

Environmental Management & Sustainable Development Series 1

Editor

**SEOW TA WEE
T.M.S.P.K.THENNAKOON**



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THE ROLE OF SERVICE CENTRES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHERIPHERY; THE CASE STUDY IN HATANGALA RURAL SETTELMENT

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Introduction

It is difficult to identify a proportionate progress both in physical and human sectors in most of the countries which are going forward under the concept of the development of the modern world. Countries which are physically progressed can be poor in human resources but countries which are poor in human resource are also poor in physical development. This is more common in developing countries. It is precise to say that “a development of a country denotes the progress in all sectors of that country as well as regions”. The current development activities underway in Sri Lanka aim at developing strategic locations of the country as resource centers to enhance human capabilities. Despite the focus given to rural areas of the country while carrying out these projects, certain areas still remain untouched and isolated in the task of physical and human development.

People living in peripheral areas always connect with service centers to fulfill their basic needs. In most cases, city serves as the service center. Accordingly, as per the tasks assigned to cities and peripherals, the majority of the developmental activities are been carried out by the urban settlements or the service centers.

Providing market opportunities for rural products, service supply, supply of agricultural ingredients, employment generation on non-agricultural sector, employment training, providing financial assistance and loans are been conducted through service centers and to derive the maximum return it is necessary to perform peripheral activities such as maintaining direct contacts with the city, engage in non-agricultural professions, maintaining day to day contacts and the mobility of the workforce.

Even though the peripherals develop as a result of the inter-connectivity between this service supply center and the annexed peripherals, regional discrepancies occur due to the proximity of the peripherals can be identified.

Conditions prevail in Hatangala rural settlement which was selected as the sample area will be studied here. This area is considerable to be an isolated area with less physical development and does not have connection with any other service area. Thus, it has to depend on the Balangoda service center. The main objective of this study is to find out how the settlers in this area fulfill their expectations.

Methodology

When collecting data and information primary and secondary data collection system will be used and secondary data was collected through books, magazines, letters, maps and organizations. Primary data was collected mainly through questionnaire, semi-structural interviews, observations and case studies and have been analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

Development and regional development in Sri Lanka

No matter how many definitions were declared about development, it should precisely mean the wellbeing of the humankind. Hence, the development should be depicted through the living standards of a man. To enhance the living standards, it is necessary to complete the entire sphere not only economic, social and environmental foundations but also education, good health, political freedom and protection of human rights. Hence, living standards is the reflection of the development. Jayakody (2008).

Accordingly, the concept of the development is considered to be a complex one. It is because of the changes that occur in the definitions and the development strategies as per the time period and social changes. At present social, economic, political and environmental concepts have become part and parcel of the development.

However, even if there are different views and definitions on development through the essence of the concept of the development it means as Karunadasa (2003) points out it is expected the equal development of every sector regionally and from country to country to deliver the quality living standards to the entire society.

Many countries which were liberated after the World War II aimed at developing their economic, social and political sectors through various development strategies and were able to decentralize the administration system existed in those countries but it created many disputes. It can be identified that many plans and strategies formulated at the national level do not meet the requirements at the regional level. Especially, it did not represent the rural communities living in developing countries. Hence, the attention to the regional development was drawn only after 1960s.

When defining an area in simple terms, it means a country, region or sub section of a country divided on various criteria such as economic, social, cultural and natural. Hence, regional development means a methodology that plans systems and strategies to develop and expand social and political lives of the people living in that particular area.

“The efficiency of modern administration does not solely depend on government policies and objectives. The nature of the expansion of the government activities towards each citizen and area and the engagement of the people in government activities affect the administration of a government. Administration of most developing countries centered on the capital. But for an efficient government it is necessary to decentralize the administration activities to states, regions, provinces, districts, cities and villages.” (Dickwella, 2003)

It can be identified through the regional development that prevails in the developing countries such as Sri Lanka. Most of the government as well as private sector investments are high in urban areas compared to regional areas.

