

3. Relocation for households whose damaged houses lie within the buffer zone

In the buffer zone where construction is not allowed, according to TAFREN guidance of 15 March 2005 the Government “will identify *land closest to the affected village* and provide houses to the affected families. As far as possible, the relocation process will attempt to keep communities intact.”

The following assistance policy will apply to households within the buffer zone:

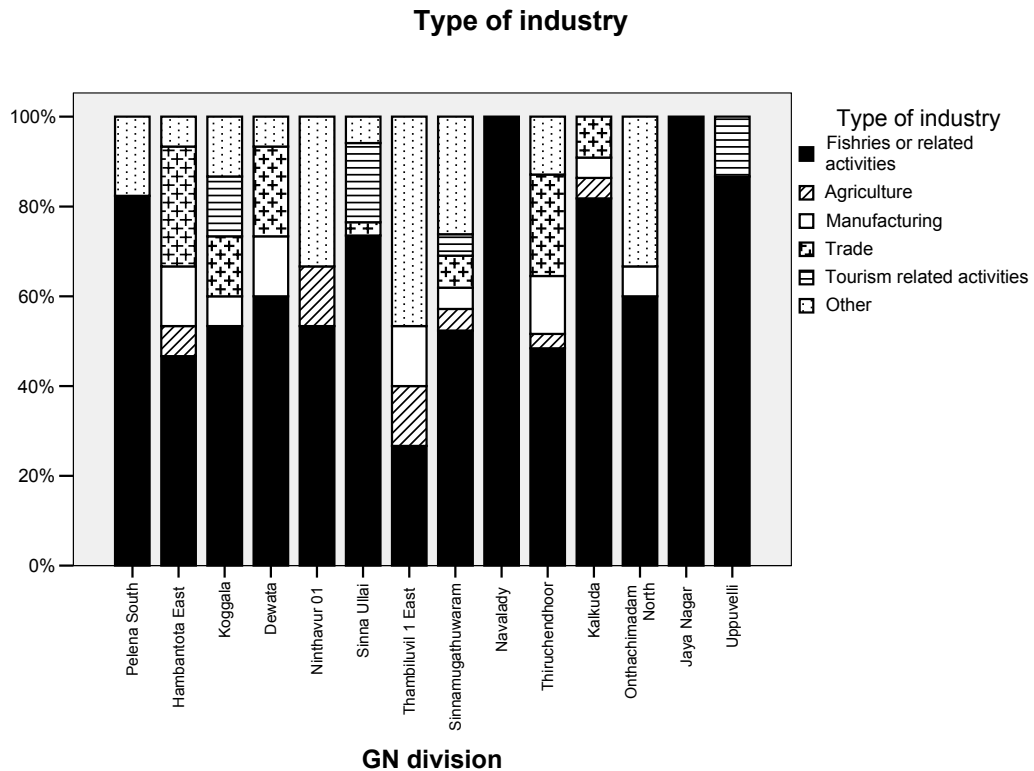
- No reconstruction of houses (partially or fully damaged) will be allowed within the buffer zone
- All affected households will be provided with a house built with donor assistance on land allocated by the state. *Households will not be required to demonstrate ownership to land*
- The new homes will be built in line with guidelines issued by the UDA and will have a floor area of 500 sq. ft. and would be provided with electricity, running water, sanitation and drainage facilities
- The proposed houses in urban and rural settlements will have facilities such as road systems, recreation etc

This report will review implementation issues regarding the following areas:

- household characteristics in the buffer zone (of those in unusable houses)
- awareness of buffer zone and enforcement
- eligibility for relocation
- information and communication on relocation sites
- preferences for relocation
- land availability
- type of assistance and type of houses
- welfare effects of relocation policy
- social conflicts due to relocation

3.1 Household characteristics in the buffer zone (of those in unusable houses)

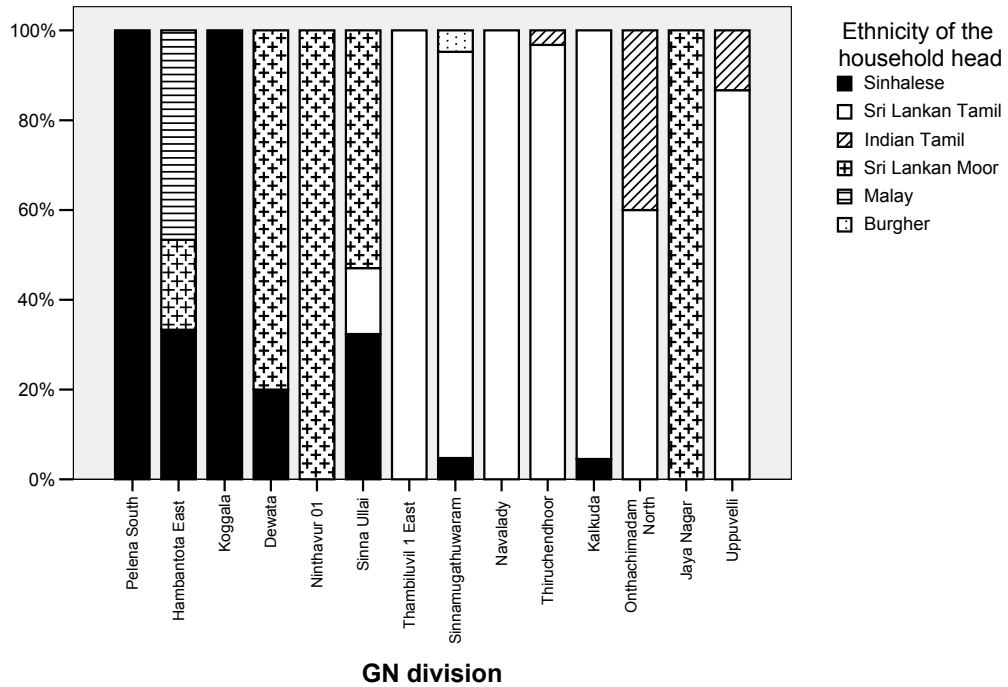
Livelihood categories: Of the 281 households surveyed within the buffer zone, the main livelihood categories for the head of household pre-tsunami were 65% in fishing related activities, 8% in trade and 5% in manufacturing. (15% were “other”).



Most of the livelihood heads are still alive and just over a quarter are continuing with their usual activities post-tsunami.

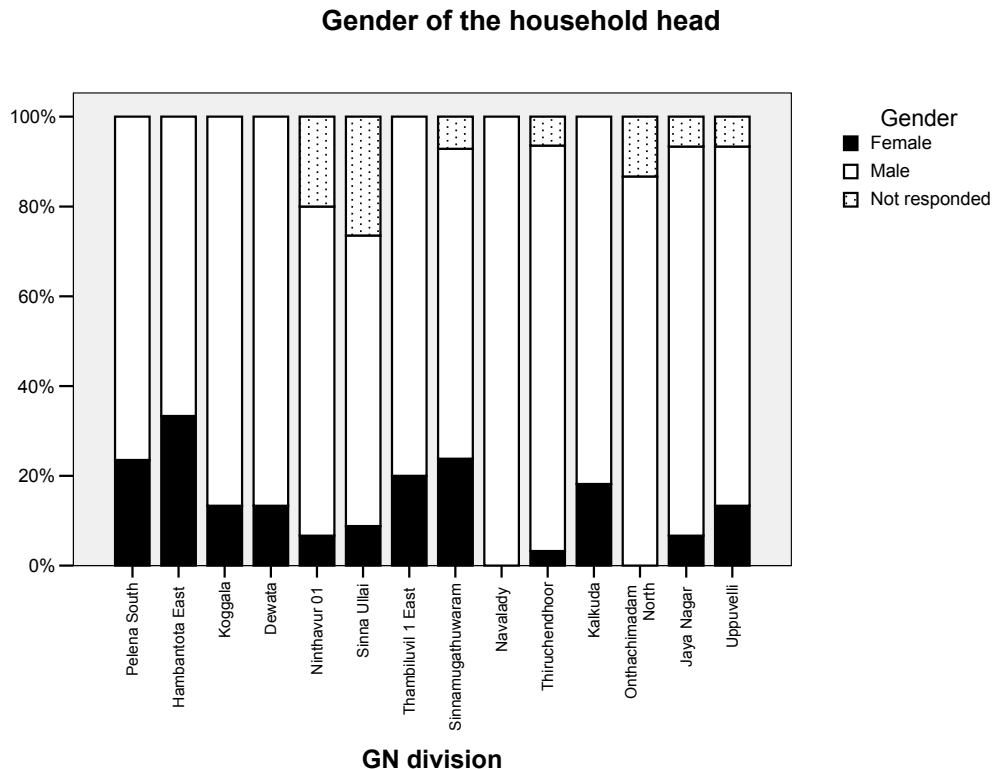
Ethnicity: Of the 281 households surveyed outside the buffer zone, 19% were Sinhalese, 52% Sri Lankan Tamil, 3% Indian Tamil, 22% Sri Lankan Moor and 2.5% Malay.

