

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY SITE

4. Study area and its resource base

Resource availability determines the economic behavior of individual households. Therefore assessment of characteristics of study area in relation to livelihood perspective is important. This chapter addresses the present situation of resources availability and their distribution pattern in the study area. Since, in livelihood approach every element surrounding the household is considered as determining livelihood strategies and welfare.

The study area is Ampara district which belongs to the dry zone region of Sri Lanka. The dry zone region of Sri Lanka is heavily dependent upon irrigation for paddy cultivation. There are no systematic data available on per capita income, gross domestic production, employment levels and the like for eastern Sri Lanka. The intensity of the civil conflict at different points in time during the past several years allows for only a sketchy outline of the level of economic development. Ampara district has been the least affected compared to other districts in Eastern Province by the conflict, which is probably partially attributable to its geographic location in the southernmost part of Eastern Province. Ampara contains the liveliest level of economic activities. Eastern province region as a whole impoverished with high levels of unemployment and low levels of formal economic activity. Despite a low level of economic situations, Ampara is noted as a highest level of agricultural paddy productivity region in Sri Lanka.

The information below was gathered from secondary data sources, namely, documents of Karaitivu resource profile for 2006 from divisional secretary division, related documents and websites of Sri Lanka.

4.1 Location of study area

Ampara is a remote city on the East Coast of Sri Lanka, about 320km from the capital city of Colombo. There is no tourism in this part of the country; however, it has plenty of jungle and wild life. Ampara is under the full control of the Sri Lankan Government. The Ampara district is located 320 km from the capital city of Colombo, Sri Lanka. The specific sampling site (study site) Karaitivu divisional secretary division is situated 30km away in the East direction of Ampara city. Figure 4.1 shows the specified location.

4.1.1 Boundary of the study area/sampling site

Ampara district is surrounded by in the north Divisional secretariat division of Sainthamaruthu, in the East bay of Indian Ocean, Divisional secretariat division of Ninthavur in the South and Divisional secretariat division of Sammanthurai in the west.

4.2 Climate of district

Sri Lanka has three major climatic zones of wet zone, intermediate zone and dry zone. Eastern province and Ampara district fall under lowland dry zone (Low-country is demarcated as the land below 300 m in elevation, Dry zone is demarcated as the place receiving less than 1750 millimeter rainfall per annum). It is categorized under major soil group of non calcic brown soils, reddish brown earths, soils on old alluvium, solodized solonetz, low humic gley soils and regosols.

Sri Lanka is receiving the rain from two main monsoonal rains. Northeast monsoon and southwest monsoon is experienced from December to March and June to September respectively. Ampara district is experiencing the rainfall from north east monsoon. The study area has the annual rainfall expectancy of 900 millimeter to 1100 millimeter. The rainfall increases from October to January. The annual average temperature ranges between 30 degree Celsius ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) to 45 degree Celsius and this range changes according to the rainfall.

The effects of rainfall on paddy production are well pronounced in the dry zone during the Maha season and in the Wet Zone during the Yala season (Maha meant by wet and Yala meant by dry are two seasons defined for paddy cultivation in Sri Lanka).

As a whole, climate of study site is represented by low land dry zone of Sri Lanka.

4.3 Resources

4.3.1 Land and land holding

Karaitivu divisional secretariat division is a portion of Ampara district. It contributes to the land area of 8.6 square kilo meters. In the east part of this area is rich in sandy soils as near to sea. In the west part is rich in clay as near to paddy land.

In the middle, the soil pattern varies between these two characteristics. There was a small portion of water pond in the middle of this area. During dry season the land of this pond exposed out. During rainy season it outs flooding. Karaitivu divisional secretariat division includes 5 small villages of 17 Girama Niladari divisions. Those villages named as Karaitivu, Salliththeevu, Karadiththoddam, Mavadippalli and Malikaikkadu. Among those Karaitivu, Salliththeevu and Karadiththoddam includes

12 Girama Niladari divisions of this area with the land holding of 6.600 square kilo meters. Land is flat in nature except in the small village of Mavadippalli. The land area near to sea called as “vempupoomi” in local terms facing sea erosion. No any structures or plantings observed to prevent this environmental hazardous. Out of this total area of 8.6 square kilo meters 40 percent occupied by paddy lands belong to this D.S division.