The prime aim of the regional development is the improving of infrastructure and other facilities in rural area. Thus, the objective of the regional development is to meet the gap between urban and rural areas

“Rural Development is a strategy which leads economic and social life development of poor people in rural sector. It will expand the benefits and privileges for rural oppressed who find livelihood in rural areas. This will target the social and economics development of poor people in rural sector while pay attention on rural sector modification plans.” (Dikwella,2003)

Thus, in order to enhance social and economic standards of the poor communities in the rural areas it is necessary to strengthen the inter-connectivity between these rural areas and the developed areas of the country. However, at present when developing of strategic regions a tendency of ignoring the peripherals can be seen. Academics have paid their attention to the threat of economic policy stability created by this regional imbalance.

Since Colombo became the economic hub of the country, the city turned into the focal point of all trade, industrial and financial activities. Colombo became the center to attract physical and human resources that exist inside the country with the help of road and railway transportation. Accordingly, 80% out of the total industries of the country and 88% of the total workforce concentrated into this strategic location while the balance of 20% remain in the rest of the country. Even though, Colombo is comparatively small in size it is the most populous district in the country. Hence, Colombo has become the center of education, health and residential service infrastructure and the focal point of operating the national economy.

Peripheral development decided on its inter-connectivity with the strategic location. Especially, many people who receive service of the service center live in semi-urban areas. Center's services are exchanged on their daily mobilization. However, in developing countries like Sri Lanka features of the peripherals are different from service centers. When taking each province into consideration each province has its own unique features and environmental conditions and also social, cultural, economic and historic identity. For example, even if Southern, North Western and Central Provinces' combine contribution to the Gross Domestic Product stands at 31%, the rapid growth rate of regional development is been recorded in North Central Province (Jayakody 2008). The social marginalization created through this paves the way for regressions of the provincial, rural or regional development.

However, Wanasinghe (1998) had attempted to classify the region into 03 broader categories based on multi-indicators.

- Periphery regions with comparatively rapid economic growth rate and actions
Southern and Western Provinces
- Periphery regions with moderate growth rate
North Central and North Western Provinces
- Periphery regions with slow growth rate
Sabaragamuwa and Uva Provinces
Northern and Eastern Provinces

What is apparent from this is the fact that objectives of the regional development of Sri Lanka's development endeavours do not filter into peripherals from strategic regions yet. As a result of this development discrepancies have flowed into the regional levels. This discrepancies widen because

developments of social, economic, political and cultural sectors do not reach not only the strategic locations but also peripherals for the benefit of the entire population in the rural areas.

Urbanization in Sri Lanka

“City is a human settlement which contains activities such as commercial, industrial, financial, educational, health, administrative and residential” (Manawadu Liyanage, 2008). Similarly according to a social scientific view expressed by Louise Worth in 1940 a city is a “permanent settlement of human beings belonging to different races and a comparatively densely populated.”

However, if a city can be defined like this there is no single and clear classification about what a city is. Urbanization can be simply defined as the total number of dwellers out of the total population who are concentrated in cities (Palen 1975).

Anuradhapura Kingdom marks the beginning of the evolution of cities. Especially cities were defined as where the elite class live and good and services exchanged.

The urbanization in Sri Lanka was also subjected to changes due to various decisions taken with the changes in the authority level. During 1871-1901 Urban and Municipal councils were also considered as cities and in 1963 town councils were also included into this category (Table 1). With the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in 1987, town councils were removed from the city category and turned in to local councils. This made the number of cities to go down and as a result the percentage of the urbanization took a rapid down turn from 21.5 (1981) to 16.5 (2001) (Rathnayake 2009).