Ethnicity of the head of the household



Religion: 18% are Buddhist, 35% Hindu, 25% Muslim and 22% Christian.

Female headed households (pre-tsunami): 13% of the households surveyed are female headed pre-tsunami, although this varies considerably. In the households selected from the GNDs in Batticaloa and Trincomalee there are very few female households, while the figure reaches 20% in the Southern Province.



3.2. Awareness of buffer zone and enforcement

There is good awareness of existence of buffer zone and that new lands are supposed to be given to those in buffer zone. 93% of households were aware of the buffer zone.

But very few realize that they will keep legal ownership to land inside buffer zone even if they move to new land.

- In Manmunai concern that land has been taken from a lady by the government, so fear that if they move their land will also be acquired by the government
- In Hambantota East some people concerned that if they move from buffer zone, government will take over their lands for the harbour development which was proposed before the tsunami but which they had been resisting.

Enforcement of buffer zone, but in some cases perception that rich houses exempts (eg Pottuvil)

Allegations that buffer zone not being uniformly enforced in Pottuvil, Ampara District

“I live within 100 m. My house was damaged and now we have built a temporary

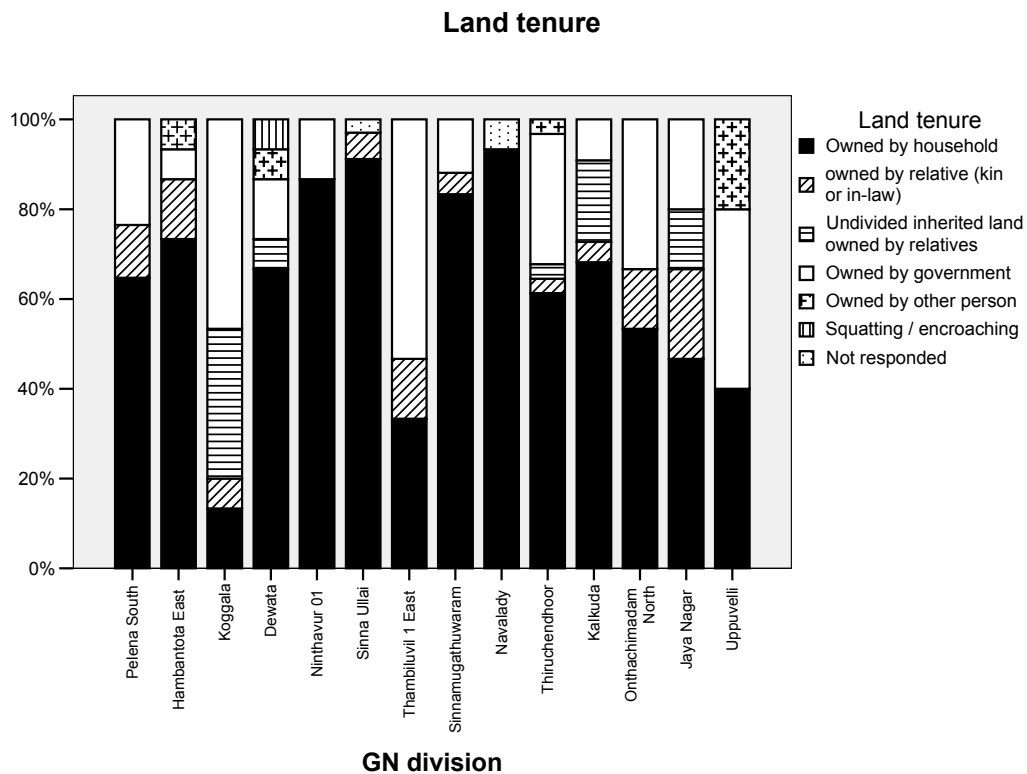
dwelling and living there. But Police came to us and said that we will have to demolish it and cannot live there. At the same time we understand in Arugambay a millionaire is putting up three storey build within about 25 m. Police has taken no notice about this. I hear that the limit will be decided only after completing and opening that building. I would like to ask the government is it that there is one law for the poor and another law for the rich?"

Focus group, Sinia Ullai, Pottuvil, Ampara District

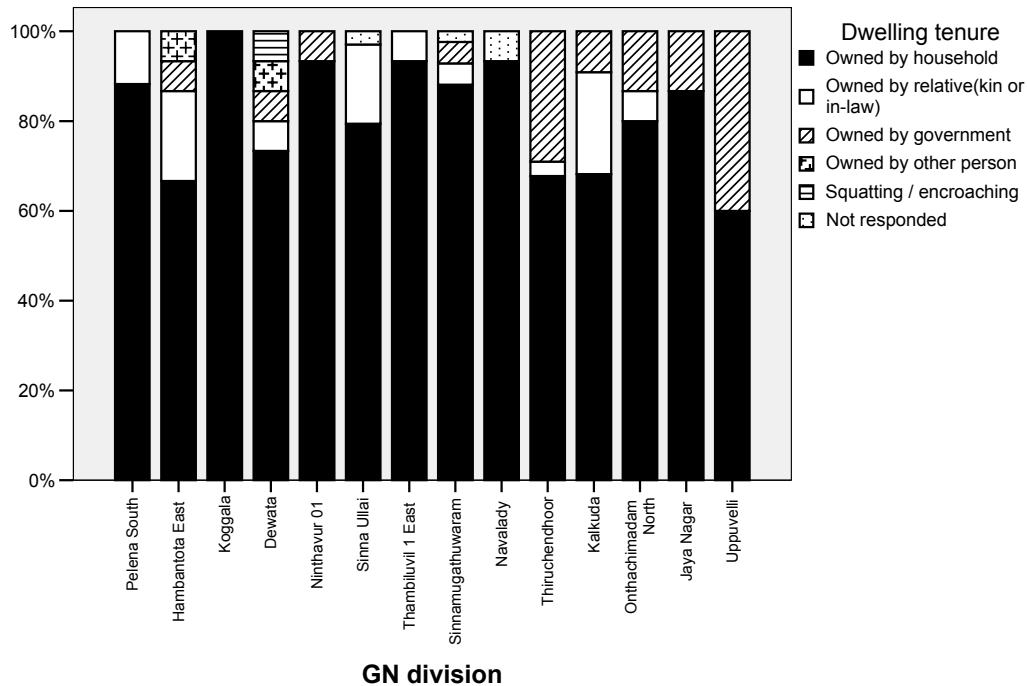
- In Kanaganagar, Thirrukovil, government has measured 200 m from the sea and demarcated the place by fixing pegs and people are not allowed to live within that area

3.3 Eligibility for relocation

New houses will be provided to those who have a house (which is theirs or does not belong to anyone else), but they do not need to own the land.



Dwelling tenure



In the focus groups many people correctly assumed that all those in the buffer zone would be eligible to new houses regardless of their tenurial status.

- Weligama identified problem where more than one family has been living together in one house so that more than one house should be provided
- In Dewata Galle, houses built with the support of the Mosque will be given to those most closely linked to the Mosque (see box)

Access to houses given by Mosque which has helped constructed houses

“Construction has commenced in a 5 Acre land to build 200 houses. The construction is under assistance of the Mosque. Only those working closely with the Mosque will be eligible to own these houses. The buildings have obtained UDA approval and they are being constructed 1 ½ km away from the sea.”

Muslim focus group, Dewata, Galle

3.4 Information and communication on relocation sites

Generally people in most GNDs have been informed of which possible sites they will have to move to. Often communication has been top down with people being told where they will live. But in other cases people are still not sure. In addition only 15% of surveyed households have been directly offered land or houses.

Top down communication on relocation in Galle District

“Visitors of the Presidents’s office visited us and discussed. The discussions were not

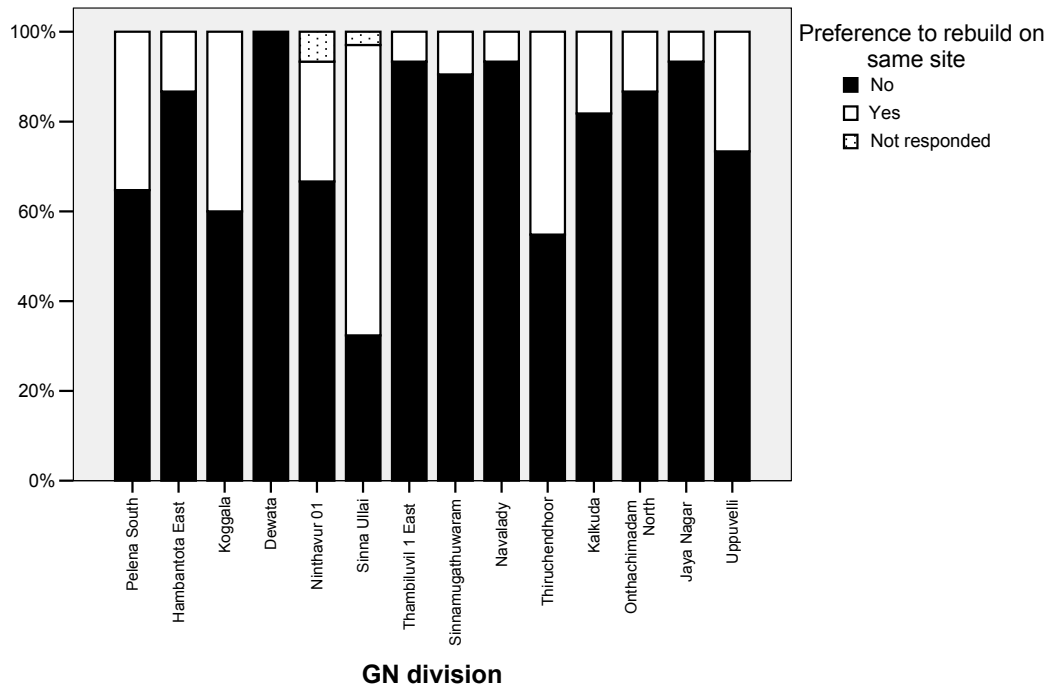
successful. When they asked whether we liked to move we said no. They were not listening to our reasons for saying no. But we were able to force our replies to some extent. We definitely said we do not approve of relocation in flats”
 Focus group participants, Dewata GN, Galle District

3.3 Preferences for relocation

Some new lands have been identified by the government for relocation and in some limited cases building has begun.

