Subjects of the Sovereignty Impulse

Lacking citizenship and resisting bare life: A case study of the Tamil refugee population in Tamil Nadu, India

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Abstract

This thesis explores the state of refugeehood in the political order of the nation-state system through a case study study of the Tamil refugee population in Tamil Nadu, India. How, and in what ways, does refugeehood affect peoples’ lives as political subjects? And what is the role of the refugee figure in the political order of the nation-state system?

The research questions are explored through a theoretical framework based on the concepts of: Citizenship (or the lack thereof); the Sovereignty impulse; State-thinking; the State/Space of Exception, Bare Life; Political Action; the Space of Appearance.

Through an abductive reading of the material, the theoretical framework will be used to analyze the empirical material. Simultaneously the empirical material will be used to analyze the theoretical framework.

I will argue that the refugee is subject to sovereignty impulses. Through these sovereignty impulses the refugee figure is constructed as lacking citizenship. Furthermore refugeehood manifest itself differently depending on spatial conditions. Refugees in the camps are subject to control and surveillance, but can come together in a community as political actors. Non-camp refugees avoid control and surveillance, but have no access to a community in which to act politically.

Nyckelord: Refugee; Citizen; Sovereignty impulse; State-thinking, State of Exception; Bare Life; Political Action; Space of Appearance; Abduction; Field Research; Refugee Camp; Tamil; India; Sri Lanka

Antal ord: 19753
I want to express my gratitude towards the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, India (ADRA India) for all the help and assistance they gave me during the time of my field research in Tamil Nadu. Without them, this thesis would have never seen the light of day. They formally invited me to visit their organization, without which I would not have been able to get a Visa. They arranged interviews with refugees at their office, since I was not allowed to visit the camps. They helped me translate during interviews. They even helped me with practicalities in Indian everyday life (making travel arrangements, finding accommodation etc.). I am also deeply grateful to all respondents in this thesis, who took the time to participate in my research and answer my questions. I can sincerely say that I feel privileged to have spoken to every single one of the respondents and I feel humbled that they trusted me with their experiences.

I am also grateful towards Lund University and the Swedish Aid Agency (SIDA) for granting me a scholarship for Minor Field Studies. Without the scholarship I would not have had the financial means to do the field research that this thesis in large part is based on.

I want to thank my thesis supervisor Annika Björkdahl for useful input throughout the writing process. I also give thanks to my fellow students at the Master Program in Social Sciences for feedback and support during the research process.
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1. Introduction

The refugee is a very important figure in our time. By the end of 2014 there were 19.5 million refugees in the world. This is almost three million more than in 2013 and the number is steadily rising (UNHCR.org.uk, 2015). The visibility is also increasing. Stories about the lives and struggles of refugees fleeing poverty, famine and violent conflict travel the world through media. These stories invoke both empathy and enmity. Sometimes they are described with threatening images of "floods" of refugees putting an unbearable strain on host countries. It is important to understand this refugee figure that demand so much attention in world politics and that invoke such strong feeling, as well as understanding the people behind the figure. Who and what is a refugee? What constitutes refugeehood? And how does the state of refugeehood affect the lives of refugees?

I begin from the perception that the refugee figure of today is presented as one whose ability to live a full life as a human being is restricted due to vulnerability and powerlessness. Emma Haddad (2008) writes that it is important to understand the refugee since attitudes are reflected in policy, and refugee policy could mean the difference between life and death (Haddad, 2008, p.1).

Through living in refugeehood, refugees have unique knowledge and insight about what it means to be a refugee. That is why I explore the state of refugeehood through a case study of the Sri Lankan refugee population in Tamil Nadu, India. The analysis is based on a two month long field study in Tamil Nadu. Through the help of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, India (ADRA, India), I conducted interviews with 32 refugees from both inside the refugee camps and from outside the refugee camps, and with 6 employees of humanitarian organizations. In Tamil Nadu there are 112 refugee camps hosting refugees from the Sri Lankan civil war. The Department of Rehabilitation in the State Government of Tamil Nadu (which is the responsible government authority over the refugee camps) estimates that there are about 69,000 refugees in the camps and about 32,000 outside the camps (Department of Rehabilitation, 2005; IRIN, 2012; Ghosh, 2014; Koutsoukis, 2014).

Into the field I brought the theories of Nevzat Soguk, Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben. These concern the construction of the refugee figure as someone lacking Citizenship through the practices of the Sovereignty impulse and State-thinking (Soguk, 1999); how Political Action in Spaces of Appearance can enable a full human life (Arendt, 1958); and about what constitutes the State of Exception, a state in which Bare Life takes the place of the political subject (Agamben, 1995; Agamben, 2005).

By doing an abductive reading of theory and empirical material, I intend to analyze

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1 Conducted from the 22nd of March 2015 to the 19th of May 2015.
the empirical material through the theory at the same time as the theory will be analyzed through the empirical material.

I will argue that the refugee is a figure defined through lack of citizenship by becoming subject to sovereignty impulses, i.e. state-building practices to shape the population of citizens. I will show how the sovereignty impulse, and hence refugeehood, manifests itself differently depending on what spatial conditions refugees live in. The refugee camps are spaces of control and surveillance, but also spaces where refugees can come together and be recognized as political subjects. Non-camp refugees seem to avoid control and surveillance but also seem to lack any community through which they can act politically.

1.1 Research Question(s) and Purpose

The research question(s) which this thesis explores and discusses is:
- How, and in what ways, does refugeehood affect peoples’ lives as political subjects? And what is the role of the refugee figure in the political order of the nation-state system?

These questions obtains two concepts that need to be explored in order for them to be discussed in a satisfying manner; the concepts of refugeehood and political life.

The purpose of this thesis is to show how these two concepts are intrinsically connected. How refugeehood cannot be understood without thinking of how it affects possibilities of living full political lives in the political order of the nation-state system. The thesis is situated in Critical Refugee Studies. Challenging and questioning how the refugee is positioned in the existing political order and how refugeehood affects their possibilities of living full lives as political beings. Instead of attempting to find effective ways to deal with the ”refugee problem” in the realms of the existing political order.

The thesis is also situated in Political Theory. Discussing what constitutes a political life and how the refugee figure is an important figure in the construction of political life within the nation-state system. As well as how the refugee figure impacts state sovereignty and the political order of the nation-state system.

1.2 Case selection

I chose the case of the Tamil refugee population in Tamil Nadu on three grounds. First of all it is a suitable case due to the size of the refugee population and the protracted refugee situation. With the refugee situation lasting over 30 years the refugee condition has been
settled within the refugee community. The refugees have had to create lives as refugees, and have had plenty of time to reflect over how the refugee condition affect them\(^2\). A large refugee population should also make it easier to assess the role of community.

Secondly, while the Sri Lankan civil war is well-covered academically (c.f. Orjuela 2003; 2005; 2008; 2008-2; 2012; 2013; Ashutosh, 2013; Korf, 2006; Samarasinghe, 2012; Shastri, 2009), I found the Tamil refugee population to be under-researched in relation to its size. Compared to other large refugee populations\(^3\) which are subject to a large number of academic articles (c.f. Bulley, 2014; Feldman, 2014; Fincham, 2012; Halabi, 2004; Martin, 2014; Woroniecka-Krzyzanowska, 2014 etc.), the Tamil refugee population is not subject of many articles with theoretical ambitions of using it as a case that could tell something about refugeehood. The existing articles are rather concerned with assessing the humanitarian situation (c.f. Giammateo, 2010; Valatheeswaran and Irudaya Rajan, 2011; Parivelan, 2014). Therefore I believe a focus on the Tamil refugee population in Tamil Nadu fills an empirical void in academic research.

Thirdly, the practical considerations of safety and english proficiency were very influential to my decision. In order to receive a Minor Field Study (MFS) scholarship, I could not travel to a location for which the Swedish Foreign Affairs have issued a travel warning. I also wanted to conduct research in an area where I knew I could easily get an interpreter in case I could not speak English with the respondents.

### 1.3 Literature review

The 1951 UN convention relating to the status of refugees has since its adoption been the main authority defining who is a refugee and what protection they are entitled to\(^4\). The UN definition is so widely accepted as the one refugee definition that even a state like

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\(^2\) It should be noted that in the initial stages of my research, when I selected what case to study, the temporal aspect of refugeehood was more central to the research then it came to be after I had expanded my literature review. It fell even more into the background after I started talking to my respondents. Hence a protracted refugee situation was not only beneficial for my purposes during the time when I selected the case, it was the actual subject I intended to study.

\(^3\) For example the Somali refugee population in Kenya; the Syrian refugee population in Jordan or Turkey; or the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon etc.

\(^4\) The convention defines a refugee as any person who: "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (UNHCR, 1951).
India, who is not a signatory of the 1951 convention and neither has any national legal- or policy framework (the Indian legal framework does not separate between refugees and illegal migrants) on how to deal with refugees, in practice adheres to it (The Hindu, 2012; Ananthachari, 2001; Valatheeswaran and Irudaya Rajan, 2011, p.24; Appendix 2, Summary of consultation workshop). Liisa Malkki (2005) has argued that the creation of such a homogenous refugee figure is problematic because it is deceptive. There is no such thing as one single "refugee experience". Treating the refugee this way only leads to an overly simplified understanding of refugees (Malkki, 2005).

Although I agree with Malkki that there is no such thing as a single refugee experience. I do not think that an overly simplified understanding of refugeehood is the main problem of the widespread acceptance of the definition in the 1951 convention as the refugee definition. There is a lot of good academic research on refugees that is sensitive to context and accounts for the complexities of refugeehood and refugee lives. As examples I can mention Bulley’s (2014) article on how refugee communities are both used by refugees to empower them, while simultaneously being used by authorities in the camps to govern them; Olivius (2014) dissertation that describes how gender equality practices are used to govern refugees; Feldman’s (2014) article describing the refugee camp as three types of spaces simultaneously: Humanitarian, political, and emotional.

The problem is instead that too much research accept the description of the the refugee as being the problem (or possible the origin state), by being outside the nation-state system. Without critically assessing the role the nation-state system plays in creating refugees and putting them in a vulnerable position.

To fulfill my purpose of exploring how refugeehood affects the possibilities of living a political life in the political order of the nation-state system, I have hence turned to some literature of Critical Refugee Studies. Emma Haddad’s *The Refugee in International Society: Between Sovereign* describes the International Refugee Regime as characterized by part humanitarian concern and part state self-interest. But ultimately she views refugees as an inevitable result of the nation-state system. Nevzat Soguk’s *States and Strangers: Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft* describes the refugee as a figure constructed as lacking citizenship, being a resource to state-building practices as the negative constituent of the citizen. I also turned to what has been described as the current central theorist of Critical Refugee Studies (Giorgio Agamben), and his predecessor (Hannah Arendt) (Owens, 2009). Agamben describes the refugee as bare life in a state of exception, and Arendt describes the refugee as someone who has lost the right to have rights. Naturally, I have also read articles discussing Agamben and Arendt, especially but not exclusively, in relation to refugees (c.f. Adler, 2014; Bailey, 2009; Beltrán, 2009; Braidotti, 2012; DeCaroli, 2013; Ek, 2006; McLoughlin, 2014; Owens, 2009; Whyte, 2012; Gladden, 2013; Halabi, 2004; Martin, 2014; Ramadan, 2012; Sanyal, 2010; Wilson, 2014; Woroniecka-Krzyzanowska, 2014 etc.

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5 See also Fincham, 2012; Gladden, 2013; Halabi, 2004; Martin, 2014; Ramadan, 2012; Sanyal, 2010; Wilson, 2014; Woroniecka-Krzyzanowska, 2014 etc.

6 More or less explicitly and more or less uncritically. For an article both explicitly and uncritically accepting the “problem” described in the 1951 definition, see for example Aleinikoff and Poellot, 2014.
In addition to having original takes on refugeehood, Agamben’s work has the benefit of an original conceptualization of the sovereign power not as a Hobbesian creature of representation (something neither Soguk nor Haddad are able to break with), but as a creator of bare life. Arendt on the other hand contributes with a uniquely performative theory of what constitutes politics and political life, which opens up for political action outside of the nation-state system.

1.4 Structure

The thesis is structured in accordance to how an academic thesis is generally structured, with separate chapters focusing on theory, methodology, analysis and conclusions. In the theory chapter I introduce and discuss the theoretical concepts I use to explore the research question. In the methodology chapter I discuss my epistemological considerations, how I gathered the empirical material and how I analyze it. In the analysis chapter I analyze the empirical material through the theoretical framework at the same time as I analyze the theoretical framework through the empirical information. The thesis ends with a conclusion in which I summarize my analysis and what I believe to be the central insights to take away from the thesis.
2. Theory

In this chapter I will present the theoretical framework of the thesis. This is done to explain the key theoretical concepts that will guide the upcoming analysis of the empirical material, while simultaneously being analyzed itself through the empirical material. It is also done to showcase my theoretical points of departure going into the field.

I will start by an account of how classical political theory has divided between zoē and bios to make a distinction between non-political and political life. I will continue by describing the refugee as a figure defined by its lack of citizenship, making the refugee and the citizen the zoē - bios divide of the nation-state system. I will follow by turning to Giorgio Agamben who turns the sovereignty impulse, the practice of creating this divide, on its head by suggesting that it is not the bios that is the political subject of this practice but the bare life. I will end by deriving from Hannah Arendt an understanding of politics as something performative. This will amount to a theoretical framework based on the concepts of: Citizenship (or the lack thereof); the Sovereignty impulse; State-thinking; the State/Space of Exception, Bare Life; Political Action; and the Space of Appearance

2.1 What is Political Life and Who is the Refugee?

The distinction between the political life and the biological life is often described to begin in Aristotle’s distinction between zoē (life as an animal) and bios (the politically qualified life). To Aristotle what distinguishes human beings from other animals is the capacity to engage in political praxis (Owens, 2009, p. 569). The relationship politics has had with biological life has been to distinguish itself from it. Both distinguishing human life from the life of animals, but also between different human lives. The bios needs a negative constituent in form of a zoē to exist. In order to make this divide a public (polis) and a private (oikos) is simultaneously created. Zoē is excluded from the public, reduced to reproduce the means of the survival, while bios is able to fulfill its potential as a human being by engaging in the political praxis of the public (DeCaroli, 2013).

Hannah Arendt is one of the most influential scholars to deal with the zoē - bios distinction. In *The Human Condition* (1958), she divides what it means to live a full life as a human being into three fundamental activities: Labour, work and action. Labour is to ensure the survival of both oneself and the whole species. Work is to create and therefore to ensure the material world of objects. Action relates to the fact that the human condition
is a condition of plurality. We are not on this world alone but together with other people and we act together with and in relation to each other. Action ensure political life (Arendt, 1958, p. 7-8). It is only action that distinguishes bios from zoē. It is only action that escapes the tedious task of satisfying necessities. Action can fill life with meaning. It can create, restore, and alter political institutions and systems, both on a material and a discursive level. To bear any value or even exist, an action must be received, experienced and reacted upon. If not, it will loose its meaning. If it merely exists outside of the relational, it will not affect anyone. An action that is not seen or heard by others is not an action but only an achievement, it is merely work. Belonging to a meaningful community is therefore a prerequisite in order to live a political life (ibid, p. 175-192). The life who is not seen or heard is a life that does not appear to anyone, it “is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life because it is no longer lived among men (ibid, p. 176)”.

In other words those who have no access to the public do not live a meaningful life as bios, but are life as zoē. Arendt gives some examples of groups which in different times and places have been denied access to the public and to political and meaningful life, such as women, slaves and the poor (ibid, p. 192-212).

According to Arendt the refugee emerged after the world wars as the zoē of the modern nation-state system. Since the nation-state is the institution supposed to guarantee peoples’ rights in the current political system, she argues that the refugees lose their rights to have rights when they become stateless (Arendt, 2003). In other words Arendt identifies citizenship as a prerequisite for access to the public realm in the nation-state system and the refugee as doomed to life as zoē due to its lack of citizenship. The great tragedy of the refugee according to Arendt is not the loss of life or freedom, it is the loss of belonging. No law exist for them and no community is theirs. It is not their freedom that they have been robbed of, it is the possibility of Action, i.e. to create meaning with their freedom. What is specific for the suffering of the refugee is not that they are being oppressed, it is that nobody has any interest in oppressing them (ibid, p. 232-233).

2.1.1 The Refugee and the Lack of Citizenship

Refugees are often described as anomalies in the political system. They are figures that can’t be incorporated into the normal, even actively fleeing the normal (Haddad, 2008, p.1). Refugees are often viewed as ”misfits” who are ”out of place” in the world (Olivius, 2014, p. 24-30). They are described as uprooted, dislocated or forced out. Their position as ”misfits” is a result of what has been taken away from them, i.e. their ”location” or ”rootedness” in a territorial space. The refugee is perceived to be a figure of lack, lacking belonging in a nation and protection of a state (Soguk, 1999, p. 10; 53-54; 135-136).

Soguk uses the concept of the state-nation-citizen hierarchy to describe how the nation-state system is built on the idea that there is a natural relationship between the collectivity that is the nation, the state as the territorial organization of the nation and the citizen as the political subject of the nation, rooted within the state (Soguk, 1999, p. 9-10;
Agamben similarly speaks of the perceived natural relationship between nation, birth (citizenship) and territory (state), while Arendt talks about the nation, blood (citizenship) and soil (state). It is important to note how Agamben and Arendt use the terms birth and blood to illustrate how people are perceived to be naturally connected to a specific nation and a state. They illustrate that citizenship is not only a legal status, it is something that is perceived to be naturally given to a human being through birth and bloodlines (Agamben, 1995, p.137-146; Agamben, 2003, p.198; Arendt, 1958, p.256-257). This discourse positions the citizen as the proper political subject (i.e. the citizen is the bios of the nation-state). The citizen gets the status as the proper political subject as well as the protection from the state through the (perceived natural) belonging in the community that is the nation and the (perceived natural) rootedness in the territory of the nation that is the state. In the same way, the state derive its legitimacy from the citizen by (being perceived to naturally) representing the nation within its (perceived natural) territorial borders (Soguk, 1999, p. 9-10; 18-19; 169-171; 186-187). The description of the modern state as a creature of representation is not a new one. In Thomas Hobbe’s Leviathan (2004), the creation of the social contract is not only a narrative of a deal between a sovereign and the people to trade absolute powers for protection. It is also a narrative of the people creating the state (signing the social contract) forming into a collectivity (the nation), and the nation-state coming into being as a creature of representation (Hobbes, 2004). Hence if what the refugee lacks is citizenship, it lacks the rights to be a political subject (they are reduced to zoē).

The refugees have fled from the state in which they are citizens and where they are perceived to have their nationality into other states, which they are not considered to be a part of. Hence the refugee represents a disconnect in the the state-nation-citizen hierarchy that shows that the relationship between the state, the nation and citizen is not the natural relationship it is presented to be (Soguk, 1999, p. 10; 53-54; 135-136). Through their lack of belonging in a nation, they are disruptions in the normality of the nation-state system, challenging not only the political narrative of individual states but the whole system.

But the refugee figure is not only a threat to the nation-state system. According to Soguk it can also be a valuable resource. Refugees can be used to reinforce the state-nation-citizen hierarchy by presenting the ”refugee problem” in statist terms (Soguk, 1999, p. 16-17; 50; 119-121; 196). It is incorporated into ”state-thinking”, i.e. the use of a set of categories that reproduce and guarantee the position of the nation-state as the hegemonic political-organizing principle, hiding the basic insight that the nation-state system is not a natural given (Bourdieu, 1995, p. 83). In accordance all the solutions to the ”refugee problem” aim to reincorporate them into the nation-state-system. Either through repatriation, local integration or resettlement (Soguk, 1999, p. 16-17; 50; 119-121; 196). How the state can capitalize on the construction of the refugee as a zoē to its bios (citizens) can be understood as a sovereignty impulse.
2.1.2 The Nation-state and the Sovereignty impulse

Instances of mass human displacement can be explained as state’s attempts to shape its population into what fits the political narrative of the nation. Michael Shapiro’s concept of the sovereignty impulse describes such practices. The sovereignty impulse is a desire on the part of the sovereign to create exclusionary identity practices based on dichotomies that draws boundaries between the privileged self that is entitled to membership in the collectivity and the other that is not eligible for membership (Soguk, 1999, p. 67-74). Nationalism as the ideology of the state can be viewed as the way through which the sovereignty impulse reaches a climax. The collectivity is effectively articulated as the nation and membership in the nation is effectively transformed into the legal status of citizenship (ibid, p. 74-83). The common feature of institutions created to deal with the “refugee problem” after the two world wars is that they take the nation-state-citizen hierarchy as the starting-point and as a natural given (ibid, p. 101-206; Haddad, 2008, p.3). The discourse on refugees is part of the state-thinking, hiding how the state-nation-citizen hierarchy is not a natural relationship but one constructed by state’s acting out their sovereignty impulses through various state-building practices.

According to Soguk, human displacement as well as the discourse on displacement is a tool for statecraft. He defines statecraft as the process of continuously reproducing the nation and the state (in other words statecraft is to act on the sovereignty impulse and rearticulate state-thinking to legitimize it). Mass human displacements and other possibly violent forms of the sovereignty impulse, practices that unavailingly creates refugees, are forms of statecraft since they are used to regiment the population at hand into one that suits the political narrative. But the refugee can also be capitalized upon as to the constitutive other to the citizen. By controlling the narrative of the other, the state can at the same time control the narrative of their citizens (Soguk, 1999, p. 10-14; 30-37; 107; 114-177; 196). From this follows Haddad’s argument that refugees actually are an unavoidable consequence of the nation-state system (Haddad, 2008).

The concept of the sovereignty impulse suggests that the refugee is not just someone ending up outside the nation-state system, lacking citizenship due to unfortunate circumstances. Both displacement and the positioning of the displaced as refugees can be seen as exclusionary practices on the part of the state to shape the population of its citizens. Agamben takes this argument one step further, suggesting that it is the excluded that is the real subject of the sovereignty impulse. Breaking with the Hobbesian notion of the sovereign power as a creature of representation, rather presenting it as the creator of bare life.
2.1.3 Sovereignty, State of Exception and Bare Life

Agamben provides an understanding of the zoē - bios divide that goes beyond understanding it as a distinction between those allowed to participate in public life and those excluded from participation. He allows an understanding of how this distinction, or rather the indistinction between the concepts that emerge when the distinction is made, can be used to perform what can be called a totalitarian version of the sovereign impulse (the state of exception). The want to divide between zoē and bios lays the foundation for the expanding control and biopower of the sovereign (the creation of bare life) since its authority is needed in order to make the divide.

The state of exception is not a state that lies outside of the political order, instead it is included in it through its exclusion from it. The inclusion of the exception is imperative to the existence of the political order. The state of exception stands in a negative relation to it, upholding the political order by suspending it. In the state of exception the sovereign power is able to exercise absolute control and power\(^7\), including to overstep the political order in order to preserve it\(^8\). For Agamben, decision-making powers over the state of exception is what defines the sovereign. It is to be able to decide over the political order itself and when it is acceptable or even necessary to suspend it (Agamben, 2005). It has been noted that Agamben’s sovereign power stands outside of and comes before the political order. The political order exists through the sovereign, rather than the sovereign existing through the political order (c.f. DeCaroli, 2013; Ek, 2006). It hence breaks with the Hobbesian notion of the sovereign power as a creature of representation. Agamben’s sovereign does not represent a bios, it creates its bios. And more importantly, it creates bare life.

Just as the state of exception, bare life is included in the political order through its exclusion. The normal political order, in which bios is perceived to be the political subject, is built on the exclusion of zoē, and it is the sovereign that makes this divide (Agamben, 1995). This exercise can be interpreted as a sovereignty impulse. An exercise on the part of the sovereign to create exclusionary identities between a privileged self (a bios) and an excluded other (the zoē). What Agamben turns on its head is the perception that it is the bios that is the political subject. For him, it is instead the bare life that is the true political subject. This is best exemplified by the state of exception turning everyone in the exception to bare life (Agamben, 1995). The reason I write that bare life is the true political subject and not zoē, is that zoē per definition is not a political subject. Agamben’s claim that it is actually the depoliticized and dehumanized other that is the

\(^7\) It is important to note that the sovereign being able to exercise absolute control and power in the state of exception does not mean that the state of exception equals a dictatorship. A dictatorship is a political order in which the sovereign’s absolute powers, to the extent it has it, is derived from the political order. The sovereign’s ability to exercise absolute power in the state of exception on the contrary derives from the suspension of the political order.

\(^8\) Over-stepping the political order is a constitutive feature of the state of exception. The order is, after all, suspended by it.
true political subject therefore blurs the distinction between zoē and bios. From this indistinction emerges a new distinction; bare life. Bare life is in its essence similar to zoē, but with the important difference of being the political subject of the political order. It is not excluded from the political order. It is included through its exclusion and therefore still in the hands of the sovereign (Bailey, 2009). Without any political rights, being mere biological existence, bare life is a political subject that can be subjected to almost endless violence and control. It is outside of the law. It can be killed without punishment (outside of human law) but the act of killing can never be an act of sacrifice (outside of religious law). It is also possible for the sovereign to administer bare life in any way deemed necessary. It decides how the bare life should be organized, nurtured, controlled and enjoyed (Agamben, 1995).

It is important to note that the sovereign not necessarily is a physical person, group or social class. If this was the case modern democracy would have removed the power and control of the sovereign. The modern political order of the nation-state system have moved sovereign power from the hands of physical people into a hegemonic political order. The exercise of the modern sovereign power has spread out to the individual level where every citizen submits themselves to the nation-state system and state sovereignty. This stems from their political rights being tied to the political order (Agamben, 1995, p.3; 126). When people accordingly guard their political rights they hence ties and submits themselves to the political order.

To Agamben there is one space which is the space of exception; that space is the camp. When the state of exception starts to become a part of the normal political order it demands a permanent spatial institution. A space where the state of exception can be embodied without loosing its status as an exception. A space where the bare life can be separated from the politically qualified life (Agamben, 1995, p.177-190). However, Olivius writes that although the refugee camp is a space of domination and subordination it is also a space of resistance, negotiation and contestation and it is a context which can provide opportunities for new types of communities and create new political spaces (Olivius, 2014, p.24-30). This description of life in camps has been strengthened by other research (c.f. Bailey, 2009; Feldman, 2014; Martin, 2014; Owens, 2009; Woroniecka-Krzyzanowska, 2014).

Similarly there is one figure that is the bare life for Agamben; the refugee (Ek, 2006, p. 371). The refugee destabilizes the nation-state system by questioning the perceived natural connection between birth and nation. The response of the nation-state system has

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9 Remember Arendt’s, Soguk’s and others’ argument that the right to be a political subject, the right to have rights, is tied to citizenship.

10 It should be noted however that Agamben speaks about the concentration camp rather than the refugee camp (Agamben, 1995, p. 27-41; 177-190). And although both institutions are camps and Agamben argues that there is a kinship between internation camps (such as the refugee camp) and concentration camps (Agamben, 2003, p.198), there is certainly a humanitarian motivation behind the structure of the refugee camp (c.f. Department of Rehabilitation, 2005; UNHCR.org, 2015) that does not exist for the concentration camp.
according to Agamben been to put them in a constant state of exception, turning them to bare life (Agamben, 2003, p. 195-198). The refugees hence reveals the violence of the law by exposing the state of exception as the ultimate power practice of the sovereign (McLoughlin, 2014, p. 321-322). And it exposes that the nation-state system is founded on the potential bare life, rather than the freedom and political rights of the citizen (Ek, 2006, p. 366).

It is important to note that a weakness in Agamben’s work is that he does not seem to grant any possibility to resist bare life. The dominance of the sovereign appears total. Resistance, especially successful, on the account of the marginalized challenges his theories, since the possibility of political resistance means that they cannot be thought of as bare life the way he describes it. Some have interpreted this as dystopianism, overstating the killability of the bare life while downplaying its positive potential (c.f. Braidotti, 2012). Judith Butler has argued how presentations (i.e. visibility) of bare life can have positive political potential by revealing the shared vulnerability of our bodies and hence influencing a less violent and harmful politics based on this insight (Butler, 2009).

Others, including me, interpret it more as dangerous utopianism than dystopianism, believing that a new politics will spring up from the borders of death. Stemming from a progressive and teleological view on politics, he appears to believe that the tension between the perceived distinction between zoē and bios that builds the political order, and the actual indistinction within the concepts the sovereign uses to enhance control and power, will ultimately make the system implode (Whyte, 2013, p. 15-22). Agamben makes a division between the fictional state of exception and the factual. The fictional is the possibility/threat of the state of exception and the factual is the actual practice of the state of exception. However if the fictional state of exception can no longer be separated from the normal political order, all that is left is the factual state of exception (the zoē - bios distinction does not exist anymore and everything is bare life). And when that happens it no longer functions as upholding the political order, because it is no longer an exception but the normal political order (Agamben, 2003-2, p. 23-24).

2.1.4 Performative Politics in Spaces of Appearance

To offer an alternative to escape from both the positions of zoē and bare life that is not grounded in Agamben’s politics-to-come, I will turn back to Arendt. This can seem counter-intuitive since she puts up clear distinctions between: zoē and bios; oikos and polis; labour, work and action. These distinctions can also in her work sometimes seem impermeable and constant, as with her argument that the refugee cannot escape zoē if it is not reestablished in the nation-state system (Arendt, 2003). But counterintuitive uses of Arendt is not uncommon in academia. I will here continue this peculiar tradition of "thinking with Arendt, against Arendt" (Benhabib, 2004, p. 173).

The reason one can interpret Arendt as providing room for far-reaching resistance
towards life as zoē or bare life, is how she describes politics as both performative and relational. First of all the concept of action is very performative. It describes politics not as intentions, not excluding politics to a type of deeds or thoughts perceived to be inherently political, and not as achievements either (Beltrán, 2009, p. 601-602). This is due to the relational aspects of politics. To create meaning, action needs to be recognized and acted upon by others. What is achieved can never be controlled, it is dependent on how others respond to it. What is important for Arendt is not the end result, but the capacity for beginnings. The reason people want to participate in politics is that they want to distinguish themselves as individuals (Arendt, 1958, p. 184-247). It can be viewed with the Deleuzian notion that the essence of the world is its ability to become, and the ability to become is set in the emerging differences of interactions (Colebrook, 2010, p. 48-52; 80). Politics becomes action-centered rather than location-centered (Beltrán, 2009, p. 601). A political space arises directly out of people acting together. The action is not only the content of the political realm, but it is what constitutes it.

A space of political action is not only a space where people come together, it is a space where the people that come together have the opportunity to appear in front of each other as political beings. Arendt calls it spaces of appearance. They are relational spaces of common appearance (Arendt, 1958, p. 184-247). It is not the nation-state or any other physical location in itself, but a space which opens up possibilities of politics acting out in coffeehouses, in kitchens and maybe even in refugee camps (Beltrán, 2009, p. 601).

Spaces of appearance might not exist for everyone. As previously noted Arendt believes it non-existent for refugees because they are not part of any politically meaningful community due to their exclusion from the nation (Arendt, 2003). And to lack access to spaces of appearance is to lack a voice and visibility (Beltrán, 2009, p. 605-606). But Arendt again provides a solution to the shortcomings of her own theorizations. She emphasizes the power of organization. Acting in concert is a way to make oneself visible. People appearing in front of each other in a shared space is the creation of community, it is to gain a voice. The community speaking in concert in front of others is to make oneself visible. It is to gain an audience to speak for, it is to take the step into the public realm, and gain the ability to be heard (Arendt, 1958, p. 185-247). Not only political action in a space of appearance can be seen as performative, but also the creation of spaces of appearance in itself.

2.2 Theoretical framework

In concert with the abductive research design described in the methodology chapter below, this theoretical framework both guides the analysis of the empirical material as well as being analyzed itself through it.

The theoretical framework consists of key concepts that can be used to make a thorough analysis of the state of refugeehood. It can help explore what figure the refugee
is; how it is created; how refugeehood affects refugees; how/where/when resistance is possible; and what role the refugee figure has in the political order of the nation-state system. These concepts are: Citizenship (or the lack thereof); the Sovereignty impulse; State-thinking; the State/Space of Exception, Bare Life; Political Action; the Space of Appearance.

The concept of citizenship allows a reference point for the discussions on refugeehood that is situated at the heart of the discourse of the nation-state system. As the figure which the refugee is constructed to be a negative constituent of, the respondents thoughts on citizenship and what it would mean for them to regain it can provide insight into what figure the refugee is, what the refugee lacks and how this lack affects the refugee.

The sovereignty impulse and state-thinking can be used as concepts through which to analyze the refugees’ inclusion/exclusion in different spaces. Where they are included/excluded and why? Who holds the decision-making powers over their inclusion/exclusion? The concepts can facilitate understanding of responses to refugee movements and to suggested solutions to the “refugee problem”.

The state of exception and bare life are concepts that can be used to understand the institutionalized control, surveillance and violence refugees are subject to. The amount of control, surveillance and violence the refugees are subject to can in return be used to evaluate what form the sovereignty impulse takes. Whether or not refugeehood is a state of full exclusion (the sovereignty impulse as creation of zoē), or a state in which the exclusion is institutionalized and included in the political system (the sovereignty impulse as the creation of bare life). Therefore increasing the understanding of the sovereign. Is it a creature of representation, or a creator of bare life? And how far-reaching is its power?

Political action and spaces of appearance provide theoretical explanations for refugees’ political behavior. By understanding politics as something performed in spaces where people have the opportunity to appear in front of each other as political beings, it opens up a possibility within the theoretical framework for refugees to transcend zoē and resist bare life. It offers a potential to become a political subject that is not dependent on state sovereignty and inclusion in a nation.
3 Methodology

In this chapter I will discuss epistemological considerations and what knowledge-claims I can make, the practical choices concerning collection of material and the analysis of the material.

I will discuss what epistemological considerations I have made with regards to how I relate to the different knowledges held by me and the respondents respectively and what knowledge claims I can make; what it means to do an abductive reading of both the theoretical and the empirical material; and how I constructed the interview schedule to catch the theoretical concepts.

I will also discuss challenges of field research. I will discuss ethical considerations; the challenge of gaining access to respondents and handling gatekeepers; and my positionality in the field.

