

Interim report on the country-wide
**‘Census on Death/ Injuries to Persons and Property Damages
due to Conflict – 2013’**

1. **Introduction**

The Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) has made recommendations to look back at the conflict Sri Lanka suffered and to use the lessons thus learnt to convert the vision for a peaceful multiracial country into reality, and also to monitor the progress in this process. The National Plan of Action which has been formulated to implement and monitor the recommendations of the LLRC has entrusted following two activities to the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs and the Department of Census and Statistics.

- Recommendation 9.37b of LLRC specifies the conduct of a professionally designed household census covering all affected families in all parts of the island to ascertain firsthand the scale and circumstances of deaths and injury to civilians as well as damages to property during the period of conflict.
- Recommendation 9.51 of LLRC specifies devising a centralized system of data collection at National level integrating all information with regard to the missing persons.

Accordingly, it was planned to conduct the island-wide ‘Census on deaths/injuries to persons and property damages due to the conflict – 2013’ to collect data on deaths/disappearances/injuries/disabilities and property damages that have occurred from 1982 until the date of enumeration as a direct or indirect result of the internal conflicts in the country. A quantitative assessment of such damages arising out of these internal conflicts was carried out through this census.

2. **Census methodology**

Initially all the places where people live were listed and the families affected due to conflict were identified in the listing process. Two separate schedules were used to collect information in this census:

This Census though carried out in the field at one visit, involved two major steps. Therefore two separate forms were used to collect information from the field.

- The first form (L1) was used to list all the units where people live. During this listing process, families with members who are dead, missing, injured/disabled, or with property damages (referred to as *affected families* hereafter) were identified. Similarly, special institutions such as Adults’ Homes, Childrens’ Homes etc. where conflict affected people live were also identified. All respondents were requested to sign in the L1 form confirming that the enumerator has visited their place of

residence (home, special institution) to collect data and that all the information provided by them are true and correct.

- Once affected families (with members who are dead, missing, injured/disabled, or with property damages) were identified, the second form (L2) was used to collect detailed information about damages to lives and property from family units as well as from persons in special institutions.

3. **Training, Enumeration, and Supervision**

The complete responsibility of conducting the census at district and divisional secretariat level was vested on the district administrative structure. For this purpose, *District Census steering committees* and *Divisional Management Committees* were appointed at District and Divisional Secretariat levels respectively. Appointment of field officers, logistic arrangements and field supervision are some of the main activities assigned to these committees.

Provision of technical assistance for this census such as preparation of census schedules and instruction manuals, providing other forms and materials, and data processing and analysis is entrusted with the Department of Census and Statistics. Supervision when required to ensure that the Census is carried out as per recommended methodologies was also done by the Department of Census and Statistics.

a) *Training of supervisors/ Enumerators*

The data collection of this Census was done at Grama Niladhari level and Grama Niladharis were engaged as enumerators and other government officers were appointed when necessary. In November 2013, DCS Field officers attached to Divisional Secretary's Divisions were trained by the Master trainers at the DCS head office. The DCS field officers trained the enumerators of their respective DS divisions.

b) *Enumeration*

More than 15,000 enumerators were deployed to collect information from about 5.3 million residential units in 14,022 Grama Niladhari Divisions of the country. Enumeration activities were conducted throughout the country between 27 November 2013 and 20 December 2013.

c) *Supervision*

Members of District Census steering committees and Divisional Management Committees were responsible for the supervision of their respective areas. In

addition to that, DCS officers were deployed in districts to supervise enumeration activities. This was supplemented by mobile supervision teams who carried out independent field supervision.

d) *Publicity*

Wide publicity was given through printed and electronic media. In addition, a press briefing was held with the participation of the Secretary/ Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs and the Director General of Census and Statistics and the assistance of media was sought to create awareness among general public.

In addition to that, a massive media campaign was carried out to make the general public aware on their duty to provide enumerators with true information.

4. **Processing of Census data**

Although the field enumeration of the above Census was completed on 20 December 2013 and the enumerators were given another week to prepare enumerator summaries and to submit all completed forms to the respective Divisional Secretariat Division. The forms received from 331 Divisional Secretariat Divisions were sent to the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) head office between 27 December 2013 and 3 January 2014.

Census data processing which is done in three stages was started just after receiving the first batch of forms.

a) *First stage - Checking for the coverage*

Even though all necessary measures were taken at the enumeration stage to ensure that all residential units are visited and enumerated, it was equally important to make certain that all forms completed at the field are received at the stores/processing centre. At this stage, completeness of coverage and receipt of forms at the head office was confirmed.

This was completed in the first week of January 2014.

b) *Second stage – Processing data for Report 1 (Preliminary Report)*

The sensitive nature of the data collected at this census requires careful verification at the field level. In order to ensure the maximum possible accuracy of the data released, sample field verifications covering the entire country will also be carried out at this stage.

Enumerator summaries which contain number of affected families, deaths, missing persons, injured/disabled persons, and damages to family property are checked at this second stage to make sure that the information provided by respondents are within the scope, and that the concepts and definitions of the Census are properly

followed by the enumerators. Summaries thus checked are sent to the ICT Division of the DCS for processing.

It is expected that the preliminary report based on enumerator summaries which contains the technical details of the Census as well as the basic information such as Deaths, missing persons, persons injured/disabled, damages to property due to conflicts from 1982 onwards by District/DS Division level as well as deaths and disappearances by year of occurrence will be released within a few weeks time.

c) *Third stage – Processing data for Report 2 (Final Report)*

Detailed data collected at the Census will be processed at this stage. Manual checking of the internal consistency is initially carried out before processing data. The major steps of processing include coding when necessary, double entry of data, data editing, and tabulations. Processed data will then be analyzed and the detailed report based on all information collected at the field will be released within a few months.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs and the Department of Census and Statistics as entrusted in the 'National Plan of Action for the Implementation of LLRC Recommendations' will adhere to the proposed data dissemination plan and will take necessary actions to release the results of the census which covered the human and property damages during the period of conflict from 1982 and afterwards, in two stages, the Preliminary Report and the Final Report.

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27 February 2014