Many people are scared to stay very close to the sea and if suitable lands are provided would be willing to move. However in many cases lands identified by government are not seen as suitable and so people would prefer alternative lands or to stay within the buffer zone

Preference to rebuild on the same site



Three quarters of households do not want to rebuild on the same site while one quarter do. Below we analyse factors that affect this result.

Willingness to relocate (table 5, section 6)

A multivariate analysis of willingness to relocate (graph above) revealed the following results. The highlighted points are based on results that were statistically significant at more than 10 percent level. (details on the model specification and variable construction are given in section 6). Two sets of regressions were estimated for relocation. One controls for the type of industry (e.g., agriculture, fisheries, etc.) of the livelihood of the head of household, and the other for the type of employment (e.g., casual labour, self-employed, etc.) of the head of the household.

- Individual characteristics of the head of the household influenced willingness to relocate: male heads of households were less willing to relocate. Contrary to the popular thinking that heads of households involved in fishing would be less willing to relocate, fishers was not statistically significant. Instead the results shows that heads of households involved in agriculture are less willing to relocate, relative to heads of households in manufacturing. This is perhaps due to the fact that individuals involved in agriculture are more attached to the land. Moors, were more willing to move. In regression that controlled for type of employment the less educated heads of households were also more willing to relocate, although in the regression that controlled for industry education of the head of household was not a significant determinant of willingness to relocate.
- Exposure to the tsunami devastation seems to affect the willingness to move decision of individuals. Households that experienced flood water levels of more than 12 feet were more willing to relocate. Households with elderly individuals were less willing to relocate – perhaps due to more attachment to place of residence. Relative to households in communities where 50 to 70 percent of the houses were damaged, households in communities with greater housing damages were more willing to relocate.
- Pre-tsunami housing conditions seem to influence willingness to move decision of individuals. Individuals with either no toilet facilities or only outside toilet facilities were more willing to relocate.
- Land Tenure: Relative to households that owned the land, households with houses built on government land were more willing to relocate. This is expected, as the ownership status of these individuals would not change with relocation.

Size of damaged house and ability to show proof of ownership of damaged house did not affect willingness to relocate decision in a statistically significant manner. Whether the household belonged to the majority ethnic group of the community, or whether they lived in a multi ethnic community also did not seem to affect the relocation decision of the households.

i. Willingness to move in principle due to fear of the sea

The importance of the nearness to the sea is borne out by this table which asks households how close to the sea they would like to live? 70% of the sample want to live beyond 200m, 20% from 100-200m and only 3% within 100metres. 5% do not care about distance to the sea.

In all the focus groups, except one people expressed their willingness in principle to be relocated if suitable land was found and provided with appropriate facilities. The main motivation was fear of the sea.

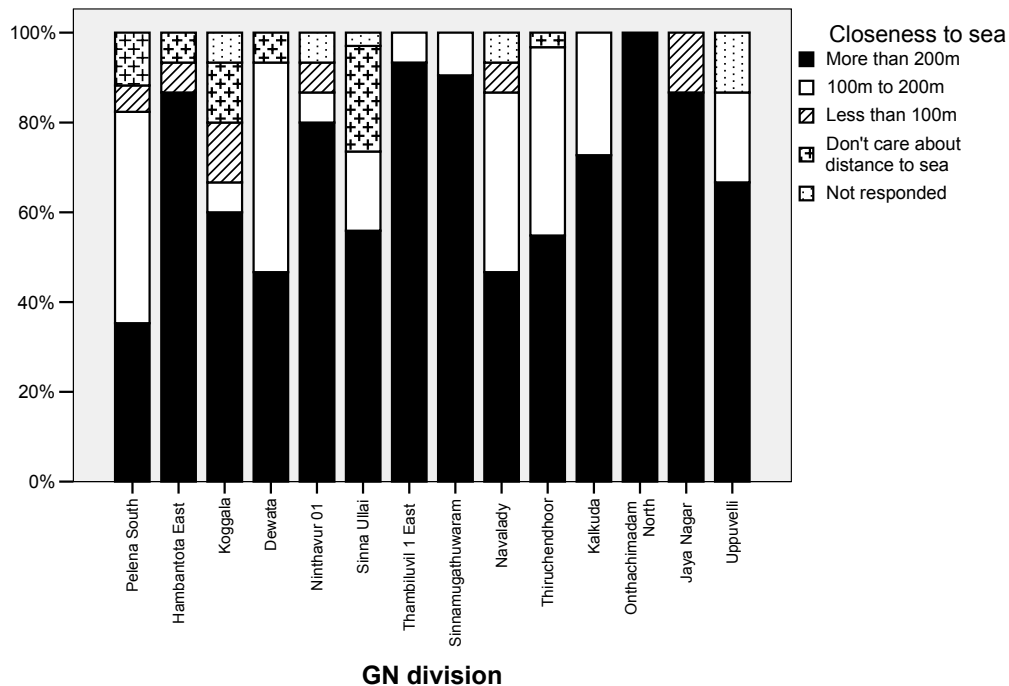
Fear of sea and desire to move in Thikkukovil, Ampara District

“We who have been living within 200 m will not live there even if you build us multi-storey houses. Because the sea is close by and we live with fear of sea coming towards land. At night we cannot sleep. Therefore we do not like live here. We should be provided houses in other areas. We have no employment. Since we live in other peoples houses even our expenses have increased. Therefore we very much prefer if

houses are built in other areas. There are some of us who have lands beyond 200 m, you could build houses in those lands.”

Focus group participants, Thambiluvil East 1, Thirrukovil

How close to Sea?



Female headed households (pre-tsunami) in particular are willing to move than preferring to stay:

In Hambontata East some Sinhalese community leaders are willing to move if land is provided close to the sea although there is more opposition from some Muslim leaders.

- In Alles Garden (Uppaweli GN, Trincomalee District) a conflict refugee camp people have now been hit by the tsunami. They support the buffer zone policy and after over 10 years of waiting hope to finally get a proper house.

Desire to move for conflict refugees now affected by tsunami in Trincomalee District

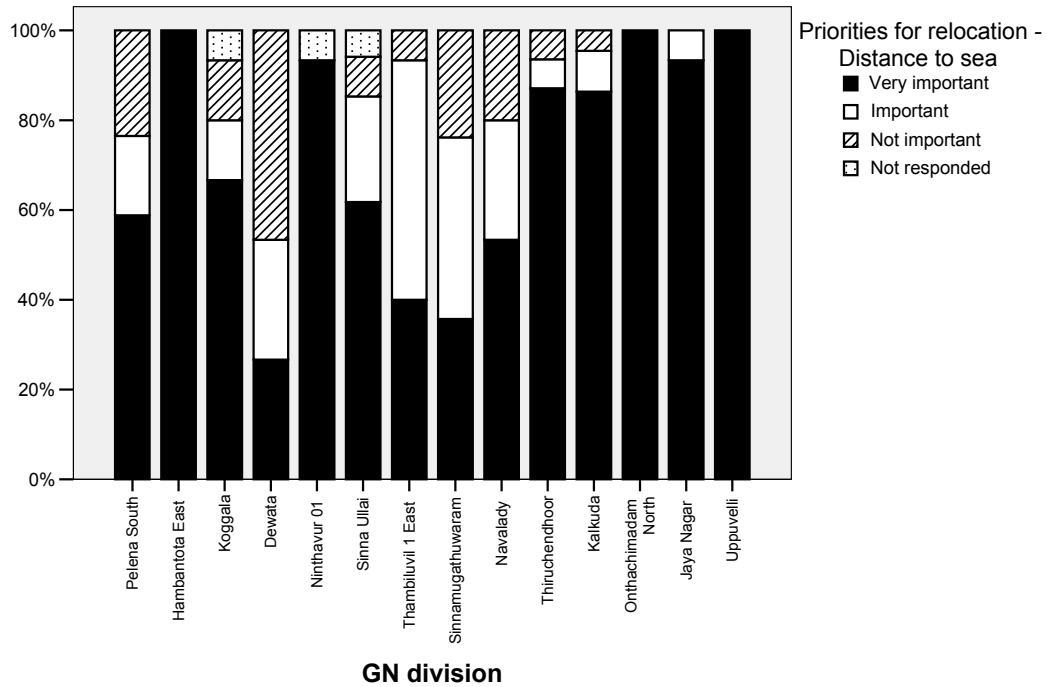
“We like to live in a place beyond 200 m and also we welcome the govt. policy on this 200 m rule. But though it looks not suitable in some places, since we have been living in the refugee camp, which is within 200 m, and experience many hardship in the past, in that context we prefer to live beyond 200 m. We who live in this refugee camp fully welcome the decision of relocating to a place beyond 200 m.”