3.1 Research Design

I intend to increase understanding about refugeehood through interviews with refugees and employees at humanitarian organizations working with refugees. Doing so, I have to navigate through different kinds of knowledges. Knowledge derived from experiences that refugees and those working with them hold, and knowledge derived from theoretical conceptualizations that I hold. How can I use the knowledge of the respondents to improve my own understanding of refugeehood without claiming to know what it is like to be a refugee? How can I speak about refugeehood using the accounts of refugees without claiming to speak for them? This problem echoes similar to the problem identified by Gayatri Spivak in her famous essay Can the Subaltern Speak (1988) regarding how the researcher always risks falling in the trap of either speaking for the subaltern or pretend that the subaltern can speak for itself (Spivak, 1988; Maggio, 2007, p. 421-426).

3.1.1 Epistemology: Situated Knowledge

The "Spivakian puzzle" has connotations to Donna Haraway’s argument regarding the danger of being trapped in a dichotomy between Positivist Empiricism and Relativism on
the question of objectivity (Haraway, 1991, p.183; Grassie, 1996, p. 295). Both positions
cannot be held accountable for their conclusions because neither reflect critically over
how the epistemic position of the knower is localized. Haraway calls it the "God-trick" to
Positivist Empiricism does it by presuming "the feasibility of a universalist point of
view" (Haraway, 1991, p. 188). It claims the possibility to be able to access the truth of
the world through the adoption of an objective method of inquiry. For me, such a position
would fail to recognize the knowledge the respondents have of their own situation, while
I would falsely position myself as finding the objective truth about it. Hence I would
silence the respondents by claiming to speak for them.

The problem of objectivism and a universal claim to the truth can not be solved by
relativism. The post-modern anti-epistemological claim that there is no objective
knowledge (Lykke, 2010, p. 131-132), also lets the researcher escape accountability. In
this case through claims that the knowledge is derived from the discursive (re)production
of the subject studied (Haraway, 1991, p.191). Hence while Positivist Empiricism moves
responsibility of the knowledge produced to the objective reality, the postmodern
relativist moves responsibility to the discursive creation of the research subject. This is
the post-modernists' "dangerous utopianism" of "claiming to abolish representation" that
Spivak is attacking throughout Can the Subaltern Speak? (1988). It silences the subaltern
by hiding that it is the voice of the researcher that is heard and not the subaltern (Spivak,
1988).

Haraway argues to solve this with strong and critical reflexivity (Campbell, 2004, p.
169-176). Haraway calls this situated knowledge. Situated knowledge recognizes that the
knowledge produced by the researcher is a reflection of the particular conditions under
which it is produced as well as how the researcher is socially situated. It is to claim that
the perspective from which one makes an analysis affects the outcome of it. It is to
recognize that the objectivity one can can claim is always partial (Haraway, 1991). By
recognizing that the knowledge about refugeehood that I create is always situated in my
positionality, I can avoid both speaking for the respondents and pretending that the
respondents speak for themselves. In this thesis the respondents’ voices always go
through me. All accounts from the respondents are presented and analyzed by me. This
does not mean that I speak for the respondents. I speak for myself, using the accounts
given to me by the respondents to analyze the state of refugeehood. The analysis made
and conclusions drawn are always situated in my positionality, never in the positionality
of my respondents.

The question remains about how I can claim to draw conclusions out of the
interviews, which is knowledge differently situated from the knowledge I have access to.
The answer is simply that me using the interviews to draw conclusions is not me drawing
conclusions from the position of the respondents. It is me translating the accounts of the
respondents into information I can use to create knowledge from my position. I believe
that understanding another perspective will enrich and improve the knowledge I can
create. In accordance with the claim of situated knowledge, I recognize that the
translations I make does not mirror the knowledge of the respondents. But their
knowledge can help me enrich mine. I will use an abductive reading of the material in
3.1.2 Abduction: Reading and Analyzing material

I will use abduction as the method through which I read and analyze both the theoretical and empirical material. In opposition to induction through which conclusions are drawn out of empirical observations, abduction seeks to go beyond what can be directly observed and focus on underlying structures. In opposition to deduction through which cases are explained with a general rule derived from logical principles, abduction does not treat empirical information as something simply providing evidence to verify or falsify a theory (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2008, p. 54-65; Eriksson, 1997, p. 26-33). Abduction avoids the trap of either theoretical or empirical reductionism. In abductive research, theoretical knowledge and empirical knowledge are constantly (re)interpreted through their contact with each other.

I use abduction not to find one general explanation, but to build theoretical insight by increasing the understanding of refugeehood. This is in part because I recognize that there is no such thing as a single refugee experience (Malkki, 1995). But also because I recognize that refugeehood is a phenomena affected by several structures at the same time and that my situatedness and theoretical points of departure affect which structures I recognize (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2008, p.54-65).

With so much interaction between the empirical and the theoretical, the success of abductive research hinges on the ability of the researcher to move up and down the abstraction ladder (Eriksson, 1997, p. 26-33). Here abduction can be related to the previous discussion about how to deal with the fact that me and the respondents have different knowledges of refugeehood. Simplified, the situatedness of our knowledges is derived from positions from which we view refugeehood from different abstraction levels. The respondents live and experience refugeehood and I make theoretical conceptualizations of refugeehood. With the blurred lines between theory and empirical information that comes with abduction, the experiences of the respondents are not merely viewed as ”empirical information” that can be explained theoretically. The experiences themselves are viewed as theory-laden (Mohanty, 1993, p. 48). The issue is not how to translate between theory and empirical information, but how to translate between different abstraction levels.

3.1.3 Constructing Interviews: Aspiring for Validity

The main way I gathered information for this thesis was through in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews gives an understanding about peoples’ experiences. Since I am not situated to have low abstraction level knowledge about refugeehood, in-depth interviews with those having it is a way in which I can get information that will increase my
understanding of the subject.

The core principle of interviews is to make the questions as easy as possible to answer (Brounéus, 2011). At the same time it is imperative that the interview questions capture the theoretical concepts being used. This in order to gain a material with high validity, i.e. a material which contains information about the subject studied (Esaiasson et al., 2012, p. 58-60). This means that the practice of constructing an interview schedule is an exercise in moving far on the abstraction ladder. As I previously stated this is an important part of all abductive research in order to be able to analyze the empirical- and theoretical information through each other (Höglund, 2011).

The interview schedule was constructed in order to capture how I figured the theoretical concepts (Citizenship; State-thinking; Sovereignty impulse; State of Exception; Bare Life; Political Action; Space of Appearance) would manifest themselves in the field. Since I did the interviews to access information I did not hold, constructing the interview schedule was in large part a matter of qualified guesswork based on understanding gained from previous research and attempts to logically deduce how the theoretical concepts might manifest themselves. The interview schedule was constructed to explore what role citizenship played for the refugees, what agency was allowed to them and what restrictions were put on them in the spaces they lived in, what role the refugee community played for them and how they related to and were treated by both NGOs and authorities (Appendix 1). Recognizing that the respondents have more knowledge than me about refugeehood, I told them to focus on what they thought to be important aspects of my questions, and to feel free to make associations. The interview schedule evolved during the course of the research after I got more insight into what was important to the respondents. Especially questions of citizenship got more prominent. Depending on if I interviewed refugees or someone working at a NGO, the interview schedule had to be adapted accordingly (ibid).

3.2 The Challenges of Field Research

Brendan Browne and Luke Muffet write that the only thing certain about field research is its uncertainty. There is an unpredictability that is inherit in field research since it is highly dependent on interactions with, and good relationships with other people in the field. This means that the researcher will need to deal with cultural customs, different personalities and emotional investment (Browne and Muffet, 2014). Not only does the researcher have to navigate interactions and relationships with respondents. Good relationships with intermediaries and local authorities are also crucial (Nelson, 2013). One key thing to consider is how transparent to be with local actors, especially authorities. Transparency will generally create trust between the researcher and the authorities and increase the safety of the researcher, the intermediaries and the respondents. However it can also limit access, especially if the research subject is
sensitive. Authorities might decide to deny access completely, or to limit access and only present information beneficial to them (Browne and Muffet, 2014; Turner, 2013). I chose to be transparent in contact with both respondents, intermediaries and authorities, because I prioritized the safety of myself, the respondents and the intermediaries over potential access. It did end up restricting my access. For example I never got a permission to enter the refugee camps. However it might have restricted my access even more not to be transparent, because I found the culture to be quite bureaucratic and permission-based and if I would have tried to gain access without proper paperwork I may not have received help from intermediaries\(^{11}\).

3.2.1 Ethical Considerations

Field research comes with the need to make ethical considerations. The researcher has a responsibility to not put participants in danger (Nelson, 2013). To avoid putting participants physical safety and personal integrity at risk it was important to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents. I also needed to make sure that all respondents participated voluntarily. (Brounéus, 2001; Söderström, 2011). Therefore I told ADRA that participation had to be completely voluntarily and I never had the impression that it was anything else. I started every interview by telling the respondents about why I was in Tamil Nadu, that their participation in the research was voluntary and that they could end the interview whenever they wanted or choose to not answer any of my questions.

The refugees I interviewed are vulnerable due to their position of dependence. Their livelihoods are dependent both on the Department of Rehabilitation in the Regional Government of Tamil Nadu and the NGOs working with them. But ADRA is also in a position of dependence since their ability to work within the camps is dependent on a good relationship with the Department of Rehabilitation. I always had to take into consideration not to do anything that could hurt ADRA, not the least because of

\(^{11}\) I already encountered the interpersonal and unpredictable nature of field research, as well as the balance act of how much to disclose in contact with authorities, before I even set foot in India. I first of all found that getting a Visa would be harder than I thought, requiring documentation that there would be an organization serving as my host organization. It was hinted to me by students previously undertaking field research that it would have been better for me to not disclose the purpose of my Visa application to the Indian Visa authorities, but to instead apply for a tourist Visa. However in hindsight I believe it was beneficial for me to be open to the Indian Visa authorities about the objective of my stay in India. I found that organizations were generally wary to help me with the research because of concerns that it could affect their relationship with Indian authorities negatively. With a tourist Visa I believe that potential intermediaries would have been even more hesitant to help me. Luckily I got in touch with ADRA who agreed to formally invite me to visit them and to help me with my research.
consideration for the many refugees who benefit from their programs\textsuperscript{12}.

I had to use an interpreter during most of the interviews. The use of an interpreter puts the anonymity of the respondents at risk, since there is one more person that knows about the respondents’ participation and their answers. Preferably the interpreter should be someone the researcher knows and trusts (Brounéus, 2011; Björkert and Henry, 2004). ADRA offered to help me translate and I had two interpreters helping me during the interviews, both of them working with the refugees in the camps. This was a solution that had both its upsides and downsides. A positive was that the ADRA employees already knew who I interviewed which reduced the number of people knowing the identities of the respondents compared to if I would have employed an outside interpreter. However, a big downside was that the interpreter was someone that the refugees were dependent on. It can be argued that this enhanced the vulnerability of the respondents. This was a big concern for me. But since it had practical upsides such as cost efficiency, as well as a potential ethical upside with one less person knowing the identities of the respondents, I decided to give it a try and stop it if I found it troublesome. I did not see any signs that the refugees were uncomfortable with the presence of an ADRA employee. On the contrary it was my impression that it made the refugees more relaxed to have them present.

Before my first interview ADRA asked to look through my interview schedule to make sure none of my questions could cause the respondents emotional distress. I was uncomfortable allowing them the possibility to “censor” my interviews. However I did agree to let them go through it since I did not want to risk straining the relationship with them. Also, it was important for me to not cause the respondents any mental distress and since ADRA know the respondents a lot better then I do, it made sense that they would be able to better judge what kind of questions could trigger emotional distress\textsuperscript{13}.

3.2.2 Gaining Access: Gatekeepers and Lack of Control

To gain access to respondents, researchers usually need to go through so called “gatekeepers”. Gatekeepers are the ones who control the opportunities for the researcher to interact with others in the field. Access to the concerned population usually requires negotiations with the gatekeepers and the feasibility of the research is thereby often dependent on the researcher’s relationship with them. Usually government officials, NGOs or people at important positions within the concerned communities are gatekeepers.

\textsuperscript{12} For example, this is why I decided not to apply for a permission to visit the camp. I was told by ADRA that they would appreciate if I did not apply since every permission stated that the visits to the camps were not allowed to be used for research. A rule I would obviously break. They were afraid it could worsen their relationship with the Deapartment of Rehabilitation if it was found out I visited the camps for research purposes. I made the decision that the potential benefits of a visit to the camps was not worth risking ADRA’s relationship with the Department of Rehabilitation.

\textsuperscript{13} It should be noted that they had no objections to my interview schedule.
(Brounéus, 2011; Turner, 2013). In my case the gatekeepers were the Department of Rehabilitation and the five NGOs allowed in the camps. A division can be made between access to area and access to respondents (Browne and Muffet, 2014). Since I did not get a permission to visit the refugee camps (see footnote 12) I had no access to area. However I did have access to respondents, mainly through ADRA.

I did not manage to establish a working relationship with any of the gatekeepers except for ADRA before I started the research. The feasibility of my research was thereby highly dependent on ADRA\textsuperscript{14}. High dependency on a gatekeeper comes with downsides. Usually it means lack of control over what kind of information is presented to the researcher. The gatekeeper can choose to only present information that suits their own interests (Höglund, 2011). This was a concern for me. Since I did not have permission to visit the camps, ADRA were the ones that asked refugees if they wanted to be respondents in the research and they could control who to ask. They did ask me if I had preferences on specific groups I wanted to interview. To increase representativity I wished to have an equal representation of men and women, a mixture of age groups, both camp and non-campus refugees, and respondents of several geographic areas\textsuperscript{15}. I was told they would try to fulfill these criteria, but they were also clear about that they mainly chose respondents on practical reasons. They did not want to draw attention from authorities that they helped me with research and they therefore asked refugees that they already had a good relationship with and trusted to be discrete. I am aware that this decreased the representativity of my selection of respondents and that there is a risk that I could have missed something of importance since I only interviewed refugees that ADRA already had a close and good relationship with.

3.2.3 Conducting Interviews: Benefits of Being Outnumbered

I intended to conduct interviews with refugees one-on-one in order to make sure that no respondent would be subject to social pressure, worrying about what the other respondents would think about their answers. I wanted to decrease the risk of ”social desirability bias”, which means that the respondents are affected by the context of the interview and adjust their answer to what they believe is expected, accepted, normal or correct (Söderström, 2011, p. 148). I was soon asked by respondents if it would be

\textsuperscript{14} When arriving in Chennai I had no other way to gain access to respondents than through ADRA. After my arrival one employee at another NGO helped me set up interviews with two refugees. So after a while in Chennai my dependency on ADRA decreased a bit.

\textsuperscript{15} It ended up being a good mixture of age groups as well as a fairly equal representation of camp- and non-campus refugees. But the respondents were mainly women and they were only from the Chennai and Trichy areas.
possible for them to do the interviews at the same time. I found this setup to be beneficial. The respondents seemed relaxed and comfortable compared to previous interviews. The conversation flowed better and I believe that social desirability bias was decreased since the focus of the respondents was less on giving me "correct" answers than when I interviewed one respondent at a time. It took some pressure off me to ask follow-up questions since the respondents often "filled in the blanks" in each others statements, adding forgotten information, following and deepening each others argument, contradicting each others opinions or just continuing the conversation by reflecting on what the other said. I started suggesting to respondents to do interviews two at a time. I even did a focus group discussion with five non-camp refugees. Focus groups are considered advantageous for many of the same reasons I found it beneficial to interview more than one respondent at a time: Respondents outnumbering the researcher shifts the power balance in the interview, making it easier for respondents to trust and open up to the interviewer; Contrasting and comparing between respondents better elucidates their reasonings and they fill in each others voids; Respondents will be less prone to force out an answer and giving "correct" answers. Because if they do not know what to say, there will be others who can speak (Söderström, 2011, p. 147-151).

3.2.4 Positionality in the Field

The empirical material in this thesis is largely the results of interactions between me and others in the field. It is therefore important for me to reflect on my positionality in the field to understand how this may have affected what material I was able to collect and the way that I have interpreted it.

A common way to think about the relationship between the researcher and the researched is as an unequal power relationship between the researcher and the researched (Björkert and Henry, 2004). This surely holds some truth. The subject of anthropology has over the course of history been used to validate racist views of western superiority, and it can be argued that field research is still being used to uphold an asymmetric relationship with western researchers testing dominant western theory on "the others" and then taking the knowledge back with them (Elie, 2012; Pintchman, 2009). Over the course of the field study I encouraged respondents and intermediaries to take initiatives in our conversations and explain to me their thoughts and opinions. Making the respondents active participants rather than "objects" to be studied. I actively tried to situate myself as someone in need of knowledge to get the respondents and intermediaries to open up to me. I do have the final control over the product, and my power to interpret the accounts of the respondents indeed puts us in unequal power relation (Björkert and Henry, 2004;

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16 As is for example illustrated exemplary in episode two of the BBC documentary series Racism - A History (Tickell, 2007).
Henry et al., 2009). Other power advantages the researcher holds are usually a lot of social capital through economic privileges and professional status. (Henry et al., 2009). This however does not apply to me as a student. I actively used my student identity to not position myself in a privileged researcher-position upholding colonial structures. The student identity was beneficial for me since it encouraged intermediaries and respondents to teach me about the field and the subject of my studies.

However, this dualistic view of the researcher-researched relationship is too simplistic. As is evident in my discussion above about the role of gatekeepers there are local actors that hold a lot of powers and whom the research will be dependent on.

The researcher is constantly subject to the respondents reconstructing the identity of the researcher. It is not only the respondents who are the "other" for the researcher. The researcher is also the "other" for the respondents. One of the most influential aspects is whether or not the respondents position the researcher as an insider or an outsider. Outsiders often have more difficulty gaining trust and acceptance than insiders due to their lack of networks and lack of knowledge of cultural norms (Björkert and Henry, 2004; Henry et al., 2009). But outsiders can also sometimes benefit from "outsider-value". The researcher is viewed as a sympathetic person since he or she is taking an interest in the situation of the respondents even though not part of the community (Höglund, 2011). I was definitely positioned as an outsider, and I definitely benefited from outsider-value. The respondents often expressed gratitude towards me for taking interest in them, interviewing them and listening to their stories. This was of course an advantage. I could use the outsider-value to gain sympathy and trust from the respondents. But it was also problematic since it seemed like it was not only due to me being an outsider, but me being the right kind of outsider. My ethnicity and skin-color was the centre of attention, and my skin-color and ethnicity was always positioned by my respondents as the one enviable. I felt that the position the respondents put me in was one which reaffirmed what Narag and Maxwell identify as internalized inferiority as a result of colonial culture and norms (Narag and Maxwell, 2014). I found it to be a difficult issue to deal with. I wanted to use the benefits of outsider-value, but I did not want to fully embrace it since I did not want to accept the premises on which I got it. I wanted to protest the colonial structures of whiteness as the norm, but a lecture from me on anti-racism positioning myself as enlightened vis-a-vis the respondents would not be a step in the direction of deconstructing colonial norms, but rather achieve the opposite.

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17 After one of the interviews the respondent thanked me for listening to her (as had happened after several previous interviews). When the respondent had left, the interpreter turned to me and said that she had to study me during the next interview, because she talked to the refugees everyday and asked them about their situation but nobody had ever thanked her for it. I however got thanked after every other interview. Here it became evident to me that the gratitude the refugees showed me may not only have depended on them not being used to people listening to them, but specifically that "outsiders" never listened to them.
4 Analysis

In this chapter I will present my analysis of the state of refugeehood; what constitutes it, how it effects the refugees, the position of the refugee in the political order of the nation-state system, and how differences in refugees’ spatial conditions changes the effects of refugeehood. I have done this by analyzing the empirical material and the theoretical framework through each other\(^\text{18}\). The quotes from and presentations of the statements of particular respondents are chosen because they are illustrative for the arguments made\(^\text{19}\).

As previously discussed I recognize that the analysis I make is a product of how I am socially situated, the conditions under which it was made and not the least my theoretical points of departure. I do not claim that my analysis will generate universal truths of refugeehood, but knowledge created from my specific situatedness. I recognize that I cannot claim that this analysis can be generalized to any refugee population in any context. I recognize that it is based on the experiences of Tamil refugees in Tamil Nadu and is therefore shaped by this context.

4.1 Desiring Citizenship

Maybe the only common denominator through every interview, both with refugees and with people working for NGOs, was that citizenship took a central role in our conversations. The refugees’ lack of citizenship was identified as one of the most influential underlying causes of the hardships of the refugees, oftentimes the most

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\(^{18}\) This thesis is not a need assessment. The purpose is not to assess the humanitarian situation of the refugees or whether or not India live up to their humanitarian responsibilities according to International Law. For those interested in doing such a study, and out of respect for the respondents’ explicit wishes, I will here quickly list the main needs and challenges of the refugees (for those interested in the humanitarian situation a thorough reading of the field notes and interview transcriptions in Appendix 2 is recommended). Camp refugees experienced a lack of living space, lack of privacy, lack of freedom of movement, widespread alcohol abuse, unemployment and documentation issues. Non-camp refugees experienced documentation issues, lack of information, lack of responsible authority, unemployment, over-stay fees, poverty and discrimination on the housing market (Appendix 2).

\(^{19}\) Since I used an interpreter in interviews with refugees some quotes will refer to the respondent(s) as he/she/they even though the respondent(s) were talking about their own experiences. This because the interpreter simply described to me how "he/she/they say that he/she/them…".
influential (Appendix 2). This is in accordance with the notion that lack of citizenship is the dominant signifier of the refugee concept. (Soguk, 1999, p. 10; 53; 136). The refugee is a figure defined by what it does not have. The refugees’ problem is that they lack the perceived unproblematic rootedness of a nation (lack of community), as well as the perceived unproblematic rootedness of a state (lack of territory where they are protected) (Arendt, 2003, p.232-233; Malkki, 1995; Soguk, 1999, p. 10; 53-54; 135-136). The answer to the refugees’ problem, as well as the “refugee problem” seem to be intimately tied to the question of citizenship.

The respondents told of the disadvantages of not having citizenship and how refugees cannot participate fully in society. One of the respondents working for a NGO told me that refugees are ”sick and tired of the refugee identity” and are ”desperately in search of a new identity” (Appendix 2, Interview 3F). Citizenship is the only thing that is perceived to provide them with this new identity.

This desire for citizenship make them take desperate measures, literally going on quests for citizenship, many migrating illegally especially to Australia. They do this despite knowing that there is a large risk that they will die on the journey. A young female camp refugee estimated that around 25% of those trying to get to Australia by boat dies on the way. And a majority of those who manages to arrive safely still will not be able to gain citizenship and successfully integrate in the Australian society. But she says that it is a risk worth taking for many because they want to be “free men, not refugees” (Appendix 2, 1I). This young woman’s high awareness of the risks of illegal migration was not an outlier. Many answered that they knew about the large risk of dying on these journeys, and many knew people whom they suspected had died since they had never heard from them again after they had left. Still, many respondents were either contemplating going themselves, saving money to send their children when they graduated school, or at least knew others with these plans (Appendix 2). It is remarkable to note that the pull of citizenship is so strong that refugees are willing to gamble with their lives (or the lives of their children), in their quest for citizenship. It illustrates two things: 1. The extreme hardships of refugeehood and the desperation it fills refugees with, and 2. How lack of citizenship is perceived to be the constituent of refugeehood and the source and underlying cause of their problems.

We may understand how much power lies in the state’s decision-making authority over citizenship (the right to execute their sovereignty impulse) if we remember Agamben’s argument that people submit themselves to the sovereign power (the state) because they derive their political rights from inclusion in the political order (citizenship). It is a testament to the strength of this modern form of exercise of sovereign power that not only do the political subjects (the citizens) willingly submit themselves to it. Those outside of it (refugees) are actually willing to go on life-threatening journeys to get the opportunity to do the same.
4.1.1 Durable solutions: Trapped in State-thinking

The respondents working for NGOs expressed that there were three types of durable solutions available to the refugees: Repatriation, local integration and resettlement (Appendix 2, Interviews 3A-3F). This is not unique. These are the three durable solutions deemed by the International Refugee Regime to be available to refugees and they are as UNHCR expresses it "the ultimate goals” in their work to assist and help refugees (UNHCR.org, 2015). What these durable solutions have in common is that they all aim to reestablish the refugee within the nation-state system. The only way deemed possible to solve the "refugee problem is to give the refugee what the refugee is lacking, i.e. citizenship (c.f. Aleinikoff and Poellot). By only articulating solutions that reestablish the citizen within the nation-state system, the norm of the nation-state as the hegemonic political-organizing principle and the citizen as the rightful political subject is reproduced. I.e. the durable solutions are part of the state-thinking that positions the refugees as subordinate vis-a-vis the citizen (Haddad, 2008, p. 3; 59-60; Soguk, 1999, p. 11-13; 107; 196). It situates the decision-making powers over who is to be considered the rightful political subject in the hands of the state. It reestablishes the power of the sovereign by legitimizing its sovereignty impulse.

None of the respondents working for the NGOs believed that any of the three durable solutions was in sight. And just as the durable solutions illustrates how the discourse on refugeehood is trapped in state-thinking, so does the explanations given for why the durable solutions are not a possibility at the moment.

It was expressed to me that repatriation is the preference of the Indian government. For example they were ready to launch a repatriation program after the government change in Sri Lanka. Indian government officials visited the camps to ask how many would like to repatriate. This made the refugees worried that they would be forced back to Sri Lanka. I was told that many refugees do not like to repatriate. They fear their safety if they are to go back to Sri Lanka and they believe they will be subject to discrimination (Appendix 2, Interview 3B-3C; 3E-3F). This was the same perception I got from my interviews with refugees20. One respondent told me: "There is discrimination you know … Tamil people, wherever they can see they shoot it … The last two months more than 20 people died. They do not know why” (Appendix 2, Interview 1E).

First of all this further illustrates the state-thinking that permeates discussions about the "refugee problem” (Haddad, 2008, p. 3; 59-60; Soguk, 1999, p. 10-14; 30-37; 107; 196). The sovereignty impulse is rendered legitimate through the positioning of the host- and originating states as the decision-makers regarding the feasibility of repatriation. Or as a 70 year old male non-camp refugee told me: "It is not the decision of the refugees. It is the decisions of the central governments of India and Sri Lanka” (Appendix 2, Interview 1E).
Interview 2D). Secondly, the Indian government’s preference for voluntary repatriation can be interpreted as an expression of the naturalization of the nation-state-citizen hierarchy (Agamben, 1995, p.137-146; Agamben, 2003, p.198; Arendt, 1958, p.256-257; Soguk, 1999, p.101-206). The refugees are not considered naturally related to India, but they are considered to have a natural relation to Sri Lanka, and it is deemed suitable that they live where they naturally belong. However, as noted many refugees do not wish to return to Sri Lanka. This is a challenge to the belief that repatriation is the most desirable solution (Giammatteo, 2010). The Indian government’s preference for repatriation is not an anomaly. UNHCRs webpage says that repatriation is the “durable solution of choice” for most refugees and that "going home"\textsuperscript{21} remains the strongest hope for many refugees (UNHCR.org, 2015). Malkki notes that the "homeland" has been constructed as the "natural habitat" for refugees, and repatriation has hence been constructed as the only way for the refugees to return back to normality (Malkki, 1995). In other words, the naturalization of the state-nation-citizen hierarchy legitimizes the nation-state system, delegitimizing claims to politically meaningful communities outside the nation, restricting access to spaces of appearance for those lacking citizenship. Thirdly the refugees’ fear returning to Sri Lanka due to discrimination on the basis of their Tamil ethnicity. This echoes similar to Soguk’s conclusion that displacement often is a result of a sovereignty impulse (Soguk, 1999, p. 67-74). The Sri Lankan civil war can be interpreted as an attempt to shape the population to one that fits the political narrative of Sri Lanka as a Sinhalese nation-state, through denaturalizing the Tamils’ relationship to the Sri Lankan nation (c.f. Orjuela, 2003).

Both NGO employees and refugees think that there is no possibility that the Indian government will provide citizenship to the Tamil refugees. Many citing the widespread poverty among the Indian population, stating that if India cannot afford to help the current Indian citizens, they cannot afford more citizens to help. Another common explanation is that it would set precedent for India’s other refugee populations to also get citizenship, which is believed to be unsustainable for a state already perceived to be too populated with too many religious and ethnic groups (Appendix 2). These arguments are trapped in state-thinking. The Indian government’s sovereignty impulse is legitimised through their decision-making authority over the feasibility of local integration. Furthermore, the cost argument is an illustration of the naturalization of the state-nation-citizen hierarchy. It is made clear that India should give preference to the "real” and “natural” Indians before they can allow the refugees into the community of the Indian nation. The ethnicity argument is an illustration of legitimizing the sovereignty impulse. The community of the Indian nation is not perceived to be able to handle any more ethnic diversity among its population, and the perception is that the Indian government should

\textsuperscript{21} Agamben and Arendt identifies blood and birth respectively as what naturalizes the relationship between state, nation and citizen (Agamben, 1995, p.137-146) (Agamben, 2003, p.198) (Arendt, 1958, p.256-257). "Home" can be seen as part of a discourse situating the state-nation-citizen hierarchy as something natural due to bloodlines, since "home" is generally viewed as the space where family lives. And family is generally perceived to be blood-relatives.
shape its population accordingly.\(^{22}\)

Resettlement is believed to be "constantly on the refugees’ minds" (Appendix 2, Interview 3C), but also not realistic since the refugees’ humanitarian situation in India is not bad enough for other states to grant them asylum (Appendix 2, Interview 3A). Again the state-thinking and legitimizing of the sovereignty impulse are evident. States are positioned as the decision-makers over inclusion/exclusion in nations. But as previously noted many refugees still migrate illegally in search for asylum and citizenship (Appendix 2). The desire for citizenship reaffirms the refugee as subordinate vis-a-vis the citizen. But it also challenges the sovereign power. The refugees take their situation in their own hands, challenging state monopoly on decision-making power over inclusion/exclusion in the nation. Below I will continue the discussion of the refugees’ desire for citizenship as a double-edged sword.

4.1.2 The Refugee internalizing the State-Nation-Citizen hierarchy

Refugees are also trapped in state-thinking, expressing opinions that positions the Indian citizen as the rightful political subject due to its natural relationship the Indian nation and Indian state and themselves as subordinate the citizen. Soguk notes that refugees are prone to internalizing the state-nation-citizen hierarchy. He argues that they have no choice but to do so, because it restricts their lives to such an extent that it would be foolish of them not to want to get back into it (Soguk, 1999, p. 161-162). This can help us understand why refugees are risking their lives traveling illegally to third countries in pursuit of citizenship. It makes more sense for them to try and find a way to get citizenship than to challenge the entire nation-state system. It is interesting to note that the same explanations the respondents working for NGOs gave me concerning why local integration is not possible are also prevalent among refugees.

The idea that India has too many poor citizens to provide citizenship to refugees is a common idea among the refugees. Many expressed that it is not reasonable for them as refugees from Sri Lanka to expect assistance from a state that cannot even take care of "its own" citizens. In a focus group discussion with five non-camp refugees, they concluded our conversation by making sure I understood that them telling me about the hardships they face as refugees and how they want citizenship should not be interpreted as criticism towards the Indian government. They instead let me know how grateful they are that they had been "welcomed" into India and allowed to stay when there are so many poor and homeless Indian citizens (Appendix 2, Interview 2B). In accordance with this Indians-first reasoning, a 52 year old woman living in one of the refugee camps told me:

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\(^{22}\) It should be noted that this argument is flawed since Tamils make up the majority population of Tamil Nadu.
For the people, those who are living here itself, they are living on the road side … Nothing they have. If the government is providing citizenship for us, also they have to give house, they have to give everything. So where will the government go to give everything? So they don’t have enough facilities to provide for their citizens itself. From where will they get to provide for us? (Appendix 2, Interview 1B).

In these accounts it is expressed that the Indian government is correct to take care of "their own" first. They do not believe it to be fair to get the benefits of Indian citizenship as long as there are "real" Indians suffering.

Just as the "cost argument" the opinion that India cannot handle a larger population and more ethnic groups, was also expressed by the refugees. Again this view is very well illustrated by the same 52 year old woman. She said:

If I come to your home as a guest I cannot take over your family, no? So we can’t expect that much from here. As a guest we came and as a guest we have to go back … If government gives citizenship for us we will make one political party. Like for Tamil alone. Tamil alone will make one political party. We will form many problems and the government will think about everything so they will not provide any citizenship. (Appendix 2, Interview 1B).

The naturalization of the relationship between state, nation and citizen through bloodlines are being expressed here with the use of the family as a metaphor for the nation and the home as a metaphor for the states. Through this metaphor refugees are situated as subordinate subjects (guests) against the rightful political subject of the citizen (family member). The respondent also expresses a belief that the Indian government will, and should, successfully execute their sovereignty impulse by excluding the Tamil refugees from citizenship. According to her description, the inclusion of the Tamil in the Indian nation will make it harder to keep the family together. Hence she clearly defends the sovereignty impulse of the Indian state.

