

## Livelihood Support by Assist Resettlement & Renaissance

### Living conditions of Disabled persons and their needs in the East and North of Sri Lanka

There are hundreds of families in the East and North of Sri Lanka where at least one member is suffering from physical disability due to the war. In Mullaithivu district alone, there are 3351 disabled persons, of whom 1786 persons are disabled due to the war. Most of the disabled people have had artificial limbs fitted but are still facing extreme hardship due to lack of suitable job opportunities to re-start their livelihood. The breakdown of the disabled persons in Mullaithivu is given below based on Mullaithivu District Statistical Handbook of 2013.

**Table 1: Particulars of number of disabled persons in Mullaithivu district - 2012**

S.No	D.S.Division	At Birth	Illness	Disabled due to War	Other	Total
1	Maritimepattu	810	241	405	0	1456
2	Puthukkudiyiruppu	71	101	738	0	910
3	Oddusuddan	64	18	264	0	346
4	Thunukkai	65	43	186	20	314
5	Manthai East	27	-	175	-	202
6	Welioya	36	-	18	-	123
<b>Total</b>		<b>1073</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>1786</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3351</b>

Assist RR met representatives of disabled families from Mullaithivu on 16 Jan 2014 at the GA's office in Mullaithivu, which enabled Assist RR to realise the extent of the problems the disabled families have been facing since the end of the war. These families are seeking livelihood support from Diaspora Tamils. Assist RR trustees were told that one person who lost both legs has been earning a living by operating an auto rickshaw. Assist RR believe that most of the disabled persons have the will power to earn a living using their able limbs but needed financial support to make a start.

Some of them desperately need commode toilets suitable to their disability. Assist RR met a person who lost both his legs. He told us that it is extremely difficult to use the traditional squat toilet in their back garden as he has to use his hands to reach the toilet and even this becomes near impossible when it rains. They made a plea to construct commode toilets for families with members who have lost their legs.



*Assist RR Meeting with the representatives of disabled families in Mullaithivu*

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They also mentioned that this is the first time that they were invited by an organisation to discuss their issues and hoped that something good would come out of the meeting. They asked whether Assist RR could provide the following livelihood support that would help them to make a new start in their lives:

- Cows and goats to a number of families in Thunukkai area @ Rs 100,000 per family;
- Machinery for making milk packets - quote is being obtained;
- Capital for starting small businesses such as making and selling peanut packets, flours, chilli powder, etc - up to Rs 50,000 per family;
- Create job opportunities that can be carried out by disabled persons - cost depend on the nature;
- Assistance to purchase a motorised 3-wheel bicycle to a disabled person who has lost the functions of both legs and only has partial use of his hands. He is already selling peanuts in Mullaithivu town with the assistance provided by Mullaithivu GA's office. However, he has been struggling to use his manually operated 3-wheel bicycle using his partially disabled hands. This would cost around Rs 100,000. Photos are given below.



*A severely disabled person makes a living by selling peanuts, etc*

**Pictures of a number of disabled persons with their family members in Mullaithivu district**



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Assist RR would like you to consider helping these unfortunate war affected people by providing necessary funds. We can help implementing any of their requests with the help of Mullaithivu District Educational Development Trust Fund headed by the GA, Mr Vethanayagan.

*Working towards enhancing the lives of innocent victims of war in Sri Lanka*  
814, Alcester Road South, Maypole, Birmingham, B14 5HH, Tel/Fax: 01564 742461  
Website: [www.assistrr.org](http://www.assistrr.org) E-mail: [committee@assistrr.org](mailto:committee@assistrr.org)