

Assist Resettlement & Renaissance

Charity registered in England & Wales – Reg. No. 1151025



Resettlement of Sampoor Internally Displaced People (IDP) - Trincomalee

People from Sampoor in Trincomalee district were displaced in 2006 following the war and were languishing in four welfare centres (or refugee camps around Sampoor). Nearly 1250 families were displaced and around 900 families were living in the welfare centres. See photos below for their living conditions. Most of these families were successful farmers and were financially sound. However, following displacement, they have lost their livelihood and have been struggling to find regular employment. As a result, they have been struggling to feed their families.



Living condition of Sampoor IDP in welfare centres

First Phase of Resettlement following release of lands by the Government

IDP families could not return to their lands and resettle because the previous government had given the land to BOI, which gave it to a company for development. However, the current government withdrew the land from BOI and the land belonging to Government was released to IDP families. The said BOI project Company filed a case against BOI and the Government at the Supreme Court (SC), which made a Stay order. However, approval was granted by the Sri Lankan Supreme Court on 10 July 2015 to resettle IDP families in their lands in Sampoor.

On this basis, Trincomalee District Government Agent has been coordinating resettlement of Sampoor IDPs. In the first phase, there were 309 families considered for resettlement in a 925-Acre land recovered by the Government. However, according to the GA's office register, only 254 families were registered for resettlement assistance. The remaining 55 families were excluded for

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assistance due to marriages, living away with families and friends, etc, after the displacement (extended families). These 55 extended families were unable to get any assistance from the Sri Lankan Government as well as other INGOs, because they were not registered at the time of displacement in 2006 as displaced.

Assist RR contribution towards 1st phase of Sampoor Resettlement

UNHCR and UNICEF agreed to build 254 shelters and toilets respectively. The GA approached Assist RR and made a request to build shelters and toilets to the extended families. Assist RR became known to the GA's office through Assist RR assistance of building 6 toilets and renovating 3 wells in June 2015 for the families resettled near Kaali Kovil in Sampoor. A small number of families were taken to their land by Namal Rajapakse in Jan 2015 during the presidential election campaign without providing any support.

Following the request for assistance for the first phase of resettlement, Assist RR had completed building 55 shelters and toilets. Some photos are given below. Many organizations and individuals have contributed towards building these shelters and toilets. They are:

Shri Kanagathurkkai Amman Temple, Ealing, London – 20;
TTVK Singapore – 12;
Sivanarulillam, Mannar – 04;
Assist RR – 19.

Funds raised on behalf of Assist RR were channeled through Rotary Club of Mullaithivu. The funds were then dispersed by Rotary Club through our Sri Lankan coordinator Engineer Henry Amalraj, who has been the backbone of our charity in SL.

A few photos from the Projects Completed by Assist RR



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2nd Phase of Sampoor Resettlement

On 25 March 2016, another 546 IDP families were allowed to return to their land following the withdrawal of the Navy that was occupying Sampoor Maha Vidyalayam and the surrounding areas with an extent of 216 acres. All these 546 families have returned without any support or assistance from the government or the INGOs. We have been informed that there are no commitments from anyone including INGOs yet to assist these families apart from the hand out of Rs 35,000 by the government towards the resettlement. UNCHR may provide temporary housing in the future but it has still not committed yet.

Assist RR were approached again and asked whether Assist RR could provide some temporary shelters and toilets, as Assist RR did in the 1st phase. Assist RR sincerely believed that we can do more temporary houses to assist some of these families with the help of the Diaspora. The GA also asked whether we could provide toilets as a matter of urgency, as there are nearly 1000 women and girls in this latest resettlement, who have no access to toilets. They are also living in a cram condition as you can see from the photos.

Assist RR was the first organization to assist these people and built 100 toilets with the support of Diaspora (50 toilets were funded by IMHO, USA). Assist RR were informed by Mr Yusuff, DS of Muthur, that they have now secured support to build toilets to the remaining families.

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The temporary huts, in which the families are living, have no concrete floors but made up of the earth surface. This means that if there is rain, the shelters are flooded with rainwater and it would make the shelters uninhabitable. Hence, there was a need for at least semi-permanent shelters to around 450 families. Assist RR made an appeal towards this project in May 2016 and already built 230 shelters and is progressing with another 30 shelters. The Diaspora from the UK, Singapore, and USA through Assist RR funded these shelters. Other INGOs also constructed a number of shelters. However, they are still looking for support to construct around 83 more shelters. ASSIST RR, IMHO USA & IMHO Canada have agreed to fund another 50 shelters. We are therefore seeking funds to construct another 33 shelters. This will ensure all the resettled IDP families in Sampoor will have roofs over the heads.

The cost of a semi-permanent shelter, as can be seen from the previous pages, is Rs 125,000.



Current Living Condition

The photos above show the condition in which these families are currently living. Families also require livelihood support to start their lives. Any contribution towards improving their living condition and earning capacity would be much welcome. Please kindly consider assisting these unfortunate families. Funds raised are channeled through Assist RR (SL). The project is being implemented by Assist RR (SL), which is a registered national NGO in Sri Lanka.