Table 1: Urban Population Growth Rate in Sri Lanka (1871- 2001)

Year of Census	Number of Town	Urban Population			Average Annual Growth Rate	
		Population	%	Growth Rate	Population Growth Rate	Urban Population Growth Rate
1871	19	260 376	10.8	-	-	-
1881	20	281 05	10.2	7.9	1.4	0.8
1891	20	321 413	10.7	14.4	0.9	1.4
1901	28	414 046	11.6	28.8	1.7	2.6
1911	37	537 666	13.2	31.1	1.4	2.7
1921	42	631 871	14.2	17.5	0.9	1.6
1931	42	737 273	13.6	15.6	1.7	1.5
1946	42	1023 133	15.4	38.8	1.5	2.2
1953	43	1239 133	15.5	21.1	2.8	2.8
1963	99	2016 285	19.1	62.7	2.6	4.9
1971	135	2348 116	22.4	41.3	2.2	4.2
1981	134	3192 489	21.5	12.1	1.7	1.2
2001	51	3021 546	16.5	48.4	1.3	1.9

Source : Department of Census and Statistics (2001)

With these fluctuations it is difficult to mention precise urbanization data based on the percentage changes in city centers and urban population. According to statistics the drop in the number of cities from 134 in 1981 to 51 in 2001 is not a reduction of number of cities but a result of instability of standards.

However, if that the accepted number of cities, the Urban Development Authority had declared 176 urban centers and with the provincial centers that provide urban services the number would exceed 300. Accordingly, the rate of urbanization in Sri Lanka has exceeded 40% but based on national standards it is at a minimum level of 16.5%. It is clear this number is the result of weaknesses in standardization. The Urban Development Authority had forecasted this number will reach up to 65% by 2030. The annual growth rate of urban population in Sri Lanka according to Provinces as Table 2.

Table 2: Average Annual Growth Rate by Province (1963-2001)

Province	Average Annual Growth Rate (%)		
	1963-1971	1971-1981	1981-2001
Western Province	4.8	1.18	0.2
North Western Province	3.95	1.09	-0.5
Central Province	2.02	0.7	0.36
Southern Province	2.08	0.92	-0.42
Northern Province	5.63	1.62	-
Eastern Province	5.7	2.17	1.60
North Central Province	2.23	0.28	-0.46
Uva Province	4.17	1.36	3.32
Sabaragamuwa Province	5.3	2.00	-1.06

Source : Department of Census and Statistics (2001)

Uva and Northern Provinces make significant contribution to the growth of urban population in Sri Lanka. The tendency among community groups who have an interest in development initiatives to get attracted to cities where these initiatives are available is the reason for this growth rate.

Urbanization is just not the mere mobilization of people to cities, it is a contributory criteria of development of a country. The connectivity between the urbanization and the regional development can be identified through a system of network. Hence, the survival and the development of the city is depend on peripherals which are being nurtured the city. There are called complementary areas. A city is unite or a center of economic, physical and activity. The main task of a city is the attraction and disbursement. The places with more economically profitable locations are been developed as cities. Place and surrounding directly affect this location. Whatever the level of development a city has achieved, the provision of services to a larger area will be accelerated. This is called Central Service place. We can introduce a complementary area as a background area and differences can be existed in background areas depending on the order of each task.

Distance is not been considered as a factor of the location of these background areas. What exists here is the hierarchy. In this hierarchy service centers that provide services to small peripheral are called small service centers, the centers above this are been called advanced service centers while other level is been called promotion centers and the top is been called growth pole.

Walter Christaller of Germany in 1933 theoretically explained the importance of a city as a unit and that theory is called Central Place Theory. Service centers provide main tasks such as supply of services to its rural peripherals as well as educational, financial, administrative services. When the distance is longer then the supply of the service will be less and this will result less impact on the peripheral. This will cause villages locate at the remote areas of the peripheral to be isolated more and more and the development activities to diminish. The supply of rural services will become slow due to the increase in distance, the time consumes and the transport cost.