Participant focus group, Uppaweli, Trincomalee District

ii. Criteria for people to consider new lands suitable for relocation

Main concerns about leaving old land linked to distance to sea and original lands (ie loss of livelihood, loss of cultural investments, desire for community to stay together), flooding and elephants at new lands and access to facilities

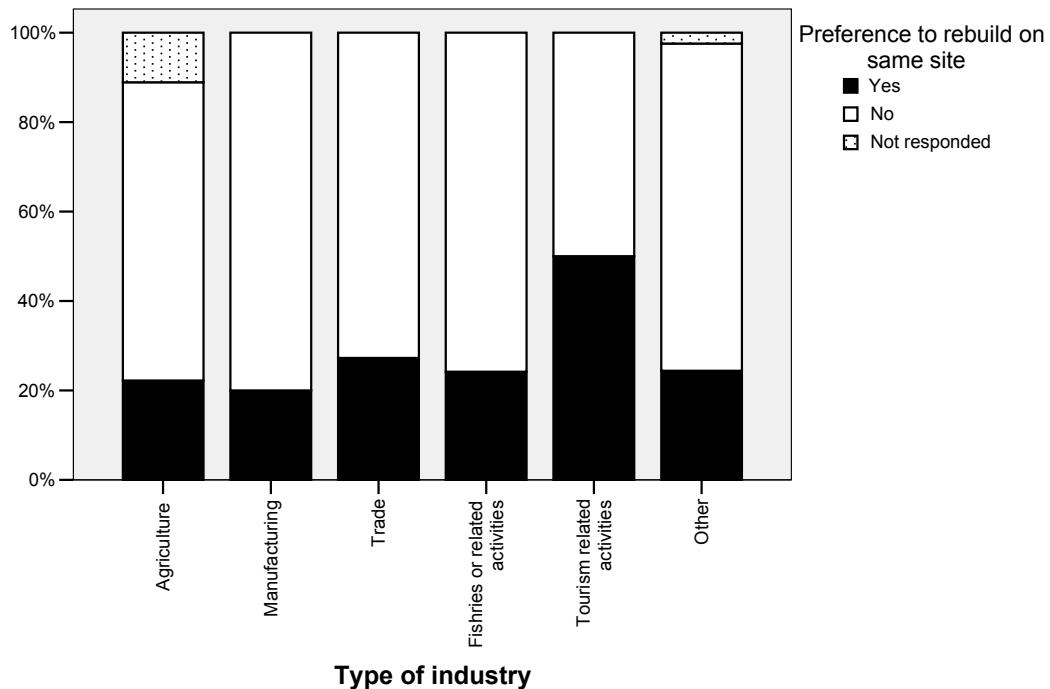
Priorities for relocation - Distance to Sea



Concern about livelihoods

Contrary to public perception fishers are more willing to move than farmers. Three quarter of fishers are willing to move and one quarter would prefer to stay. By contrast one third of farmers would prefer to stay. For tourist related occupations, half would prefer to stay.

Willingness to relocate - Type of industry



- Concern by Sinhalese community leaders that fishermen in Hambantota East are provided with alternative lands close to the sea
- Concern by fishers of Pottuvil, Ampara District to stay near the sea

Desire by female fisher to stay near the sea in Ampara District

“We cannot leave our jobs and go to a distance place. We have to live closer to sea even if it is little beyond 200 m. But we cannot go several miles away. Then our husbands cannot engage in fishing easily and we also cannot help them as we do now. As there is a land nearby we request that houses be built in that land for those who are within 200 m. If we got places like Sarvodayapura our husbands will have to leave home very early in the morning for their jobs. . . .

We like retain the ownership of our lands and also if we are to be given land elsewhere to live, then it should be closer to the village. Because our husband leave very early in the morning, mostly on an empty stomach and they return late in the evening expecting to have a meal. If we live far away then it will be very late. Also they cannot carry their fishing tackle from and to home everyday from a distant place. We have grown up daughters. Therefore we cannot leave them alone at home to go anywhere.”

Focuss group, Sinnai Ullai, Pottuvil

- But freshwater fishermen in Thambiluvil east 1, Thirrukovil (Ampara District) are more flexible about being little distance from the sea “None of wish to live within 200 m. We are fresh water fishermen therefore being a little away from the sea does not affect us.”

Concerns about separation of community based on kin, religion and caste

- In Navalady, Manmunai north, Batticaloa land sites which have been offered will only be enough for 300 houses but there are 475 families in the village and people want to stay together “the Navalady people want to live in the same place. We will not agree to be segmented sent to different places.”
- In another part of Manmunai north, in Thiruchendoor there are the same concerns about separation

Desire for communities not to be split between those within and outside buffer zone in Batticaloa District

“Those within 200 m will have to go. But due to this situation we will get cut off from our kith and kin. We doubt whether we can continue to keep our relationships. It will be broken. The place we are to be relocated is about 10 km from our present place. Therefore definitely our ties are going to be severed. Some who have bicycles or other means of travel might be able keep in touch. But many will not be able to.”

Participant, focus group in Thiruchendoor, Manmunai north Batticaloa District

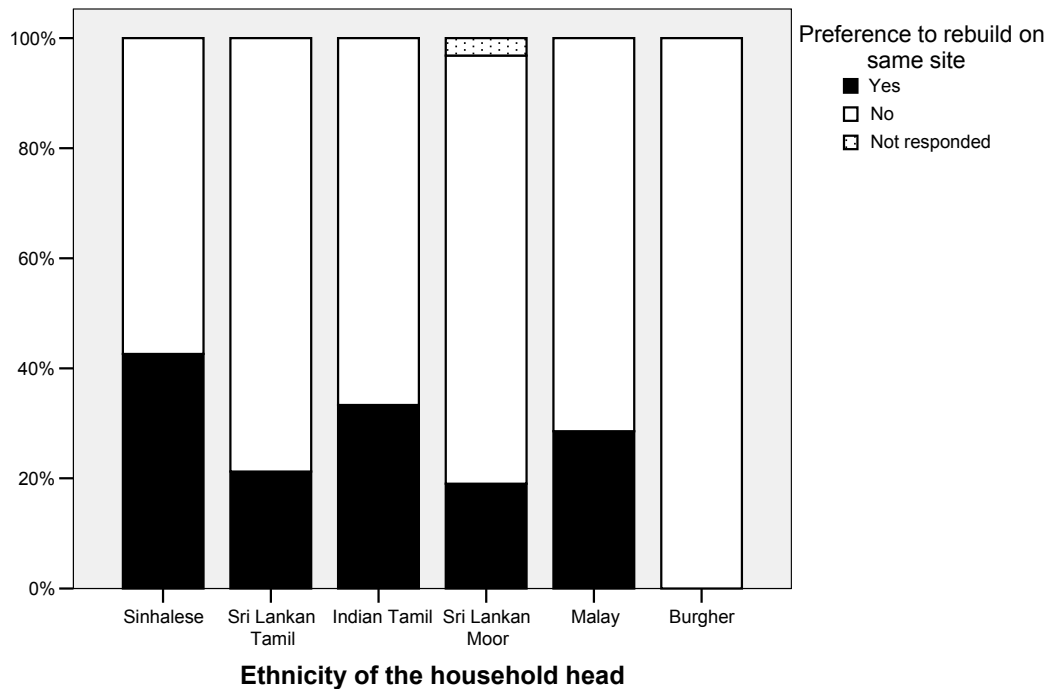
- In Onthachimadam GN, Batticaloa desire for village to stay together and not to divide those within the buffer zone from those outside the buffer zone who will stay
- In Sinai Ullai, Pottuvil, Ampara District concern about staying near the temple

Concerns about moving from Buddhist temple in Pottuvil, Ampara District

“We cannot go to a far away place. Here we erected a Buddhu Medura with the leadership of the Pansala. If we go from here that will also be destroyed. I feel that it is better if we settled here because we are near our Pansala, the school and our fishing industry is here.”