The perceived natural relationship between state, nation and citizen is also used by those born in India, or those with children born in India, to claim Indian citizenship. Here, the natural connection evoked between the nation-state and the citizen is not one of bloodlines, but of birth. Two female camp refugees, age 21 and 20, both born in India believes they should be given Indian citizenship since they are born in India. They express that they are Indians since they are born in the country. They do not think it makes sense that the Indian government does not provide citizenship to those who are Indian. In accordance they are hopeful that they will get citizenship. However, they believe that their parents do not have any opportunity to get Indian citizenship because in opposite to them they are born in Sri Lanka and are hence Sri Lankan (Appendix 2, Interview 2E). Although in this instance used to empower the refugees, it is a clear illustration of how the state-nation-citizen hierarchy, is internalized by the refugees.
4.1.3 The Subversive potential in the Refugees’ desire for Citizenship

The refugees’ desire for citizenship is not only a reproduction of their subordination, it is also highly subversive. It challenges the notion that the state-nation-citizen hierarchy is natural, as well as the state monopoly on decision-making power over inclusion/exclusion in the nation. The citizenship the refugees are looking for is not always situated in a claim to have a natural right to the nation and the state within which they seek citizenship. The refugees’ search for opportunities to get citizenship without claims to have this natural relationship evokes an understanding of citizenship as a fluid identity, socially performed and adaptable to context. Even as something that one is able to create for oneself through illegal migration. Many don’t care which country they would live in if they would get citizenship. In an interview with two female camp refugees, 27 and 43 years old, I was told “They need only citizenship. Where they can be citizens they will go” (Appendix 2, Interview 1G). In an interview with a 25 year old male camp refugee I was told: “Because of citizenship he can’t buy anything here. That’s why he wants to go back. Or to some other area. Whatever if he will get citizenship” (Appendix 2, Interview 1E). That citizenship can be seen as something socially performed rather than natural is illustrated well by a quote by a 44-year old female non-camp refugee:

The identity of refugee, I don’t like that. I’m Sri Lankan. I can any other nationality. But now I say I’m a Sri Lankan. I don’t want to say I’m refugee. I don’t like the word refugee for me or for my children. We are Sri Lankan. But otherwise if they give us the nationality for India, we would stay India. (Appendix 2, Interview 2A).

This quote is very interesting because it illustrates how the refugees’ quest for citizenship is a double-edged sword. On one hand it reaffirms the position of the citizen as the rightful political subject and the refugee as subordinate by positioning refugeehood as something undesirable and citizenship as the cure through which she can make her life whole again. However, being a citizen is described as something performed, and she ensures that she can and would perform as a citizen of any nation if that would mean that she would get the benefits of citizenship. She is Sri Lankan but she can be Indian, or any nationality. This exposes that the state-nation-citizen hierarchy is not the natural relationship it is made out to be (Haddad, 2008, p.49-50; Soguk, 1999, p. 19; 28; 203; Agamben, 1995, p. 137-146). It suggests that politics and being a political subject is something performed. It evokes an understanding of refugeehood and lack of citizenship not as a condition characterized by uprootedness from the natural order of the nation-state system, but as a loss of spaces of appearance in which to perform as a political subject.

In the following section I will discuss if the refugee camp can be an alternative space of appearance for refugees, despite being a space to an extent characterized by the violence and control of a state of exception.
4.2 The Different Spatialities of Refugeehood

The refugees live in two different spatial conditions. Either they live in one of the 112 refugee camps in Tamil Nadu, or they live outside of them. According to government figures around 69000 Tamil refugees live in the camps and around 32000 live outside of the camps. Through enrollment in the camps the camp refugees get free housing, access to 22 welfare schemes provided by the state government of Tamil Nadu and the presence of 5 NGOs working with different programs in the camps (Department of Rehabilitation, 2005).

The status of refugees living outside of the camps are according to respondents subject to a disagreement between the State Government of Tamil Nadu who view them as refugees, and the central government of India who view them as illegal immigrants. As previously mentioned the Indian law does not distinguish between refugees and illegal immigrants (The Hindu, 2012; Ananthachari, 2001; Valatheeswaran and Irudaya Rajan, 2011, p.24; Appendix 2, Summary of consultation workshop). The distinction is made on a political basis. The only benefit non-camp refugees receive is a medical insurance card from the State government of Tamil Nadu. No NGO has any program directed for them, although ADRA was in the middle of the process of starting up such a program (Appendix 2, 2B).

I found that the state of refugeehood is experienced in different ways depending on whether refugees live in a camp or outside of the camps. They are subject to different degrees of control and surveillance, they have different possibilities to form a community, organize politically, to be recognized as political subjects and to hold authorities accountable. I will argue that the camp to some extent resembles a space of exception at the same time as it seems to provide a space of appearance for refugees. While camp refugees seem to experience both these spaces simultaneously, non-camp refugees on the other hand seem to experience neither, avoiding a space of exception but lacking a space of appearance.

4.2.1 The Camp as a Space of Exception: Control and Surveillance

Many respondents living within the camps told that lack of freedom is one of the biggest downsides about living in the camps. The two most common complaints was the constant surveillance from the Q-branch officers\(^\text{23}\) and lack of freedom of movement. Every time they go out from and enter the camp they have to register where they are going and for how long. If they are going out for more than a day they have to apply for permission.

\(^{23}\) The intelligence wing of the Tamil Nadu Police Department.
Still, they have to be present for headcounts, and if a Q-branch officer or a government official wants them to return to the camp they have to return immediately. Respondents described how the control and surveillance seemed focused on two things: Making sure no refugee had any involvement with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and making sure they were not moving outside of the camp without permission (Appendix 2, Interview 1A-1I). The opinion that camp life consisted of surveillance and lack of freedom was echoed by non-camp refugees. Their usual reason for choosing to settle outside when they arrived in India 24 was that they have more freedom than inside the camps (Appendix 2, Interview 2A-2E). A 26 year old male non-camp refugee told me: "The main thing is we can get our freedom outside. If we want to go anywhere … we can go. But in, when staying in camp you have to get permission" (Appendix 2, Interview 2C). This is in accordance with how previous research has described life in the refugee camps in Tamil Nadu (Valatheeesswaran and Rajan, 2011).

The strict control and surveillance focused on restricting the refugees’ freedom of movement, situating them within the confinement of the camp, suggests that the camp does work as the spatial institution of the state of exception. The number one focus of the authorities in the camp seemed to be to spatially separate the refugee from the normal Indian society. As a result, refugeehood materializes without it loosing its status as an exception and becoming the norm (Agamben, 1995, p.177-190). By being excluded from the Indian nation the camp refugees lack citizenship and the political rights citizenship entail. But they are being included in the Indian state as an exception to the norm, as someone allowed to live in the territory of the Indian state despite not being a citizen. At least as long as they are situated in the camps, the spatial institution of the exception. The non-camp refugees on the other hand live in a spatial condition where their refugeehood has not materialized as an exception. They are not confined to the boundaries of the camps, as illustrated by them suffering from less control and surveillance. They live in the space of the normal Indian society, among the normal Indian citizens. There are less control mechanisms (surveillance, restrictions of movement etc) keeping them from merging from an exception into the normal. This could provide insight to why the central Indian government do not want to give them refugee status, but classify them as illegal immigrants. They cannot be included in the political system, not even through their exclusion (as exceptions). Because without the spatial institution of the state of exception (the camp) separating the exceptions from the bios, the indistinction of the exception might challenge the notion of the zoē - bios divide and hence question the entire basis of

24 Many that had chosen to stay outside the camps, now wanted to move into the camps, but found it hard to be allowed enrollment in the camps (Appendix 2, Field notes and interview transcriptions). That the Department of Rehabilitation denies non-camp refugees enrollment in the camps seem ironic and paradoxical considering that they have explicitly expressed that they want refugees to settle in the camps instead of outside (Department of Rehabilitation, 2005). The two main reasons for wanting to move into the camps were that the humanitarian situation had improved since the five NGOs got access to the camps in 2005, and that the refugees had not counted on their stay in India being so long and that they no longer had financial resources to live outside of the camps without access to any benefits (Appendix 2, Field notes and interview transcriptions).
the power of the sovereign. The non-camp refugees therefore need to be completely excluded.

The Q-branch officers in the camps did not seem hesitant to use intimidation techniques such as threats, yelling and nightly interrogations in order to assert their power over the refugees. Two women, 36 and 37 years old, told me that the Q-branch police in the camp is not there for their protection, but only to surveil them. They said: "They are not there for security purposes, only for raising questions purposes". They told me about two cases, one of sexual abuse and one of arson, which they had reported to the Q-branch police without them taking it up to investigation:

If they are giving complaints the police will not at all take it up … They will say "You are only refugees. Go go go … You are refugees. Bloody stupid. Why are you coming here? Go and be in your home. Whatever benefits the government is giving to you just take it and please be in your home. Why are you coming here for problem?" … If someone murder someone it means no one will come and ask the reason … Police are not taking any decision on them. Police are not also at all caring about them and giving them security. (Appendix 2, Interview 1H).

This could be interpreted as the refugees being Bare Life, depoliticized and dehumanized, controlled and administered in any way deemed necessary (police not for protection, only for controlling). With even the possibility to kill it without any consequences ("If someone murder someone it means no one will come and ask the reason") (Agamben, 1995, p. 95; 129-135). And there are many features of the lives of camp refugees (the control and surveillance) that are similar to how Agamben describes bare life and life in a state of exception. But I believe this would be an oversimplification. These accounts do not only tell a story of government authorities controlling and surveilling them while showing neglect for their lives. It also tells a story of conditions in which the refugees can resist bare life. I want to go back to the importance Arendt gives to beginnings and her description of politics as relational (Arendt, 1958, p. 185-247). Since the refugees have authorities available that they can identify as responsible for their situation and that they are able to report crimes to, they do have an opportunity to begin a process. And although their reports might not be handled respectfully or in a manner of rule of law, there is a sense among the refugees that they can hold the authorities accountable. That it is in their rightful place to complain and protest over the police taking bribes and not caring about them, but only about surveilling them.

That the camp refugees are not completely devoid of political potential, dehumanized and killable, can be illustrated of how some camp refugees position their protection from authorities favorably vis-a-vis the protection of non-camp refugees. For example I was told in an interview with two female camp refugees, 65 and 19 years old, that the reason they did not want to live outside the camps was that if they were sexually abused or the victim of any other crime as non-camp refugees, the police would tell them: "You are not an Indian, and you are not a Sri Lankan. You are not registered under the refugee act. So we are not the responsible persons for what you are telling, so we will not take any action" (Appendix 2, Interview 1C). It should also be noted that I was also told about how
Camp refugees had reported crimes (such as child abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse) where the Q-branch had investigated and taken the accusations seriously. For example, one respondent told me she and other community members had reported a man for child abuse and after the following investigation his registration was cut and he was sent to another camp (Appendix 2, Interview 1B-1C). The camps hence seem to be a complex space. With the control, surveillance and lack of respect for life that is characteristic for the state of exception. But at the same time with room for resistance towards the bare life that life in this space of exception threatens to put them in. This suggests that the camp could also be a space of appearance. The non-camp refugee seems to be a more problematic figure for the Indian government, being labelled as illegal immigrants instead of refugees, completely excluding them from the political order rather than including them as exceptions. Non-camp refugees avoid the control and surveillance of the camps. But lack of protection and concern for their lives still seem to be as bad as or even worse than for camp refugees.

4.2.2 The Camp as a Space of Appearance: Capacity for Action

In the camps there are official political structures. Every camp has a camp committee which holds regular meetings discussing the needs of the refugees and the problems in the camp. Every camp committee is lead by a camp leader who in most cases has been democratically elected by the refugees during a camp committee meeting (Appendix 2, Interviews 1A-1I). Overall those working with NGOs in the camp seemed to view the camp leader as a communicator at best, passing information from government officials to refugees. It was even pointed out that the camp leader was forbidden to conduct what the government called ”rights-based activities” (Appendix 2, Interviews 3A-3B; 3E-3F). Refugees generally viewed the camp leader more like a political representative, someone that could speak for them in contact with government authorities. Someone that had a position which forced the officials to hear them out, because the camp leader did not speak as an individual, but for the community (Appendix 2, Interviews 1A-1I). Life for camp refugees hence meets two of Arendt’s prerequisites for living a political life: Community and organization (Arendt, 1958). Many camp refugees described the other refugees like family or relatives. Two female camp refugees, 36 and 37 years old, told me: ”The neighborhood families are behaving like relations, like blood relations … Now when we are here we want each others help. We are doing good things for each other” (Appendix 2, Interviews 1H).

The descriptions of the camp communities do not sound like communities situated in the state-nation-citizen hierarchy where the refugees are nurturing nationalism, which is the conclusions in much previous research (c.f. Halabi, 2004; Fincham, 2012; Feldman, 2014; Wilson 2014). Rather it seems to be a space which can be turned into a new form of non-territorial political space based on new non-nationalist communities (Olivius, 2014, p. 36-38). It seems to be a community derived from the refugees recognizing that, sharing the same cohabitative structure of the camp, their codependence on each other is large. Community in the refugee camps seems to be ”an inevitable result of the
unavoidable sociality of being” (Bulley, 2014). The community allows the camp refugees to speak because it situates them in a position where they can discuss with each other how life should be organized. They have a community within which, and from the point of departure of which, they can talk politics. The refugee camp seems to be a space of appearance for refugees. A space where they can appear in front of each other as political beings. A space where they can act in relation to others in order to create meaning (Arendt, 1958). But the question remains whether their speech is heard by others than themselves (Maggio, 2007). Arendt suggests that organization creates power (Arendt, 1958). It seems to be reaffirmed by the many respondents telling me how the Department of Rehabilitation was more likely to listen if they made a demand that served the whole community (e.g. water facilities, sanitation facilities etc) and they made the demand as a community, than if they asked for something that concerned them individually (e.g. renovate the house, reclaim lost registrations etc) and made the demand as individuals. A 43 year old female camp refugee told me: “The word of the single person will not be accepted there” (Appendix 2, Interview 1G).

The maybe most illustrative example of how camp refugees organize as a community to gain influence was when a 43 year old female camp refugee told me about how the refugees successfully had gone on a hunger strike in the beginning of the 1990s to protest the harsh conditions at the time25. She said that the refugees came together and decided that ”if we don’t eat they will realize we need something more than this” (Appendix 2, Interview 1G). It should be noted here that Agamben probably would take this as confirmation that his thesis is correct, rather than a challenge to the notion that refugees are reduced to bare life. It could be argued that actions such as a hunger strike (or other bodily protests) is the ultimate sign of bare life. The political subject has become bare life to the extent that there is no potential for action outside of (the threat of) suicide. Both Bailey (2009), Ek (2006) and Owens (2009) have however shown that such acts of resistance by refugees are not made out of a desperate state in which the refugee has no possibilities of agency outside of killing their biological life. Where they have no alternatives other than the extremes of passivity and suicide. Rather such acts are deliberate, organized and highly instrumental actions (c.f. Bailey, 2009; Ek, 2006; Owens, 2009). From an Arendtian understanding of politics as relational actions, it is important to note how the refugees had a defined target for the hunger strike. It was made so “they will realize we need something more (emphasis added)” (Appendix 2, Interview 1G).

On the contrary to camp refugees, non-camp refugees expressed in interviews that there exists no community for non-camp refugees. They are not organized in any way. They live geographically scattered and many do not know a lot of other non-camp refugees (Appendix 2, Interviews 2A-2E). They cannot, as camp refugees do, form a community on the basis of proximity. It does not grow out of ”the unavoidable sociality

25 They were accommodated in a prison, their freedom of movement was even more restricted than nowadays and they were not allowed to cook for themselves but could only eat what they were given.
of being” (Bulley, 2014), because they simply are too scattered. Most of them state that they like to keep to themselves and not draw too much attention to themselves. They do not think that the Indian government would appreciate if they organized themselves. A 44 year old female non-camp refugee told me: "It is impossible because the police problem ... They don’t want us together with others. So it would make a problem” (Appendix 2, Interview 2A). Another respondent, a 26 year old male non-camp refugee told me: "We are not supposed to do that. We should not create any organizations. Law and order problems” (Appendix 2, Interview 2C). However, most of the respondents seemed positive to the idea of being organized and to have some sort of group that could represent them in public debates, talks with government officials etc. A few believed it would only cause them trouble (for example previously mentioned 44-year old woman), but most of the respondents thought this could be a way which they could make their voices heard. The same 26-year old that told me it was illegal for them to be organized said: "the main thing is there should be an organization to help us. No, not to help us! To lead us! For political issues. That would be nice” (Appendix 2, Interview 2C). In the focus group discussion I was told that through ADRA starting up their non-camp refugee program, some non-camp refugees had started to get in touch with each other. They further told me that they had talked about forming an interest group, and it was their hope that this would be done within a year (Appendix 2, Interview 2B).

Without being part of any community it seems like the non-camp refugees suffer from a lack of visibility. The individual bodies of the non-camp refugees are not a presence that demand attention in the way the organized, recognized, spatially concentrated camp refugees are. Judith Butler has noted how presentations of vulnerable bodies can serve as the basis for politics respecting our shared corporeal vulnerability (Butler, 2009). The visible vulnerability of the camp refugees seems to evoke humanitarian politics that the non-camp refugees are excluded from (22 government welfare schemes and five NGOs working in the camps).

In a consultation workshop organized by ADRA in order to discuss the program for non-camp refugees they intended to start up, ADRA's choice to be the first and only NGO to work with non-camp refugees was motivated by the observation that the needs of non-camp refugees had been neglected. As an example UNHCR does not assist non-camp refugees within their voluntary repatriation program. The non-camp refugees present at the workshop expressed that one of their main issues was that there were no welfare schemes available for them. The Department of Rehabilitation provide the camp refugees with information on what services and schemes they have the right to access and how they can access them, but nobody provide them with any information (Appendix 2, Consultation workshop on the needs of non-camp refugees).

A very common theme in interviews with non-camp refugees is how they believe that there is a big misunderstanding regarding the wealth of non-camp refugees. Non-camp refugees deny that they live outside of the camps because they are rich and have relatives in Western countries providing for them (Appendix 2, Interviews 2A-2B; 2E). In the focus group discussion with five non-camp refugees one man stated that the common perception about non-camp refugees is that 100% of them are rich. He estimates it might be true for around 35%, but that the rest of them are very poor (worse off than camp
refugees).(Appendix 2, Interview 2B). Due to the non-camp refugees’ lack of visibility, people cannot see that the wealthy non-camp refugee is a myth. In an interview with a female respondent working with one of the NGOs present in the camps she said it was her perception that non-camp refugees generally had more resources than camp refugees and that they themselves had made the assessment that they did not need benefits when choosing to settle outside the camps (Appendix 2, Interview 3C).

While camp refugees have easily identifiable authorities present in the camps who are actually there for them. And who have a hard time ignoring the requests of a whole community. The authorities outside of the camps, where the non-camp refugees live, are not for them. They are for the Indian citizens. And the authorities have no problems ignoring the individual non-camp refugee. In the workshop organized by ADRA, the present non-camp refugees told that when they went to the Department of Rehabilitation they were told that they are only concerned with camp refugees. Usually they were referred to the police who told them that they were not the responsibility of the police either, usually advising them to try and find a job in the non-formal sector (Appendix 2, Consultation workshop about the needs of non-camp refugees). Note that the advice of the authorities is for them to try and make do outside of the law, in the black market economy. They are not included in any way in any part of the Indian society. The problem of having no department, institution or even NGO that they can contact in order to get assistance or information was continuously expressed as one of their main issues. A 26-year old male non-camp refugee described meeting with government officials like this: “They want to avoid us … They do not give proper answers to us. They will not respond us!” (Appendix 2, Interview 2C).

A common occurrence in interviews with non-camp refugees was that they were not only searching for citizenship. They were searching for any identity that would give them recognition. A 44 year old female non-camp refugee said: "We don’t have identity card, or any … In camp they give refugee card and this is ok for school and any job. But we don’t have … We are refugee. We are refugee only. But we have no identity” (Appendix 2, Interview 2A).

What is illustrated in this quote could be seen as the observation previously made by many other that refugeehood is sometimes a preferable status due to the protection tied to it (remember that the non-camp refugees are not recognized as refugees by the central government of India) (c.f. Martin, 2014; Aleinikoff and Poellot, 2014; Feldman, 2014; Haddad, 2008). However this quote is not about protection. It is about identity. It is about what Arendt recognizes as the tragedy of the refugee. Not loss of their freedom or threat for their lives but a loss of a sense of belonging (Arendt, 2003, p. 232-233). It is somewhat ironic that it is the non-camp refugees, not fully recognized as refugees, that echoes Arendt’s description of refugeehood, and not the camp refugees whose refugeehood is fully recognized. But Arendt’s description of the refugee is a description of zoë, a figure completely excluded from the political order. When refugeehood materializes for camp refugees in the spatial institution of the camp, they are included in the political order as an exception. Included in the Indian state, even though excluded from the Indian nation. This facilitates control and surveillance of the camp refugees, but it also renders them visible to each other as well as to authorities and NGOs (who also
become visible for the refugees). Which means they can create a community (they can speak) and they can make requests and demands to authorities (they can be heard). The camp is hence not only a space of exception, but also a space of appearance.

The non-camp refugees on the other hand lack visibility because their refugeehood never materializes. They are not being included, not even as exceptions. As complete exclusions they lack everything. They lack community (they cannot speak), responsible authorities (they cannot be heard). However their lack of visibility allows them to avoid the control and surveillance that camp refugees are under. In other words, they have their freedom. But they cannot use it to make themselves heard because they have no space of appearance. Perhaps ADRAs new program on non-camp refugees could become one, with what could be seen as an emerging non-camp refugee community appearing from it (remember how the focus group had met through ADRAs program and how they had plans to form an interest group).

4.2.3 Is Bare Life an impossibility?

The camp can be seen as a space of exception (a territory in a nation-state where non-citizens live) in which refugeehood as a state of exception (people living in a nation-state despite lacking citizenship) can materialize. And it does seem to fulfill its purpose of separating the exception from the norm (the Indian society) in a physical sense. But it does not seem to succeed in creating the controllable subjects of bare life. In opposite to what Agamben cites as the purpose of the state of exception, the refugees do not become depoliticized and dehumanized by this practice. They are able to form and organize as a community. They are able to (at least partially) demand accountability from authorities and NGOs. And the authorities and NGOs (at least partially) recognize them as political subjects. How come that in a space that is supposed (according to Agamben) to be the materialization of a state that creates bare life, refugees are actually being seen, heard and recognized? One could possibly understand it by continuing Agamben’s reasoning when he divides between the fictional state of exception and the factual, and the argument he makes that the factual state of exception can never become the norm, because as the norm it is simply no longer an exception. No matter how repressive, it still becomes formalized, with rules and boundaries for the exercise of power, in accordance to which the subjects of the exercise of power can hold the sovereign accountable. They become political subjects and not bare life. Maybe the state of exception does not only have a hard time surviving normalization, maybe it also has difficulties surviving materialization. When something materializes it is made visible. When the state of exception spatially materializes, an authority over the space is made visible (in this case Indian government authorities), as well as the population within this space (in this case the refugee population). Through the visibility of the population it has the opportunity to organize as a community and through the visibility of the authority the community knows who to hold accountable for the way they are governed. Rather than being a depoliticized and
dehumanizing space where bare life can be administered, it seems that camp spaces can provide context for new political communities.

The state of refugeehood does not materialize for the non-camp refugee and the non-camp refugee population is rendered invisible. This has the effect that they cannot identify themselves, build a community and speak up through the power of the organization. Authorities can refuse to hear the non-camp refugee and avoid taking on responsibility for them, because the community is not visibly demanding attention. The lack of visibility renders NGOs to conclude that they do not need to assist non-camp refugees, because they simply do not see their humanitarian situation. Maybe Judith Butler says something very important when she writes that the presentation of vulnerable bodies reminds us of our shared vulnerability (Butler, 2009). Maybe bare life takes on a different form when the plights of people becomes visible, demanding politics respectful to our shared corporeal vulnerability.

This should not be interpreted as non-camp refugees living in a more pure form of the state of exception and as more pure forms of bare life because their refugeehood has not materialized. To the contrary the non-materialization of the state of exception means that they cannot be recognized as exceptions. The state of exception is a power practice and if it does not materialize it will not be practiced. The non-camp refugees cannot be included through their exclusion, because if the state of exception does not materialize there is no control mechanism that separates the exception from the norm (like the camp and its control and surveillance). They therefore needs to be fully excluded, positioning them as zoë rather than bare life. This does have a depoliticizing and dehumanizing effect, but their invisibility also renders them hard to control.

Hence the construction of bare life seems doomed to fail. If a state of exception materializes to facilitate the administration of bare life, the materialization becomes a potential space of appearance through the visibility it creates. Providing people the opportunity to resist their status as bare life. But if the space of exception does not materialize neither does the control mechanisms to administer bare life.
5 Conclusion

In this thesis I have explored the state of refugeehood by analyzing interviews made with Tamil refugees from the civil war in Sri Lanka, living in Tamil Nadu, India. I have explored what constitutes refugeehood, how it is created, how it affects refugees and how the effects it has on refugees differ based on the spatial organization of refugees. Simultaneously I have discussed the role of the refugee figure in the political order of the nation-state system.

The answers of the respondents largely reaffirm the notion that the refugee figure is created as the subordinate other vis-a-vis the citizen who through this is (re)articulated as the rightful political subject. The refugees are reproducing their subordination by displaying a strong desire for citizenship, which is perceived as the cure to their condition. This desire for citizenship takes its most extreme form in refugees undertaking life-threatening journeys, illegally migrating to especially Australia, in search for citizenship.

Both refugees and NGO employees are trapped in state-thinking. They (re)articulate the state-nation-citizen hierarchy as a natural relationship. Establishing refugeehood as lacking through the loss of a natural relationship to a nation and a state. This is done for example through reasonings regarding how the Indian nation-state has a responsibility towards the "real" Indians before they can include the refugees in the Indian nation. The perceived natural relationship of the state-nation-citizen hierarchy legitimates the sovereignty impulse, positioning decision-making authority over inclusion/exclusion in the nation solely in the hands of the state. This is illustrated by how the perceived durable solutions is trapped in state-thinking, all of them preserve the state monopoly over decision-making powers over inclusion/exclusion in the nation. Hence preserving the right of the state to execute its sovereignty impulse.

But the refugees’ previously noted desire for citizenship, cannot only be interpreted as a (re)articulation of the citizen as the rightful political subject and the refugee as the subordinate other. It can also be interpreted as a challenge to the notion that the relationship between the nation, the state and the citizen is not as natural as it seems to be. The citizenship that many refugees search for are not tied to the community of a specific nation tied the specific territory of a state which they are ”naturally” connected to through birth or bloodlines. The refugees simply want to have citizenship in one nation and in one territory, which one is secondary. It also challenges the state monopoly on decision-making authority over inclusion/exclusion in a nation. With the refugees taking matters in their own hands, illegally migrating to another nation-state with the objective to gain inclusion in that nation, not taking into consideration any sovereignty impulse of that state.

The form taken by the sovereignty impulse that refugees are subject to seems to
depend on the spatial conditions the refugees live in. Non-camp refugees seem to be the subject of completely exclusionary practices. Camp refugees seem to be subject of a sovereignty impulse more similar to a state of exception, in which their exclusion gets institutionalized and included in the political order as an exception. It is hence hard to say anything conclusive of the sovereign in the political order of the nation-state system and the role the refugee figure plays in it. Non-camps refugees seem to be subject for exclusionary practices suggesting a Hobbesian creature of representation trying to shape its bios into one it can represent. A bios that fits its political narrative. The camp refugees on the other hand seem to be subject to practices aimed at forming them into controllable subjects, rather than shaping the bios. Suggesting a sovereign that is more of a creator of bare life then a creature of representation. I have offered a potential explanation by suggesting that it may be possible that the state wishes to control the refugee. But that this might not be possible if the refugee is in a spatial condition that does not allow for control, like for example the geographically scattered non-camp-refugee whose refugeehood has not materialized. The state then retorts to a sovereignty impulse based on exclusion. Because without the control mechanism of the camp that physically separates the refugee from the citizen, it cannot afford the indistinction between zoē and bios that an inclusion through exclusion causes.

What can be said with more certainty is that the different spatial conditions have a big impact on how refugeehood manifests itself for refugees. Camp refugees are subject to a lot of control and surveillance which non-camp refugees do not have to suffer. But camps also seem to provide a space of appearance for refugees. A space where they can appear in front of each other, and the authorities in the camps as political subject. The refugee community in the camp is active; they are organized; they consider themselves rightfully able to hold both government authorities and NGOs (at least partially) accountable for their involvement in the camps; they consider themselves (at least partially) able to influence future developments in the camps; and there seems to be an (at least partial) recognition of accountability and responsibility on the part of government officials and NGOs. Non-camp refugees do not seem to have such a space of appearance. They cannot speak and there is nobody to listen to them. No NGO is working with them and almost no government benefits are available to them. No authorities want to take responsibility for them, neither in humanitarian matters or in matters of the law. The non-camp refugees seem to echo Arendt’s description of the refugee as life as zoē. Its tragedy not laying in oppression or lack of freedom, but that nobody has any interest in oppressing them. However, there were some indications that ADRAs recently started non-camp refugee program could potentially open up a space of appearance for non-camp refugees.

The camp refugees’ capacities to appear as political subjects instead of being reduced to bare life, despite the camps being similar to how Agamben describes a space of exception, challenges the notion of the state of exception as an effective power practice. The entire possibility of creating bare life is challenged. If the state of exception is to be a power practice it is imperative for it to materialize because otherwise the control mechanisms turning people to bare life do not materialize either. But if it does materialize the people in it become visible for each other and can form and organize in a community which can also hold the now visible authorities accountable. It also provides an
understanding of political life not hinging on a sovereign power, regardless of whether it is a creature of representation or a creator of bare life. But rather as something that can be performed in any relational space of common appearance, not just through inclusion in a nation.

I want to conclude this thesis with some suggestions for further research continuing on the themes of this thesis. First of all there is a possibility of continued research in the same refugee population for further empirical application of Arendt’s theories, by studying whether or not ADRAs recently started program for non-camp refugees can provide a space of appearance. One can also imagine the theoretical framework of this thesis being used on other refugee populations to further increase understanding of the refugee’s role in the nation-state system. Following a conversation with a Sri Lankan so-called plantation Tamil, who told about apartheid- and slave-like conditions for plantation Tamils in Sri Lanka, I would like to call for more research to build both knowledge and attention of the situation for the plantation Tamils in Sri Lanka.
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7 Appendix 1

7.1 Interview schedule for camp refugees

Introduction/Background:
- Age?
- Family/Marital status?
- Employment?
- Religion?
- When did you leave Sri Lanka/arrived in Tamil Nadu?
- How long have you lived in this camp? Have you lived in another camp before? Have you previously lived outside the camps?
- Why did you choose to settle in a camp instead of outside?

Political Agency:
- How would you describe life in the camp?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to improve life in the camp?
- Who can you go to with your suggestions?
- Have you ever made any suggestions on how to improve the situation for camp refugees? Why/why not? If so, how was your suggestion received?
- Are you informed about changes in the camp beforehand? If so, who informs you?
- Are you asked of your opinions before changes in the camp are being made? If so, who asks you?
- Are you organized in any way inside the camp? Do you have a representative(s)? If yes, what is the role of the representative, how was the representative chosen/created and what do you think about this system?
- How would you describe your role within the camp?
- What are your hopes for the future?
- What should happen for you to be able to fulfill your hopes for the future.
- What interest do you feel there is about the refugee situation?
- What interest do you feel like there is to hear your thoughts and opinions about the refugee situation?
- Do you feel there are any ways in which you can you make your interests and opinions heard in the public discussion about the refugee situation? If so, how?
Community:
- How much contact do you have with the other refugees in the camp? How would you describe your relationship with them?
- How much contact do you have with refugees outside the camp? How would you describe your relationship with them?
- How much contact do you have with Indian citizens. How would you describe your relationship with them?
- Do you have any contact with refugees that have resettled in Sri Lanka or a third country? How would you describe your relationship with them?
- What are your sources for news?
- Are you interested in Sri Lankan politics and the recent events in Sri Lanka?
- Are you interested in Indian politics and the recent events in India?

7.2 Interview schedule for non-camp refugees

Introduction/Background:
- Age?
- Family/Marital status?
- Employment?
- Religion?
- When did you leave Sri Lanka/arrived in Tamil Nadu
- Have you previously lived in a camp?
- Why did you choose to settle in a camp instead of outside?

Political Agency:
- How would you describe life as a non-camp refugee?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the situation for non-camp refugees?
- Who can you go to with your suggestions?
- Have you ever made any suggestions on how to improve your situation? Why/why not? If so, how was your suggestion received?
- Are the non-camp refugees organized in any way? Do you have a representative(s)? If yes, what is the role of the representative, how was it chosen/created, and how do you feel this system is working?
- What are your hopes for the future?
- What should happen for you to be able to fulfill your hopes for the future?
- What interest do you feel there is about the refugee situation?
- What interest do you feel that there is to listen to your interests and opinions about the refugee situation?
- Do you feel that there are any ways you can make your interests and opinions heard in a public discussion about the refugee situation? If so, how?
Community:
- How much contact do you have with refugees inside the camps? How would you describe your relationship with them?
- How much contact do you have with other refugees outside the camp? How would you describe your relationship with them?
- How much contact do you have with Indian citizens. How would you describe your relationship with them?
- Do you have any contact with refugees that have resettled in Sri Lanka or a third country? How would you describe your relationship with them?
- What are your sources for news?
- Are you interested in Sri Lankan politics and the recent events in Sri Lanka?
- Are you interested in Indian politics and the recent events in India?

7.3 Interview Schedule for employees of Humanitarian Organization

Introduction/Background:
- Age?
- Family/Marital status?
- Religion?
- How long have you worked with the Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu?
- Have you worked with anything else before, and what?
- Why did you choose this profession?