Balangoda Urban Centers and its Periphery

Theoretically number of peripherals can be crossed with each other in the hierarchy and could be identified in many peripherals but due to the actual physical and social factors that that exist on the planet there are human settlements at the present who are compelled to fulfill their supplies from one peripheral with or without their consent. Hatangala rural human settlement is been covered only from Balangoda urban center and Waligepola service center without having any connection to other peripherals.

Balangoda held the position of the most efficient and successful urban council in Sri Lanka for many years and this remote peripheral was selected to study if all peripherals in Balangoda develop equally. This human settlement is located 20 km from Balangoda city and Waligepola, a small peripheral which supply the services required by the communities living in the area. However, a center of this nature is not adequate to meet the growing demands of the people and they will have to travel to Balangoda for their needs despite the distance.

When paying attention to the increase in the urban population in the Sabaragamuwa Province, there were 12 cities from 1963 to 1981 (Table 3). But the number had declined to 3 in 2001 due to various specifications and standards of defining a city. The general annual growth rate in this area is -1.6.

Table 3: Urban Growth in Sabaragamuwa Province (1963-2001)

Year of Census	Population		Average Annual Growth Rate	Number of Urban Council	Share of the country %
	Total Population (000)	Urban Population (000)			
1963	1124500	43800	5.3	12	0.4
1971	1316100	93800		12	0.7
1981	1482000	178700		2.5	12
2001	1787938	75801	-1.6	3	0.4

Source : Department of Census and Statistics (2001)

In 2001, these three urban centers were named as two urban centers in Ratnapura district and one center in Kegalle district. In Ratnapura district, Ratnapura and Balangoda and in Kegalle district, Kegalle was named as urban centers respectively. Though Ratnapura and Balangoda were declared as urban centers based on city standards, the Urban Development Authority says that there are 46 urban service supply centers in Ratnapura in 2005. Accordingly, the number of urban centers are been decided on the population in the area.

- 1st Order - <20,000
- 2nd Order - 10,000-19,000 (District Capitals)
- 3rd Order - 10,000 – 19,000 (Small and Medium City)
- 4th Order - 25,000-10,000
- 5th Order - >2500

Table 4: Difference of Population with 20 Years

Order	Urban Centers	Size Of the Population (000)		Difference of Population with 20 Years	Average Annual Growth Rate
		1981	2001		
1 st Order	Rathnapura ★ ★	37 354	46 309	8955	1'2
2 nd Order	Kegalle ★ ★	14928	17430	2502	0'8
	Balangoda ★ ★	10263	12062	1799	0'9
	Pelmadulla	6153	8000	1847	1'5
	Mawanella	13898	23501	9603	3'5
	Kuruwita ★	★	8000	-	-
	Ehaliyagoda ★	★	4900	-	-
	Embilipitiya ★	★	22000	-	-
3 rd Order	Ruwanwella	4856	7850	2994	3'1
	Rambukkana	5352	7790	1830	1'5
	Warakapola	4701	5984	3283	3'5
	Kahawaththa	3650	5980	2330	3'5
	Galigamuwa ★	★	5890	-	-
	Deraniyagala ★	★	4270	-	-
	Yatyanthota	2217	4285	2028	4'6
4 th Order	Rakwana	1799	3985	2186	6'0
	Dehiowita	6350	8190	1240	0'9
	Nivithigala ★	★	6000	-	-
	Aguruwella ★	★	4850	-	-
	Karawanella -	-	-	-	-
	Bulathkohupitiya ★	★	3110	-	-