4.3.2 Case/ethnicity

Ampara district is representing all ethnic groups (such as Sinhalese, Tamils, and Muslims) of Sri Lanka. Among those Karaitivu divisional secretariat division is representing Tamils and Muslims. Tamils were represented by the first 12 Girama Niladari divisions of this D.S division area. Nowadays there is better inter-linkage among three ethnics in these areas. Therefore the peace and harmony situations among ethnics are getting importance to build up a healthy society in all ways. In the recent past among ethnic groups, there were bitter experiences leads to civil stress and restricted free movements in these areas.

4.3.3 Demographic resources

a. Population

The total population of this area (according to the data from resource profile 2006 of Karaitivu Divisional Secretariat) is 20,443. Out of this the tamil include 13,023. Among those the number of households included under Sarmurthi National anti poverty scheme is 1595. Their population number is 7975. Therefore the

percentage of population identified as rural poor is 61 percent ($\frac{7975}{13023} * 100$) out of 12

Girama Niladari divisions. According to the total population size of 20,443 and land

area of 8.6 square kilometers, the population density of this whole D.S division is 2,377 people/sq km and population annual growth rate is 3.9%. When considering the Tamil ethnic their density contributes 1,973 persons per kilometer square (13,023/6.6).

These information tells the differences among demography in terms of ethnic. The above population density and annual growth rates are higher than national level figures. The population characteristics of the tamil ethnic are described here in terms of age and sex distributions (Resource profile Karaitivu, 2006).

b. Age based distribution of population

The following table describes the population distribution according to the age ranges in the 12 Girama Niladari divisions. The considered age ranges here were 0-5(children), 6-19, 20-54 (include more economically active population) and more than 54(elderly). According to this data, the percent of constitute of each age range group was calculated. Children group constitutes 10%, 6-19 years group constitutes 27%, the more economically active group constitutes 52% and the elderly constitutes 11%. These values reflect the availability of enough labors from this population.

Table 4.1 Age based distribution of population among 12 Girama Niladari divisions of KDS

Divisions	0-5 years (10%)	6-19 years (27%)	20-54 years (52%)	>54 years (11%)
1	115	284	693	160
2	47	133	354	93
3	51	167	438	58
4	90	198	383	79
5	113	213	621	90
6	42	148	332	168
7	67	404	289	65
8	154	360	606	133
9	63	266	359	30
10	56	182	335	42
11	165	322	460	79
12	185	320	887	170

(KDS: Karaitivu Divisional Secretary Division)

c. Population based on gender

The following table describes the gender based population distribution of this area. The male to female ratio is 0.97. It is nearly to one. Therefore sex based population is in balance among these 12 G.N divisions.

Table 4.2 Sex distribution of population among selected 12 G.N Divisions

G.N Divisions	Male	Female	Male: Female
1	538	714	0.75
2	289	308	0.94
3	360	354	1.02
4	401	439	0.91
5	511	526	0.97
6	340	348	0.98
7	389	436	0.89
8	682	571	1.19
9	408	290	1.41
10	300	322	0.93
11	486	540	0.90
12	776	786	0.99
Total	5480	5634	0.97

(Source: Resource profile Karaitivu, 2006)

d. Cultural characteristics of the population

The KDS represents the religions of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. The majority of the people living out of 12 G.N divisions (owned by Tamil ethnic) representing the culture of Hinduism except a small number of Christianity followers. Hindu temples saving as the basic structures of hindu culture here. Along with a Christian's church was also found in this area.