Political Agency:
- How would you describe the situation in the refugee camps? What would you say are the main challenges facing the refugees in the camps?
- How would you describe the situation for non-camp refugees? What would you say are the main challenges facing non-camp refugees?
- How have the refugee camps developed during the years?
- How do you do to identify what the main challenges are? Short-term and long term?
- What are you and your organization doing to deal with the challenges for refugees (camp- and non-camp)? Short-term and long-term?
- How do you do to identify the best ways to face these challenges?
- Are the refugees organized? Do they have any representation?
- How often do you meet with/talk with the refugees and their representations?
- How much influence do the refugees have over what types of programs you are running within the camps and how you are running them?
- How much is the refugee situation discussed in Sri Lankan/Indian politics? In what way is it discussed?
- What is your perception of the relationships between the refugees in the camps? How would you describe the refugee community?
- How much contact do refugees have with people outside of the camps?
- Would you say that the relationship between a camp resident and an outsider generally differs from a relationship between two camp residents? If that’s the case, how?
- How is the relationship between you and the refugee community?
- How informed are refugees about Sri Lankan politics and recent events in Sri Lanka?
- How informed are refugees about Indian politics and recent events in India?
8 Appendix 2

8.1 Interviews with camp refugees

**Interview 1A (Transcription): Woman, 33 years old, camp refugee**

Benjamin: Ok, so let’s start then. How old are you?
Translator: *Speaks tamil* Respondent: *Speaks tamil*
T: 33
B: 33 years old, ok. And are you married?
T: *Speaks tamil*
R: Mm
B: Ok, any children?
T: *Speaks tamil*
R: Three children
B: Three children, ok. And do you have a job
T: *Speaks tamil*
R: (NGO name)
B: And what is your religion?
T: *Speaks tamil*
R: Hindu
B: Hindu. And when did you come here to India?
R: 90
B: 1990
R: Ya
B: And eehm.... Have you always lived in the camps or have you lived outside as well?
T: *Speaks tamil*
R: *Speaks tamil*
T: What she is telling means she used to stay outside also
B: Ok. What would you say is the difference between staying outside and staying inside the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil*
R: *Speaks tamil*
T: *Speaks tamil*
R: *Speaks tamil*
T: What she is telling means the government makes us stay in a particular place for us. But sometimes we use to go out but we are asked to come back to that same place only. Then the government will bring some benefits to us. That is why we are coming back to the same place.
B: Aha ok. So the difference is the benefits? You get benefits in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They get some offer inside the camps
B: Offer?
T: Benefits, benefits benefits
B: Benefits ok. For how long did you live outside?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Oh. What she is telling is not her life she lived outside. But before she was telling we have freedom to go out anywhere.
B: Ah ok
T: They can go out anywhere. But not for living. She used to go for school, college....
B: Aha ok. Eehm ok. Eehm... So how would you describe life in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: So what she is telling means that she is feeling so happy. Compared with previous days. Previously and all how the life inside the camp means usually regularly when they go out they used to sign and when they get inside the camp they have to sign. Means registration was maintained regularly by the Q-branch. Every week there would be a headcount. They would come and check regularly. During the cash dole and all, they will not announce anything, but they will come before that and they will do the headcount.
But this and all was a previous life, so she is telling, but now she is telling means that now they don’t have that much conditions inside the camp. Now they are feeling happy because they are living like, with the surroundings and all, it means. So there is no.... conditions are not bad compared to previously. Now there are feeling free. Now nobody is questioning them where are you going, when are you going, when will you come back? So now she is feeling like now she is not troubled and she is feeling like free
B: Ah ok. So if you go out you don’t need to register?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Previously they used to go straight to that government official. Now they have this procedure. First they go to the police officials who is always there for checking. To him they have to take permission. They will go and ask him and he will give some "No objection - certificate”. If he provides that means they have to take that "No Objection-certificate” towards the collector’s office, the administrative office and from there they
will provide the permission.
B: Ok... Eehm... Is it easy to get permission?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: We need to inform early. Before two days. But they will give. No issue
B: Ok. Eehm... And you said you were able to go to school and college. What did you study?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Computer applications she finished and she did her higher grading in that
B: Higher grading? College then?
T: No school.
B: Ok so...
T: Here we are telling it as school
B: Ok... So eehm... Is it possible for you to get a job in that sector?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Where do you mean she will get a job. Here or in Sri Lanka? That she is asking
B: I meant here.
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, she will get. Because it is only lower qualification, no? So she has hope that she will get job
B: Ok. And how about in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: There also she will get
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling is in Sri Lanka and all she will get a good job like bill collecting. Because they are using computers. They may have some jobs in shops, no? She can do that
B: Mm ok. In camp, have you ever made any suggestions on how to improve the conditions in the camps?
T: Sorry?
B: Have you ever made any suggestions on how to improve conditions in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling is with the help of NGOs I did many steps towards development for children inside the camp.
B: Ok, can you give any examples?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Last six years she has been working with (NGO name) it seems. In these six years what she is doing means, through livelihood programs, small income generations programs, she is doing means many of them got sheep. Like the people those who are widower, widows, single, orphans all these people they made so they got som goat,
sheep, goats. Sheep, sheep you know?
B: Yes, sheep
T: Yes, they provide that through (NGO name) and she support that program. And she give a list for who are in need. Real need. Those who are in need. She identified them at the field level and she gave a list.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: So as of four years she is working with child development. So many of them, malnourished children get support through the (NGO name) program. Also education, those who are not, do not have availability of paying fees and all. For those she gets assistance from (NGO name). Also she give medical help, referrals. She has referred so many children it seems.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Now recently water *indistinguishable
B: Sorry?
T: Now recently water purification plant is being implemented in their camps. So through that program also they are helping others
B: And.. And eehm. How about... Do you have a system with a camp leader and camp committee?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They have camp leader and camp committee and self-help groups
B: Ok. Can you tell me a little about how this is working? How it is organized?
T: Sorry
B: Can you tell me these things work?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they are getting any benefits from government it means it will come across cap committee advice. Through them only they will get the benefits
R: *Speaks tamil
T: So if there is any problem inside the camp. Any camp person or any problem with outside person also, the camp committee will come forward to help them. So camp committee is helping them with police inquires and all, government officials, with the legal things they will do
B: Ok... Do you feel that this system is working well?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Sometimes the committee will be very useful for them, sometimes they will not be
B: Ok. Do you have an example of when it has been useful?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: While getting cash dole the committee will be very useful for them. Telling when the cash dole will be provided. When providing rations, the camp committee will confirm earlier and it will be very useful for them to make the arrangements. During taking registration, headcounts, everything the camp committee will confirm them early. Because the government will only inform the camp committee.
B: Ok... Do you have examples of when the committee is not useful?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling is always the camp committee leader will not take responsibility. If there is any problem arising inside in the community. If inside they are facing any problem with one family towards another. If they make any complaint, the camp leader will not listen and he will go and do his own work. So he will not participate in that and he will not make the committee arrangements to do what needs for that family also. So he is not socialistic, he is always selfish so she is telling.
B: Aha ok
T: Like selfish in areas.
B: Ok. And how do you feel that the camp leader and camp committee is representing you? Are they representing the community in a good way?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: It’s good. With the committee and the people, that relationship is good. Not with the camp leader
B: Not with the leader, ok. But I was wondering if they feel the committee and the leader was representing them in their contact with the government... In their contact with government officials, if they are representing the community? Do you understand?
T: No... Like how the camp committee is representing the government?
B: No. The other way around. In the contact with the government. Are they representing the people?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Sometimes. Sometimes she is telling. Sometimes the camp committee and the camp leader will be very useful for them. But sometimes if the leader and the committee are busy with their own work they will not concentrate on them
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He use to do good things also. But at the same time he is doing irresponsible things
B: Ok. Such as? What are the irresponsible things?
T: Not concentrating on the people or community. If they have any inquiries he will not recommend it to the government officials
B: Ok... So what is your hopes for the future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: When she was 7 years old she came here. As a child. So now she has children that are 7 years old. In Sri Lanka they have many lands.
B: You have land there?
T: Ya. So what she wish is that she has to go back to Sri Lanka while the children like to build a new home. So she like to build a new home in Sri Lanka and she wants to live with her children in Sri Lanka.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She wants to educate her children very well
B: Ok. In Sri Lanka?
T: Yes
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No no no. She wants to educate her children here. After completion of their education she wants to go back to Sri Lanka because all her relations are there in Sri Lanka so she wants to live a happy life with them in Sri Lanka.
B: Ok. Is your land available for you if you go back to Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Her aunt and uncle is there and they are taking care of her land it seems.
B: Are you talking a lot with your relatives?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Mm
B: Yes? And what are they telling you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Many times they use to say the living cost is very high. Also because the unavailability of rain there is no harvest also so we also, so please don’t come here until your children are educated. Educational status will complete. After completing their educational status you please come. So they will give some advice to her.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: And they say until the children got settlement in their life don’t think of going here. They told her that so she is not thinking to go there now.
B: No ok. Eehm... Do you feel like there is a big interest in India about the Sri Lankan refugee situation and Sri Lankan refugees?
T: Sorry?
B: If there is big interest in Indian society about Sri Lankan refugees?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Always she use to inquire about Sri Lanka, the status in Sri Lanka, fem those who are coming from Sri Lanka. She use to watch Indian news regularly and she use to read newspapers regularly.
B: Ok ok... But what about your situation here in India? The Sri Lankan refugee situation here in India. Are there any news about that? Any discussions about that?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She is living a very happy life here because she is... she provides the support for whatever her children needs. So she is feeling staying here is a very happy life.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: When she came here when she was 7 years old that time her parents very struggled her few things she was asking. Few tings for school also. Her parents use to struggle to buy that. But now we have a very good situation here. So whatever her children expects from her now she use to provide that.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Whatever the needs the children is asking for now, I am fulfilling it.
B: Ok... Eehm... Do you... What is the.... How is the relationship like between the people in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: sometimes a few of them use to be good with others. But many of them are having some problems with each other
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Next next homes, no? They may have some fights within them.
B: Aha ok
T: But her relationships with others is very good. But others, her neighbors, are having some problems with each other
B: Ok. Eehm... Is there... Are people helping each other out if there is a family that have a problem?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: When they are not feeling well they are taking each other to the hospital. If they don’t have cash they will provide cash to take their treatment.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they have any family celebration during that time they use to help them. Cutting fruits and vegetables.
B: Can you tell me a little bit more about the self-help groups you mentioned before?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They use to have a saving habit n one SHG group. In that group they will do savings and inside the group itself it means they will rotate it for their use and needs. After that they will collect it. If they use it for small-scale business also they use to help others
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Also they will solve the domestic violence problem also. If it is there inside the camp
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They represent and do cleaning work in and around the camp. Also if there is any big program or event being held inside the camp they will come forward to represent the group
B: Ok... Do you have contact with a lot of people outside the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
B: Refugees. Refugees outside the camps
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, she has
B: Ok, how...
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them outside of the camp are being with the... Those who came with passport, using the passport when they came from Sri Lanka. Many of them are dwelling outside the camps it seems. She has contacts with them it seems.
B: Ok, so how would you describe your relationship with them?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Because her own husband and her sister is staying like that. That is why. So she knows their problems. She used to speak with government officials regarding getting registration of their names inside the camp. So towards them she used to speak with the government officials
B: They want to move inside the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes yes. They like to
B: Why would they like to?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are not earning. They don’t have any earnings. They don't have that much riches. They are very poor background so none is supporting them. Without support they are living a life outside means if someone is giving them help, they are always expecting something from others. So if they get at least registration at least government cash dole will be provided, and at least minimum they will live their life. That’s why they are expecting registration inside the camp
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they are coming inside the camp also the Q-branch official, police you know, if they are coming for checking they will ask: ”Why are you coming here? You go out. What is the relationship between you to be here?”. They will abuse him like that. If they have registration means they will not raise any question also. That’s why they need registration also.
B: Mhmm ok. So what did the government officials say when you approached them about getting registration?
T: Sorry?
B: How did the government officials respond?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: According to the government rules will provide so if they are telling we will not provide they will not provide. She say slowly they will tell and they will not show hard or show force with us, but they will express what they are receiving from government
B: Sorry, I do not understand
T: What she is telling means while she is approaching government officials regarding getting registration and all they will respond very calm and in a very nice manner. They use to say if higher authorities will give permission we do not have any issues with providing.
B: Ok. So what is the status of your request right now?
T: Want to get registration. Her husband and sister want to get registration inside the camp
B: Yes. But have you gotten an answer yet?
T: Not yet
B: You have not gotten an answer yet?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: No
B: Do you know when you can expect to....
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Maybe she get. May not be. She is not sure about it. Whether she will get or not.
B: Ok. Do you know the rules about who can get and who can’t get? Do you know what
the rules are?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She doesn’t know
B: Ok. Did they tell you when they would come back to you with an answer?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No no. Later they will come back and tell her like this. Now, still she doesn’t know about it
B: Ok... Eehm... So... Do you have contact with Sri Lankans living in a third country?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes she has (respondents phone rings, she is talking)
B: Yes ok... Eehm... How do you keep in touch with them
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Through phone
B: And what about Indian citizens do you have a lot of contacts with Indian citizens?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. Friends. Classmates
B: Friends and classmates?
T: She has contact with her classmates. She has very good relationship with them.
B: How would you say the relationship generally is between...
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She says they have very good relationship. They use to help her whenever there is a need.
R: *Speaks tamil
B: Eehm eh.... Is there anything you want to talk about, that you feel is important, that I have not asked you about.
T: *Speaks tamil
B: No?
T: *Laughs. I know you can identify what she is saying through her gestures itself. She has very good gestures, no?
B: *Laughs. Yes.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: There is only one thing. If those who came with passport and are staying outside. If they don’t, if their visa is also completed presence, they have to go back. But they don’t have money to go back to their country. So still they are being here. If they get registration for camp means it will be very useful. So she is thinking and wants to share with you
B: Ok
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Like her husband is non-campus refugee. So what she is feeling is her husband is somehow far away from her. Her relationship between him and her will be very distant. So she is thinking
R: Three years
B: Yes
T: Past three years
B: Yes
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Anything else? That she is asking
B: I actually remember one question I forgot to ask. And that is if you think is any possibility of getting Indian citizenship in the near future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She is saying if we will get we will be very happy. It will be very happy. But no way
B: But no way *Laughs. Ok ok. Eehm... Yes, also. Do your husband have problem with over-stay fees?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Government is not asking them to pay. *Laughs. So still they are not facing that problem. But there are some problem for others.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Usually the Q-branch police, the Q-branch police, they use to inquire them: "After finishing off your visa period, why are you being here? Go back to your country". Also with the fees they use to threaten. And they make inquiries of them
B: Mhmm ok.... Yes... I don’t have anymore questions. If you want to add something feel free
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is feeling is that you heard her problem. So she is feeling comfort with that. Somehow she is feeling good about you and you are speaking very well. If she would know the language it would be very useful for her to get more involvement and interaction. She would love to interact with you.
B: Ok. I am glad you were feeling comfortable and...
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Her brother is your age so she is feeling like a brotherly relationship when she is seeing you
B: *Laughs. Ok ok. I am happy that you feel like that. And I am also happy, and feel very good about our conversation and that you wanted to talk to me. I really appreciate it.

Interview 1B (transcription) : Woman, 52 years old, camp refugee
Benjamin: How old are you?
Translator: *Speaks tamil
Respondent: *Speaks tamil
T: 52
R: 52
B: And are you married
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Mm
B: Any children?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She has two daughters
B: And what is you job?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She is working as a community volunteer for (NGO name)
B: And what is your religion?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Hindu
B: And when did you come here to India?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: 1990
R: 1990
B: And have you always lived in the camps or have you lived outside of the camps as well?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Always inside the camps
B: Always inside. And why have you chosen to live inside the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They don’t have permission to live their lives outside the camps because they are living under control of the government. So still they are refugees and they are expected to live their lives inside the camp
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they go outside of the camps they will not get any benefits of governments. That’s why they are living inside the camps
B: Ok…. So how would you describe life inside the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Inside India if she wants to go anywhere outside, to other camps also, she needs to take permission. So she has permission issues. ”Why are you taking permission” and all. She feels it is difficult to get permission from government officials.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If there are any emergency also she can’t stay. Without permission if she is going means the government will make some problems for them. So she needs to take permission for every time. Every time she is going for any emergency also. She has to take permission
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they are educated also they can’t go outside to do a job. Because for staying outside also they have to take permission, no? They have some permission issues
R: *Speaks tamil
T: In India they are not providing any jobs to her children also. If they are undergraduate also. Not only undergraduate, post-graduate also. That she is telling.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is wishing means her daughter, second daughter, *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Her older daughter is doing her degree in Engineering field. She got a sheet with the help of some NGO *Speaks tamil
R: (NGO name)
T: Through (NGO name) she got to do a course over there. Now she is doing. But what she with after completion of the studies she wants to go back to Sri Lanka. To live a happy life. Because here they are not getting any proper jobs. For her daughter also she is scared of after finishing if she doesn’t get any job also means why do we have to be here
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Why she is expecting to go back to Sri Lanka after the completion of her schooling alone means while she was there. After her schooling she came here. She has been here for the last 24 years. She got married after her presence here in India only. What she is thinking is if they are going there the cost of the colleges and all this will be very high. She will not be capable of paying the fees. If she will be here the government will face som needs, no? They will give cash dole and no house rent. They will take care of some things, no? Everything will be given by government. But also NGOs are helping for childrens’ education. But after, for settlement, we will not get jobs. That’s why we want, wish to go back there
B: Ok. And..
T: She has very bright goals. Clear future plan.
B: And do you… Is it easier to get a job in Sr Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Her relations and all, no? Her relations. Relations
B: Yes
T: Her relations when they were here they did their degree courses, like under-graduate and postgraduate. Now they are in there and they are doing very good jobs. According to their education they are getting jobs. But here now if they are educated also they use to go for painting works. So there is not much nice to be here.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: But that… They can go there and stay over there. But employment opportunities is very less it seems in Sri Lanka.
B: Ok… Do you have a lot of contact with your relatives in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Each and every week she use to call her neighbors who are there in Sri Lanka B: Your neighbors in Sri Lanka? So you, do you have land in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Her husband’s brother and her husband’s mother. Her mother-in-law and her brother-in-law are there in Sri Lanka. They are taking care of their land. It is there. But her father and mother is here only in India. She doesn’t have anything but her husband have
ever
B: Your husband. Ok… And what does your mother-in-law and brother-in-law tell you about the situation in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling like previous, it is not like previous ruler. The situation is very nice. We are feeling comfortable here. So you come, but after the completion of your children’s education. So they are telling. So they also happy to go there
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs. The education status is different there. Because here no? After completion of 12th grade, you know highest secondary grade?
B: Yes
T: After completion of 12th grade we can directly join under-graduate, here. But there we have to do another course, like 13th grade
B: Ah ok
T: What she is telling is we need to spend more years there. So I don’t like to be there. That’s why I want to give an education for my children here itself
R: *Speaks tamil
T: The system is different. Here the education is different, there the education system is different. There they have to round long way, they have to travel long. Her the destination of reaching is very little
B: Ok… Eehm… I would like to go back and talk mor about the situation in the camp. If you would go out without a permission, what will happen?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Now she is telling *Laughs. Wherever she has to go she is supposed to take permission, no? But now she is telling, she is here now today she is not taking any permission to go here. Previously they were very strict. Without permission you should not go out. So the situation was prev.. early…
B: Previously. Yes
T: Now without permission also they are traveling wherever they want
R: *Speaks tamil
T: During the visits, before the visits of government officials, they will do a count, no? During that time they have to be there in the camp
R: *Speaks tamil
T: During that time, during that headcount if they are not there means they will cut the registration
B: They will cut the registration, ok. How many times do you have these headcounts?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Monthly once it will be
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No! *Laughs. The government official will do like this. He will meet only the community leader and he will ask him if everybody is there or not. If the community leader says everybody is there means he will go. He will not ask them to stand in line and count like that. According to their feasibility they used to do that.
B: Ok... So how... Can you tell me a little about the system with the camp leader and camp committee? Can you tell me about how that works?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Camp committee is not stable. It is not stable and the committee members are not talented. They are doing selfish things. Whatever they need they are doing for theirselves. Not for the peoples' sake

B: And what about the camp leader?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Past 20 years he has been the camp leader over there *Laughs. So past years he is always telling all the things he did. "I am the camp leader. I did this. I did that. I am so socially concerned. I am doing good things for you". Like self-praising person. So she is telling

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Somehow he is managing. He use to do some work also. But always self-praising. Saying praise about himself. But somehow he is good

B: He does good, but he is praising himself while doing it, ok.... Eehm... If you have any requests or any suggestions who do you go to?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: First they will go and they will discuss with the, the need with the camp leader.

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Through him they will go forward with it

B: They will go forward...

T: Yes, take it to higher authorities, officials, government officials. Whatever the need

B: And how do you feel this system is working?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: So what she is telling means if this system is not working out, what they will do is during the visit of government officials to their camp directly the people will talk with the government official and they will make a request

R: *Speaks tamil

T: If they are giving a request through camp leader to the government official and they are not doing means straight away they will give request straight to government officials

B: Ok. How is you relation with government officials?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Whatever they are expecting, they are doing. So the relationship is very good with them

R: *Speaks tamil

T: *Laughs. If there is garbage in and around the camp it means the government official will say if you are doing this, unclean things, having unclean environment, if you are making environment unclean means we will make you from this camp

B: Will make you?

T: Will make you to vacate from this camp to another camp
B: Aha vacate
T: Yes vacate to another camp. We will host you to another camp. Like that they use to, like how to say…
B: They threaten with that?
T: Threat. Like they use to give some threat. So what they will do actually, when they do that they use to be scared of it and they will make the camp always to be clean
B: Ok
T: Because of this threat only they are keeping the camp clean *Laughs
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Still the camp is very small. It is near the national highway. It is situated near the national highway. But still the government is not interested in vacating the people from there. Still they are making them to be there
B: Ok. Would you like to change location?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. No
T: *Laughs
B: No. *Laughs. Ok. Eehm… Can you tell me a little bit about what you do as a (NGO name) volunteer?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Providing nutrition food to malnourished children.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Use to do home visits regularly to see if children are going to school or not
R: Children club *Speaks tamil
T: Contacting few competitions with children. Those who are represented in the children club. Each and every week they have children club. They are looking forward to that. Whether that club is working or not, she use to monitor regularly
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Library is there. She is looking after it
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Parental guidance also she is providing. Parental guiding and some counseling also if it is needed. Because many of them are alcohol addicts they have many problems within the families themselves, misunderstanding problems. Like she use to give counseling for parents because the child will be affected, no? Of their problems. So some parental care, some parental counseling she use to give
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Not only for help…. *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling, not only for (NGO name). What she is telling also, if any government official is coming she will organize the community.
B: Ok
T: She has organizing capacity, so she is telling. She thinks this is her positive point
B: Mhmm ok, that’s good
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Thanks
B: You’re welcome…. And…. Is there a lot of participation in the community?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Participation will be there. Always they come forward to help each other. They use to help each other if there is any need
B: Ok. Do you have any examples?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She have one story. Previously one child was sexually abused by a camp person. During that time many of them went to help that family. The family, those who were having the child. They gave complaint against that guy. During that time they went to give a, give a witness. They went for witness. This is a big thing, no? They will be thinking "Why we should enter into others business, annoying things".... Like…
B: Sorry?
T: They went for witness, no?
B: Yes
T: Many of them if there is any police issues, any case, means they will not go forward for it. But many of them participated in that event and they made that. Because actually they wanted to punish that person because today he did it to one girl, tomorrow he can do it to many others, no? So everybody, the whole community they were together for this. For this case
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Domestic violence. The rate of domestic violence is high there. In their camp. So what happened, before four days what happened means there was a fight between husband and wife and the husband beat his wife very hard. The girl was beat. So during that time she doesn’t have any relation there, no father, no mother, nothing. So during that time she was helpless. In that situation she asked some help with them. And what they did means they made a complaint against that person. As a group, ladies group, women’s group. Because it is domestic violence, no? Violence against a woman, no?
B: Yes. What happened when you made the complaints?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: From police side, no? They are always expecting money.
B: Ah ok
T: There is no justice from police side or government side. So there is no justice for this. What they are doing is they are getting money for other party and getting favors for opposing party.
B: Sorry?
T: Who is giving money to them. For them they will do favorable things. But still what they are doing is making complaints about this
B: Yes. They are making the complaints. But what happened in the two cases you told me about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Police *indistinguishable them. That’s it. They released him. For that sexual abuse case
R: *Speaks tamil
T: For that sexual abuse case they beat that boy and then they sent him back. Because the parents came and they said that our son is mentally retarded. B: Mentally retarded?
T: So he doesn’t know what happened that time. Without knowing he did they said. And they showed some government records, some doctor records. And because of that they just beat him and released him. For this first case. *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Still they gave the complaint the day before yesterday, so the police is doing inquiries. so still they don’t know what will happen in this case. Still the girl is not living with that guy now it seems. She left the camp and is living outside together with her children. She has two children. She is staying alone with her children outside the camp B: Ok. Do you feel the police is there to protect you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are not coming for emergencies.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs. With the citizens they have many problems B: With the?
T: Citizens. Indian citizens. With Indian citizens they have many problems. "Problems with Indian citizens we face. Why are you also bringing complaints to us? Why are you bringing complaints?"
B: Is that what the police say?
T: Yes. Outside police. They have special police, Q-branch, inside the camp, no? Only for them. But this police will not register any complaints
B: They will not?
T: Yes. So they are going to the outside police. So he ask them "Why are you coming with problems? We are already responsible for the citizens itself. For these problems itself we can’t give solutions. If you are also coming it means what will we do” B: Ok
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Why they are going for police means, they are going for the police means, they are giving less punishment. Because they are refugees, no? They will not give punishment to them. They will give punishment for Indians only. They are refugees, they came her under the status of refugee, for that in the status of humanitarian aid they will complain to the police. If there is any problem there within them then Q-branch may enter. But also they use to give complaints to outside police station because they will tae severe action.
B: The outside will take more severe actions?
T: Yes
B: Ok… Eehm… Do you have any contact with refugees that live outside of the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No
B: Ok. Do you have contact with Sri Lankans that live in third country?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, she has
B: Ok. How do you keep contact with them?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Phone
B: Phone. And what do they say?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She wants to settle in Sri Lanka only. So she doesn’t want to speak more anyway with the foreigners. She wants to settle in Sri Lanka with her citizenship and with her children and everything
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them are enjoying their life in foreign countries. They are living their life very joyfully with their more money. They are earning more. Everything, they have all the facilities and they are living life very joyfully. Even though I am hearing this, I am not feeling like I want to hear this. What I am feeling is I want to be with my family, with my relations and everything. I want to be with them in my country.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laugh
R: *Laugh
T: What she is telling is if we live in foreign countries we can earn more. We can earn more. We can have everything. We can have iPhones, we can have Apple laptop (points to my laptop), everything. But we can not have peace. We will not have happiness. We will not have our relations. We will not have *indistinguishable. Nothing will not be there. Only we will have money and luxury life. But I need a peaceful life with my family and neighbors
B: Ok… And how about Indian citizens? Do you have a lot of contact with Indian citizens?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laugh
R: *Laugh
T: What she is telling is she has very good relationship with outside Indian. So she is telling me, because Madame is also there
B: Because sorry?
T: Because Madame (points to herself) is there. I am an indian citizen and she has a relationship with me that she is exploring. We have a very good relationship. Accordingly we use to speak with everyone. We feel like they are our neighbors, so we use to share with them everything. We use to speak frequently all the things with them. But she is telling also we have one fear. Whatever we have here is not…. It is not a stable thing whatever it is we are having. Because we don’t have our own country, we don’t have our own house. If we are planting a plant it is not on our own land. So that is the feeling she is having here.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She wants to buy her own property
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She is wishing to get a property. Like we are seeing everyone is living with their own property but we are here as refugees. it is making them feel that it is hard. So she wants to be a citizen in her country. To live her own life.
B: Ok…. Eehm… Do you think that there is any possibility that the Indian government will provide citizenship to you in the near future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. No
B: Eehm… Do you… Do you have any idea why?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling means already India is placed in second place for population. You know?
B: Yes
T: For the people, those who are living here itself, they are living on road side. Indians are living on the road, on the street, on the road side. They themselves don’t have any proper housing. Nothing they have. If the government is providing citizenship for them, also they have to give house, they have to give everything for them. So where will the government go to give everything? So they don’t have enough facilities to provide for their citizens itself. From where will they get to provide for us? So for them there is not much capacity to give, so then how will they provide to us?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If we are being here it means the country will divide into two because we are Tamil and we all together will create a country. Like that. They will not provide

R: *Speaks tamil
T: Already they are being here as a guest. Only we came here as a guest. So a guest doesn’t have that much. If I come to your home as a guest I can not take over your family, no? So we can not expect that much from here. As a guest we came and as a guest we have to go back to our place. So I suppose we have to go.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: There is no chance to get citizenship.
B: Ok… Eehm…
T: Many government parties are there, you know? Government parties
B: Political parties?
T: Political parties are there. She is speaking also about political parties. There are many there
B: In the camps?
T: No. In India. Many political parties are there. If government gives citizenship for them, they will make one political party. Like for Tamil alone. Tamil alone they will make one political party. Like we will form many problems and government will think of everything so they will not provide any citizenships.
B: Ok… Eehm, yes. is there anything you want to talk about, that you feel is important, that I have not asked you about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil. She is asking, she is giving many information, about her camp and everything you know, while knowing this what are you going to do with it she is asking. I was telling he is doing his Master, he will keep it confidential. For his thesis purpose alone he is collecting this information. Like that I am telling
B: Yes
T: Anything more? To add about this?
B: Eehm. It depends on what the question was. Was it about what I will write about or was it about how I will treat the information?
T: Sorry?
B: Was it about how I will treat the information or about what I will write about?
T: Sorry?
B: Was she asking about what I am writing about or how I will take care of the information?
T: What you are writing about.
B: Ok. So I am writing about agency among refugees so it is basically about how much you are able to form and affect you own life.
T: *Speaks tamil
B: And also in some ways your relation to authorities. If you feel there is anyone that is responsible for you
T: Wait Benjamin. I want to turn off the AC
B: Ok, yes, sure… Eehm yes. Also in some ways your relationship to authorities. If there is someone you can, if you have any representation with authorities. If you feel there is an authority you can hold responsible and accountable.
T: *Speaks tamil
B: It is things like these I am going to write about
T: *Speaks tamil
B: Is there anything else you like to add or something you want to add?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs. So what she is telling is the same as before. Someone is there to hear our stories. So I am feeling happy in my heart. Until today nobody has been here asking about our lifestyle in the camp. But today Benjamin is asking everything. So I feel comfort. I feel happy about that. So please say thanks to Benjamin to hear all our stories
B: I am happy that you feel that way. And I also want to thank you for wanting to share with me.
T: *Speaks tamil
B: Yes, I appreciate that a lot
R: Thank you
B: Thank you

Interview 1C (transcription) : 2 women, camp refugees, 65 and 19 years old)
Benjamin: Ok… So, how old are you?
Translator: *Speaks tamil
Respondent 1: *Speaks tamil
T: 65 years old
Respondent 2: *Speaks tamil
T: 19 years
B: Ah ok.. And how eehm… Do you have any jobs? Or are you a student (directed at R2)?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She is being at home
R2: Searching *Speaks tamil
T: She is searching for job.
B: Searching for a job?
R2: Yes
B: What kind of jobs are you searching for?
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: She finished her 12th standards
B: Ah 12th, sorry? 12th standard?
T: Yes, 12th standard. You know here we have grades, no? First grade, second grade, like 12th grade she finished. Now she is searching for a job according to her education qualifications
B: And what did you study?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Gen… Uhm…
B: General?
T: Yes. General. Science, math, social science
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Max, plus computer science
B: Ok, max plus computer science… Ehm, and you worked for (NGO name) before right? And also another community organization? (Directed at R1)
R1: * Nods
B: Yes?
T: *Speaks tamil.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes
B: Ok. Eeh. And eh. Are you married?
R2: *Shakes her head
B: No?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya
B: Yes? Aaa… And what religion do you have?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: Hindu
T: Christian (R1) and hindu (R2)
B: Christian and hindu, aha. Eehm and eh. When did you arrive here in India? When did you come to the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: 1996 B: 96?
R2: Born in 95
B: Born in 95 and then you came here 96, ok?
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: 1990 she came
B: Ok. And eeh... Did you, have you stayed in the camp the whole time or have you stayed outside also?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: As we explained already (in previous interviews) usually they used to come to that Mandappam camp. I already told you (in previous interviews)
B: Ya
T: That specific place they reach. Soon after they reached there, they send them to a place called, a place near Pondicherry called…
R1: *indistinguishable
T: *Indistinguishable. There they…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Before there was a camp there. So they lived there and they were living there for two years. Then after that, it is a coastal region, so the government thought it was not safe for them so they took them from there and they put them in Goomidpoondi camp
B: Goomidi… Sorry
T: Yes, both of them come from Goomidpoondi
B: Goomidpoondi? Is that how you pronounce it?
T: Ya. *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: From her side. Her parents came here the year of 1990 it seems. That time, the year of 1990 her parents came here. They cam here together and they got married only. Then they got back to Sri Lanka. Then again after her birth there was a fight it seem so then again they came back here, as a refugee again they came back here in 1996. Then it seems they were searching some places. First they were in *indistinguishable there is one camp. After Mandappam they went there to *indistinguishable. Sometimes they were there and aging sometimes another nearby camp they were there. Then at last finally they came to Goomidpoondi camp
B: Ok, so how long have you stayed in Goomidpoondi?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: 14 years
T: 14 years
B: Ah. And have you ever thought about staying outside of the camps? Why have you chosen to stay inside the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: No never.
T: They use to stay inside the camp. Everytime always
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If they are going out for job purpose they will go out. Otherwise they will not
ok. What is the reason for choosing to stay inside the camp?

T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil

T: It is the government order. Government is making us to be there. That is why we are there
B: Mm, ok
R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Why, because they are there means because each and every month they are checking if they are there or not. During that checking means that only if they are there they will provide cash dole. That’s why they are there
B: Ok ok. So for… Ok. Eehm…
R1: *Speaks tamil

T: If they are not available at that time. If they are not there, it means they will eject… They will erase their name from the registration. So that’s why they are being there
B: Mhmm. What happens if you loose your registration?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil

T: They will not get any help from the government. Also they will not feel any way like they are secure, that’s why. For security purpose they want to be there, inside the camp
B: Ok. In what ways would you not feel secure?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil

T: They are telling like two types: One type is that if they are going out somewhere without registration they are there, if they are going out somewhere and they have an accident government will say, or police will say, ”you are not in registration so we are not responsible for that accident and will not pay anything to your family for the accident” That is what they will say, that is what she (R1) is telling. What she (R2) is telling is that specifically for women it is not safe. If they are going out and somebody is doing wrong things to them it means that if they are doing a complaint or like that they will tell ”You are not an Indian, and you are not a Sri Lankan. You are not registered under the refugee act. So we are not the responsible persons for what you are telling, so we will not take any action”
B: Ah, you loose…. You loose any… How can I say this?….. You loose any protection from the authorities?
T: Ya
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil

T: So what they are telling means if they are going out for jobs also it means they have to have permission. If they are going out for job without permission if they are going out means if something happens there. Like some accidents, or murder or something that means that time also the government, or police or Q-branch nobody will take any charge
of it. What she (R2) is telling is: One day her brother, older brother, went out for a job it seems. So during that time the police... eeh somebody told from inside the camp, he was spy like a spy, he was giving information to the police office about her brother. So the police suddenly came and made a check-up and they asked ”where is he?” and they told that he went for job. So the police told them to bring him again here, so now, soon after that, from that day onwards he is not doing job it seems. They are not going job also, so they are loosing job also

B: Ya, ok. Eeh. Is that common that people from inside the camp inform the police

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: It’s common

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: So what she is telling means government is giving cash dole, no? It is not sufficient. It is not enough to run the family. So they need more money. For that purpose they are going for jobs. When they are going for jobs government officials come for checking suddenly without telling, without any prior information. That is what is affecting us. That she is telling

B: Yes. But I was wondering… Ya. How does it eeh.... Do you feel like you can trust others in the camp or are you afraid that they will inform the police of what you are doing?