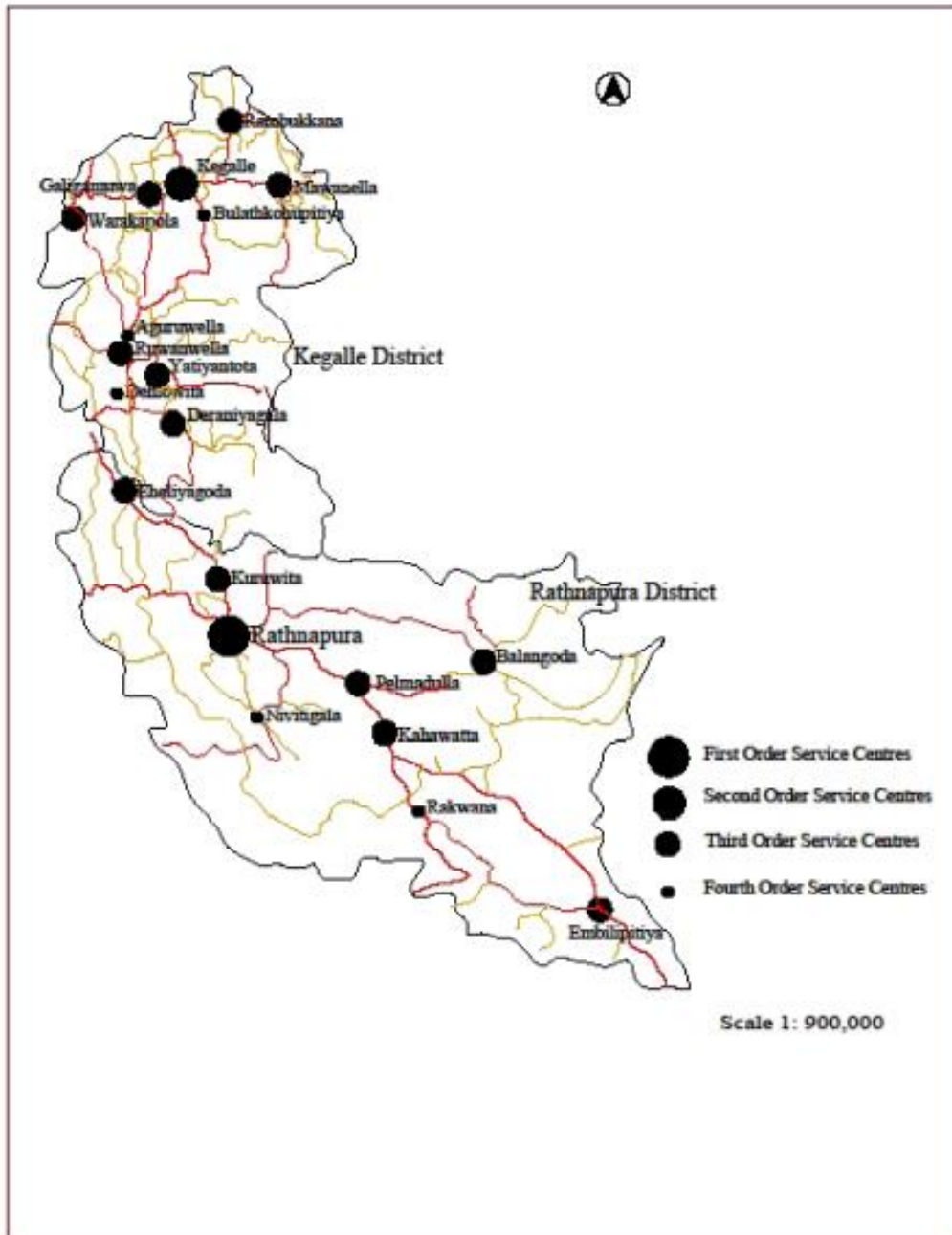
★ ★ National Urban Centers

★ Service Centers

Source : Urban Development Authority (2005)

What is been revealed from the above data is that Balangoda was a city by 1981 according to the national standards. Thus, the location of small service centers supported by main service center in Rathnapura is in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Service Centers in Ratnapura District



Source : Urban Development Authority (2005)

Balangoda city limit with an extend of 10km acts as the main commercial and service provision center for small annexed centers in the close proximity of Waligepola, Udawala, Pinnawala, Rassagala, Opanayaka, Kongasthenna, Imbulle and Kalthota. Following shows one direction of areas that have been subjected to the services provided by Balangoda city. In addition to Rathnapura, Balangoda is the only city that people can meet their demands and that make a number of people coming to cities for their daily needs.