e. Educational condition of the population

Altogether there are 10 schools standing in this area. 7 of them are situated in the area of 12 G.N divisions. One of the schools named Vipulananda central college saves for from year 6 to year 13 of schooling years. The early abandoning or nonattendance of schooling years is high among poor families.

f. Employments and income of the population

Most of the populations are involved with paddy farming, vegetable production, fishery (since close to sea) and livestock rearing. Except that various small and medium level other activities also carried out by people. These include masonry, carpentry, shops, bakery, saloon, laundry, milling, tractor repairing and welding shops, bullock carts, painting etc. The majority of formally unemployed people cannot receive regular monthly income. It varies according to the chance and opportunities related to their activities in a year period. It is fluctuating month to month. There is a need for them to save the flush of income in some months and use them in another period.

4.3.4 Livestock resources

Among the all livestock types, chicken rearing is the most important one in this area. Since chicken is free from all religious taboos, there is a high demand for chicken meat and eggs in this area. Even though most of the people doing for self consumption. Chickens are mostly reared for egg purpose than meat purpose. The production is not enough to fulfill the consumption demand in this area. Cows get the importance next to chicken. The milk production is very low compared to the population size. There are fewer numbers of goats and buffaloes found in this area.

The approximate number of goats and buffaloes were 134 and 74 (Karaitivu resource profile, 2006). No any pastureland found for these livestock. There are difficulties in receiving feed and medicines on livestock rearing because there are no any nearby stores to issue them.

4.3.5 Water resources

Water is obtained from hand dug wells for all purposes. The wells near sea coast getting brine taste or salt water intrusion. Nowadays, this area is under access of pipeline supply of water under the governance of national water supply and drainage board, Sri Lanka. This system is charging for water usage.

4.3.6 Market

There is no organized market system observed within this area. Some small scale level of shops and groceries are doing well within this area. The market set ups developed here easily failed because of the established market systems in the surrounding areas or in nearby Divisional secretariat divisions compare to here.

4.3.7 Institutions

The area is situated ahead of the main B grade road that facilitates/eases the bus transport between the nearest small city of Kalmunai and Amparai. Even though the services are limited, several institutions are working here. Those are multi purpose co-operative society, branch of people's bank, NGOs like Servalanka, Sanasha, Sarvodayam, World Service Canadian University and International Red Cross society.

4.3.8 Characteristics of Agriculture

Farming system characteristics of the study area: the climatic conditions and labor availability are more conducive situations related to agricultural production activities. Except the paddy, other vegetable and fruit crops production occurs at home gardens in small scale. Coconut tree is the long term multi-purpose crop mostly adopted in this area. All paddy lands belongs to this area is cultivated during yala season under irrigation. Karaitivu divisional secretary division is under Galoya

irrigation scheme in Sri Lanka. It receives the irrigation via the following seven canals named (in local language) as follows: Palaiyaveli vaikkal, Vadichchal vaikkal, Pudduveli vadichchal vaikkal, Maelkandam vaikkal, Poorampurikkandam vaikkal, Karaikkolaikkandam pirathana vaikkal, Muthalai vantha vaikkal and Kaakamkoththi malai vaikkal. During Maha most of the paddy lands receiving rain water. The average yield during maha season is 90 bushels per acre and during yala season 60 bushels per acre from the reports of Sri Lanka Department of Agriculture.

