five fishermen leaving the occupation every year. They leave it for the previously stated reasons, including others such as 'looking for greener pastures'. There is also the steady stream of young people departing due to marital reasons. It is the wish of the parents that their children are educated well, have better employment opportunities and better lifestyles than they did previously, since the village currently does not offer prospects for such a progressive future.

Due to the end of the war, the Jaffna district is finally reconnected to the rest of the country with what looks to be an open economy, in contrast to its tough borders during the war. Many new opportunities and challenges are emerging. The Jaffna peninsula is changing rapidly, and so is Passaiyoor. Due to the lack of alternatives, migration has always been one of the means that were used by the local people to adapt. The end result has been settling in a new place and starting a safe and comfortable existence, with opportunities for a better quality of life for themselves and their children.

'We educate our children using the income that we earn through fishing. Since the income from fishing is low, we want them to study and join other employment. Some of them like to stay on, but we want them to do better. Although the fishing industry has been good to us, it is now in decline.' (Passaiyoor Women's Society)

10. Conclusion

Communities that have experienced conflict and displacement rely on various resources to reconstruct their lives after resettlement. The study provides a glimpse of how the inhabitants of Passaiyoor are recovering since the conclusion of the war in Sri Lanka. They draw on internal and external resources that cut across the human, social, physical, financial, environmental and political contexts impacting their life and prospects in the village. By looking at the six aspects in relation to the area as a part of the city, place to live, social community, economic community, political community, and personal space, researchers were able to draw out information on how they functioned cohesively with complex interactions.

Passaiyoor is distinctly a community as opposed to a group of families living together in the village. The ties that the locals share are deep-rooted and encompass many aspects. The common occupations, interests, networks, caste and religion, together with the shared experience of enduring violent conflict, played, and still play, an important part in the formation of the community. The priests at the church and affiliated societies are also known to pursue activities energetically in order to promote cohesion at inter- and intra-family levels while the diaspora augments various interlinks at family and friendship level. The donor aid was also provided to the village at the community level and not at an individual or family level, likely reinforcing the existing group ties among the people.

The principal factors in the Passaiyoor people's 'world' played major roles in the day-to-day life and development of the community. It was evident that residents were active agents in their own survival during the war and post-war period. During the phases of displacement, return, resettlement and recovery, they were resourceful and relied on survival strategies that were available to them. Subsequently, they followed recovery tracks that were meaningful to their own needs and aspirations and sustainably synchronized such tracks. The challenges the community faces now are development-oriented and influenced by larger socio-economic, environmental and political processes that are taking place.

Both positive and negative changes have met the village and its people. On the positive side, the conclusion of the war meant people could return to their homes, rebuild their lives and move about freely without fear. They could also access facilities such as education, healthcare and so on without interruption and benefit from decent public infrastructure. From a negative perspective, there are looming livelihood challenges in the fishing industry, due to a mix of reasons. There are also indications of cultural and social changes affecting the traditional way of life. The increasing issues associated with alcohol and unemployment, especially among youth, are a matter for concern.

This village's narrative provides a number of insights for academics, policymakers and practitioners. First, the people were never passive recipients; they were resilient, adoptive and adaptive. Second, while there was limited state/agency support during the early times, the

diaspora filled the gap both during and after the war. Third, when donors provided support at the community level, in close deliberation with the government and locals, there was a high level of absorption and utility of these resources, resulting in multiple impacts. Fourth, recovery happened in several areas. Some areas were ahead of others, but all of them implicated each other to various degrees, including how people evaluated life and found happiness. Fifth, intersections among certain aspects, such as the fishing infrastructure, religion and the diaspora are particularly interesting, as they are potent drivers for change in the local context. Research on such areas in similar post-war settings will shed light on their role in post-conflict recovery and outlooks for community-centric development.



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