Figure 2: Peripheral city zones



Source : Field Data (2011)

Peripheral city zones that are the partners of the development drive of the country receive direct or indirect resources and it is also true that these resources are not sufficient for the development of regional and rural peripherals. The extent of the resource can go will be decided on the quantity of the resources released from the main center. Infrastructure facilities are been developed in mega cities rapidly but the pace is getting slower when you reach rural areas. This situation makes a disparity in the distribution of resources and due to the lack of a proper management mechanism, under-developed places like Hatangala can be identified in the districts. The quantity of the institutional services provided by Balangoda city centers as the main service center to its peripheral can be abstracted (Table 5).

Table 5: Service Periphery in Balangoda Urban Center

Government Institute	Finance Institute	Educational Institute	Privet Institute
DSD-Balangoda	People's Bank	National School	Insurance Institute
Nenasala	Bank of Ceylon	Maha Vidyala	Channeling Centers
Youth Center	NSB	Pirivena	Retail and Whole sale Shops
Cultural Center	HNB	International Schools	
Urban Council	Seylan Bank		
Telecom Office	Sampath Bank		
Police Station	RDB		
Magistrate court	Capital Bank		
Sub-Post Office	Rural Bank		
MOH	Sanasa Bank		
Forest Office	The Finance		
Prison	Pan Asia Bank		
Base Hospital			
Rest house			
Public Library			

Source : Balangoda Urban Council, 2011

With the objective of delivering the maximum service possible followed by identifying the needs of the communities living in the area the majority of government, financial and educational institutes has been established in and around Balangoda. Customers of government and private financial institution can be identified as special group of people who conduct their trade activities in the close proximity of a peripheral. Similarly, those who are seeking higher studies here and abroad are also concentrate near peripherals because those services are readily available there. Shops in the city have been located according to the individual status and the financial capacity of the individuals (Table 6).

Table 6: Commercial facilities

Commercial Type	Quantity
Retail Shops	71
Wholesale Shops	35
Clothes Shops	98
Jewellery Shops	21
Wine Story	06
Gift House	45
Coop City	01
Food City	01
C.W.E	01
Wholesale Shopping Complex	01

Source : Balangoda Urban Council (2011)

Individual needs differ and the ability to choose a shop according to the needs of the customer is available in Balangoda. When travelling 20km down Embilipitiya road from Balangoda, a service area which is

placed in the lower ranks of the periphery called Waligepola exists. Located between the study area of Hatangala and Balangoda this low ranking service center is unable to provide a service similar to the main service center in Balangoda (Table 7).