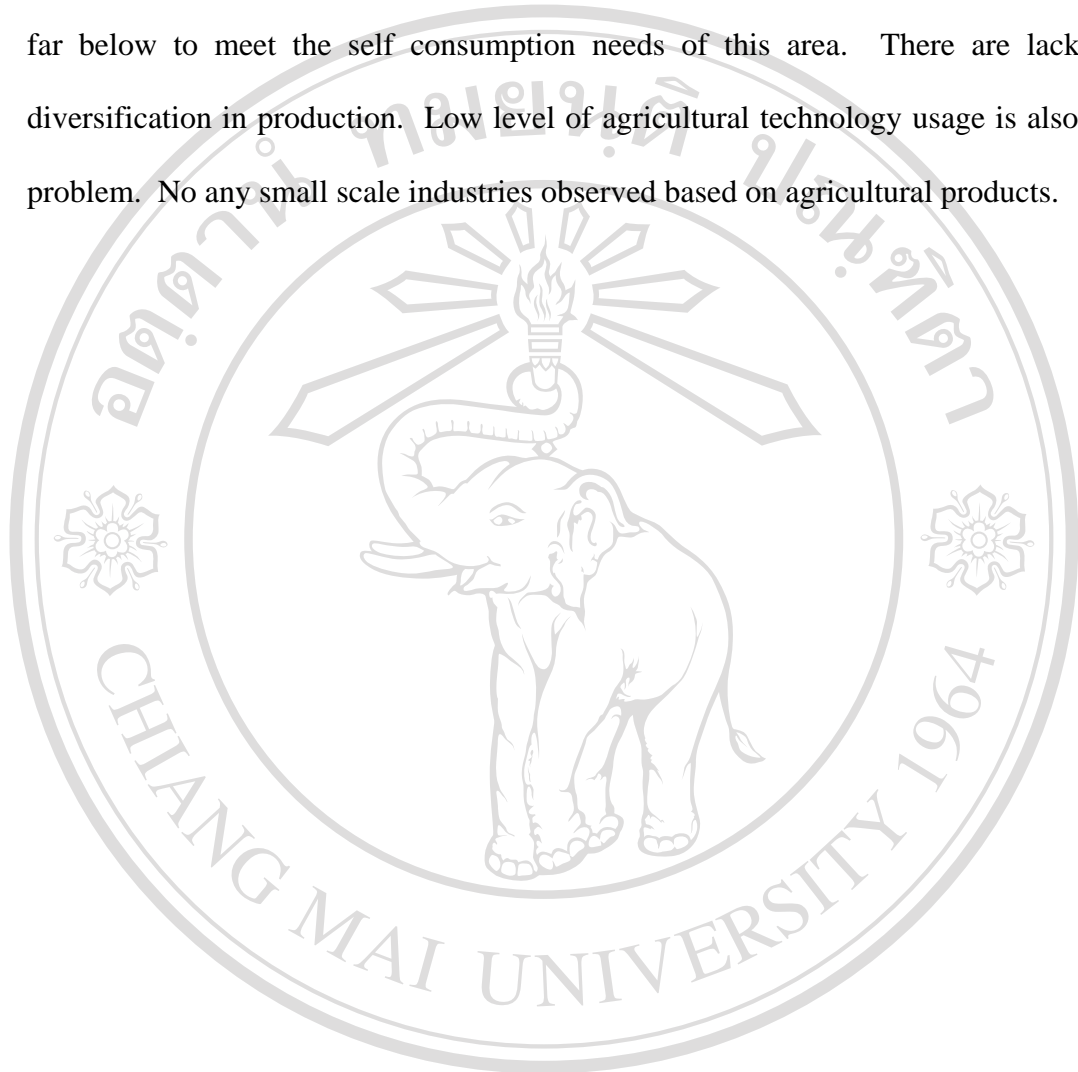
Other field crops cultivated in this area are manioc, vegetables, green gram, ground nut, maize, chilli, cowpea, sweet potatoe and small onion. Their cultivated acreages are shown below:

Type of crop	Land area(acre)
Manioc	14
Vegetables	10
Green gram	2
Ground nut	4
Maize	2
Chilli	2
Cowpea	2
Sweet potatoe	1
Small onion	1

(Source: Resource profile Karaitivu, 2006)

a. Identified problems in agriculture in this area

The production of other field crops and livestock products are not enough or far below to meet the self consumption needs of this area. There are lacks of diversification in production. Low level of agricultural technology usage is also one problem. No any small scale industries observed based on agricultural products.