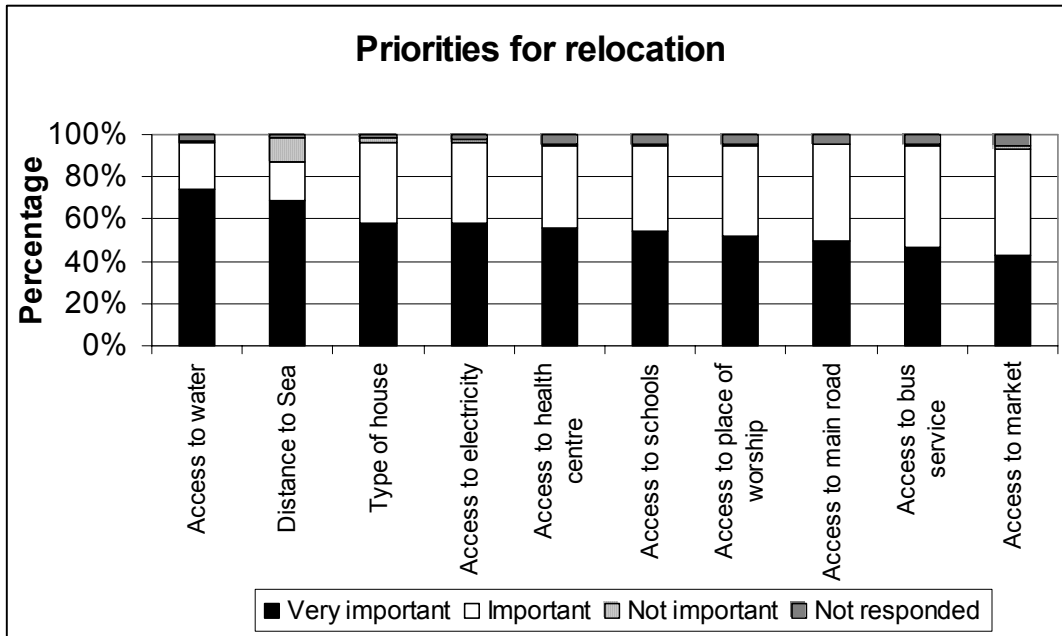
Focus group, Sinai Ullai, Pottuvil

Willingness to relocate - Ethnicity of the household head



Concerns about new site

Main concerns about new land sites are distance, access to infrastructure, problems of caste and problems of flooding. According to our survey of 281 households (based on the options given) access to water was considered “very important” by 74% of households, distance to sea considered very important by 69%, type of house by 58%, access to electricity by 58% with access to other facilities such as health centre, schools, place of worship and bus service considered “very important” by about 50% of households.



- Uppaweli, Trincomalee: “We prefer a place 200 m away and high land to protect from dangers from the sea. It should have drinking water facility, toilet facility, school, child care centre and all the other facilities.”
- Concern that proposed land is flood prone in Thambiluvil East 1 GND (see box)

Concern about new land being flood prone in Ampara District

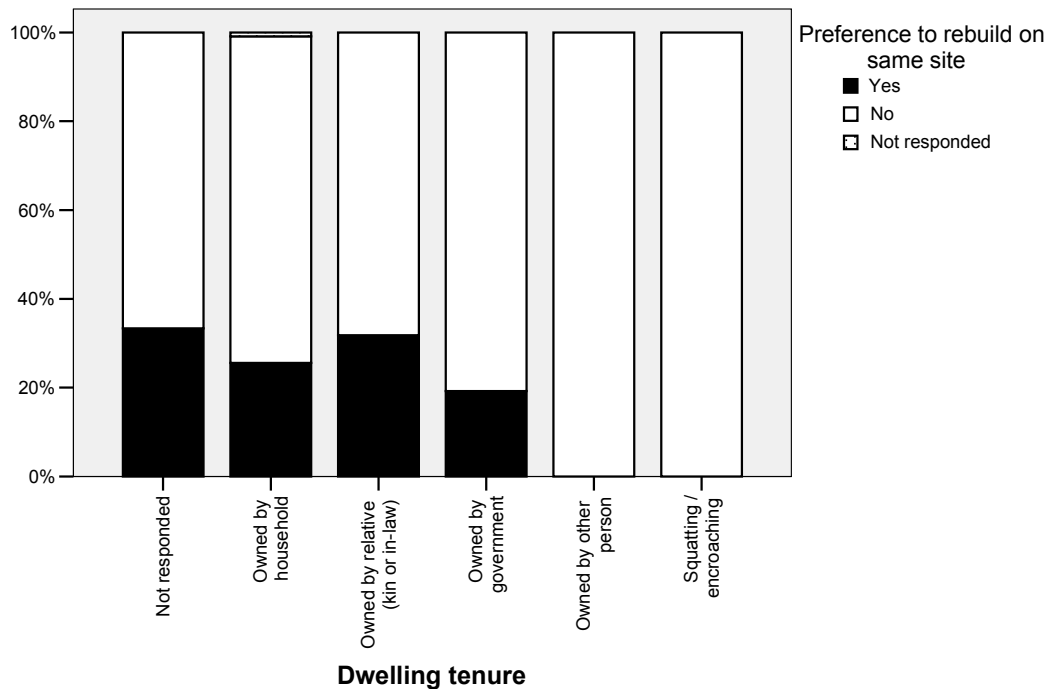
“Only if you see this area will you understand. It is a low lying area. We have written to the GN that we do not like to live there. They have promised to visit and take a decision. But even if they say that we could live there we do not like to live there. But if they want us to be there then that place will have to be filled and raised to height of 5 ft. If not, we will not like to live there.”

Focus group, Thambiluvil East 1, Thurukkovil, Ampara District

Perceptions of new site relative to pre-tsunami situation

Clearly perception of the new site depends on the pre-tsunami situation. So households who were encroachers are willing to relocate.

Willingness to relocate - Dwelling tenure



iii. Perceptions of whether land identified by government is suitable

In 10 of the 14 GNs community leaders are aware of the lands proposed for them to settle in. Their reactions are mixed; half are satisfied with the lands, half reject them. Of the rejected lands, in 4 out of 5 cases, people have identified alternative lands. In one case people are refusing to move anywhere.

Approval of government identified lands

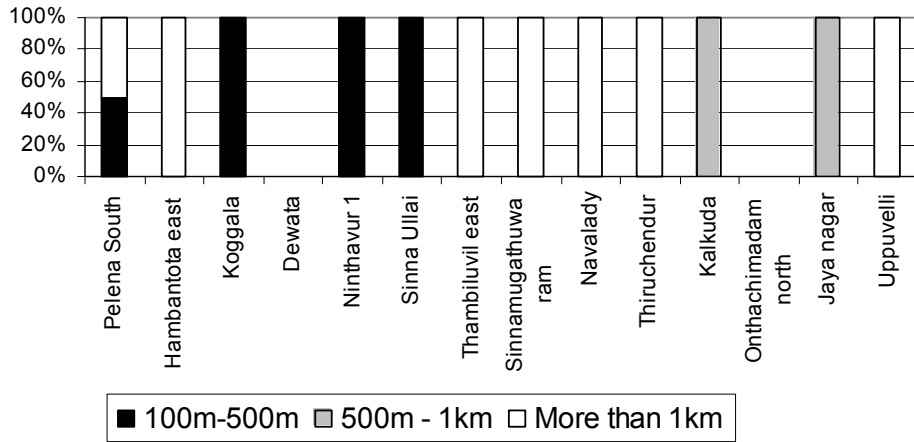
In 5 out of the 10 GNs where the community know where they will be moved, they accept the government choice provided appropriate infrastructure is provided.

- In Jayanagar GN, Nilaweli, (Trincomalee) people do seem to accept the government identified lands and want to move soon. But they would like a school, mosque and electricity to be provided.
- In Pelana South, Weligama (Matara District) an NGO is building two story houses for fisherman which a majority of the fishermen seem to accept