Table 7: The Facilities Supply by the Weligepola Service Center

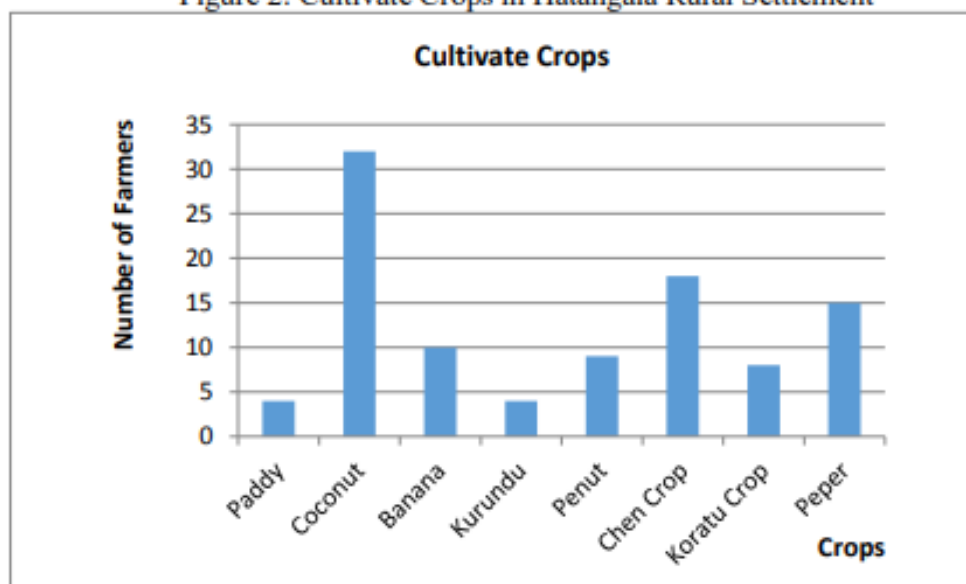
Government Institute	Finance Institute	Educational Service
District hospital	People's Bank	Central College
Police Station	Bank of Ceylon	
DSD-Weligepola	RDB	
Cultural Center	Rural Bank	
Agrarian Service Center		
Samurdhi Office		

Source : Weligepola Provincial Council (2011)

A considerable disproportion of facilities between Balangoda urban service center and Waligepola service center can be identified. The concept of schools with adequate facilities cannot be found in the peripheral area. Children living in the peripheral have to incur more money and time to access these facilities and the government and private financial organizations deal with the customers living closer to the peripheral but this tendency deteriorates according to the distance. Hatangala is a rural human settlement located 8km away from Waligepola and the main livelihood there is the agriculture. Due to the geographical location of Hatangala, the area has to depend on Balangoda main service center because this village is not connected to any other place.

The extension of this settlement is 1639 acres and 485 families live in the area with a total population is 19795. Out of this 49.4% is female while the male population is 50.6%. there is no big difference between male and female population and it stands at a minimum rate of 1.2%. out of the total population living in the area 49.4% belong to the age group of 17- 35 years. Thus, there is a significant labor force available. However, unfortunately 60% of this group is engaged in agricultural activities making and backward step in the development process. The agricultural pattern of the people living in this area differs. Yala and Maha seasons cultivated according to the weather conditions and permanent crop cultivation is also in practice.

Figure 2: Cultivate Crops in Hatangala Rural Settlement



Source : Field Data (2011)

Due to lack of non-availability of proper irrigation system a decrease in paddy cultivation is visible and the coconut cultivation is common in the area and the percentage is around 32%. We will have to pay specific attention to the market available for the products of the villagers. The nearest service center for their inputs is in Waligepola. The quality of inputs available in this small service center is low despite the high price. In order to meet their requirements if they travel beyond Waligepola, they will have to incur an addition transport cost as well as time and labour. Thus, they are forced to buy less quality products for a high price available at Waligepola service center. Majority of the population, i.e 37.5% go to Waligepola for their needs but 7.5%, 12.5% and 10% go to advanced service centers such as Pallebadda, Balangoda and Ambilipitiya respectively to buy consumable items depending on quality, the length of time and the trust. Similarly, since there is no proper market place to sell their products, farmers in the area have to sell their goods at a lower price (Table 7).

Table 7: Places Where sale the Farmers Product , 2011

Place of Sale	%
Hatangala	48
Weligepola	13.5
Pallebadda	17.4
Village Fair	3.8
Economic Center (Colombo)	17.3

Source : Field Data (2011)

Around 48% of the farmers sell their goods within the village. The main reason for this high percentage is the non-availability of a quality road network and transportation methods to deliver these goods

outside. Even if a buyer comes the shopkeeper decides the price of the good not the farmer. The farmer cannot influence because he does not any other alternate mean to sell his goods. For an example, coconut and banana cultivation is very common in the area, but the price of a coconut fluctuates around Rs. 10-12 and the price of a banana kilogram is around Rs. 10-15. Since the facilities in this peripheral have not developed to provide access to directly connect with service areas such as Waligepola and Pallebadda where goods are sold at reasonable prices, villagers have to sell their products at such lower prices.