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: So what happen means people are there inside the camp. In the neighborhood, the surroundings next to home itself. Some limited space are there. And they have some persons will have deeper and stronger ties to the police department. Of they are giving information it means the police will do them favors for them. For that they are doing such things it seems. So people are there giving information about them. Only what happens is the situation she is explaining about herself is: One day she finished her education, no? So she wanted to do higher studies. So to inquire about higher studies, she wanted to do some beautician course, facials and such, beautician course. For that she came here it seems. To here she came. While she traveled and came here to inquire about the course, here somewhere near to Chennai they are giving free course, without money…

B: Sorry, cos? What is a cos?

T: Beautician course

B: Ah ok. Course course, sorry! *Laughs

T: Course yes. Without money they will give the course like… For that she came to enquire it seems. During that time someone from her neighborhood, someone gave the information to the Qbranch police. That girl is not there so you go to that home. Soon after that the Q-branch cam and inquired her parents, suddenly her parents called her and asked her to come back immediately. So soon after that she got home. After that when they saw the girl only, they left, the police left it seems. Until that. Because why? Because suddenly suddenly they ask? It’s because many of them are going to Australia illegally, you know? For that purpose police is doing check-ups continuously.

B: Mm aha ok… We, we have already talked about some aspects of this, but can you tell
me a little bit about how you would describe the life in the camps?

T: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: Actually why she is disturbed is while she was doing her schooling. In school itself, schools are common for everyone no? Indians is there and they will also do there schooling there. During that time the teacher will asks, teacher used to ask "who are from the camps? Please stand up". They used to call them "Hey camp!" and like that.

B: The teachers?

T: Ya the teachers and also the students, those who are studying with them also, they will call "Hey camp, come here!"

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: They will not see like commonly, you know like…

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: There is some discrimination like Indian and then Sri Lankan. So they will not give any respect to them. They will not pay any attention to their words.

B: No, ok

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: If a problem is rising in the school they will say "only because of these camp children we have these problems, not the other students, so we will punish them" like always they pay attention to them if there is any problem happening in the school. Only they will abuse them only. So this is the various different… It happens in school.

B: In school, yes. Do you feel like it affected your grades as well?

T: *Speaks tamil

R2: Sometimes

B: Sometimes, aha. Ehm, and how about in the camp? How is the situation there?

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Government is giving only 1250 rupees per family. Only two of them are there in her family. Her and her husband. With that cost it is not sufficient to run the family so they are feeling like it’s like a burden so it is not sufficient so we need to earn more. So they are thinking.

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: But the government is providing some few… Government is providing only few things not more things so it is not enough for them. Because the price and rate of everything was increased no? each and everything was increased so they couldn’t survive with that money.

B: Ok

T: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: many of them are alcohol addicts. Alcohol addicted. So if nearby houses, if they are
addicted, it means sounds hearing everywhere. Because it’s small homes you know? Small small houses, hud type of houses, so they can hear problem of her family problem, and her family problem I know. Every family problem, everybody knows. So there is no privacy.

R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Through this situation small children also learn to drink alcohol. Because of this only

R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them becomes drop-outs in their 8th standard, 10th standard. After that they are being home and they learn everything with their friends and they are like… They learn everything and they do it on a daily basis. It is a routine process in their camp.

R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If the family head is a drunk it means because of that person there are many breakups in the families. So many of the families get into break-ups. So many of the families are not living together. They are staying alone alone, staying with someone else, taking someone else. That person no, the drunk is doing all immorality like sexual abuse of the children.

B: Hmmr
T: Ya
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them for drinking purpose itself they will borrow money from outside and taking money from outside. For more dues, they borrow money for due purpose, they are taking and making the family in a tragic situation.

B: They put them in debt?
T: Ya. Again after getting the money they are not paying them again. That’s what the problem is arising.

R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of the children are sexually abused because of this. Children

B: Mm, ya…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Child marriages is also happening there, child marriage. Between 18 years, before(!) 18 years, before.

R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Parents are scared about the children. To have them here because of these guys no? Those that are being at home out of work and usually drunk doing all those silly things. Because of them the parents are giving the girls to get married soon.

R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of the girls are stressed, affected by stress, many of the girls

B: Because of the…
T: Child marriages, girls, children themselves have to take care of their family. So many problems is arising in their family. So in this small area they can’t balance, no?

B: No…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: From (NGO name) we are giving some treatment for alcoholic addicts. You have heard about it?
They are giving some treatment
B: I have heard you give references
T: Ya ya. Her in (NGO name) we are giving some treatment. From their camp many of them came to get treatment. They took treatment. After they took treatment, during their treatment time they were not doing, not taking alcohol. They were showing obedience there it seems. After they came back to the camp again they started drinking. So there is no use in that. A few of them may have corrected their life and going on. But many of them went there but aging they are drinking
B: They went back to their habits…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: In their country no? Their home, everybody’s homes will be separated. They live very separately, but here no they live very dense. Everybody’s home is next to next to next to. Very small places. They are hearing everybody problems. Like her problems everybody knows like the situation is happening so in her family matter also someone is coming and speaking about her family. So that is something she doesn’t like, no? Because there is no privacy. Somebody speaking about our problems it can be accepted?
B: Mmm
T: No, she is raising the question now to you. Now you tell me, if someone is coming in your problem getting into your problem and he or she is speaking about your problem. Can you accept that?
B: Ya, well no. I want my privacy as well
T: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs. See how it is happening. In her (R2) country, in Sri Lanka, in her home. It is very far away from other homes. And whatever somebody is doing anybody will not come and enter in their matters, but here no? There are three sisters in her home it seems
R2: One brother
T: One brother and three sisters. In her family if her mother is advising something, like: ”You should not do that” or ”You should not talk to that guy”, you know? Mothers sometimes gives conditions like that, some tips, no? How to do this and you should not do this. If her mother is giving some comments like this soon after she goes out the neighborhood will say: ”Oh oh! You are doing wrong things, that’s why your mother is telling you this. That’s why your mother is giving advice to you”
B: Hmmf, ok
T: The thing is like. It is here, they will say no no not here. It is flying like…
B: Flying? What?
T: No. Like… the thing is they will not tell the actual story. They will tell some imagined story. ”Oh, you did that no? That is why your mother is giving this advice”
B: Ah ok, they make up. They fill in the blanks so to speak
T: Yes
B: You said… What happens if you would report for instance such things as sexual abuse.
T: Sorry?
B: What happens if they report anything like that?
T: Ok *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually what she was working with *Speaks tamil.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: While she was working with (NGO name) while she was working one child was sexually abused it seems. During that time she went to and gave a complaint against that guy. So what the police did was they cut off the registration of that guy and they sent that guy out of the camp and they asked him to go to another camp
B: Ok
T: Another camp. Somewhere near camp. And asked him to not go, get into this camp
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: So the problem is like that. Also she is sharing about the problems she is facing inside the camp. First question you asked, now she is giving answer to that *Laughs. Ok. What the thing is. From (NGO name) also (NGO name) built a toilet for them. Government also built a toilet for them. That (NGO name) also built a toilet for them. So they have many toilets around the camp. But even though, people are not getting into the toilets but using outside. Outside space. For that place, because of that only there are getting more diseases it seems. So she is telling. Also what she is sharing is many of them are cleaning their homes, cleaning, they are cooking and carrying the garbage whatever they have they will carry it and they will throw it in front of the camps itself. So through that many garbages are….
B: Piled?
T: Ya, it becomes big you know? Corporations is not coming to clean there because it is camp no? S they will not come and clean. So it becomes high and because of that also problems are occurring
B: You have no system to take care of the garbage?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: No. No government, no corporation will come and clean that place. Before means previously what they used to do is all the women and all the girls they had some self-help group. Self-help groups? You heard of self-help groups?
B: Mhmm, yes
T: Through that self-help group means what they used to do is gather all the garbage. they used to *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They used to throw it out for…. Hmm… They will throw it out
B: Throw it out? Out where?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They will fire it off
B: Ah ok fire it…. Burn it, ok… Eh, all these things you have told me now. Do you have any thought on how they can be improved, or even solved?
T: What?
B: All these problems they have told me now if they have any thoughts or suggestions on how…
T: Ok. *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: No. They don’t have hope. If somebody will solve their problem, including the government
B: No. But do you have thoughts on how the could be solved? If there were anybody…
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil. So what she is telling is the problems are not arising because of a third person or someone from the outside. The problems occur because of the people who live inside the camp themselves. Sexual abuse or something. Whatever it is. The garbage problem, the toilet problem. Everything occurred because of the people in the camp themselves. So nobody is responsible for that. Each and everyone should take responsibility for that. If they are correcting themselves it means the problems will not arise and we can live a perfect life inside the camp. So she is telling
R2: Ya. *Speaks tamil
T: In toilet also no? Toilet I told you government and NGOs are providing toilet no? Few of them, what they use to do means they will keep the toilet. Some particular person make the toilet as their private part, for them only. So they will keep a lock and all
B: They lock the toilets?
T: They will lock and few of them use to do that. That is why many use outside.
B: Ok… How, how, how do they… How do they…
T: Because if it is open it means somebody will come and use the toilet and they will make it like unclean. They feel, that’s why they use to make it as a privacy part. They use to lock it.
B: But how are they allowed to do that?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If they ask something with them about that it means they will have a fight with them. So they are fearing that so that’s why they are not asking anything to them. But generally it is common toilets only but some think it’s for them, their privacy.
B: Ok. So…. So you say these problems largely come up because of the people that live in the camp. But why do you think people do all these things? Do you have any idea of what makes them…
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What she (R2) is telling is we will not give complaint or say anything against them. If we are giving complaints
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Shuts off AC. She is feeling very cold
B: Ya ya
T: If they are giving any complaints or if they are telling on them, making complaint about them, it means the people, those who are doing privacy things or whatever, those who are doing mistakes. It means next day if we have some problem. If for example she
is telling, if our home is on fire and it got on fire, they will not come forward to help us. But if we are not telling anything it means they will come help us. That’s why they are not telling anything against them

B: Aha.. Ehmm. Do you feel… Do you still feel that there is solidarity in the community? That people are helping each other a lot?
T: Sorry, I’m not getting you

B: Eeh.. If people are helping each other a lot in the camps? Helping each other out if there are problems?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If there is a marriage function. Any other function or celebration they will help each other. They will feel like they will go mingle with that home. They will do all necessary things. They will help them
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling means she does not have any relations here in this camp. She has her relation in *indistinguishable camp. Where she was before. Previously, there she has relations and in Sri Lanka also she has relations. Here she has no relations. But what they will do is the neighborhood family she will call her brother or sister. Like they will mingle, like they have feeling of like an uncle or aunty, like a known person. If there is people that are annoying person to her also it means they will help her and mingle with that person as annoying person.
B: Ah ok
T: So they will get into each and every of their family activities. So they will come and get into her family activities and all. So they will help each other
B: Ok. How about… I’m curious about how you… the system with camp committees and campo leader. If this is something you feel you can use if you have any suggestions and requests or things like that?
T: Like…. How?
B: How they feel… If they feel like they have representation in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They have leader in the camp. Also they have camp committee. They will represent…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If they have any problem. If they make a complaint together with that leader it means he will take it up and he will convey with government official
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They will tell collector’s office also.
B: Collector?
T: Administration office. That administrates all the district. To them also they will take the things to them.
B: Directly to them or through the committee or the leader?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Took the committee and he will go.
B: Ok. Ehmm… How do you feel like this system is working?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: No, what she is telling is actually the system is very helpful for them because many of the children don’t have any support to get higher education. So during that time, the leader no? The community leader will make a request to help that child, he will take it to government office. So through that also the government is helping us she is telling
B: Ok ok
T: So it is very helpful for us she says. So the system is working out for them
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Like for registration also. Many of them what they use to do now they are here. If they want to see somebody in Sri Lanka they use to take passport and go there. Again if they think it is not a safe place there for them, they will come back from there to here. After only they use to the theses thing. When they go out the registration will be cut off from the government. Again if they, when they are entering again, registration will happen. So continuously they will do this, going and coming. But they are playing no? Like government will tell them you are playing, going and coming going and coming, so what government did means they stopped the registration. Again if they are going to Sri Lanka and they are again coming back also they will not provide registration. Like they stopped. Why? Because of that they stopped registration. Now many of them are struggling with registration. Because if they are no registration government will not provide cash dole and their benefits no? That’s why for that also the leader no, the community leader made a request: "Will you please provide registration for us". Like he requested those things to the collector too, the administration officers. So these all things are very useful for them it seems
B: Mm, yes. Is there a lot of interest in the camps to be a part of the committees and to participate in the discussions and…
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She has her own interest to participate in social activities. Earlier also she was a part of the committee member
B: In what committee?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Camp leader is having one committee no? In that committee she was one of the members of the committee
B: Ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She also has an interest in SHG, self-help groups
B: Self-help group?
T: Yes SHG. Self Help Group. She also a member of self-help group and she was a representative of that self-help group. And she formed more than 11 groups it seems.
B: 11 groups! Oh!
T: 11 ya
B: In what areas?
T: In Goomidpoondi only
B: Yes, but for what…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Women self-help group
B: Women?
T: Yes it is particularly only for women.
B: Ok. Eehm and what were you doing in the self-help groups?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They will do all the social activities. Cleaning the streets and water. If they need anything in the camp they can do that. Also what they will do is they will collect money.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Weekly, weekly they used to save the money. From my side means, if I only have 20 rupees I will provide that. Altogether they have one account. If they will put into that account every week or every month. Like my group belongs to weekly basis means I will put money every week. If my group belongs to monthly ones means they will put the money every month. They will save the money like if some need is arising in the group itself, like my daughter’s marriage is there, I can take that money from the bank and I need to give it back. With a due. But with a very low percentage.
B: Ok, a low rate
T: Low percentage. And for other purpose also. If they want to start a small business they can use that money and do a small-scale business. When doing the business we can give back the money we took from there
B: So it’s like beneficial micro-loans?
T: Yes
B: Ya
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: The rate of finance, getting borrow money from outside is higher. This was all reduced because of this self-help group. During her period.
B: Eeh. Are you still active in the groups?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Still 12 groups are working and more… Previously more than those groups were there. But they used to go to Sri Lanka, go back. Many of them went there many went to Australia. Many migrated no? So that group was broken. Now they have 12 groups
B: Ah ok. And the committees? Is there one committee or many committees?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya,, only one committee
B: One committee, ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What happens means in committee no? For each and everything one person will be the responsible person. Like if water is not working one person will be that in the committee one person will be the responsible person for that, for the water tank, water supplies and everything. For toilets, one person will be the responsible person for that.
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: And for education. For eduction one person is the responsible. For sports, one person is the particular contact for sports. Yearly he will contact many games like inside the camp itself. They itself have a committee no? They themselves will do all the entertainment. Yearly ones like…
B: Ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: From other organizations no? Like (NGO name) or (NGO name). If somebody is providing some educational support to that child it means we will ask that child to get a signature from the committee member who is representative for education. If the child is given that signature only that child can proceed to further with that NGO for studies
B: Ok ok. Ehhm. What is your hopes for the future?
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is thinking about her future is she wants to go back to her country B: Ok, to Sr..
T: To Sri Lanka. Yes, because all her family members are settled there it seems. They are wellsettled there now. Her son and her daughter are there. In her family one, her grandchildren grandchildren no?
B: Mm
T: One of her grandchildren is doing Law B: In Sri Lanka?
T: Ya *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: One other grandchild is doing nursing courses
B: Sorry, naas?
T: Nursing, nursining, you know?
B: Ah yes, nursing. Sorry!
T: Yes. nursing
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Through government also they are getting benefits there it seems so she wants to go back to her country
B: Mhmm. Do you think it will be possible to do in the near future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She has that hope
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They have land there it seems
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Government told who is the propertier. Who is the propertied of the land, if he or she come only they will give back. The government expressed that apparently to her family. That’s why she wants to go back.

B: Ok. Eeh. How does your family…. What does your family tell you about the situation in Sri Lanka right now?

T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Phone communication

B: Yes, ok. But what do they tell her about the situation?

T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil

T: They use to tell we don’t have any problems, please come back here. We live the safest life. So they use to tell. So she is thinking it is good for me to go there *Speaks tamil (towards R2). I am asking about her future

B: Yes yes. Please *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil

T: So what she is thinking about her future is she is scared about her future. Because she is interested in computer science it seems. So she already she went and work with one computer centre, computer browsing centre you know. Whenever she went there and whenever she came back one guy was following her and he proposed her

B: Eh ok

T: He proposed her. She informed those things with her parents. So what her parents did was saying there is no need to go for work or anything. You please be here in home like they told and they stopped here. So for time being she is in home even though she has some interest and she want to do something but her parents now are scared of sending the girl-child out. And the camp situation. Nerby nearby home, that situation is also not nice. So they don’t want to be there in camp or else being in India. Because they are thinking it is not the safest place for girls her

B: Ok

T: So they want to go back to Sri Lanka. The parents is telling to go back

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: So what she is feeling means she doesn’t like to go back to Sri Lanka also. She doesn’t want to, but her parents want to go back. She doesn’t want to go back because she doesn’t know anything about Sri Laka. At least she knows her, where she did her schoolings, she has some friends her. If I go back to this country she is telling I don’t know anything about that country

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: What she is telling is her now she is not going anywhere. For this interview purpose now today she came. Here itself the parents are making here to be at home close to all the time. They use ask her "Be in home, be in home". So her she is used to being in home. What they are telling is once we go back to Sri Lanka there you can go wherever you want. Where you wish to go. Her parents are telling. What she is telling the annoying thing itself is here parents are not allowing her to go out, that if I went to Sri Lanka that is annoying place no for me? So I will feel insecure like…

B: Ok, in Sri Lanka she will feel insecure?

T: Ya
B: Ehmm ya… So you would prefer to stay in India
R2: Ya
T: Ya
B: Ya ok…. Do you feel that there is a lot of interest in your situation in the… in the Indian society? Do you feel like there is a lot of interest in knowing about your situation?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is thinking means her father and mother want to be there in Sri Lanka, but she wants to be here. Because what her father and mother was telling her means compared to India we can be, live a beautiful and happy life in Sri Lanka. So they are telling. But she doesn’t know how that can be possible for her, because from her childhood itself, from her childhood to growing up to know she has been living her life here. She doesn’t know how the lifestyle will be for her, how the entire process will be getting if she will be moving entirely to there. That is what she is telling.
B: Aha, yes
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling means actually she wants to be here in India. But she wants to go back to her home because of citizenship.
B: Ah ok
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually they want to be here because Indian government did many good things for them. They have given, provide, when they came here as refugees they have given place for them. They have given cash dole, water, things they need. Everything government has been giving to them. So they want to show thankful to the Indian government. But still she want to go back to her country
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them got married Indian guy, or many married Indian girls of the guys… How dou you say
B: No I understand they have…
T: They transferred their….
B: Ya
T: Relationships. So they want to be here, but also they want to go there
B: Ok. Do you feel like there would be… Is there any chance…. Is there any possibility to get Indian citizenship do you feel?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Laughs
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil

(Seems they don’t agree with each other)
T: According to her (R1) thinking it seems the Indian government will provide everything for them. And she thinks government will provide citizenship also, maybe in the future.
B: Maybe in the future, ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If a guy married a girl. If a Sri Lankan guy married an Indian girl it means the guy will take the girl along with him to Sri Lanka and they are living a life there. If an Indian guy marry a Sri Lankan girl it means that girl will be with that guy no? For that girl she can get citizenship
B: She can get citizenship ok
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Everyone will get. Inter-related married at least for them they may get, like that she is telling
B: Mhmm ok
T: *Speaks tamil (directed to R2)
R2: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: She doesn’t have any comments about this
B: Ok. That is fine… Ok, so ehm. But do you feel like
(Interruption for lunch plan)
B: Yes, ehm. Do you feel like there is eehm… a lot of interest in listening to you and what you have to say about your situation?… From journalist, government, NGOs, do a lot of them want to hear your opinion?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling is they want to ask. They want to suggest one thing only, with (NGO name) only not anybody else. What they are telling previously (NGO name) constructed toilet there in the camp it seems. Now one part of the toilet is good and it’s going well, but one part of the toilet is broken. Some people itself broke the door and the roof, everything they broke. So they want to construct it again
B: A new one
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Also if renovated it would be good for them
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Because of population density. It’s over no? That’s why they can’t control the people. They are doing whatever they want. If they want means they will close the door very fast and they will break it. Like people mistake *indistinguishable, but even though they are requesting (NGO name) to renovate that bathroom.
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling for each and every individual home. If the government or any NGO would be providing for each home one toilet. Or two homes one toilet. They can keep it safe. They can put privacy like locks and keep it very safe. If government provided means
it would be useful for them.
B: Mhmm. Have you made that suggestion to the government?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: No what she means is in the previous when they came here. Soon after that government built the toilet. But ow presently NGOs are helping them. So they want to sake with the NGOs only not with government
B: Aha eeh
R1: *Speaks tamil
B: Yes?
T: Nothing. She is telling the same thing like many is using the toilets. Thats why they want one family, two families one toilet. Or three families. At least three families one toilet. They can keep it safe. Others will not go in their. So at least three families will take responsibility for one toilet. If anything happens to that they will take responsibility and renovate she says.
R1: *Speaks tamil
B: Yes?
T: Ya, same…
B: Ok... Eehm.... You told me before about discrimination in your school. Is this something you feel happen a lot in other places as well? (directed to R2)
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Till school only she was there no? In all schools it is there she knows
B: In all the schools?
T: Ya ya
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Her parents wanted her to join a college also. But she is not interested to go to college because to this problem only. So this is why she is avoiding college
B: Ok. Is there the same problem in other areas of society as well?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, everywhere.
B: Everywhere?
T: In all the camps they are facing those problems. In other camps the children are facing the same problems
B: Ok. How about in workplaces? Is it the same?
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling means in school only we will learn good things bad thing every things. In school we will learn no? What is good things? But in school itself teachers is doing this discrimination. It means where will it go, like this she is expressing her feeling
B: Mm ok. Do you have a lot of contacts with Indian citizens?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, they have
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They use to mingle with many Indians. When they are traveling in train or in bus. Wherever they are going they are helping others and others is helping them. So for everything they need some help from Indians no? So they use to mingle with them
B: Aha. And how about refugees outside of the camp? Do you have any contacts…
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
T: (Speaks about the AC)
T: Yes?
B: The question was about refugees outside…
T: What she (R1) was telling means refugees outside refugees are getting more funds from their relations, those outside of the country like Australia or Canada. From those they are getting more money. That’s why they are feeling happy, according to her thoughts, outside refugees are very happy
B: Ok. But do you… Eeeeh… Do you have any contacts yourself with outside refugees?
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: No
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: None of her relations are like that, outside so she doesn’t…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: One of her relations were outside refugees so they had contact. But they also went to Sri Lanka back
B: Ok. Do you know anyone who have settled in a third country? Another country?
T: Sorry?
B: Eeh. If they know anyone, any Sri Lankan, who lives in another country?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: No
B: No? Ok. Ehmm… Do you follow news and events about what is happening in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Through television, through newspaper news also, through phone they use to gather and collect news about Sri Lanka
B: Mhmm. And are you also interested about what happens in India? News and recent events from India?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: No no no
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: People are there in Sri Lanka. They use to call them only, so they use to collect
information from them
B: Ah, you get it from your contacts in Sri Lanka?
T: Ya
B: Eehmm…. Is there anything that you feel, anything that you feel is important that you
want to talk about? That I have not asked you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Laughs
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: You asked, you covered maximum number of questions. Through those questions they
told you everything about the camp it seems. So she (R1) is telling. Only you foot to ask
one question
B: Ok? Which one?
T: That is about their jobs. What type of jobs they are doing outside, when they are going
out of the camp
B: Ok….
T: You should ask that question she says
B: Yes. What are the jobs you are doing?
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Painting
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Fitting. Fitting, plumbing.
B: Yes. Fitting, plumbing painting…
R1: *speaks tamil
T: Ladies use to do helper work in shoe companies. Stiching, pasting, packing
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Little little shops, like selling in the shops
B: Mhmm
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Some of them are working in steel companies. Or road companies. Steel, road,
something. Manufacturing companies. Automobiles
B: Mobiles?
T: Automobiles
B: Oh automobiles, yes
T: Because of this many of them are spoiling their hands. Getting some skin problems,
health problems
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Next to the camp they have zip code, you know zip code?
B: Zipcart?… No I don’t know…
T: Zipcode
B: Zipcom? No? What?
R1: Zipcode
T: Zipcode. S-I-P-C-O-D-E.
B: S-I-P-C-O-D-E?
T: Yes, zipcode. It is an industrial area.
B: Oh! Zipcode! Ok!
T: Yes, zipcode. It is an industrial place. There they have all types of companies. Like automobiles, manufacturing companies. All types of companies will be there. Many of the guys are going there for helper works. Not… If they are educated well also they will not get any good jobs. They will work as a *indistinguishable or as a helper. Small small work
B: Ok. Is it possible to get permanent or is it daily labour?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them are doing for daily wages, not permanent. A few of them maybe will do permanent because they are doing long but years they are working no? That’s why they are given permanent
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Even though many of the children are educated also. If a guy is educated also he did an undergraduate also he did a master also he doing painting work
B: Painting jobs mm. It is hard to get other jobs?
T: Ya because government is giving preference to Indian citizens only
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them did engineering course, some engineering courses, have an engineering diploma. Basics in engineering. Also they are going for the same painting work
B: Mhmm
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Few of them did a doctor also. Except that doctors are higher educated also but they are doing the same work. They are doctors also getting small cleaning only
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: From Indian government no? Previously, the year 1990 tell to those government provided space to these children to do doctors degree here in India. Nowadays the government is not providing space for them to do doctor courses
B: To do PhDs?
T: So doctor courses in the sense medical doctor.
B: Aha medical doctor
T: So they are not providing to do that B: Ah oh.
T: So they are not providing to any MDs
B: are there any other subject that you can’t study?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes. They can choose only engineering. Engineering they can do. But they are not allowed to take doctorship from Indian government. Even though they are taking the highest scoring marks also, they are taking state first ranking, government will not provide.
B: You mean…
T: Medicine
B: Medicine
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of the children is doing nursing courses
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Nursing. Basic nurses
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They will do only nursing because government is not providing sheets no? For doctor medicine course. That is why they are doing nursing alone
B: Ok
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They will give physiotherapy. Physio… Like videos for them. For that and all they will allow. But not exactly for medicine, general medicine
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She is telling one of her neighborhood guys is doing physiotherapy. Through some NGOs they are getting support so he can do it
B: He is working with it or studying?
T: Sorry
B: Is he working with physiotherapy?
T: Ya. For colleges and all they may get help from government or NGOs. They get help and all and they are doing.
B: Eeh… Is there anything else you like to add?
T: *speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she (R1) is asking is: Is this it or do you want to ask any more information? Then you please ask us
B: I don’t have any more questions. But if there is something you feel you like to talk…. T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She (R1) is feeling very happy about you. She is happy to speak to you
B: Ok. Thank you! I am happy to speak to you too
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What she (R2) is telling means from her childhood she was facing many problems no? With her schooling and all that she shared. She was neglected and she was seen by her teachers itself being discriminated. From her childhood she wanted to share those things with someone like someone will hear her story. Like she felt lost. But today you were the
only person to have asked those things to me. So I felt so happy. Thank you to hear my words. So she is telling
B: Oh. Thank you very much for sharing it with me. I appreciate it a lot
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What she… So she is happy about that. Because she felt that previously nobody was there to hear my story. So she felt. Like she says, what she share, her feelings and everything she shared everything openly with you
B: I am very happy that you wanted to do that. I appreciate that a lot. Thank you!
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is saying is when you are done with your thesis if you share it with (NGO name). She will ask for it and she will be very happy to study your thesis
B: Yes. You are very welcome to do that. Thank you! And thank you for wanting to talk to me. Thank you

Interview 1D (transcription) : Woman, 36 years old, camp refugee
(Respondent starts talking about how she came her already when I introduce myself. I have to stop her to tell her about why I’m here, my research, that she will be anonymous in my paper and to sake her if it’s ok that I record our conversation. Then I proceed where I interrupted her)
Benjamin: Ok… So you came to Mandappam Camp in Rami Swarm, right?
Translator: Yes, they reached Rami Swarm
B: Yes. And I’m sorry. I interrupted you. What were you going to say?
T: What? What actually?
B: No I said that I am sorry I interrupted her and asked what she was going to say when I did
T: *Speaks tamil
Respondent: *Speaks tamil
T: If you ask questions she will answer
B: *Laughs. Ok ok. I will start then by asking some background questions and then I will go more into the topics.
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Nods
B: Ok?
T: Ok
B: Ok… How old are you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She is 36 years old
B: 36?
T: Yes
B: Ok… And are you married?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes. And she has three boys and one girl
B: Three boys and one girl? Ok… What religion do you have?
T: What village?
B: Religion religion
T: Religion
B: Yes
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She belongs to christian. Her husband belongs to hindu. So she follows hindu
B: Ok. Eehm. And do you have a job
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No, not at the time. She is housewife
B: Ok. Do your husband work?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Painting. Painting work
B: Painting, ok. Eeh… And you came in 1990?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Nods T: Yes
B: 1990 ok. Have you always lived in the camps or have you ever lived outside of the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Always inside the camps
R: *Speaks tamil
T: After Mandappam camp. They shifted, government officials shifted to
*indistinguishable. From
*indistinguishable, in there 8 years. From that they had some family problems like this is…
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil. Her husband had some big operation. Operation in the stomach B: Ah ok
T: So they changed their home to Phulal camp
B: Phulal?
T: Ya
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: As why they select this camp, it was they have husband relations here. So because that
they selected. After that they * Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: 2007 onwards they are living here
R: *Speaks tamil
B: Ok. So you were able to choose which camp to go to?
T: Yes, they choose. They choose from local revenue inspector to shift their home to
here.
B: Ok
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: For surgery the government official sent, the doctor sent her husband from
*indistinguishable to Chennai. So that they changed they place.
B: Ok. And then you could choose from the camps in Chennai?
T: Yes yes
B: Ok. Why have you chosen to live in the camps instead of outside of the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: The reason being is they are not taking outside is economic support. Usually
from inside the camp they will get E.B, free E.B B: Sorry? Free…?
T: E.B.
B: E.B?
T: Electric Bill
B: Ah ok
T: Yes Electric Bill. Free housing, free water, everything is free. But outside it is not
possible. They don’t have enough money to live outside. They are spending money for her
husbands disease, for his surgery. They have also three small kids, small small kids.
When the kids are very small they need more money. Economically *indistinguishable,
so that only they selected camp.
B: Ok. And how would you describe life in the camp? And I am very much interested in
hearing about your thoughts and opinions, and this goes for all my questions, so feel free
to expand on what you think is important.
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually, there in Sri Lanka, they have a land, they have a home, they have a separate
bathroom, separate toilet and a lot of room *indistinguishable so they are used to doing
outside. But here everything is lost. Like they have a small house, like 10x10 feet, 100
square feet home and if they are going outside other children are coming inside and their
children are going outside so they can not control it. So they are facing this type of
problem.
B: Mhmm, eehm. And how about… Do you have any suggestions on how you could
improve this situation?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Ok, what she is expecting from the government. In 2007, during 2007, they had a
jewel. They had jewel, gold gold
B: Aha ok..
T: Gold that they keep in the locker in the bank. The bank gave 30.000 money for lease.
They made a home for that money, separate inside the camp. After that they could not get
it back because they had economical depression in the family. So the jewel is lost, now
the bank is not giving jewel. They can not get back the jewel now, no?
B: Ok
T: Yes. And the home is now under the situation of falling down, the roof, everything,
there is no…. Everything is expired. Everything is expired, like the sticks the bamboo
sticks, everything is expired. So they, the government, they expect the government to
build a new home. It would be good for them.

B: Ok. Aha… Eehm. If you… Who do you go to if you have any requests like this? Any suggestions like this?

T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil

T: She passed all the information during the collector’s meeting and the commissioner’s office meeting inside the camp. Orderly they informed. But by the by government officials are giving priority to common problems like drainage, and other like toilet facilities. But not.. But not interested to build home or anything

B: Ok. So how often do they have these meetings? With the collector’s office and the commissioner’s office?

T: Sorry?

B: How often do they have these meetings?

T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil

T: 6 months. 2 per year

B: Ok. Every 6 months?

T: Yes

R: *Speaks tamil

T: They are mostly giving preference to common problems like toilet and these things

B: Yes

T: They are not giving importance to this

B: And in these meetings are there a lot of interest in participating? Are there a lot of people from the camp participating in the meetings?

T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil

T: Those who are interested in the camp will participate in the meetings. There is this problem, candidates will participate… Want to meet particular authority. Sometime the job goers are just going and not participating in the meeting. Except them, most of the people in the camp participate.

B: Eeh. And do you have any representative who represent you in your contacts with the government?

T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil

T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil

T: From inside the camp they have a camp committee. From the camp committee they have a camp leader. First she will go to the camp leader and he will ask any information, like any problem or request or any letter or anything to ask the higher authority like government officials. Or they can directly proceed with them. In camp we have Q-bransch office. In front of the shop, it’s there. From there she collect the information or collect a phone number from them and straightly call them, call the government officials then they will come to camp and meet there.