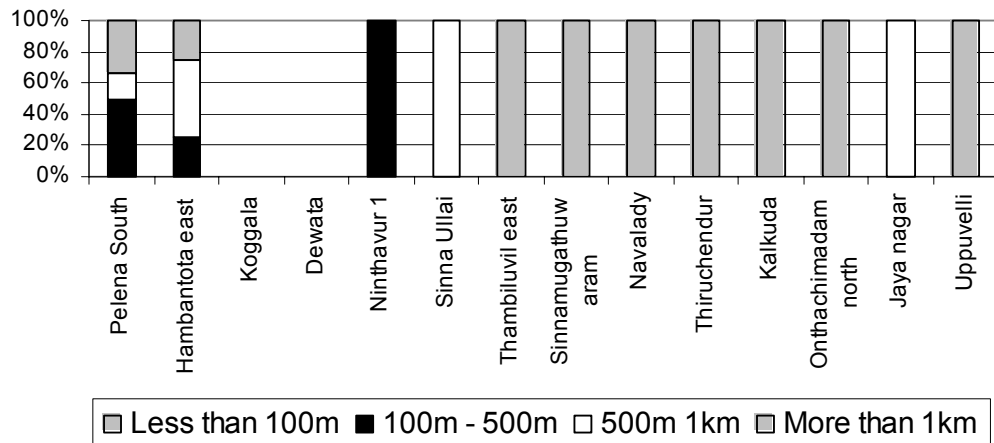
Rejection of government lands

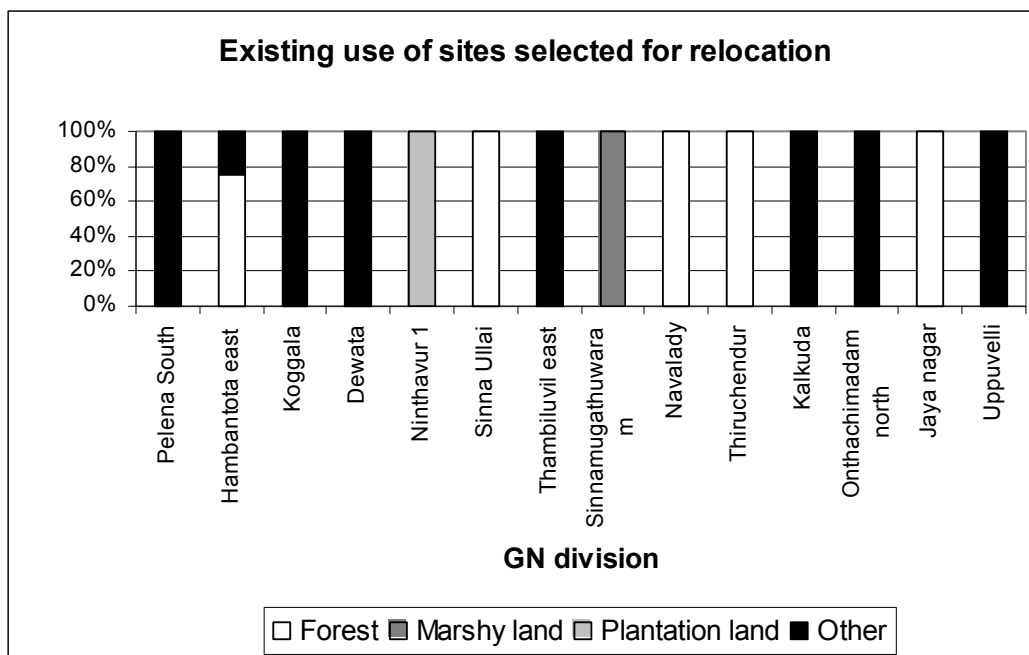
In half the GNDs government lands have been rejected. The reasons vary but include the fact that the land offered is too far from the sea or too far from their original settlement. Half of the land sites identified in the GNDs surveyed were over 1 km from the sea. The larger housing settlements especially are more than 1km from the sea.

Distance to Sea of the sites selected for relocation



Distance to previous settlement from the sites selected for relocation





Rejection of government identified lands and desire to stay

- In Hambantota East Muslim villagers seem strongly opposed to moving from their old places, although Sinhala villagers seem more willing to move

Rejection of government identified lands as unsuitable, but identification of alternative lands

In 4 out of the 5 GNs where people have rejected the government identified land, they have identified alternative lands to move – an issue discussed in the next section.

iv. Identification by local people of alternative lands as preferable to government identified land

In four GNs people have rejected government identified lands, but identified other lands as suitable.

In three of the four focus groups in Ampara District, residents have rejected the lands identified by the government, but have identified other lands which they are willing to move to:

- For example, Sinnamuhathuwaram GN, Alayadiwembu DSD is a low caste Tamil village which is largely Christian – with both a Catholic and Methodist church. People are unhappy with the land that the government has allocated as it has problems of flooding and lack of drinking water. But they have identified other land which they are willing to move to and the church has expressed a willingness to help purchase this with government support

Rejection of government identified site in preference for land they have found by low caste Christian Tamil GN in Ampara District

“This community could be defined as people who are shunned by high caste people. Therefore when these people are to be resettled in places like Puliampaththai and

Kawadapitty, it is like throwing them again into a garbage bin. These places get flooded, like in Sinnamuhaththuwarem where there was water. Many people do not like this. . . . Is it because of shortage of land that attempts are being made to fill up low lying lands and relocate these people? If so, the government should join with the churches and NGOs, and purchase lands even if it is expensive. These affected people are labourers. They work in the market and construction sites in the Muslim areas. If these people are relocated to places like Puliyampaththai what will they do for their living? . . . Based on the discussions I had with these people, the suitable place to relocate these people is the place on the road opposite to the Old Hospital Road which is also similar to Puliyampaththai. They could fill this land and build houses, even flats. . . . At present these people are displaced in six places. What these people want now is to get all these people in six places to one place and discuss this matter and take a decision. Therefore the responsibility of taking decision is on these people. The responsibility of directing them lies with the government officers and well-wishers. “

Methodist Priest, focus group, Sinnamuhaththuwarem GN, Alayadiwembu, Ampara District

v. Government’s response to local people’s suggestions of alternative lands

Many villages have already identified land for resettlement, but government has generally not listened.

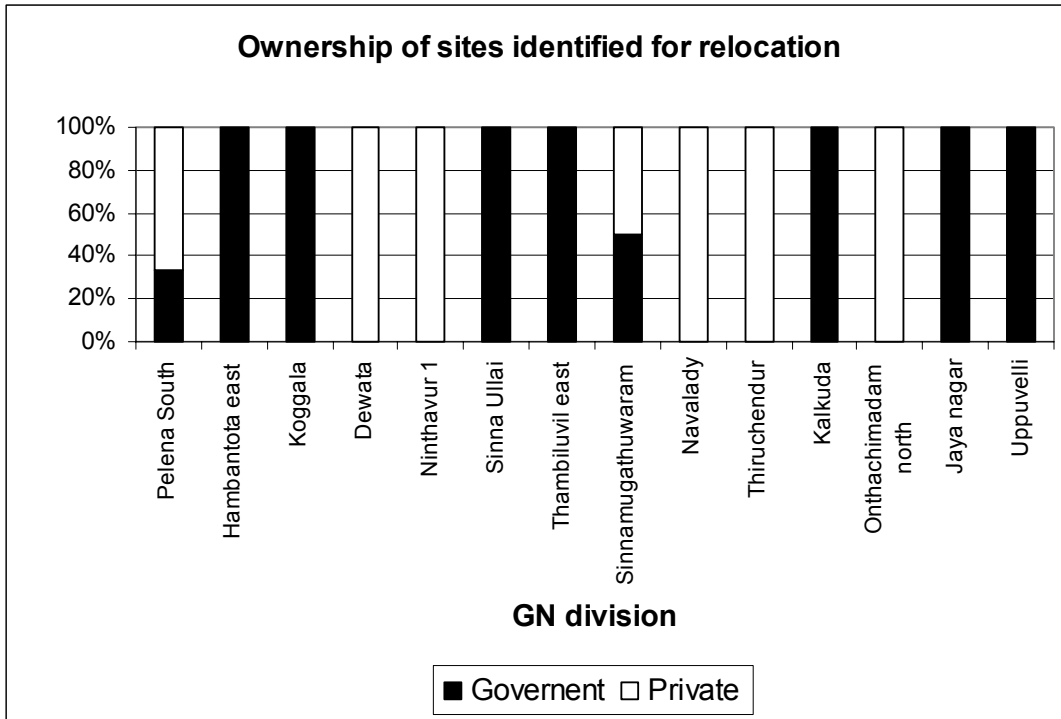
Government ignores request for alternative lands in Thirrukovil, Ampara District

“At present we are living in Kudinilam camp and there are 350 families in it. At present they are provided with cloth tents. In today’s position there are facing a lot of difficulties. We like to have that site as our permanent residing place. Government is trying to send us to a place, Thamaraikulam, which we do not like. But the people do not like that place. . . . First they (govt) asked us where we prefer to relocate. We wrote through the DS that we would like remain in the present place. But they rejected it saying that it belongs to private persons. But ¾ of the owners of this place say that they are willing to give it.”

