

## **Socio-economic status of resident communities in the islands of Kalpitiya Peninsula in Sri Lanka**

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Kalpitiya Peninsula is located in the North-west coast of Sri Lanka and it is bordered by the Indian Ocean from the west, and Puttalam Lagoon from the east. There are 14 islands in Kalpitiya covering a total landmass of about 1672 hectares and Islands of Baththalangunduwa, Uchchimune, Palliyawatte and Rodapaduwa are human habitations. This paper examines the socio- economic and livelihood status of the fishing communities in the Islands. A socio- economic survey was conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire from 134 fishing households. Simple random sampling technique was applied to select the sample from the 4 Islands of Baththalangunduwa, Uchchimune, Rodapaduwa and Palliyawatte. Field data were analysed using SPSS statistical package. The majority of residents (72%) of Baththalangunduwa were migratory fishers from Negombo, Chilaw and Kalpitiya areas but all residents of Palliyawatte were permanent dwellers followed by Uchchimune (94.7%) and Rodapaduwa (83.3%). All respondents (100%) of Baththalangunduwa and Rodapaduwa were married followed by Uchchimune (95.5%) and Palliyawatte (71.4%). Rodapaduwa and Palliyawatte Islands communities were Catholics and that of Baththalangunduwa and Uchchimune were (96.8%) and (95.5%) respectively. The average monthly income of the household was 39,000 rupees while the average value of the household expenditure was about 31,000 rupees. Results revealed that among the fishing communities, there was a severe deprivation of basic human needs such as housing, safe drinking water, sanitary facilities, education opportunities, health facilities and infrastructure facilities. Geographical remoteness and occupational based migration are critical factors for deciding their living conditions. The role of social work is very important and necessary social policy options should be prepared to improve the socio- economic and livelihood status of the fishing communities in the islands of Kalpitiya Peninsula in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** socio-economic status, islands fishing communities, occupational based migration, social work

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