B: Ok ok. So which way do you prefer to go?

T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are going straight to meet with the higher authorities. Individually. Individually they are going to meet the higher authorities like government officials. The government officials inside, Qbransch is there, revenue inspectors are there. They are the primary authority to collect the information from the camp to the government. So they call them and when they visit they meet them and give request letter to Q-branch. And after that they will proceed

B: Ok. How do you feel the relationship is with you and the authorities?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Based on individual character in the camp, the person that are Q-bransch, their individual character. If they are going there then they say to go outside and wait for 5 minutes, sometimes they say 10 minutes, sometimes 15, sometimes hesitant to talk. Like… Like the face individually like (makes grumpy face)

B: *Laughs. Ok

T: So they can not mingle with them easily. So they will proceed another only, also they are facing same problem. They are expecting what their wishes until they achieve. Like they are waiting waiting waiting to get their information

B: Ok

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Actually her husband. What her individual problem is, her husband 2007 proceed to go to Sri Lanka by boat. That time what happened the revenue inspector cancelled registration, a number they are given you know, that number they cancelled. So she proceed… Next time the government, Q-branch called and arrested her husband *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Around two months they were inside the jail. Her husband! Her husband inside the jail. After that they had had to fill out flyers and after that they came back to home. During that time registration was cancelled. After that she proceeded to new registration from collector to also commissioner. Commissioner is the highest authority for that. The commissioner’s office they are the writing persons of the… They saw the refugees are coming going coming going. They are directly hesitant. Directly hesitant and directly said “Why are you coming? You come with new certificate, new ration card, new things, new certificate, new things new things. You was given when you came here, initially reached here”. They ask many many questions and she could not answer and they lost everything. They lost so far since 2007 the certificate.

B: You have no registration?

T: She is having, but her husband

B: Aha, he is not

T: So far not having. 2000 onward, 2007 onwards not having the number. But but, so that only he is not getting cash dole *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: She is only getting cash dole only for her as well as her child. Three children

B: Mm. You said they removed it because he went to Sri Lanka. How is t for you to travel to other places? How is your freedom of movement?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: For migrating only for other job. For work. Work related. What she says she initially gets permission from Q-branch by letter. Writing letter. After that the Q-branch officially inform to the revenue inspector. B: Revenue inspector? T: Mm, revenue inspector. After that their cash dole, their enrollment number is not to be cancelled. Otherwise it will be cancelled. B: Mm. You need to get the permission first. T: First thing is they are getting permission from the camp. After that only they go outside. B: Mhmm. And eeh... What reason eeh.. did they give for not giving your husband his registration back? What was their motivation? T: *Speaks tamil R: *Speaks tamil
T: She says the Q-branch and the commission they are blaming others, each others. When they are going to get the permission the local Q-branch is saying: "You go to commissioner's office". The commissioner's office is saying: "You go to the local Q-branch". They are saying directly you go there, you go there, go there, go there. But she is going here and there and there is no solution. So she says it is like that. They have all the documents in their home. But no solution. B: Ok R: *Speaks tamil
T: Only depending on the individual character of the Q-branch only. If they tink they will give immediately. B: Sorry, if they? T: Enrollment number. If they think like, local Q-branch, if they think they want to help her husband they straightly give. She doesn’t need to go here and there. But they don’t think like that. B: Ok, it depends on the person, the officer? T: Ya ya B: Mhmm ok… I want to go back a little to the system with the commission and the camp leader. How do you think this system is working for you? T: *Speaks tamil R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually the camp committee. Before they created. But now the committee is not good, not strong. So they are meeting in the coming sunday and there only they re going to decide, they are going to elect one camp member. I think they don’t have any (Phone rings)
B: Ah sorry, it’s mine. *Shuts off phone
T: Now they are planning to select a new camp leader the next sunday, coming sunday B: Aha ok… Is there high interest in the meeting? Will there be a lot of people there?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil

T: In the camp they select him no? Like they have respected people no? Good people who are respected and good to talk to the government. Or the most interested in the camp, camp individual will be selected like that only. Those who come in front of the community will be selected.

B: Those who are coming?

T: Yes, those who are coming very interested. If I come and say I am interested in being camp leader means he will ask, request, from everybody. If everybody say: "Ok, you are a good leader". They will select him, like that. So the individual is selected.

B: Ok. In what ways do you think the camp committee has become weaker, or become worse?

T: Sorry?

B: In what ways? How?

T: Sorry

B: In what ways does she think the committee has become worse? Because she said it has become weaker, right?

T: Weaker, yes. *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Actually the camp committee. Recently their weakness is. If they are having some problem like electricity problem. If someone is using washing machine, somebody is using induction stove. So the problem, small small problem. Like they are using most of the power. Others are using less of the power. So the area is very dim and sometimes the cable connection is lost. That means the individual, because the homes are very narrow, continuous homes, so the individual problems come to the group, the camp committee. So the camp leader goes to solve the problem, during solving the problem he indicates somebody: Indicates like: "You are the wrong. You are the wrong"

B: Ok

T: That she mean for the camp is not good. So that is a problem. So the 20 members are in the camp committee, one or two left on one problem

B: Eh, they…?

T: Ya, 20 members in the camp committee, around 20 member. Initially one problem came in and one is left. One is left. One is gone

B: One is gone?

T: Yes. And another time, another problem and another one gone. Another time, another one gone. So totally now is everyone gone. That’s what’s the problem. Now also the camp leader is not willing to do the work.

B: Ok, he is not taking care of the problems… Ehm. And if they are any changes taking place, like rule changes or any changes in the camp. Are you asked of your opinions before the changes are being made?

T: Any changes? What is any changes?

B: Ehm… Like for example rule changes, for example if they change the rules for how to get permission for traveling. Or something like that.

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: What she said now, initially they are getting permission from Q-branch by handwriting. So that if they change or leave for another camp it means they collect the
letter from local Q-branch from Phulal. If they want to leave for another camp means they have to leave a letter to Q-branch by hand so they can stay there. It is a nice way and there is nothing wrong with that.

R: *Speaks tamil
T: The reason that, if they are getting permission, they want to go to Mandavaram(?). It is around three km away from the camp. Sometime immediately they want to go to another camp it means they have to wait. The process is a little too wide. So what she suggest is that, if it is possible to elect these facilities to the camp leader. Like getting permission from the camp leader and going outside would be nice. Nice she is expecting likewise.
B: Aha. Have you made that suggestion to the authorities?
T: Sorry?
B: Has she made that suggestion to the authorities? If they can do that. If the camp leader could do that. Has she suggested that?
T: Oh ok ok. *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No because the government is the only one with authority to giving permission. So that they are not allowing camp committee or camp leader. They have not suggested and they are not asking anything so far
B: Why have you not suggested this change?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What the government authorities says is: "If you want permission you come to me". If you want, straightly come to me. So the problem is becoming like this. The camp committee suggest for doing internal work like inside the camp only
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Only she faced one problem. Her brother visit her home. And she informed the camp leader. The other people they told to the Q-branch, like somebody is leaving her home. So the Q-branch quickly visited her home and asked who he is. She said my brother. At the time she said she informed to the camp leader. But the Q-bransch said: "I am Q-branch. I am no camp leader. You don’t pass the information to the camp leader. You straightly pass the information to me". So she was very scolded like he was like that
B: Ok.. Do you inform of your visitors as well? Not only if you go out but also if someone visits?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Not allowed. Like those who don’t have registration is not allowed. Her husband is not allowed inside
B: Ok. He is not?
T: Ya, but it is ok. He is now, he is there. Because he is the only earning member *indistinguishable around the family, earning member. So he must be there. But in the rule, what the government rule says is those who don’t have registration ID is not allowed in there. But the government, the Q-branch knows about her husband. So that he allows
B: That they allow. Ok.. Does he had permission or is it just something…
T: No no. No permission or anything like that. It is just safe corner, like that.
B: Ok… Eeh… How is it with work? Is it hard for you to find work and what work do you do?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Mostly the people are taking contract inside the Chennai or nearby the Chennai. So the painting work there is no opportunity. So what initially they paid 600-650 rupees per day. But now only 400-450 rupees only. Sometimes 100 rupees goes to other expense like other allowances like traveling. But now it is very risky like they have a ladder from top to bottom, like tie ladder you know? Or rope, rope letter. It is very risky
B: Aha
R: *Speaks tamil
T: For the last six months, only three weeks he is going for work. For low wage. Per day, 400-450 only.
B: What is your hopes for the future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are *indistinguishable they are studying their life, because there is no proper income, proper guidance. Every day they are facing difficulties like children have any problem so they want to spend money. So they are getting money from outside and they want to repay aging. Like it is not confident for her. If they are going to Sri Lanka they have some problem so they reason like that. So what they chose is the children, that they study, that after they study they will get money and take care of their family. But what means is they have lost their faith for what their children will be doing. They don’t have a forecasting nature
B: They don’t have?
T: Forecasting nature. They don’t have future. Future plan. Nothing, not anything
B: Mm ok… Do you think there is any possibility that you will get Indian citizenship in the future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Sometime in the government official meeting they ask citizenship. But the government official in the meeting say: ”Ok, we can see”. But there is no proper guidance or no proper solution.
B: Ok. You said that you would be facing some problems in Sri Lanka as well. What types of problems?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What she said means if they are going there. Somebody is saying it is very nice, there is no problem. Somebody is saying there is problem. What she is saying means her friend was there. Government related, government government… spy for the special investigation in the government office and they called them. After that they stated this no. Where they are going, they don’t know anything. But after that the man is not… They want to lost their family. Because they called and the person is not going anywhere means what they do. The government official says he is there, he is there. But there is nothing. But the government what they are doing, they don’t trust it. So they are in fear about Sri Lanka.
B: Ah ok. Eeh… Do you have a lot of contacts with friends and relatives in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Only her matter is talking to her from Sri Lanka, but nobody others. They have relations, no?
B: Ok. And what does your mother tell you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Sometime her mother is saying you come to her. Sometime her mother saying you make your children study well in India and after study you come back again. Because they are having. Economically they are getting 1000 rupees per day. But for tea expense only 500 rupees, it means they can not spend. So you can spend her because (NGO name) and (NGO name) is supporting you and government is also giving cash dole to you and some things you are getting from here. But sometimes she is asking why are you not coming? Sometimes she is telling like this
B: Mhmm, so she change? Ok. How… How would you describe the relationship between the people in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: From her point of view they have a great home, but not having continuous home. So she is not going any outside or anywhere. She only spending more time for her family, her children, for watching *indistinguishable, extracurricular activities. Generally time is going, she doesn’t get any more time than that. So she talks to other but not very closely.
B: Ok. Do you have any contact with refugees outside of the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She doesn’t know anybody who is outside living. She doesn’t know anything about outside refugees. But she knows about other camp people.
B: In other camps ok
T: Because already she has been in other camps. So she knows refugees in other camps, but she doesn’t know outside refugees. They are getting permission from local police station
B: Yes. Do you have contact with Sri Lankans living in third countries? Not India or Sri Lanka, but another country?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: One she studies in Malaysia, one in Senegal(?). She is fourth girl child in her family. Totally five girl children in her family
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She doesn’t have her father because he died in early stage in health disease
B: Health disease? My condolences
T: Ya, health disease
B: Eehm. How would you describe your relationship to….. Do you have a lot of contact with Indian citizens?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She knows other Indian citizens from her husbands work. Her husbands colleagues only. In Mandappam camp only one family she knows because she is selling some snacks, she has some tea stall near them. So she knows only one family.

B: Ok. Eeeh…. How would you say…. How is the relationship…. How are your relationship with Indians? In workplaces, in school, in places like that.

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Mostly Indians have faithful talk with them. Initially they are coming to India or they talk initially *indistinguishable means come, come. It’s respect like this "vanga"(?), and "va"(?) means not respect. In Chennai mostly use "va", "va", in Chennai it is respect only. In here it is respect. In there they are not using, it is not respect. So what they think it is degrading so they are mentally depressed sometimes

B: Ok

T: That time only they face like this only

B: Do you feel there is a lot of interest from others, from society, to know about your situation?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Sometime they have problem inside. The family problem. What she think is nobody knows about this problem. Because she keeps shy about that. If her husband break any TV, or is angrily, he gets some drinking habits means she will not tell. She is not interested to share anything to others. She is usually going faithful and she express to others a humble life.

B: Mhmm ok ok… Eehm… Are you interested in Sri Lankan news and recent events?

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Her husband mostly have the TV on, watching news about Sri Lanka. So that she is following. She is also watching TV, like her kids TV

R: *laughs

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: She is interested in the episode, like one part of the film, film. Like episode, one episode, following

B: Yes, series

T: Series, yes

R: Half hour *laughs

B: *laughs. Are you following Indian news as well?

T: *Speaks tamil

R: *Speaks tamil

T: Actually what is the thing is they are not watching Sri Lankan news. In India only they are broadcasting Indian channels only. From that if they are showing any news about Sri Lanka, they are watching that

B: Yes. What I meant is if they are interested in news about news about India as well. Not Indian news channels.

T: Ok. They are interested in news about India. They watch Indian news. And if there is anything about Sri Lanka they watch that as well.
B: Aha… Yes… Is there anything you feel is important or that you want to add that I
have not asked you about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Generally she shared her life and she doesn’t feel anything left out
B: Ok… Then I don’t have any more questions so I thank you a lot for wanting to talk to
me. I appreciate that a lot

Interview 1E (Transcription) : Male, 25 years old, camp refugee
Benjamin: Ok, so let’s start. How old are you?
Translator: *Speaks tamil
Respondent: 25
B: 25?
R: Ya
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
B: Sorry?
T: You are the same age. Or no… You are 23?
B: Yes
R: *Speaks tamil
B: And… Are you married?
R: No
B: And I already know where you work, you work with (company name) *Laughs
R: *Laughs
B: And what is your religion?
R: Village?
T: Religion
R: Religion. Hindu
B: And when did you arrive here in India?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: 2006
B: 2006. Aha. Ehms… And did you stay in the camp from the beginning or have you
stayed outside?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. Rami Swarm
B: Yes, you first came to Rami Swarm.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: After that he transferred to Valani Sagar(?). It’s a camp *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Erol(?) district.
B: Ok. When did you come to Phulal?
T: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
R: *Laughs. 2 years, 2 1/2 years.
B: 2 years ok. Do I pronounce it wrong? Or.. No? Do I pronounce it wrong? Phulal
T: No. You are right. *Speaks tamil
B: So why did you choose to live inside the camps and not outside?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He wish to live outside but government make him to live inside of the camp. That’s why he is living inside
B: Ok. Eehm, and ehm.. What would be the benefits of living outside?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: First he’ll get his freedom
R: Freedom
B: Freedom, mm. Can… Can you expand on in what ways?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Inside the camp they need to get permission. But in outside no need of taking any permission
B: Mm. Ya. Ok… So how would you describe life in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Because heavy population there is no cleanliness inside the camp
B: Cleanliness? Ok ok
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are feeling troubled with that
B: Mhmm…. Is there…
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He is from Valani Sagar(?). His parents are in Valani Sagar (?). Now he is in his brother’s home
B: Ok. Valani Sagar(?) was the previous camp?
T: Yes, another camp
B: Another camp
T: *Indistinguishable camp
B: Aha ok
T: Phulal is in Chennai District, *indistinguishable district. This was in Erol(?) district
B: Ero district?
T: Erol(?)
B: Erol(?)
T: Ya. It is around 6-7 hours there. *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
(Translator talking, drowning in the voice of respondent still speaking Tamil)
B: 2? Or what did you say? 2 hours?
T: Eleven hours travel
R: Twelve, twelve
B: Ok ok. Twelve hours travel
T: Maximum. *Speaks tamil
B: Ok…. Eehm. You said cleanliness was a problem in the camp. Do you have any suggestions on how the situation could be improved?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Government allocated some staff working inside the camp. But sometimes they use to come sometimes they never. Sometimes they never come. *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they are taking steps it means they will come. After that they will not come.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they have any problem that time alone government will come to clean *indistinguishable, other wise they will not. One time one child fell on…
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Last time one child fell with the fever, dengue fever. You heard?
B: Yes yes
T: During that time government send that person to clean that, corporation, corporation came and cleaned everything. After that there is no presence of them
B: Ok. But they are supposed to come every… They are supposed to come consistently
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. One, one week
B: Weekly once, ok. Eehm… What happens… Have you complained about them not coming once a week?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Complaining, they will not come
B: Even if you complain
T: Even if they complain. They will say we will come, but they will not come
B: Ah ok. So so yes…. So how is the response to your complaint? What do they answer you?
T: Weekly means they will be telling orderly. Orderly pass the information. Otherwise when the meeting take place with government officials they will give that complaint
B: Yes ok. But what does the government tell you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They will say they will come but they will not come. Last month one collector visited there. That time they complained to him. At the time they came inside the camp and cleaned everywhere. After that there is no, nothing nothing
B: Ok ok
T: If anybody comes means they will not continue
B: Eh so… Ehm… You have a camp leader and a camp committee, yes? You have a camp leader and a camp committee eeh how eehm… Can you describe to me how this system is working? If you have any suggestion or something
T: *Speaks tamil
B: Can you describe the process?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Around, he was living around 5 years in Valani Sagar(?) camp. After that only he came here. It as only around two years. In there they have, there is no proper camp committee. They have a committee, but they have no leaders. Everybody telling like they are the leader. So they have no proper… Because they have more population. More populated in Valani Sagar camp
B: Ok
T: What the way they are leading is that first they have a petition to camp leader. The camp leader inform to the R.I., the Revenue Inspector. They can go straightly also. In Phulal they have an assistant, R.I. assistant also. He is selected inside the camp. The government official has an assistant. So they can go to the R.I., the assistant, and give the letter to them. After that the
*indistinguishable is closed
B: Ok. Do you prefer going to the assistant or going through the committee and the leader?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He is saying it is a straight way to give it to the R.I. and… Otherwise they are taking it (makes gesture of going through many steps)
B: It takes longer?
T: Yes
B: Ok ok. Eehm. So what do you think about the relationship between people in the camp and the authorities? What is the relationship between people in the camp and the authorities?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Alcohol is the problem. If they are addicted it means they will have a problem with them. During night times if they have alcohol it means they will have fight with them.
B: Who? The authorities
T: Ya. If they took alcohol…
B: Do the authorities drink alcohol?
T: Ya
B: Aha ok
T: They are addicted, you know? They are doing alcohol, they are addicted, so after that they will make a problem inside. Otherwise there is no problem
B: But is that common? That they are drinking during night time?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
T: It depends on the people who are there. Some use to take it night time. Some take it in the morning. Always some of them, a few of them will be on alcohol
R: Always
T: Always always
B: Ok ok
T: But night time mostly they have alcohol.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Sometimes police is in the wrongs, sometimes.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Only on sundays there are many fights. Only on sundays, because on sundays everybody is free and everybody will be drinking
B: Ok… Eehm ok. Can you give an example of anytime you had a request or suggestion and… yes. Can you give an example of a suggestion or request that either you and the community had and how that was received and what happened?
T: Sorry, how?
B: If he can give a concrete example of a time when either he, either you, or the community had a specific request and what happened and how it was received?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They have to write a letter to the collector or the R.I. Otherwise no, nothing happens. If they have any problem they will give a letter to the collector visit, or R.I. visit. Otherwise they will not do anything
B: Ok. But can you give an example of something, some request you gave and was successful?
T. *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *indistinguishable gave the letter to the government official. Last year only they constructed the toilet. After a month passed, or year! Year passed. Only then they provided. It can take 2-3 years before they are providing. And so he is telling now only they are getting
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are getting it late. Late late.
B: Mm. Yes…. Eh ok… So what is your hopes for the future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He doesn’t have hope about India so he wants to go back to Sri Lanka. So not only Sri Lanka but any other country. He needs the changes
B: The changes?
T: Ya. Because here he will not get any improvement it seems so he has been…. He can’t buy any property.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He need to go outside. Outside camp.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Because of citizenship he can’t buy anything here. That’s why he wants to go back. Or to some other areas. Whatever if he will get citizenship
B: Ok. Do you have citizenship in Sri Lanka
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
B: Yes?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He has a citizenship in Sri Lanka. He came here in 2006.
B: Yes. Eehm. Do you have friends and relatives that lives in Sri Lanka?
R: Many friends live in Sri Lanka
B: Many friends. What do they tell you about the situation there?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: In Sri Lanka they are calling them. There is some peace now. But they have individual problems.
B: What kind of problems?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What he is thinking is his brother is in jail, or was was. In Sri Lanka. So if he is going there they will think that he will also be making some problems inside. So the government is always seeing the negative side of them.
B: Ok
T: So he has fear about that
B: Aha ok. Eehm… Ehm yes. Do you feel that there is a lot of interest in the Indian society to know about the Sri Lankan refugee situation?
T: Mostly always they want to know B: Sorry?
T: Yes Indians. Mostly always they want to know about the Sri Lankans.
B: How about in news, and things like that?
T: Yes. There is about the refugees on the Internet and Youtube-channels
B: Youtube-channels? Ok, so it is on alternative news channels?
T: Ya ya
R: *Speaks tamil
T: That is how they collect information about other Sri Lankan refugees. Most people also *indistinguishable
B: Sorry?
T: Sometime also in Tamil papers the news come about refugees.
B: Ok. In Tamil newspapers?
T: Ya ya. In Tamil newspapers
B: Mm ok… So…. How would you describe the relationships between people in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He has many many friends inside the camp so he feels that the relationships… He is happy about it. He is very happy about that
B: Mm. How is it if someone is having any problem or anything like that? Are people helping each other out?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are helping each other
B: Can you give an example?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: With their housing they are supporting
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If someone needs a new sheet they will help
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs. What he is saying is a joke. He is saying he has a bike and if someone needs it they can take it. For collecting girlfriends *Laughs
B: Eh ya.. Ehm and how about refugees outside of the camps do you have a lot of contact with them?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: His main duty in the office is being on the help-line so always talking to outside refugees
B: Through work? Do you have any personal relationships?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes he has many friends outside
B: Aha, eehm…. So are you interested in recent news and events from Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He always knows about what happens, what is going on in Sri Lanka. He is updated on everything?
B: How do you get the information?
R: Facebook friends
B: Facebook friends
T: He has many Facebook friends *Laughs
R: *Speaks tamil
T: There is tamil news on Facebook and so he is tracking
R: Youtube
T: Facebook and Youtube
B: And Youtube, aha. So what are your friends on Facebook telling you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They are telling there is no proper schemes. Actually only one. Wi-fi, the government is providing, free. They can use it. But other than that there are no schemes available for the community.
B: Ok. Eehm… Is this…. Is this something…. What schemes do you think would be needed to facilitate resettlement?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Tamil people need to reach 85% marks for university entrance. But others need 65%. There is discrimination you know? So they are struggling
B: Aha
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Next thing the protection. Tamil people, wherever they can see they shoot it. They shoot.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: The last 2 months more than 20 people died, all of them Tamils. They do not know why. What is the reason
B: Ok, they…. Is… Is those killings being investigated? Is there an investigation?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Oh they are doing their investigation of the killings but there is no result.
B: Ok
T: They do not spread out the investigation results
B: They don’t give out the result?
T: Ya
B: Ok… I was thinking about land. If you go….. Eehm… If someone that owned land in Sri Lanka go back, will they get the land back?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: In Sri Lanka they are planning to build an atomic energy station. But in their project located area they have around 6 acres of land, they will not get it. Because the government allocated it for separate…
B: For the atomic…
T: Ya. The Tamil’s land are going to other projects so they will not get it
B: Ok… Eehm ya. And how about news in India. Do you follow news and what happens in India?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He is always in the system so he only use to update Sri Lankan news. He likes to get more information from Sri Lanka.
B: Aha. Ok…. Eehm. Is there anything you want to talk about? Anything I have not asked you about that you feel is important?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No it’s enough *Laughs
R: *Laughs
T: If you have any more questions you can ask
B: Not on my schedule. But I am trying to think a little if I have any follow-up questions on what you said…..
T: *Speaks tamil
B: Eehm…. Actually…. You said before you had no hope of Indian citizenship so you hoped to go back to Sri Lanka. Do you feel like there is improvements being made in Sri Lanka? That the situation there is going in the right direction? Because you said that you were more hopeful of the possibility of going back to Sri Lanka, so do you feel like there is improvements being made there?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What he said, in last election they have changed president. And what they expected was Tamils will get relief wit the….
B: With the change?
T: Yes, with the change. But they are not getting more changes. Little little changes only
B: Aha, only small changes?
T: Small changes. So they don’t like that. They want more changes
B: Do you feel so far that the new government have been disappointing?
T: Sorry?
B: The new government
T: Ya
B: Does he feel they have been disappointing?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What they did, like bribery and and bad things like that, what they did the last government. The new government want to rectify that, means they are working with this to solve this. But many Tamil people died in Sri Lanka, but they are not finding solution for that. Only they are finding what are the mistakes done, by the previous government
B: Ok ok
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Mostly the government ruler, the last government ruler, was arrested only for the reason of corruption.
B: Arrested? Was he arrested?
T: Yes, the government ruler, last government ruler. They have changed the government ruler, no? The last government ruler was responsible for the war, where his family was. After this he and his family was arrested only for the reason of corruption but not for the reason he killed the people
R: *Speaks tamil
T: For the humanitarian case means he will not come out from the jail. They will not come out from the jail. But now they are only arrested for the corruption reason so they will be released in 1-2 years. There is no permanent solution.
B: Mm ok, no
R: *Speaks tamil
T: There is no permanent solution
B: Is there a Tamil party?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They have a Tamil MP. MP MP. Member of Parliament
B: Oh MP. Yes ok
T: A representative for Tamil Nadu, sorry I mean Tamil people. But in the higher things they will not regard him because he is minimum, he is in minimum, only the person who is there for Tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: The reason also if they go out. If they want to go out. If they want to attract more support from the people. the MP will be shoted
B: Oh ok. Ok…. Mm, ok…. Ok yes, I don’t have anymore question, so if there are anything you like to add?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He already knows about you so he doesn’t need to ask about that
B: *Laughs. Ok. Well, thank you then for wanting to talk to me. I really appreciate it

**Interview 1F (Transcription) : Male, 20 years old, camp refugee**

Benjamin: So ok… So how old are you?
Translator: *Speaks tamil
Respondent: 20
B: 20 ok. And are you married?
R: No married
B: Not married. And do you have a job?
R: No job. I am student.
B: You are studying? What are you studying?
R: I am studying editing for movies
B: Movies. Ah ok. So kind of film studies?
R: Yes
B: So what do you want to work with in the future?
R: Eeeh…
T: What do you want to work with in the future?
R: Future. Film. Movie
T: He is editor.
R: Editing
B: Editing? T: Yes yes. In movies
B: Ok nice.
R: Next
B: What is your religion?
T: Religion?
R: Hindu
T: *Speaks tamil
R: No. Same as you. Hindu. Hindu
B: So when did you arrive here in India?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. Born in India
B: You are born here, ok. So when did your parents arrive here?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: 19
T: 1990?
R: *Speaks tamil T: Oh yes. 1990
B: 1990 ok. Have you lived all the time in the camps or have you lived outside before?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. Born in India
B: Always in the camp. And why did you choose to live inside the camps and not outside?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They have rules
R: Rules in India. We in Sri Lanka live in camps
T: They are not allowed outside so they stay inside
B: Aha ok…. And also… I-I, when I ask questions I am interested in your thoughts and opinions so feel free to expand on what you think is important.
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. Ok
B: So how would you describe life in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. Happy, happy, but… *Speaks tamil
T: He wants to work in the outside. But he needs to get permission from the Commissioner's office so it may take 2-3 months. So he, he said it is little risky. It is not
possible to get permission outside so that’s what he stays back in the camp itself. So for job and all they can’t get any chances. Especially he is interested in movies, no? So for that, for films, they need to…

R: Movie, movie editing
T: Especially he is in film industry, you know. For that he needs to travel to many places to take shots. Shooting and everything. So during that time if he goes out of the camps means they will not give permission because many times he has to stay outside, no? So getting permission to go outside is a problem for him.
B: Ok… Eehm.. Anything else?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No proper housing
R: Water problem, restroom problem. So maybe…*Speaks tamil
T: He can’t buy or purchase any land over here. Because he is a refugee, no? He can’t buy any land…
R: Any property
T: No property. He can’t do the registration to get it. If they are earning also they couldn’t do that
B: Ok
R: *Speaks tamil
B: Mm, yes?
R: Nothing sir
B: Ok. Have you… Is there any way… Or do you have any suggestion on how you can improve those things you just talked about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: So Indians he can marry. He want to marry Indian girl. It means he can get land and everything through her. *Laughs
B: Ok *Laughs
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If anybody want to go outside, they need to get permission from Commissioner’s office. After the y got it they send it to local police station
B: Ok
T: This is another chance to live inside and outside
B: Ok… And how about representation? Do you have someone that represents you and your interests when talking to the government?
T: Sorry, I don’t understand. Do you mean father, mother?
B: No no no. I mean representation in the camp. That can talk to….
T: Ah. *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: They have community leader. He will speak about community problems. But not about family problems.
B: Mhm yes. About community problems, but not family problems. Mhm. How would you… Would you say that the system is working?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What he is telling is they have committee. They have leadership committee. In that committee they will have the discussion, whatever the things they need for that particular community. During that discussion, they will submit some requests from their side. Also, if leader also accepts the request he will submit it to government. If government is willing to do that they will do. Otherwise they will not. Particular things they will do.
B: Ok. What are the kind of things they will do and what are the kind of things they will not do?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Water problem was faced
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Last years they have constructed road and toilets. And water problem was addressed. All these things were provided by the government
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Housing problem was not faced. From government side.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes
B: Ok. How would you describe the relationship you have with authorities? For example how are you met when you ask for permission to go outside?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: It is risky to get a permission
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Government is doing problem for one day travel also. They are not giving permission also. So he is struggling to do a program with others. A job-related program
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Not only for job. For everything. For functions, events or emergencies. If he wants to go to other camps also he needs to take permission.
B: Ok… Eehm… In what ways is it risky? You said it was risky to as for permission? In what ways is it risky?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If they want to get a one week permission to go out means the government will provide three days. If they ask for more the government will give according to their (the government’s) feasibility not according to their (the refugees’) feasibility.
B: Ah ok you mean risky in that sense. That it is hard to get?
T: Ya. And for permission they even have to wait sometimes for five minutes, I mean five hours, hours.
B: Five hours?
T: Yes. He has to wait for a long time to get a permission
B: Ok. What is your hopes for the future?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: His future is all about cinema
R: Cinema cinema
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He wants to go to Andhra, Kerala or Canada
B: Ok. To be able to work with cinema?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He believes he will get good money and good scope in these places only. Not anywhere. That’s why he is willing to go away
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He is telling he has no hope of getting citizenship here.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He has only one aim and that is to marry an Indian girl
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually he is in the line
B: In the line
T: Yes, in the line
R: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs… You can continue
B: Eeh ok… Eehm… So eehm… How about Sri Lanka? Would you like to go back there or…
R: No way
B: No way?
T: *Speak tamil
R: No. No way *Speaks tamil
T: He has a girlfriend. She is in Sri Lanka. So what he is expecting is she has to come back here. He is expecting her presence back here.
B: Ok. So what is your relationship to Sri Lanka? What is your feelings?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He is scared about Sri Lanka
B: You are scared, ok.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He has interest to go there. Not to stay back there. He has interest to go just for a visit
R: *Speaks tamil
T: But he has fear for his life. If he went there he will be no more in the world, that’s why he is scared. That’s why he wants to be here
B: Aha ok. What is your girlfriend saying about Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She is born there. Her birth there. She is citizen of Sri Lanka so she likes that place very much. She… *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: She likes to be there. But she also like to travel India. But her thoughts about Sri Lanka actually is that it’s a nice place to live
R: *Speaks tamil
T: What he is describing about Sri Lankan life is that it is like a foreign culture life. So it is very difficult for people to be here, after here they don’t like to go back. Because the cultural change.
B: The differences ok
T: He doesn’t want to make the cultural change
B: You said your girlfriend was a citizen of Sri Lanka. Are you not a citizen?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Suppose he has to get citizenship in Sri Lanka he has to stay there 6 months in Sri Lanka. Then only will he get citizenship. I think you are asking like this: His girlfriend has citizenship in Sri Lanka so if he marry her he will also get citizenship?
B: No, that was not what I was asking. I just wondered if he did not have citizenship. Is it because you were born here? Is that the difference that you were born here in India and therefore you need to be there 6 months?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, they need the 6 months. But he has the identification that he is a refugee so he has a chance to get citizenship.
B: Ok… Eehm. Do you feel there is a big interest in knowing about you situation? Among… In the Indian society? Among… Is there many people asking you about your situation? Like journalist or people like me?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: No no
T: Actually I don’t think I am getting your question
B: If there is a big interest in Indian society to know about the situation for Sri Lankan refugees?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: We are not clear about your question
B: Ok… Eeh. Whether or not the Indian society, in Indian news and in Indian poetics and so forth, if there is a lot of focus on the situation for refugees?
T: Indian society?
B: Yes yes
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He has no idea about that. His thoughts are fully about cinema. If you ask any question
regarding cinema he will answer. He has perfect answers for that.
B: Ok *Laughs
R: *Laughs
B: Ok. Well, is there any movies about the refugee situation
R: *Speaks tamil
B: Yes? There is?
T: He is editing a story it seems
B: Ah you are making a movie about it?
R: Yes
B: You are filling a void in that sense?
R: No? *Speaks tamil
T: He is making a short film about the refugees
B: Ok
R: *Speaks tamil
B: Ok…. So is there lot of… Is there a lot of interest in knowing about your thoughts and
opinions, from authorities and NGOs and things like that. Are they interested in knowing
about your thoughts and opinions about the situation for refugees?
T: Situation in what way?
B: About eehm…. their needs and… Needs, requests, wishes
T: From government and NGOs?
B: Yes
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No job because they are refugees
R: *Speaks tamil
T: So they are studying and everything but they don’t get any jobs because they are Sri
Lankan. Or any other, any type of loan. He is getting support from his father, but same
ways low class or middle-low class people they can’t study because of the economic
situation.
B: Ok…. eehm…. You said before that your future was in cinema, and you also said in the
beginning that it’s hard because you have so much restrictions to go outside. What do you
feel would have to change for you to be able to work with cinema in the future.
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He doesn’t have a space to keep is equipment so he needs to have a new home. He
needs to be able to buy a home. After that he needs to buy equipment for movies. After
that he needs to get a *indistinguishable. After that he wants to do more things
B: Ok.. So this means that you…. That you have to… What needs to be changed, for that
to happen, and correct me if i’m wrong, is that you need to have less restrictions on
movement and you need to be able to buy land and property?
T: Sorry
B: I said that if I understand correctly, what needs to change for him to be able to meet
his future plans is less restrictions of movement and the possibility for him to buy land
and property?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: And hard work
B: And hard work. Of course
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He has a friend team. He has one team
R: Indian friends
T: Indian friends. With the help of his Indian friends he is planning to buy all the materials. It is a partnership system. Then only he can develop his plan. He can develop his career
B: How did you meet your team?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: College college
B: They go to the same college as you?
R: Yes
B: Aha ok and…. Eehm. How… How would you…. In college and general in Indian society how would you describe the relationship between Indian citizens and Sri Lankans?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: In a small age people used to see him differently. But nowadays everything is equal. Now they are treated equally. Because of language, initially because of the language…
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Even though they are speaking Tamil the slang is different, different accents, no? So that’s why people used to see them differently *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Because of language they used to blame them and they used to *indistinguishable also
B: Sorry? Keep them?
T: Blame. They use to blame them. And…. Mock, mocking them
B: Aha ok
T: Make fun of them because of the language
B: Yes… The change you are talking about, before you were treated different but now you are treated equal…
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Now he learned how to speak with friends and how to speak with family
B: Ah he changes..
T: Ya, he changes. With his friend he use to speak normal tamil. With his family normally what they use to speak.
B: Aha ok
T: He speaks different from what he does in the camp.
B: And… How would you describe the relationship between people in the camp?
R: Normal
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
(We are getting tea)
T: When he is inside the camp they are talking to each other like normal. They are, they have the most respect for each other it seems. They can talk to each other like they want
only inside the camp, they can’t talk with Indian citizens like they talk inside the camps.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: How they are talking to their school friends. How they are talking to their family. It is not possible to talk to Indians like that.
B: Mhmm… How is the…. Is it mmmm…. If a family have any problem, is it common you help each other out?
T: *Speaks tamil
R. *Speaks tamil
B: No?
R: No
T: They will not support. Each and every one has to help their own
B: Ok. And *Coughs. Sorry. And how about Sri Lankan refugees that live outside of the camps, do you have any contact with them?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No, he doesn’t
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, yes he does. He doesn’t have any relations that is living outside of the camps, that’s what he is telling. But he does know people staying around Chennai
B: In other camps or outside?
T: Outside
B: And how about Sri Lankans living in a third country, outside of India and Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes he knows. A few have migrated from here. Illegally.
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Those who travel illegally, he knows everybody.
R: Everybody *Laughs
B: Everybody? *Laughs
T: Those who went from the camp where he is from
R: Facebook friends
B: Do you keep close contact?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He got an order from Canada it seems. A friend gave an order for composing songs
B: Composing?
R: Yes
B: Ok. So for a movie?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Album, for an album
R: Small
T: A small small album
B: Ok ok.
T: He needed to work on that from there. Tamil friend wanted him to stay over there.
*Speaks tamil
R: Ya, he is Sri Lankan
B: Mm… And do you follow the news about India or Sri Lanka?
T: Sorry
B: Do you follow the news about India or Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Indian news
B: You are not interested in knowing about recent events in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tam
T: He doesn’t want to know little little things about Sri Lanka. He wants to know about the big issues. If there is any major program or any major thing happening there he will listen to that news. Otherwise he is not interested
B: You are more interested in things that happen in India?
R: Yes
T: Yes *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He got an opportunity to travel to Canada from an agent that works with him and his group. He needed to have a passport. So he went to the passport office to get a passport but what they told is he is born in India so he doesn’t have a citizenship of Sri Lanka also. No valid ID. So if he goes there, to Sri Lanka, to get a passport means they will also not give a passport immediately. They will make him to stay back there for long, then they will give. Because in India, he is born here no, so they will not give. And here also they are telling him we are not able to provide. So he is struggling to get a passport
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If he was born in Sri Lanka means he would get the passport easily.
B: Because he…
T: Yes. Because in his certificate it is written that he is born in India.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He is born here but he is not a citizen here. But he is not getting passport from Sri Lanka. What is the reason? Some… He say it must be some misunderstanding
B: Mhmm
T: ”You are born in India, why are you coming here for passport”. Likewise the government will ask. They question them. It is trouble to get passport here?
B: What was your invitation to Canada about?
T: Sorry?
B: His invitation to Canada. What were you going to do in Canada?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Wild photographer
R: So I need traveling for the job so…
T: Traveling along with him to do a job. The same thing wild photographer
R: So I need passport
B: You need a passport, yes yes
T: He will get around 15.000. After that he will get according to the agreement more than 10.000.
B: Ok…. Is there anything you would like to talk about that you think is important that I have not asked you about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: *Laughs B: Sorry?
T: Nothing. He is making fun. Just joking. He is speaking about your color
B: Aah, well yes. As usual
T: Yes, everybody is speaking about your color
B: Yes *Laughs
T: You are also thinking about it now, right?
B: No, I am not thinking about it but i am getting used to it because everybody is always asking about my color
T: Actually, what he is asking is means he needs tips to become white-skinned
R: *Laughs
B: Tips? *Laughs. I don’t think I have any tips and I don’t think you need any either because why would you want to be white-skinned? There is no need
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
B: I think I can stop this (the recording) now.