The main point that I had observed is the connection between the main service center in Balangoda and these rural communities is very low. What is clear from this is that there is not yet a good market had been created in Balangoda service center for the peripheral settlers to sell their agricultural products such as coconut and banana. Various areas in the peripheral have also been neglected in Balangoda urban service center.

Services similar to the ones available in Balangoda are been provided to the communities living closer to the peripherals. The opportunity for the communities in the rural peripherals to enjoy the benefits of quality schools, super markets have been limited due to various factors such as the financial status and the mode of transportation.

The human settlements who fulfill their needs within small service centers are finally connect with main service center in Balangoda. Waligepola junction is the meeting point of all these communities to connect with the main center in Balangoda due to transport hardships.

Hatangala rural communities face many hardships when receiving infrastructure facilities such as education and health. Especially children those who seek higher education are affected because all the quality educational institutes are located in Balangoda and transportation difficulties. Hence, out of 77% of the Hatangala children receive their education at Hatangala Maha Vidyalaya. At higher education level, this school has only the Arts stream and 15.4% of children go to Balangoda National School for higher education. People in their area use the bus which travel to and fro to Balangoda 10 times daily to fulfill their needs. But due to the uncertainty of the bus service people also use alternative personal transport modes such as lorries, motor cycles and three-wheelers. This mode of transport takes only 15 minutes to reach Waligepola. But 80% of the population depend on the public transport which takes more than 15 minutes to travel to Waligepola.

Waligepola is the closest place to receive healthcare. Since the place offer services free of charge with maternity and OPD facilities, people from various places including Hadagiriya, Diyawanna, Thalagaskanda, Walipola, Kongasthenna, Hatangala, Yatipangamuwa and Ratawala come to this place. But to receive emergency facilities such as theatre facilities, X-Ray and blood checkups they will have to go to Balangoda Base Hospital.

During their visits to service center to fulfill their needs, rural people of Hatangala have the habit of purchasing the household items. Prices of goods available within the settlement are high and people take the opportunity of buying quality items at a lower price whenever they can. Shop owners within the settlement do not maintain a stock of goods and they visit Balangoda or Walogepola to purchase goods. They add the transport cost to the price of a good. Villagers buy their good enough for a period of a month from centers such as Waligepola, Pallebadda and Balangoda.

Table 8: Places where People buy Consumption goods 2011

Place	Quantity	%
Hatangala	12	62
Weligepola	61	31.4
Balangoda	90	46.4
Embilipitiya	20	10.3
Pallebadda	03	0.5
Other	08	4.2

Source : Field Data, 2011

The percentage of people who connect with Balangoda service center to purchase quality goods at a lower rate is as higher as 46.4. when they visit the city for other purposes they tend to buy their consumable items from there.

When Balangoda city is dispatching special services to small centers, they contribute them to each small center not as much as to the city. This might cause to miss special services. Attention of urban, authority, government as well as higher education institutes always focus on the main center. Resources also directly drawn to these main centers. However, the small centers are been nurtured by the residual resources of the main center. This way the energy of flow weakens at the far end of the peripheral.

Hatangala rural settlement is a single peripheral located in Waligepola service center, 20 km away from the main service center in Balangoda. The study endorses the fact that there is a lapse in settlers receiving to this peripheral due to various factors such as transport, time, cost and distance. People in this area accuse the political authority for lack of receiving resources and the marginalization. This politicization has created a rift in the unity among villagers. If direct contacts were given with the main centers in the city to gain development activities, the area could be turned into a developed human settlement despite of its geographical isolation. Similarly, if the attention of the urban institutes are drawn towards rural communities living in peripheral areas, resources will flow to rural areas without much hindrance.

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