Participants, focus group, Thambuvil East 01, Thirukkivil

3.6 Land availability

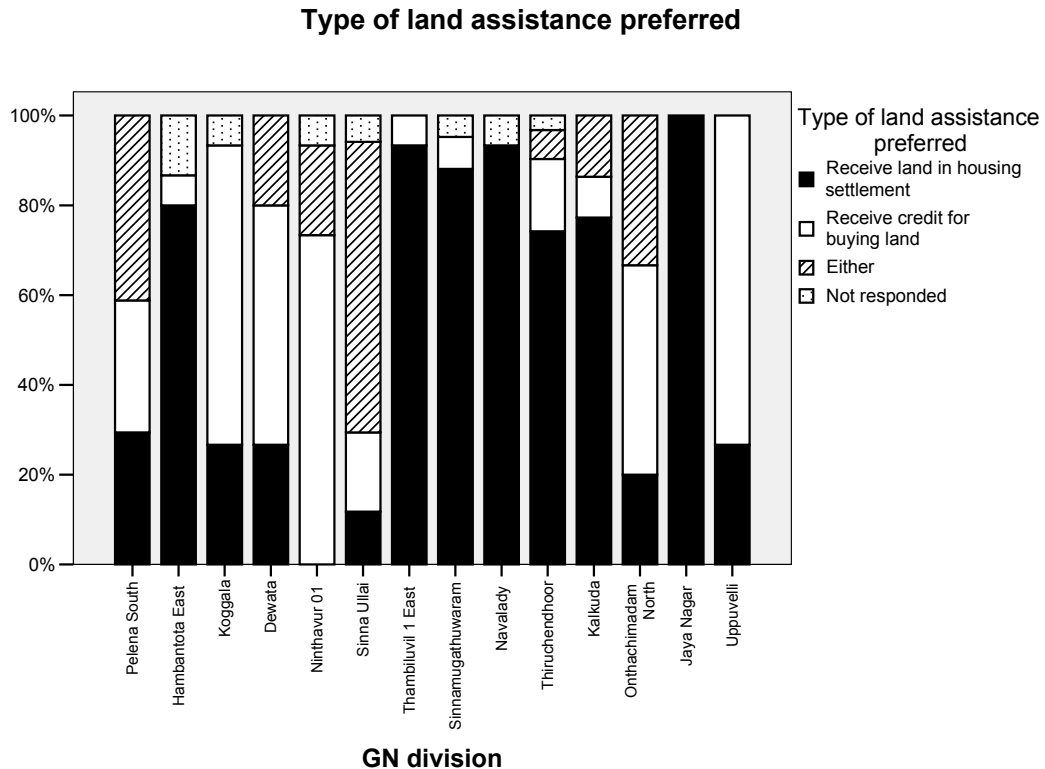
Shortage of government land is a problem in many areas and many of the sites identified are private lands.



3.7 Types of assistance, type of houses and house design

Type of assistance for land

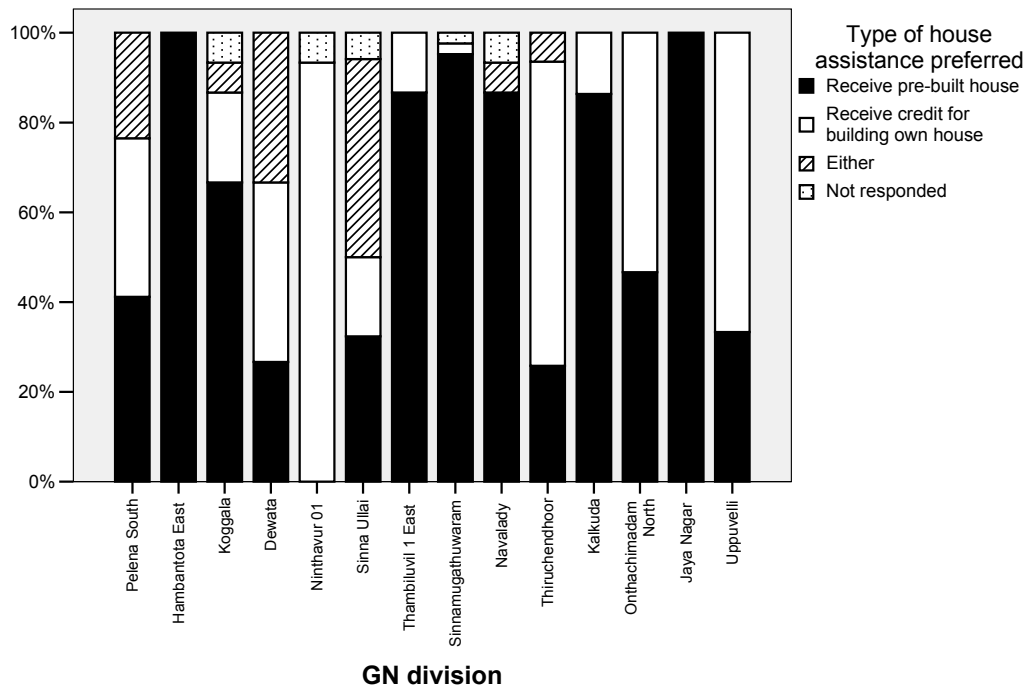
55% of our sample would like land in housing settlements.



Type of housing assistance

60% of our sample would like to receive pre-built houses.

Type of house assistance preferred



Type of accommodation preferred

90% of households would like single story detached houses.

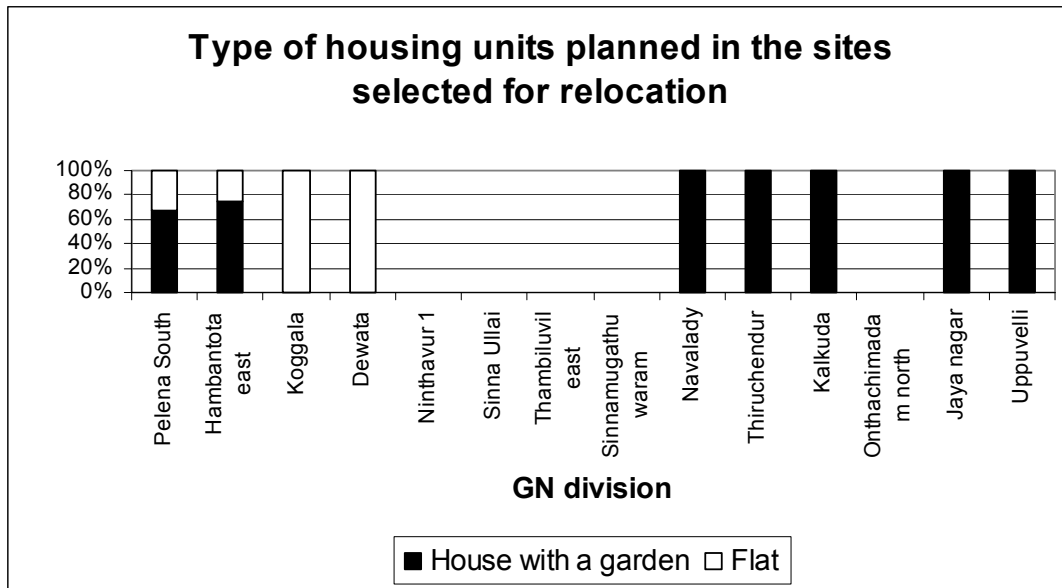
Type of accommodation offered

However contrary to people's preferences, as the table shows, in several GNDs flats/apartment are mainly available.

Preference for owner construction in Dewata, Galle

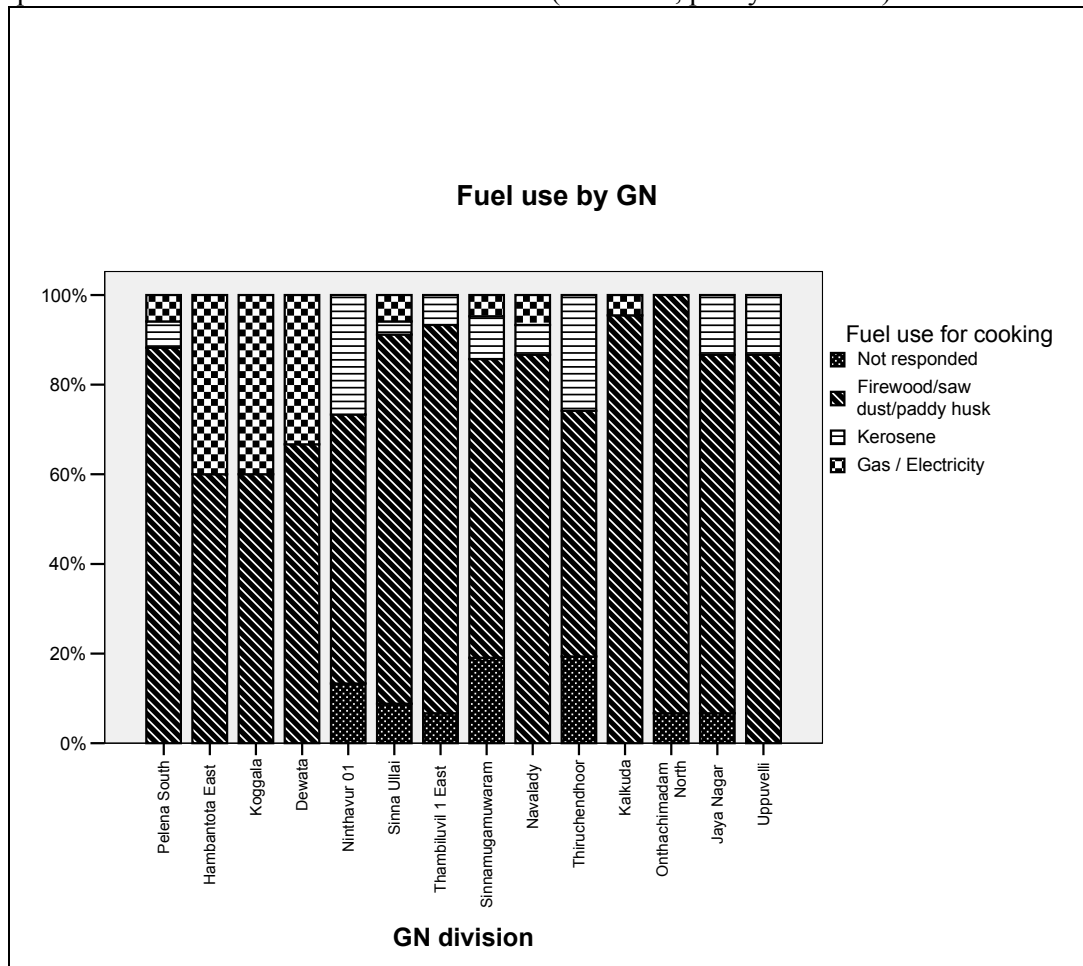
“We should be given houses from where we can continue with our present livelihoods. Flats or connected lines of houses are not suitable. Cultural problems may arise. We cannot live close to some of the unacceptable people in the community. If land and money are given to us, we can build our own houses. What is most essential is the money.”