**Interview 1G (Transcription) : two women (43 and 27 years old), camp refugees**

Benjamin: Ok, so. So how old are you two?
Translator: *Speaks tamil
Respondent 1: *Speaks tamil
T: She is 43 years old (respondent 1)
B: 43. And you?
R1: 27
B: 27. Eeh. Are you married?
R2: Ya
R1: Mm
T: Both are married
B: Both are married. Eehm. Do you have any jobs?
R2: (NGO name)
R1: (NGO name)
B: (NGO name), aha. Eehm. When did you come here to India?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1:*Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: 89 (R1). 96 (R2)
B: 89 and 96 ok. And, eh how long…. Have you lived in the camps the whole time?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Before when they came… they came from Sri Lanka. They were there in Rami Swarm, the place where they come. They stayed there in two years as refugees and then they sent them here to this camp.

B: To this camp, ok.

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: She was there in that particular place, no? When the refugees are coming they use to be there in that place. A place which is called Rami Swarm

R1: Rami Swarm

T: Rami Swarm camp. One camp is there, big camp. Refugees will be there until another place gets allotted to them. A large sum of refugees will be there until they get other places for them.

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: What she is saying is here 1990, soon after they came out from that *indistuinguishable, that camp I told you about, no? Soon after refugees will be there. After one year what they did was they put them inside the prison, you know prison

B: Yes

T: Here we have big prison in Chennai. They put them in prison. *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Ok. One old jail was there. They put all the people inside the jail and they were not allowing them to go out. They were given food and everything inside. Not even, they are not coming out…

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: They were given a time. From morning 6 to evening 6 they could go out. But only to do work. After 6 they had to be inside the jail. They set some certain rules and regulations it seems. That time in 1990s. It was continuing

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: It was continuing for six years. They felt that it was very difficult at that time so what they did was to fast many days. You know here for everything they will have fasting. For whole days, a number of days they will fast. So accordingly they fast many days. *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: 7 days. They fast 7 days without taking food or nothing. They were sitting and said you have to allow us to go out at any time like….

B: Aah! You went on a hunger strike?

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Yes, thats right

R1: Strike. *Speak tamil

T: After that they were given some particular place for them and they let everybody out from the jail

B: Ok, they let you out from the jail after the hunger strike?

T: Yes yes

B: Ok. And was this… Was this after you had been sent here to Chennai?
T: Yes, after. They were sent here, no? And after that it happened.
B: Aha and then they were put in jail…. Eehm, ya… Can you maybe expand on that a little? Eehm.
How did you decide that you were going on hunger strike:
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually it means inside the jail all this, they are eating food and they are eating but it was restricted all this, ok? And they were not allowed outside, not allowed to go, no? They were providing food to them. So they thought if we don’t eat they will realize we need something more than this. They felt like we have to cook and we have to have things in our own hands but they are giving us and it is not sufficient for us. That’s why they were doing this strike. So after doing this strike they take a decision on that and they let them out.
B: They let you out of the…
T: Ya
B: Aha, Eehm. And then you were placed in the camps? After that, after they let you out of the jail?
T: Ya
B: Eh ok, you were placed in the camps… How would you describe your life in the camps now?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: First thing, she is telling, the government provide home to them. It is only 10 feet this side, 10 feet length and 10 feet breadth only (*Actually it is 10 square metres, not feet)
B: 10 square feet
T: Ya 10 square feet. In that 10 square feet they have to live. All family. So they feel that it is very difficult to survive there
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling me is if the family is having 5 children, or even more than 6 children also, they have… They’re having the same home. So it is very difficult for us to survive in that home. She also asks if you have any suggestions for this B: Eehm, no eeh.
T: *Speaks tamil
B: I am thinking, is there… anything. Is there anything you can do to suggest improvements to that?
Is there any way to apply to get more space?
T: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Laughs
Now what they say is already government allotted this much only from the beginning they are allotted same. If we request now, they will not change. Recently, the camp is located near the jail only. These people’s camp is located near jail. That place belongs to jail, belongs to state government.

B: It's government property?

T: Ya. Government property, they are living there. Now they are planning to enlarge the jail. The government is planning to enlarge the jail, so they are going to extend the place. So they are asking them to go to another camp. They are asking them to migrate from this camp to another camp. There also they will only be providing ten, ten, ten. So they telling the risk for this.

B: Would you get any assistance in moving? If you would do that?

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: No. Government will provide only ten ten. *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

B: Aha. Is their a lot of people building more?

T: *Speaks tamil

R2: Mhmm

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: Those who are having money, they will build otherwise they will not. *Indistinguishable (drown out by respondents voices)

R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil

T: What they are telling me is they are struggling to get simply a sim card also. If they want a sim card it means they need a valid ID, an ID-card, no? They don’t have any ID, no? Because they are refugees, no? They have only one card, that is family card that says this much are there in their family. But it’s given by this government. The central government. It was given by them. They only have that card, so they find it difficult to get the sim-card also…

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: Taking gas cylinder. You know gas cylinder?

B: Cooking gas?

T: Cooking gas. For that they also need ID-card. So they don’t have that so they are not
given that. So also they are telling to go out outside, they have to put a sign. They have to register in front of the camp. They have to register that they are going here and they will be back on this time. So they have to fill the register
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If they are going somewhere out of station…
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Aah, uhm. If they are going somewhere out of station like from state to another state or something longer, distance like 100km or more than that they will have to get a permission from the local uhm… some revenue inspector from them they have to get permission and they have t inform the police also. Inside they have Q-branch polices. They have to inform them that they will go out. They will allow them to stay outside for five days not more than that.
B: Only five days?
T: Ya
B: Ok, ehm. What happens… What happens if you are not back in time?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling is that if they are not returning back to camp at least they have to make a call to inform to the consent officer. If they are not informing it means that what they will do is cut the registration. They will not get any refugee, uhm… benefits. They will not get any refugee benefits
B: Ok ok.
T: They will cut their registration. Then they will not no more inside the camp. They will send them out also
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: if again they need to get registration and for that benefits are placed on *indistinguishable, they have to… they have to go to commissioner, tell the commissioner and tell him the valid reason.
B: To get the registration back?
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: To take the position back they have to go their and make the same registration and sometimes it takes two years.
B: Aha
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If they have the camp registration only they will allow them to go to foreign places also. To their country also. If they don’t have that registration they will not be allowed to go there also
B: To go outside of India:
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: That’s what they are fearing if they are not back on time. That they will face all the difficulties.
That’s why they, as soon as possible they are coming back to their home within their permission
*indistinguishable
B: Sorry? I didn’t…
T: Within that permission time they are coming back and this is the reason to that. There are struggles for them if they are missing to come back it means they will face all the struggles. They are being on time.
B: How is it controlled? How are you…. How is it controlled? Do you have to go through a checkpoint or something like that?
T: Sorry I’m not getting you?
B: How it is controlled that they have not been out too long?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They take permission, no? Before they go out they have to take permission from officer. He will give this many days. That officer that gives the permission will have one copy of the certificate also they have some copy. If they on the time they will come and check… The people will come and check if they are their or not
B: Ok, so they will come and check?
T: They will come and check. Regular monitoring will be there
B: And if you are just going out for the day? Like now? How is that controlled?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
B: Ok
(Conversation about "Swedish fika")
B: Eh, have you ever made any suggestions on how to improve situations in the camp? Is it possible to make suggestions on how to improve situations in the camp?
T: What type of suggestions?
B: Suggestions for example to eeh… on how to structure in the camp… On what would benefit them, what they need. For example on housing that we talked about.
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: So what they are telling means that if we are requesting anything with all socially. If they are requesting something as a group, it will happen soon. If they are requesting something individually it will not happen. And also for the group if the higher authorities is not they and they are telling them that also means nothing will happen, ok? He will tell them I will speak with higher authority, I will speak with higher authority. It’s like they will keep on postponing it. If once a collector, you know the administrative authority of the district, if he comes or another commissioner or any support officer come it means things will happen soon or immediately. Others will not take it up B: So are you coordinated as a group in that sense? That you discuss what your needs are and what you should focus on? T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Also, they are telling if there is any emergency need like toilet facilities, street light
facilities, water facilities, if there is any emergency issues they will reflect it immediately as a group. They will speak together
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: So they will get together for these basic needs or emergency needs only
B: Ok. Only?
T: Ya.
B: Would you say…
T: You know they said they have this ideology of if we ask this they will provide. But if we ask this they will not provide. Like they have two types of categories. They know that whatever we ask for they will give them while they will not for other things, you know? If we are asking we don’t have water, it means they will brings water facilities. If we are asking we have too small space to live our life so we need more, they will not give. So they… *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: They will not ask. I am telling you know that home, the space is very low, no? This is the problem that each and every family is having in all camp. Everybody is having the same problem. But if we ask also they will not give. They know the situation so they will not ask that type of question
B: Is there other… What are some other things that you won’t ask?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They themselves have the ideology if we ask about this they will do. If we ask about house they will not do. Like they have ideology about that so they are not asking
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Mm
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling is government set the limitation. If we are asking for other thing they will not provide. So we ourself know they will provide this, they will provide that, they will not provide this. According to our needs we will ask them. That they are telling B: Mhm… Ehm… So except for housing what are the other things you will not ask for?
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Citizenship
B: Citizenship
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling means is if a guy… uh uhm… a youth, a guy or whoever it may be get an education, they will not get a job according to their education because you know they are getting jobs to Indians first. Then only refugees
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They are rejecting refugees. If they want to get the jobs in government also they will not give any *indistinguishable. Corporation work also they will not give. Not even the corporation jobs
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They will not get a loan also to do business
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They are facing lots of problems. That’s why their strategy for their life has become very backwards. They are becoming very poor and poor. If they are educated also they
are not getting a proper job. Most of the… *Speaks tamil
R1: Painting
T: Even if the child is educated well, the boy or girl will do painting work
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Labour work. All types of labour work. Daily wages labour work like…
R1: Welding
T: Welding, painting, plumbing. Like that. Small small jobs. They will not get regular jobs. So this is the problem they are facing. If they got citizenships that means maybe they could get good jobs
B: Aha…. Eehm. Before changes in the camps are being made, before changes are being made, are you asked of your opinions beforehand?
T: *Speaks tamil. Sorry what changes?
B: Any changes within the camp structure. For example rule changes. Say for example that eeh… say for example that the rule for staying outside the camp would be changed from five days to four days, if a change like that happens, would they be asked of their opinions beforehand?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: No no. They will not discuss or ask their opinions ask them to share their opinions with them. What they will do is that the government authorities, the higher government authorities, will take decision and they will inform them. Each and every set of area, they have a blackboard.
B: A blackboard?
T: Ya, they will come and write it there and then go
B: Is that how you get your information?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If there is a checking, head count is there. If there is a…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If anybody is coming to v is it the camp… Like for any information they will write it at the blackboard and they have to see, they have to read it and they have to be there
B: Mhmm. is that something you do everyday? Check the blackboard?
R1: Ya
T: Ya, usually they go check everyday
R1: Everyday *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Always they are waiting for the blackboard. Information
B: Mhmm. Ehmm. When you go and make suggestions as a group, do you have a leader, any representation, someone to be a spokesperson for you?
T: Ya ya. They have leader. They have a community leader. They themselves elected him and made him a leader. Within themselves he will be that person
B: How do you feel that system works?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling is before the information passes through the elected person, the elected person will come to them and he will have a small focus group discussion. We are planning to speak about these things with the government or else with higher authorities with officials, these things we will speak with them. As a group if this is accepted he will go speak with them. Otherwise no. If no… If like single person *Speaks tamil...

T: The word of the single person will not be accepted there

B: Aha

T: Yes

B: Ehmm… And eh, how do you feel about your role as volunteers for (NGO name)? How would you…

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: Good. I like it

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Laughs

T: What they are telling is they are feeling comfortable with this. They are feeling happy to serve for the people. They learn a lot of information and they develop their skills

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Ah. They learn lot of things about child rights and education and the development of how the child will be from small age to…

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: From the baseline they are learning everything about the child, how they have to behave with the child. So everything like that they learn. So it is quite interesting for them to work with (NGO name)

B: Can you describe what you are doing?

T: *Speaks tamil

R1 and R2: *Laughs

R1: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Laughs

T: *Speaks tamil

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: First they are speaking about child protection. They are working for child protection majorly. here no, very limited space. Possibly this is there… *Speaks tamil

R1: *Laughs

T: Limited space, no? So possibilities are there that children become abused are something so they are telling. So they are giving protection to the child and they are taking class about many types… like children’s club. Weekly they have a children’s club. Like children parliament, no? You heard about children parliament? Accordingly they have children’s club in their areas. They use to teach everything like good touch bad touch, good touch bad touch. And how to be good with the elders and personal hygiene and how to maintain self-behaviour and leadership qualities. Like they are teaching many
things. Each and every week on Sundays they have children’s club.
B: Aha ok
T: So through that they are teaching many things to the children. So they are sharing
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Also through our program we implement library there. Yes, we implement two types
of libraries. One type is book-reading type. One is usual library like we
*indistinguishable we post them there
B: Sorry?
T: Tv like wall no? For small years. Two to nine years children use to see that wall no?
The TV, and they will be dancing and try to speak a little little english. Like learn english,
speak english, rhymes like that no? CDs will be displayed there. So two types they are
learning. One through seeing, visual. And one through reading
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Around nine years they use to go there regularly for reading, the library. Then also
spoon english class. This is exclusively for a little older children like 11 to 15 years. For
them they have spoken english
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Also they have computer class. And also there it was implemented by (NGO name).
They have spoken english class and computer class. We provided five computers to their
camp.
B: Ok
T: Each and every year we have classes. For these we have teachers. These people
monitor the teachers.
B: Ah ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Malnourishment they are speaking
B: Malnourishment?
T: Ya, they are taking sample of the child every day and they are providing nutrition to
them. There are providing monthly twice. We are providing nutrition monthly twice. So
all them two times they use to call the mothers for meeting
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: 153 children are there right now with malnourishment so for these 153 children’s
mother they will call them and teach them how to provide nutrition to the child. And they
are already trained to do that. They are already trained with some tool-kits about how to
deal with malnourishment and development. So they speak tamil, but not much english so
they are sorry about that. For speaking with you. So they will take classes and after that
they will provide that nutrition food to the parents
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Also they will teach the parents how to take care of… Parenting skills. They will teach
the parents to take care of the children.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They also, they will motivate them, they are providing nutrition food no? From us,
they are providing no? By using that material they encourage anyone to do
demonstration. Like food demonstration, cooking recipes. Like competitions also,
sometimes they will contact competitions for any mother that cook very nicely with good
recipes and all, they will contact
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: Summer class
T: Eacha and every year they are contacting summer classes also. From outside we will provide funds and we will facilitate the program from our side. Management will facilitate it and they will make arrangement for everything
B: Mhmm
T: the children get together. They gather the children like…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They are sitting *indistinguishable, also they are visiting homes regularly if a child or parent or anybody need counseling they will provide counseling also
B: Ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Health references also they are doing. If the child is not feeling well they will get request from them and they will provide it and if really there is a concern they will take it off and we will provide
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Educational support also. As I already told you
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Not only with (NGO name). I already told you no, (NGO name is working) in three sectors: Nutrition, health and education. Apart from this there is any needs for families that means they will refer to other NGOs
B: Aha ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: (NGO name) no? One NGO named (NGO name) they are providing evening tutoring centers. So through them can children go to the evening tutoring centers also. We are having weekly once only, no? One spoken english and one weekly computer center no? Weekly once. They are taking tutors regularly, after the schools they can come there and they will
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: School visits also. They are doing school visits. Whether the child is going to school regularly or not
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If the child is drop-out from particular classes…. There will be two reasons. One is if the child is slow learner means if he or she is not interested in continuing studies means he or she will drop from the school. During that time they will go to their home, their individual home, and they will speak to them individually with mother with father and with child and they will give more counseling and asks the child to go back to the school. And they will go to the school and refer the school to take class very… very… They will ask the teacher to take the class accordingly so he or she who is a slow learner can still be at peace with it. Something like that they will refer. The other type is if there is no money for paying the fees means they will send request to us and we will provide it to them
B: Ok
T: So those words they are doing at field level
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She is telling everyday we are having work. None of the days we are not working
R1: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They are telling whatever work they are doing they are writing report daily, no? And she is telling I am having work daily
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Laughs
T: *Speaks tamil. they are telling *Laughs. daily they are writing report, no? So their hand are in pain for them
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They will go for another question
B: Ah yes. Ehmm. What is your hopes for the future?
T* Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Laughs
T: Like you, same they are answering (before the interview I had told that I did not know what I wanted to do after my studies)
R2: *Laughs
B: What? Pardon?
T: What you said to me before no? Before, you were speaking to me about your future no? They are answering the same as you
B: What? Eh, they don’t know?
R1 and R2: *Laughs
B: *Laughs
T: Same as you and with the same expression they are answering
B: *Laughs
T: That was what I was telling them you said the same before
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: They don’t have any hope. This will go on like that
R1: *Speaks tamil
B: You think this will continue?
T: *Speaks tamil. Which? Which you mean will continue?
B: The refugee situation
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They don’t know. They don’t have an answer for that. Still they are finding that
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Simply they need only citizenship. Where they can be citizen they want to be there.
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: That’s why they are going illegally to..
R1: Australia
R2: *Laughs
T: Many of them use to travel by ship illegally to get the citizenship in Australia.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Because here no? They have been here for 25 years and they are not getting citizenship but in
Australia it means that that if they will be for five years they will give. They will get citizenship.
That’s why
B: Aha. Do you know many that have tried to do that? That have tried to go to
Australia?
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them left
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: What they are telling means if… Many of the Sri Lankans are traveling if they are
calling, you know many of them travelled from here to there illegally. If they are calling
there to here means they use to go. Also if any foreigners, any visiting, any foreigners are
coming and saying go along with us they are ready to be going. To get the citizenship
*Laughs. Now what they are telling is that if you call they will come also. They will
come back with you *Laughs
R1 and R2: *Laughs
B: Ehmm, ehmm….laughs awkwardly… ehmm eeh
R1 and R2: *Laughs
B: Ehmm ya, so… What you are saying is you want to get citizenship, it doesn’t matter
where?
T: Sorry?
B: The important thing is to have citizenship and not where to have it?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, that is the important thing. They need citizenship. For that they will go until the
last
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Laughs
T: What she is telling means you will ask such questions no, you will have to go to UN.
Un conference no? And speak about their situation to get the citizenship for them
R1 and R2: *Laughs
B: Ah, I am only a student sorry…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling is nowadays students are our biggest hope
B: Hope?
T: Hope, ya…
B: Ehmm ok so…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs. She is telling after not you will raise question
B: What?
T: She told you not to go to the UN and speak up to get them citizenship, no?
B: Mhmm
T: She is telling your face become changed and now you will not ask any more questions
R1 and R2: *Laughs
B: *Laughs awkwardly
R2: *Speaks tamil
B: I, I will continue to ask questions. But I’m afraid I don’t have the ear of the UN.
T: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If you continue to ask questions today fully also they will answer
B: Uhmmm, ya…. Do you feel there is eh, is a lot of interest to know about the refugee situation?
T: Sorry
B: If there is a lot of interest from others?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They are telling sam thing is happening everywhere. We already know the situation. Why we need to go anywhere to ask.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: The situation is the same. Everywhere, the refugee situation is the same. So we already know the situation we should we go anywhere to ask them they say
B: Aha, but do you feel that there is a lot of interest from others to know about you? Others, not others like other refugees, but others like people like me *laughs if there are… yes…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes yes. They are interested.
B: Mhmm ok. So ehmm. There are a lot of people that want to listen to your thoughts and opinions, to listen to you? Do you feel like there is a lot of people that want to listen to you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes they like to share everything. But many of them use to come and listen needs and
what problem they are facing and everything they are just listening and going. If someone is coming they are also interested in sharing but only concern is they are hearing and going there but not taking any steps forward. B: Mhmm ok ok.
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They are telling you are recording everything?
B: Yes yes, if it is ok. If you want to.. if you want to just say the word and I will press stop
T: Sorry
B: if she doesn’t want anything to be recorded she can say so and I will press stop
R1: Stop anytime we want
B: Yes yes
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
B: Ehmm. How would you describe the contacts, the relationship between the refugees in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Nobody is not a relationship. Nobody is a relation like cousin, like father, like brother. They are not a relationship but scattered people come together being here and just they are speaking with them like brother, sister like they have like they have relationship
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Their own blood relationships are still in Sri Lanka. But here whom they are in the neighborhood with and so is annoying person, annoying person. But still they are being with them and speaking very nicely so they have been building a very good relationship.
B: Aha
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: a few of them are there in Sri Lanka, no? With them they use to speak in phone that’s all
R1: *Speaks tamil
B: Would you say that this it is a solidaric community?
T: Sorry?
B: Solidarity. Would you say there is a lot of solidarity…. that they ehmm they eeh that it is important for them to help each other out
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: Mm
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya, they use to help each other. But the situation which they are living in is not good enough for them to survive?
B: Ok… Do you have contact with refugees outside of the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Mm
R2: Yes yes we have
B: Do they come to the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If one day travel it means they can go and come back. If long time it means they need to have permission.
R2: Permission
T: And they will go and they will come back
B: Aha…. Ehmm. Do you have any contacts with Sri Lankans living in other countries, third countries, not India not Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Having
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: Australia, France, London
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They will speak only by phone. they will not help them
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If they ask money it means they will cut their contact
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Laughs
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: Actually what they are telling is if the people those who got citizenship already in Australia or other countries they have lot of money already and they are earning lot but they are not sending anything. Not even a *indistinguishable, even if they are their relation. Blood relation also they are not sending anything. Now recently some they went as refugees over there. Illegally a few of them are there in Australia. Even though they are there as a refugee with the help of government they are sending few supports during emergency. the people who are there as refugees are supporting but the people those who are there as residents they do not help us. So they are telling definitely if we would get the chance to get a citizenship anywhere in some country definitely we would be helping, like sharing. Also now there is no way to get citizenship so ask him to take me (R2) along with him. That she is telling
B: Uuhm…
T: *Laughs
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling is we are telling about reality and he is sitting there smiling towards us
(apparently I am smiling awkwardly)
B: (Straighens out face) Ya… I am sorry. But I am not in a position to do that…
T, R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: No no no
R2: *Speaks tamil
T, R1 and R2: * Laughs
T: She is saying I’m just making fun of you so please don’t mistake me. We know about you. We are just speaking like this to have fun
B: Ok, that’s ok. You can make fun of me, it’s ok *Laughs
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T, R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Speaking about lunch
(Lunch break)
B: Are you following what happens in Sri Lanka? News and events?
T: Hm?
B: If they are following what happens in Sri Lanka
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: Mm
B: What are your sources of news?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If now we are going there for residing means what does the situation means. How they will behave us? How they will treat us?
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Whether the problem if there? If it was solved or not
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Already it was a war there, no? That’s why they came here. Still is there a war there or not
B: Ok, how do…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Always they use to inquire for all such news B: Inquire? So you ask people you know?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Their grandfather and grandmother. Also her mother and father are there. So they use to inquire them
B: Aha ok. You don’t… Do you read and watch Sri Lankan news?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Regular, regular newspaper. Indian news will be there. Some other countries news will be there also al little bit. That news they will follow.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: And TV, they use to watch
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: On youtube
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
B: Do you follow what happens in India as well?
T: They are following that also. *Speaks tamil
R1: Mm
R2: Daily
B: What is it that you are especially interested in?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: In what aspects are you asking?
B: Eh if you are looking at news, or reading…
T: Aah! *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They are telling about the problem of finding news about Sri Lanka. Such news are very interesting.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Indistinguishable they will watch the news
B: Ok… Eh… Do you feel like there is anything you want to talk about that I have not asked you about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She is asking you are asking us about all this and you are recording this no? And you will speak of this in your college, no? Whether you are publishing or not?
B: I will write a paper and then it will be… I don’t know, I don’t know how many people will read it. It will for certain be read by my guide, my examiner and some other students. But if it is good enough, my guide might tell me that I can try to submit it to academic magazines and if they think it is good enough it can be published. But it is not likely. There is a very small chance for a Master’s thesis to be published. A small chance. In extension to that, since I also have a scholarship from SIDA, the Swedish Aid Agency. Every year they give out, I don’t know how many scholarships, but they give out quite a lot of scholarships and they usually pick out the papers they think are the best. Just a few papers of everybody that got the scholarships and they publish it and send it to the embassies. So that could also be the case. But there are no guarantees. I don’t know how many people will read it. There is a small chance, that it will be published. But it is a small chance.
T: *Speaks tamil
B: I will keep (NGO name) updated on how it goes. If it should get published they will know and if that is the case I hope they can give you the information.
T: *Speaks tamil
B: I will also give… eeh. I will also give eh, (NGO name) the opportunity to read it. Since they have helped my so much, so that they get to chance to know what the outcome has become. Eeh, so if you are interested you can also, in the end of this summer the end of August, you can also ask what was the result of this, because they (NGO name) should have the finished product of this, if you are interested in what I have written.
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
B: Mhm
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *You are taking information the problem they are facing, no?
B: Yes yes
T: You have recorded a few things what are the problems they are facing inside the camp. You are taking notes of it
B: Yes
T: She is asking, because of listening this will get any benefits?
B: Well, eh. From me?
T: No. From any side. From government from somebody to help. Will you refer any NGOs or suggest to government to do help.
B: Mhmm. Ehm. I am just a student so I am not really in a position to do that. What I can hope for is that, in the best case scenario, if my paper does well, that it will put light on the situation for those who read it. But I am not in a position where I give advice to government or persuade any organizations or anything like that.
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
T: She says only she asked to comfort herself *Indistinguishable. name check
B: Sorry?
T: She is asking for name check
B: Name check? Sorry? What do you mean?
T: Nothing. Without reason she asked this question
B: What is name check?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Without reason. Without reason. Without reason she asked you
B: Without reason she asked me..?
T: The question. Will you suggest to government or any NGO…
B: I mean I don’t have the…
T: No no no. That question. Without any reason. Without reason she asked the question. She know the reality but still…
B: Aah aha ok. You mean like that
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Laughs
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: She is telling he is doing about Political Science, no? I was telling her he is doing
political things. Then she is telling no, that here in India many of the politicians are (does money hand gesture).

B: Corrupt?
T: Ya, corrupt. So she is saying he will learn all these things from us and he will do the same things there. So I’m telling her see that face he is like childish, innocent. He is very small boy, he will not do that. He will do good things. That I am telling her.

B: *Laughs. Yes, good. I will not be corrupt. *Laughs
T: *Laughs
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil. She is proud of you
B: *Laughs
T: Here, many politicians are doing that
B: Yes… I think this is everywhere to some extent. More is some places than in other places, I guess… But is there any other problems you are facing that you think I should know about?
T: Huh?
B: Is there any other problems you are facing that you think I should know about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Already we talked about all the things. The only thing is we don’t like to live inside the camp
B: No… Can you expand on that a little? Why you don’t like to live in the camp?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: House
B: Aha. The housing
R1: Mhmm. First the house *Speaks tamil
T: Culture of the children. Because small no? Whatever the parents are doing the children are doing that thing
B: Aha
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Can’t give a proper education.
B: Mhmm
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Health and hygiene is very poor
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Toilet is common for all the camps. All camp they have the same, same… B: The same toilet?
T: Yes, the same toilet
R2: Very naughty *Speaks tamil
T: Limited space. There is no air. Everybody using same bathroom. For men separated for women separated. Even though they are having toilets, always standing in queue. Whole camp, in the camp nearly some 600… *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: 1150
R2: *Speaks tamil
B: That have the same bathroom?
R2: Same
T: Same bathroom. They have to stand in queue from the morning they are standing. Standing standing before going.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Those who have money they will build separate bathroom for them inside the home. But only about five of them have toilets. Separate toilets in their home. The rest of them are stand…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: That is one problem
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Before getting out from the camp they have to take permission, no?
B: Mhmm
T: So that is one issue
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: There is no secret inside the camp because it is very restricted place, no? Small place. If we are having. If we are family. Like for example I’m telling if we are family means if we are not keeping any secret. If I am telling a secret about our family it means a third person will know
B: Mm aha. There is no privacy?
T: No privacy
R1: No privacy
R2: Privacy
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They can’t even control their children also. If we are controlling them by words it means neighborhood will know the things. That’s why they don’t control their children also. If we are shouting at them means others will know that the child did some mistake like…
B: Aha they will know the child did something it shouldn’t
T: Ya. So they can’t control their children also
R2: Next. Next question?
B: I, I don’t have anymore questions. So eeh…
T: So they are also both feeling that this bedroom culture…
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: Another problem is children. Small house. Children are knowing everything. What are the parents doing, the romance things doing by parents also children are knowing that
R2: *Laughs
B: Mhmm, ya.
T: There is no privacy for that also. There are no bedrooms they are feeling like.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
B: Yes, no bedrooms. Mhmm
T: It is a very important and valid point
B: Mhmm. Yes
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Laughs
T: They feel shy about it
B: Oh, they don’t need to be… But yes… Ok…. If you don’t have anything more you
want to bring up I think we are done for the day.