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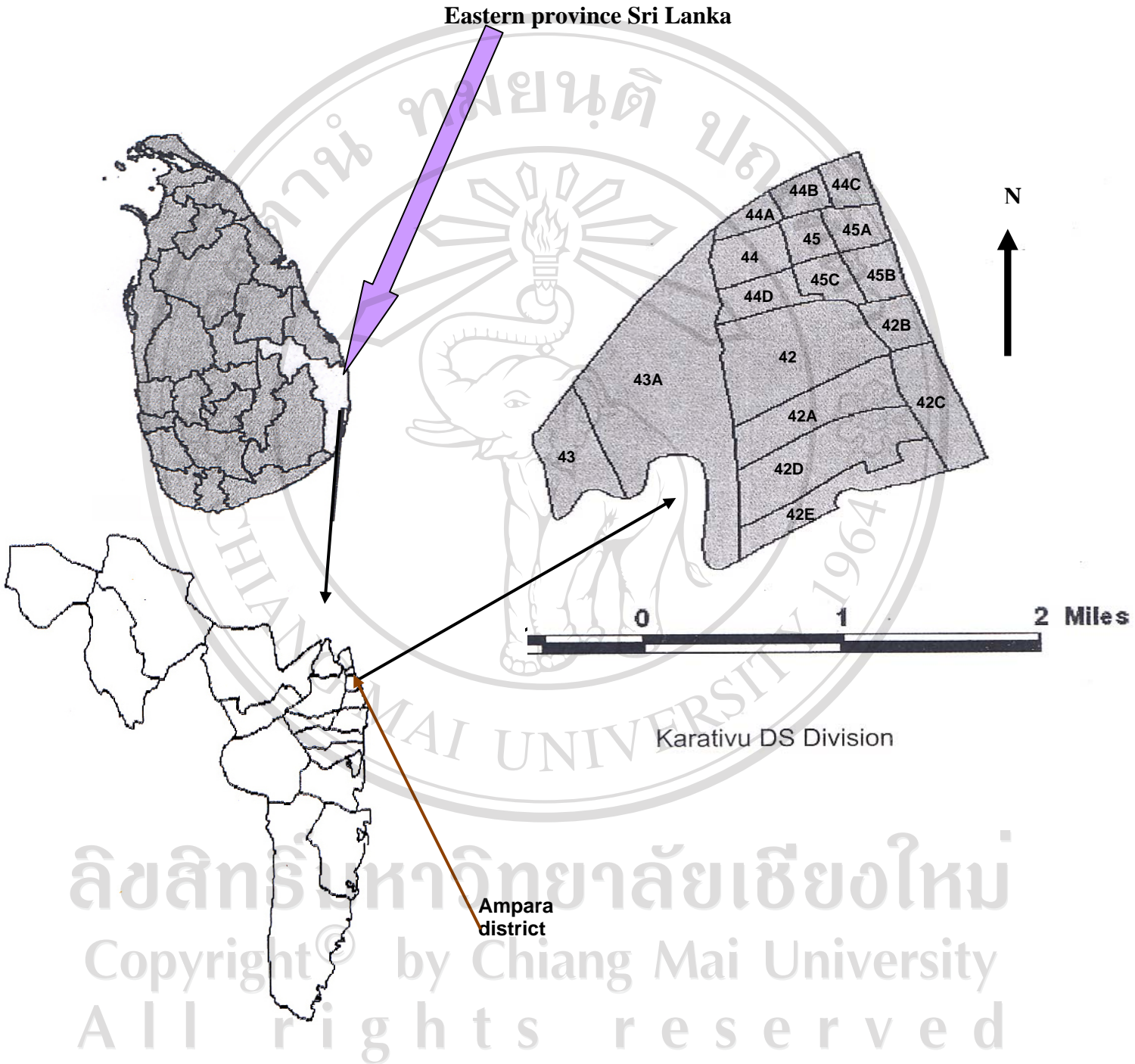


Figure 4.1 Location of study area