Focus group, Dewata, Galle



Housing design

Housing design will have to take account of the fact that pre-tsunami almost three quarters of households cooked with biomass (fuelwood, paddy husks etc)



3.8 Welfare effects from relocation policy

New houses provided regardless of land tenure

The government will provide houses for people who owned their houses or their houses were not owned by other private parties. This is known as the “house for a house” policy. Ownership of land is not required. It is still not clear what will be the exact legal tenure status of the new houses, but land sale will be allowed according to TAFREN. It is not clear if government permission will be required for sale.

Pre-tsunami household owned land tenure: 78% of households that claimed to own their house, also had private land tenure.

Pre-tsunami government owned land tenure: A little more than one-eighth (13.2 %) of the individuals owned houses on government land.

Pre-tsunami land tenure owned by other private parties: The remaining 9% of households owned houses built on land owned by other persons.

Floor area

Welfare benefits from the government policy of a new house with a floor area of at least 500 sq.ft. will be mixed but just over half the households will benefit.

- half the houses (49%) had floor areas less than 450 sq.ft. This includes all the GNDs in Batticaloa district, Pelena South in Matara district and two GNDs in Ampara district.

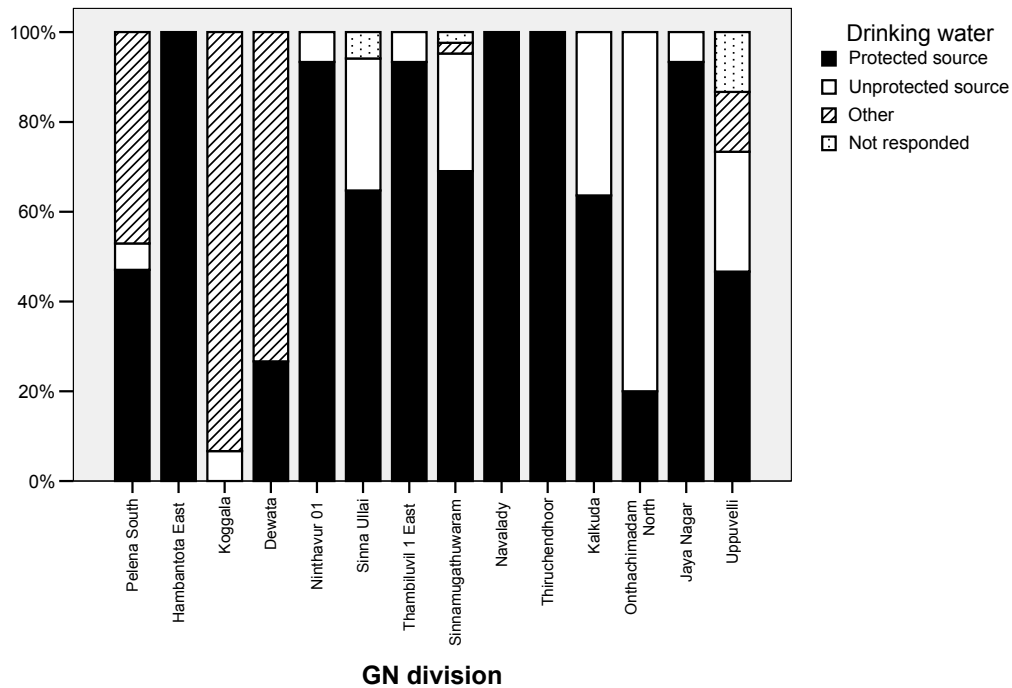


35% of households had a floor area of more than 600 sq.ft. However these negative welfare effects are less when floor area per capita is used as many households have reduced in size due to deaths. On a floor area per capita basis (ie floor area divided by number of household members) a little over half the households in the sample had a floor area of less than 125 sq.ft. per capita. Assuming a replacement house of 500 sq.ft. roughly the same percent of households will have a floor area of less than 125 sq.ft., after adjusting for post-tsunami household size (ie taking into account deaths and missing family members).

Access to facilities

12% of households will benefit from the government policy of providing drinking water from a protected source with relocation.

Source of drinking water - Pre tsunami

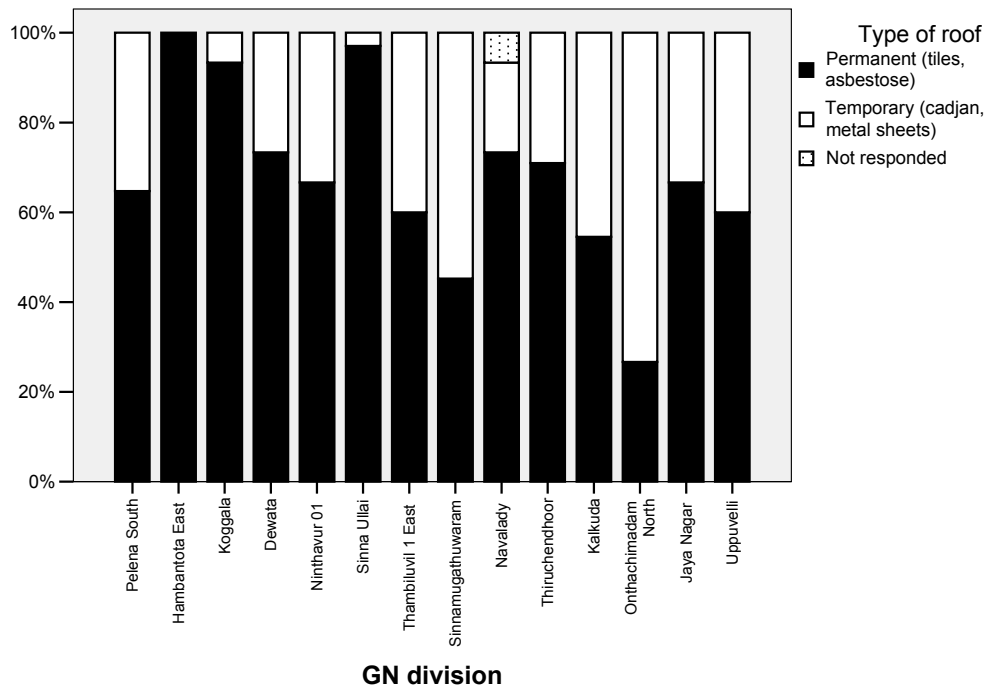


Housing quality

Some households will benefit from the government policy of providing houses with roofs and walls made with permanent material.

- In all surveyed GNDs more than half of the damaged houses had walls made from permanent material; more than two-thirds of the houses in 11 of the GNDs had walls made with permanent materials.
- In 10 of the 14 GNDs surveyed more than half the damaged houses were made with permanent roofs. But across the sample, one third of households (32%) had temporary roofs ie cadjan or metal sheets.

Type of roof



3.9 Social conflicts due to relocation

The tsunami has occurred in areas of high religious and ethnic diversity. These are also areas where there are groups of internally displaced persons from the ethnic conflict and wide differences in incomes, livelihood and caste. Sri Lankan society is already scarred by 20 years of conflict. Relocation of households which is already a major social experience can, in this context, cause major social tensions in terms of which groups receive the best sites or houses, and who is relocated next to whom. This emerged during this survey when for example in Dewata, Galle some Sinhalese households expressed a wish to move away from Muslims living in the railway lands. It will take time and dialogue to reduce these conflicts, but in many cases the top down and rapid way that sites are being identified prevents this dialogue from taking place.

The coastal belt, particularly in the Eastern Province is inhabited by Tamils, Moors and Sinhalese and there were many pre-tsunami ethnic tensions. Groups often have an attachment to places of worship (eg the Buddhist shrine at Pottuvil or various Mosques) and this attachment may have grown after the tsunami due to a desire for religious support and that many of these structures remained standing due more solid construction and open design. Many religious and ethnic groups have particular customs which need to be taken account of in township planning and house design. All these issues need to be handled sensitively given the already highly charged ethnic, religious and social tensions in the country.