Interview 1H (Transcription) : two women (36 and 37 years old), camp refugees
Benjamin: Ok. So how old are you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: 36
B: 36. And you?
R2: 37
B: 37
T: Today is her birthday and today she is celebrating her 37th birthday
B: 37th birthday?
T: Today is her 37th birthday
B: Birthday. Congratulations then! Happy birthday!
R2: Thanks
B: Ehmm. Are you married?
T: *Speaks tamil
(R1 and R2 nods)
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: They are telling with gestures.
B: Yes
T: You understood no?
B: Yes. I have been here long enough to know that gesture (the tamil nod is moving the
head sideways rather than up and down) *Laughs. Eehm. And do you have jobs?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: (NGO name)
R1: (NGO name)
B: (NGO name). Volunteering for (NGO name). Eehm ad what religion do you have?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: Hindu
B: Hindu
R1: I am christian
B: Christian. When did you come here to India?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: 1990
B: 1990. And you? The same?
R2: Ah, same.
B: Same, aha. And have you always lived inside the camps or did you live outside of the camps before?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: In the camp
R2: Camp
B: In the camp from the beginning.
R2: Same camp
B: The same camp the entire time?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Ok… Yesterday I asked you remember. Yesterday they came to one particular camp which is located near Rami Swarm
B: Yes
T: They reached there. And the next day itself they came to camp.
B: Aha next day
T: Yes, next day itself
B: Aha ok. Did you choose to settle inside the camps? Did you have a choice? Whether to stay inside the camps or outside?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: No no. They are telling like it’s like if they are being in the camps they are getting benefits. If they are outside the camps means they will not get benefits. So they want to be inside the camps
B: Inside the camps. Eeh, how would you describe life inside the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They are feeling hard
B: Hard? Could you… In which ways?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Very hot. They don’t have proper housing. The roof belongs to asbestos sheets.
B: Asbestos sheets?
T: Ya
B: Ok
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: Asbestus sheets *Speaks tamil
T: In the beginning the government put it over the roof. So the are feeling so hot inside the camp.
And limited space.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: 10x10 feet. I told you no? Yesterday
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Because of insufficient space, nobody is coming to their homes. And they are not going to others homes. To stay, or any functions, or any ceremonies like that. They avoid that
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: There is some issues with the government. Government officials are there, no? During the headcount, if they are not there that means they will raise many question. Like stupid stupid things. Questions they will ask
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: During the headcount if they are not going to enroll themselves it means they will take their money benefits that they are getting from the government
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them having drinking habits. Taking alcohol. So during the night times they use to shout shout. Many of them are there no? Near near houses. If a fight is taking place in a house it means it will reflect in other houses also so everything is visible. There is no privacy between them
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Nowadays no? Youth and all while seeing those things, youths… you…
B: Youths?
T: Children also learn to take alcohol
B: Aha, so it goes down the ages?
T: Ya
B: Aha. Ehmm. Do you loose your benefits already after missing one headcount?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya ya. She (R2) faced that problem. But she (R1) not. She (R1) never faced that problem but she (R2) did. One time it seems she was not there during the headcount so they cut her benefits. Now again she is getting it
B: Aha, how did you…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Usually they use to give 700 rupees per head. Eeh eh…. As a benefit, as money, as a…
B: Cash dole?
R1 and R2: Cash dole
T: But while they were taking the headcount she was not there so they took 200 rupees from her.
They gave only 500.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If one months they are not taking the cash dole it means next three months they will
not give
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If they are not going for check-in it means they will *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They will tell, the government officials will tell if you are not coming for check-ins we will not provide cash dole like… If you are not coming it means we will not provide this. Usually they use to curse them
B: Curse?
T: Curse. Like ”Why are you not coming”
B: Aha ok. They will yell
T: Ya
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They will not get respect also. They will say anonymous things to them. They will scold them. During headcount you have to be there, even if you are sick also, even if you are being in the hospital
B: Ok
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Without permission they should not move from place to place. They should get permission going for one day also they have to get
B: What did you do, what did you have to do to get you benefits back? (To R2)
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Next month she was on time so they gave her back
B: Aha ok so you got it back next month
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: The thing is like this. Before they are checking headcount. During that time only they will announce. Like writing the, like yesterday we told you no? They will be writing at the board like suddenly they will inform so if they are at jobs or so they can’t come back, no? So they use to travel some *indistinguishable. It maybe take some *indistinguishable for some to travel to other places for job. So before they are returning the headcount will be over. So even at that time also they will cut off it
B: Aha. Even if you have permission to go out to work?
T: Yes
B: Oh
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They are telling we need job compulsory. For to survive. So we are going for job, and they are taking headcount which is important for us. This is also important for us. We need both no? So before headcount they need to inform us two days. Later on if they are informing us we can’t be there on time so this we need also.
B: Mm. If you have any suggestions… If you have suggestions like this for example that they should announce the head counts at least two days before. Is there anybody you can talk to to make these suggestions? Within the camp?
T: Sorry?
B: If there is anyone they can go and make these sort of suggestions to, within the camp?
T: Mm
B: Like she said, they need at least two days notice before the headcount. Is there anyone
in the camp they can go and make this request to?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes. Many times they requested this. But they are telling why are you people going for
job. Anyway we give you cash dole no? You people please be here. They are telling like
that. So what they are telling is we have many requirements like for education purposes,
for children, for food to live a better life. To build some more tents, or to build a toilet, or
to make some medical usages like we have some few requirements. If we are not going
for job who will provide that? That is why they are going for job, they are telling. But
they (government officials) are telling ”no why are you going. If you want to know the
time when we are taking headcount you please be here”, they are telling. So these types
of response they are getting from the authorities
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling in many situations, if they are facing any problems, if they are
going to the police station to inform that they are facing some problems by other people.
It means if they are giving complaints the police will not at all take it up. Taking the case,
not at all do justice to them. They will say ”You are only refugees. Go go go”, refusing
them and they are not at all giving respect to them. They are also not at all giving any
priorities to them. So they are also feeling like that. In the camps, if a person is a little
rich it means they will take their cases. Like if I am rich it means they will take my case.
If she is poor it means they will not take her case.
B: Because they take money?
T: Ya
B: Ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya. They use to. They use to go with the community leader, he will represent them.
They will ask whatever needs, what do they want and they will write it as a request letter
and they will provide it to the higher authorities
B: Mhmm. Eehm... Within the camp, do you have any sort of organization? Among
the refugees, are you coordinated on what issues you need to focus on and what requests
you are going to make? Things like that
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya. They use to. They use to go with the community leader, he will represent them.
They will ask whatever needs, what do they want and they will write it as a request letter
and they will provide it to the higher authorities
B: Mhmm. Ehm. How is the requests usually met?
T: Huh?
B: Received. How are they usually received?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil. They will raise only social problems like sanitation problem, toilet problem, garbage problem. Like they will raise, a group of people together and they will raise if it is an issue. If it seems there is an issue they will raise a question on it and they will raise it as a request and the community leader will represent them and he will give it to the higher authorities.
B: Mhmm. How do you choose community leader?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: One day they will call everybody for meeting. *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They have camp committee. When they reached here they made one committee called camp committee.
B: A camp committee? Aha
T: The camp committee will call each and everybody to a meeting. During that meeting they will ask "Who do you want to be elected leader for you". During that meeting if many of them voted for a particular person it means he will be leader for the community. Who is gaining the most votes.
B: Who gets the most votes?
T: He will be the leader
B: Aha
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: In the year 1990 when they were coming from Sri Lanka, one day they were there. After that they were placed in another camp called (?) *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: It was near the beach. Previously where they were
B: Mhmm
T: Near to the beach. From there, government thought it was not safe for them, so from there again they were totally relocated to this (?) camp. Now they are being here no? Now from there. They were relocated. To year 2000 they had been totally relocated so overall now no? In the year 2000 they faced many problems like water, there were no water facilities and there were no toilet facilities and no drainage facilities. Like they faced many problems. During that time they raised many requests to the government. But that time and all government did not come forward and help them. During that time, as an NGO (NGO name) came forward. So they are telling, (NGO name) came forward and built the toilet and put up a wall and got the water and all. So that time it was useful, one person coordinated all things so they elected him as a leader.
B: Aha
T: So likewise, she is telling the background of this...
B: How they elected their leader?
T: Ya
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Previously they used to go for toilet in the ground in open space. That time in open space the snakes and insects will be there, many of them were bitten by that so after that (NGO name) made request and (NGO name) provided toilet for them.
B: Aha. Ehm. can you explain to me a little about the role of the committee?
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Whatever problem they are facing they will take it first to the committee. Then only they will go to the police. If the committee can’t solve the problem they will go to the police. With the help of committee only they can go to the police. they can’t go to the police straight away. Whatever problem they are facing committee will represent them
B: Ok
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: What they are telling they are telling a few comments about the police officials. The Q-branch police that are there. One day what happened one woman was taking bath. She was around 35 years
*Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: She is around 38 years old. while she was taking bath one guy noted how she was taking bath.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: The toilet is not proper, proper toilet. Next to the home itself they built. *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: With the help of coconut leaves they use to build small small bathrooms like for taking bath. One day in the camp a guy was watching that. That girl see the guy and she was shouting that he is seeing like. Doing that time they were facing problem like they were going and complaining about to the police. That time they were not coming to ask any question.
B: The police?
T: The police is not coming to ask any questions to that boy, that guy. They are not coming and they are not at all caring of it.
B: Aha
T: Also one night this thing happened, one woman home was burned by fire. Someone put fire on her home
B: Ok
T: That night her home fully burned. That night also they went and made a complaint of it. Inside the camp they have police no? Q-branch police is there. So that time they went and made a complaint also and that time also they did not come forward, like issues like that they will not come forward. But if we are going out from inside the camp one time he they will come and raise many questions. But when we are in need, when we are facing a problem that time they will not come to us. Like that they are feeling.
B: Mm, aha aha. Ya, it’s eeeh. You don’t feel it’s for your security…
T: Yes yes. They are not there for security purposes only for raising question purposes
*Laughs. He says ”When you are going? Where are you going? Without permission you will go”. Like torturing them.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: You know many of them are illegally travelling to Australia no? Many are traveling. The police no, they come torturing “Today you will go! Today you are going to go”. Like without reason. he is just coming to torture them. ”Oh you are planning to go today? You are planning to go today”. Like without reason. Somebody is going somewhere but he is not at all catching them. And him coming asking them ”Today you have plan! today you have plan!”. It makes them, the words themselves, makes them why can’t we go to Australia illegally. So it makes them think negatively.
B: Aha
T: *Laughs *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She was not at all having thinking, previously not at all she had the thought of going to Australia. But after Q-branch did this she is now thinking about going to Australia illegally. So he made her think like this. During night time and all they will come check their homes whether the people are there or not. While sleeping no? When it is time to sleep. During that time they come and say ”you please come out and we want to check you. If you are here. If somebody left from your home”.
During night and everything they are torturing them. So that feels very hard to them
B: Ya
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Not even. They are not even allowing school children also. They will check the headcount for school students also.
B: For school student?
T: Children. Their children
B: So when they are in school they will be checking if they are in camp?
T: Yes
B: Ok. But they have permission to go to school
T: Yes, they have
B: But still they are checking… Hmm ok…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Many days they use to go to school and bring their children to school and they show them. And they send them again
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: How you are feeling about this she says? Are you feeling funny? Are you feeling sad? Are you worried about them? About the stories?
B: Yaa… Of course I am feeling sad about it. Because eeh…. I don’t think eeh… I don’t think anyone should live with that kind of surveillance. 24/7 surveillance you know?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Why they want to go to Australia means they have some reasons. Because here they are not at all getting citizenship. Here they are facing troubles everyday. They are living consistent life, consistent place. They are having children no? They are scared about their children. That they will grow up with bad habits. How the other people are learning… How them are learning from others. So they are scared of it so that is why they are planning to migrate from here to other. Because still it was still seen they are refugees. If future if their children will be here also it means they will also be seen as a refugee. So they don’t want to call them as refugees. They want some citizenship. That is why illegally they travel… they travel by boat, travel between the sea. Everything they are facing troubles, but even though they want to. Because they want to achieve a goal to become a… To live a good life, with citizenship.
B: Mm, aha. Do you know many people that have gone to Australia.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Her neighbourhood. Neighbour family is and her friend and her relations are all there
B: Mm ok. Ehm… Have you heard about the risks as well?
T: About?
B: The risks. Of going to Australia by boat?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Many of them are dying while they are traveling themselves. Because they can’t survive in that..
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They know it is a risk. Even though somehow they want to go there.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Towards future. They are thinking towards future. If we are here we call by them as a refugee. If we go there, within a year we will get a citizenship. That is the main reason for knowing, by knowing the risks, knowing the risks themselves they want to be going
B: Mhmm
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They don’t have property here, they don’t have anything. Whatever they are earning, just they are spending for children education alone
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If the children after the education also children also are not doing good works. Even if they have good educate children are going for painting works, fitting works, welder works like that. That like unskilled work. Even though they are educated they are doing the same works. That’s why we don’t want to be here.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: There is no protection also
B: No protection? Ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: If they have fighting between them themselves. If someone murder someone. If someone nudered someone it means none will come and ask the reason: Why you did? Like… Police are not coming. Police are not taking any decision on them. Police are not also at all caring about them and giving them security no? So none will come and raise
any questions about them. They are feeling like they are like orphans, we don’t have anybody…

B: Mhmm, mhmm. Ehm. Would eeh.. Do you think there is any possibility for a future for you in Sri Lanka?

T: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: They are telling that compared to India. Compared to here it is more dangerous there so they don’t want to go there. So main thing is here we are getting at least a cash dole to survive to live minimum life to have food no? But there is risk to not have food.

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: They don’t have, not at all anything is there

B: No

T: they don’t have home. Nothing is there. If they go there also none will take them to their homes. No, they will take them for only two days

B: Uhm

T: If relations are there in Sri Lanka. If they are going to their homes they will keep them for only two days. After that they also send them out, no?

B: Ah

T: Without home and without ideology to survive there so what they can do? They can’t do anything

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: 1kg rice, you know? Rice

B: Ya ya ya

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: 1 kg rice is rupees, 150 rupees. It will not be sufficient to have food for one time. It is not sufficient to take one time meal.

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: There in Sri Lanka if they went it means their major work is only agriculture in Sri Lanka. Now it means they forgot agriculture also. They don’t know how to do the agriculture now, now. If they had been there it means in small *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speak tamil

T: It means also they will not provide any loan for them. Because they

B: Here? Or there?

T: Because they came from here to there, no? There in Sri Lanka also they will not provide any loan. here also they are not getting. There also they will not give to do any small business. Like any small economic development they will not do. So they are telling we can’t survive there in Sri Lanka. So better we will be here

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Also they are scared about war. Again if it will rise means what will we do?

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: Ya. They are scared about war. Still if it is continuing means what to do?

B: Mhmm ya… So maybe you can talk to me a little about your role as volunteers for (NGO name)? What are you doing and… yes?

T: *Speaks tamil

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: *Speaks tamil
T: They are telling they are working with three aspects. One is nutrition, one is education and one is health. So for nutrition we are providing food. Nutrition material, nutrition food to the malnourished children. That is their main work they are telling. Each month they are providing that. Then for education, if there are any drop-out children inside the camp, they are enrolling them again with the school. So they have good communication with the schools. Usually they use to take the children to the school and speak with school management and enroll them again. If through health camps they use to refer many children, if any children is not feeling well it means they will give a request to us and we will take it forward.

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: they are also providing counseling. Because many houses, many fathers uses alcohol. They are drinkers and there is alcohol addict, no? Addict means continuously they will drink they drink and drink and they will shout on them. So during that time the children are not at all having interest to study. Because it is a limited space and they have to be there in the space and do everything. They have to read, they have to sleep, doing there no? And sometimes children may get diversions because father is doing this, ”why we have to study, we go for job”. It is in young ages themselves they will be thinking about going for job and all. During that time they will go to them and give them counseling. And make them to realize why they are being here and they should go to school again to avoid such a life. To not live such a life. To live a better life than this, so they will motivate them

R1: *Speaks tamil

T: Also they are conducting spoken english classes. Spoken english classes. So one teacher is there and they will monitor her. How she is taking? Children are coming, how the attendance will be? They will gather the children

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: Then they are having a children club. Sunday, weekly once they have children club. During that children club they will speak about rights, hygiene, self-confidence, leadership qualities. Like that. They will give classes about it. The have manual for it. We have given them a manual to take classes. Accordingly they are taking

B: Mm

T: They are also doing many activities like summer camps. In summer they are doing camps, like yesterday I told you, no?

B: Yes

T: Ya. Summer camps also we have library. So children usually come and use the library also

B: Mhmm

R2: *Speaks tamil

T: Computer centers.

B: Computer centers?

T: Ya, that also. They are monitoring regularly

B: Ehm… Do you feel like there is a lot of interest in the refugee situation from others?

T: Sorry I’m not getting you

B: If there is a lot of interest in the refugee situation from others? Others like…
T: Like other citizens, NGOs…
B: In the sense of the broader Indian society
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya. Outside Indians use to mingle with them nicely. But they never do any helps and all. We say hi we say bye and all
B: Mhmm. It’s social…
T: Mm social visits
B: Eehm… Do you feel like eeh… there is a lot of interest from NGOs, from government officials and also other people like me maybe to listen to your thoughts and opinions? Your own experiences?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: What they are telling is while someone hear our problems, if someone is listening, it means we are feeling comfortable. We are feeling like someone is here to hear us. Like they are feeling happy about it. Also only we are getting benefits because you are hearing about our two stories alone. If you are going inside the camp you will be hearing so much of things more than this
B: Ya
T: But what she is sharing is, what she is sharing means that if you come inside the camp the police will suspect you that you are like Australian agency partner like… *Laughs
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: And they will take you
B: Well, they will not even let me in
T: Ah, yes
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They will not believe that you are a student and that you are doing research and all they will not believe anything. Like she is telling
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They will believe like you are an agent *Laughs
R1 and R2: *Laughs
T: Now what is the thing they are feeling happy is they are having helping source from NGOs. What that means is if they have some needs no? NGOs are giving to them no?
B: Ya. Mhmm
T: So they are feeling happy about NGOs
B: Mhmm
T: Ya
B: Do you have close contact with NGOs?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya ya. They are getting benefits from all NGOs. All the sources. One NGO called (NGO name) they are providing evening tutors for children. It is very useful for them. Then through (NGO name) they are getting three benefits no? That is useful for them. Also one organization (NGO name). (NGO name) is there. Weekly they are conducting medical camps
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They have *indistinguishable, you know?
B: No? What?
T: Eeh, like kindergarten
B: Ok
T: Lower level kindergarten. They will provide food and all. (NGO name) provide kindergarten to them. To all the children.
R1: (NGO name)
T: Also one NGO is there called (NGO name)
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: They are giving medical reference help for eeh above 18 years. We are doing below 18 years and they are… eeh
B: Doing above?
T: Above
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Also they are taking more care of diabetic patients
B: Diabetic?
T: Yes
B: Ok
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Government is also doing but few helps only. Not much
B: Mhmm ok… Ehm. How would you describe the community within the camp?… How would you…
T: *Speaks tamil
(Silence)
B: How is the contacts between people in the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: What she is telling is they don’t have relations, blood relations they don’t have here. The neighborhood families are behaving like relations, like blood relations. So somehow if they are doing good tings or bad things we are going like neighbors like helping each other doing good things for each other. Now when we are here we want each others help. We are doing good things for each other
B: Ok. Eehm. Do you have a lot of contacts with other refugees outside the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: Mm, we are having. *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya, you know they will not keep all the family members together. One family, in their
family, their brother came from Sri Lanka it means she will be here in this camp, he will be there in another camp. Like they have connection and communication between each other
B: Ah, between camps?
T: Ya, between them
B: Ehmm… Do you also have contact with Sri Lankans that live outside… Ya, in Australia you already said…
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: You know neighborhood homes use to travel illegally to Australia or other countries no? If they travel there and they arrive safely and settle there it means they will have contact with them. They will tell we are like this and we are living a wonderful life. They use to communicate regularly with them. So they know how the situation in Australia also.
B: Mm… So eh so… How do you communicate? Social media? Phone?
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes, by phone
B: Phone
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Laughs *Speak tamil
T: Their children are having some social contacts through Facebook
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Now, she has a plan to go to Australia for her children also
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Not Australia, she (R1) doesn’t like Australia now because everybody is captured there.
B: Aha
T: Before reaching
B: Yes they are captured
T: They are capturing so she wants to go to Canada
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: She (R2) is expecting sponsor from her uncle.
B: Ok
T: Her uncle is there in Australia. From there he arrived well and he went to New Zealand. Now he is a citizen there in New Zealand
B: In New Zealand
T: In New Zealand. Now he is telling for developing her also I will sen some sponsor to you for you to come here. So she is expecting within this year
B: Aha ok. Ehmm…
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: What I’m telling is we have to search for other volunteers. Because she is going to
Canada and she is going to New Zealand
R1 and R2: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: She (R1) is telling she is taking me also there. *Laughs. To do her social work
B: *Laughs
T: If she can go there
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
T: She (R1) is telling no, that she will take me there. And she (R2) is telling you now
"Don’t write, don’t write”
R1 and R2: *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Only future plans only so don’t write this.
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: She would have been happy if she would have been there in Canada
B: Mm
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: If we go to other countries legally it means again we have to go to Sri Lanka to get a passport and the whole process is there. So if we want to go legally it means we have to go to Sri Lanka
B: Aha. Before going?
T: Ya. Legally
B: Legally, yes. Ehm… Do you follow a lot of news, of what happens, of events happening in India or happening in Sri Lanka?
T: *Speaks tamil
R1: Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes. They have interaction with people who are there. They use to communicate everything. Also by seeing TV news. Also by reading newspaper they are getting knowledge
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya. She knows about… Her parents are there. Parents are there. They use to communicate regularly
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: They are now from her mother she received a message. Now they are well. There is no war and the government is providing home for us so please come come come. She is calling her. But even though she is having little fear if she went there it means their independence will be gone. She is scared of that.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Her mother is not feeling well so she want to go there. But if she go there she can’t come like quickly… To meet her mother. If she take one time exit visa she can go and she can come back. But if she go there it means she can not go back suddenly no. So she have intent to go to Sri Lanka to see her family and all. But she doesn’t want to go also. Having intent, but doesn’t want also.
B: Mhmm… Do you have anything you want to add that you think is important that you want to add that we have not talked about
T: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil *Laughs
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Already the American government asked them no? You give tamil refugees to us and we keep them with us.
B: The American government?
T: The American government asked to India. But the Indian government told they will not provide. Why they are not giving freedom to us? Why they are not giving citizenship also they are not at all giving anything, why they are not giving us to them also?
B: When did this happen
R2: *Speaks tamil
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: 1995. American government called them. But the Indian government did not leave them
R1: *Speaks tamil
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *So what they are telling means that government is not leaving us to live a life. Not at all giving us citizenship and those who are calling to give citizenship also they are not leaving us to go there also. So we are sad about this country
B: Ya
T: Ya?
B: Yes
T: Also the thing is. If they are giving citizenship we will be happy about that, we will live our life here itself
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks tamil.
R2: *Speaks tamil
T: Without citizenship, being a refugee, we can’t live a life here. We are feeling it is very hard
B: Yes, is there something more they want to add?…
R1: *Speaks tamil
T: Additionally they are finding you very beautiful
B: *Laughs awkwardly… Uhm *Laughs. Thank you
T: *Speaks tamil
R1 and R2: *Laughs
B: Ya… I don’t have any more questions so if you want to say something else please do otherwise…
T: *Speaks tamil
(Silence)
B: Ok, ehm. I thank you a lot then for talking to me. I appreciate it a lot. Thank you

Interview 11 (Notes): Two women, age 21 and 20, camp refugees
R1 is 21 years old and R2 is 20 years old. Both are students at L in Social Work. They are
both unmarried. R1 is hindu while R2 is Christian. Their families both arrived in India in 1990 and they were both born in the camp. They have never lived outside of the camp, but have stayed there all their life. They did not feel comfortable with me recording our conversation so I took notes instead. I asked whether or not they felt more comfortable doing the interview separately or together. They answered that they did not mind either way. I therefore decided to continue doing the interview with them together since they seemed quite shy and experiences from previous interviews told me that respondents seemed to gain more confidence when being interviewed together and hence were more open and talkative. Still they were a bit shy and quiet during the interview and I had to work hard to get them to expand upon their answers and I had to continuously encourage them to take initiatives and speak on things they found important. Especially R2 was very shy. Most of the accounts from this interview is given by R1. Usually I asked R2 directly after R1 answer what she thought about what R1 just talked about. Usually she merely said "the same".

The reason they and their families live in the camp is the benefits they get in the camp. They have access to facilities and grants which they would not be able to survive without. They also cite security as a reason. Within the camp the refugee community look after each other and help each other. Outside of the camp they would find themselves on their own, without the safety that the community provides.

The first thing R1 brings up when I ask them to describe the situation in the camp is lack of freedom. When asked to expand it is the lack of freedom of movement that she is referring to. The refugees have to register every time they go out from the camps, when they are leaving and where they are going, and they also have to register when they come back. If they forget to do this the police in the camp will come and question them on their whereabouts and what they were doing. If it happens more than once they will lose their registration in the camps, which means that they will have to move out from the camp. The refugees can get permission to go outside of the camps for longer time periods, for example if they get a job. R1 says it is not very hard to get a permission like this. However, they will have to be there for head counts. Head counts take place once every 6 month and are announced 2-3 days before. However sometimes government officials can ask during the monthly handouts of the cash dole and other aid that they want to see all family members, which in that case means that the person outside the camp need to get back as soon as possible. Failure to be at the headcount or to not be able to show all family members when could also result in a loss of registration.

Another thing that is brought up is the lack of living space. They only get 10x10 metres per family. They say it’s ok if you are only one or two, maybe even three, but if more it is impossible to live a comfortable life in that lack of space. Also they have restrictions on how they are allowed to improve their accommodations. They are only allowed to have sheets for their roof. This makes the shelters very warm during this time of year and not very tolerable against rain in rain season. Many have wanted to build concrete roofs so that it can withstand the weather better. But this is not allowed. It is also risky for them to improve their housing. Since they are not allowed to go out they will be questioned by the police on how they got the money to improve their shelters. Therefore people within the camp who do have some resources do not use them to improve their lives because to spend money will lead to attention and suspicion from the police in the camp. They also say a big problem is that they don’t have any private bathrooms, only
shared bathrooms.

Another thing that is brought up in the interview is the lack of employment opportunities for refugees. A vast majority of employers want ID-documents, which the refugees do not have. Therefore refugees are almost only working with day-labour, such as painting and construction work, to a very low salary despite many being well-educated. R2 hopes to get a job in the private sector after her education, because some private companies do employ refugees. R1 is less hopeful since even in the private sector, the companies who do employ refugees are in a minority. Most want their employes to have proper documentation, i.e. have citizenship.

All the above issues is why they both feel like the most important thing for them is to gain citizenship. When asked about if they have any suggestions on how to improve the situation, that is what they answer. Citizenship would give them freedom of movement, ability to get a job and ability to eventually buy land and a house. They feel like they should be offered citizenship since they are born in India. Their parents is Sri Lankan they say, but since they are born in India and have lived their entire lives in India they are Indians. But still they don’t have citizenship. They feel like Indians without citizenship. Neither want to return to Sri Lanka. Both would prefer to stay in India, both over returning to Sri Lanka and over moving to a third country, for example Australia. A lot of people they know have gone to Australia. They go because they want to be as R1 said ”Free men, not refugees”. They want to be able to make a living for themselves, which they can not as long as they are considered refugees. Everyone is well aware of the risks according to R1 and R2. R1 estimates that around 25% dies on the way to Australia, 25% gets their safely and manages to become Australian citizens while the rest is sent back. But the people that go feel that the risk is worth taking because they don’t see any way for them to become citizens in India, and after 25 years as refugees they don’t feel like they can live like this anymore. Parents are especially ready to send their children on this trip. Because they feel like, unlike them, their children have received a good education in India and they have the tools to make a good living for themselves if they would get the chance. They don’t want their children to live the lives that they have lived, as refugees, when they have gained so many tools for themselves to create a good life. R1 say this is why most parents have as their no.1 priority to make sure that their children receive a good education. Because when they do get citizenship, either in India or in a third country, they want their children to unlike them have the ability to create a good life for themselves. R1 says this is also why parents are more concerned with their children getting citizenship then themselves. First of all they feel like the children often have a much bigger chance, especially if they are born here, but they also feel like they would be able to improve their lives a lot more if getting citizenship than themselves would be. However R1 say that if they could choose a majority would want Indian citizenship. If that is not possible she say that about 50% would consider going back to Sri Lanka if they feel like their lives would be safe there, while the other half would rather either stay in India as refugees or try go to a third country. R1 and R2 don’t know what would need to change for the Indian government to change their stance and grant them citizenship. However they are still hopeful that they will get Indian citizenship, because they are hopeful that the Indian government will realize that it makes sense for people born in India to be Indian citizens. However they do not think that their parents have large opportunities to become Indian citizens. R1 says that in the camps they talk everyday
about this. If they think they have any chances of getting citizenship soon and how they feel like 25 years is too long to live as a refugee and that they should be offered citizenship. The children is also everyday encouraged by the adults in the camps to study and get a good education in order to be able to get a good job when they finally get citizenship.

They do have a representative in the camp. A head of the camp. He was chosen by the refugees themselves because he took a lot of initiatives in the camps and helped a lot of people with their problems. Therefore the camp members wanted him to represent them in their contacts with the government. R1 is very happy with the head of the camp. She feels like he is a very good person that involves himself in a lot of peoples’ problems and take them very seriously. Some camp leaders only look to benefit themselves she says, but not the camp leader in their camp. He tries to help everybody. They also have a lot committees in the camp which hold meetings regularly. The committees arrange functions and events within the camps. They also try to fix problems that camp members have. If someone has a problem they generally go to the committees who try to solve the problems themselves if it’s only a minor problem. If it’s a major problem the head of the camp gets involved who take the issue up with the government officials, often successfully R1 says. "Every problem we have, he fix” she said. They never go to the government officials themselves directly because this will not be received well. R1 says they do not have a very good relationship with government officials and police in the camp. If they approach government officials or police directly they will be dismissed or ignored. R1 says the government take good care of them in the terms of making sure that they have everything they need to survive, however they will not provide them the citizenship that they need to be full members of society. They have through the camp leader several times asked about the possibilities to get citizenship and the need for them to get citizenship in order to lead full lives. But they have always gotten a negative answer.

R1 says that a lot of the members in the camp is members of different political parties, like EPRLF, EPTP, LTTE, PLTO. These people are very politically aware and discuss events and politics in both India and Sri Lanka. Previously, in the 90s, the parties were active within the camps and they had committees. But nowadays they are not allowed. No refugee, not even those members of political parties, go outside the camp to participate in political activities (because they are not allowed to). Hence refugees do not participate frequently in the public discussion about the refugee situation, which R1 says is quite active, everyday there is a news article or a debate article that discusses the refugee situation. She says some political parties (for example the current government) want to send them back to Sri Lanka, while some political parties want to grant them citizenship. Although they can’t go outside to give their opinion on their situation, it does happen that journalists come to the camp. She cites one example where a journalist, after the Indian government announced their intention to repatriate the refugees after Sri Lanka’s regime change, came to their camp and asked them whether they wanted to go back to Sri Lanka or if they wanted to stay in India. That article was published in many newspapers and garnered a lot of attention.

Both say that the situation for the Tamils in Sri Lanka depends on what region you talk about. In both their families region of origin they say that the situation is good. They have a lot of relatives in Sri Lanka who they talk with frequently and they are always
telling them that they should come back to Sri Lanka because they are safe in Sri Lanka now and their situation is steadily improving. There is a lot of optimism regarding the new government. However they do not want to go back to Sri Lanka because they have lived all their lives in India and feel at home in India, not in Sri Lanka. They also refer to how much better the education is in India compared to in Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka they would not learn English they say. Except for what they hear from their relatives they do not follow what happens in Sri Lanka. Not because they are not interested, they say that they just don’t have time because they are too busy studying. In the same way that don’t follow news and events from India either.

They don’t have contact, and don’t know about, refugees that live outside the camps. However they have a lot of contact with Indian citizens. R1 seems to think this is a stupid question and somewhat of a matter of course that she will have Indian friends after living her whole life in India, going to Indian schools. She says that Indian friends frequently visits her in the camp (since her movement is restricted). She also have some contact, through phone and Facebook, with people from her camp that have successfully gone to Australia and tell about their life there. R2 however say she doesn’t know any who have gone to Australia.

8.2 Interviews with non-camp refugees

Interview 2A (Interview transcription): Woman, 44 years old, non-camp refugee

Benjamin: Do you have any questions before we start?
Translator: *Speaks Tamil
Respondent: *Speaks Tamil
T: You can start
R: Start
B: Ok. How old are you? Age? How old?
R: 44
B: And are you married
R: Ya, I’m married
B: Eemh, do you have a job?
R: I was working as a teacher in Sri Lanka
B: Teacher?
R: Ya. But now I’m housewife.
B: Ok. Eeh, what is your religion?
R: Religion? I’m hindu
B: Hindu?
R: Hindu
B: When did you arrive here in In....
R: 1997
B: 1997?
R: Yes
B: Ok. Eeh, have you... Did you stay outside of the camp from the beginning?
R: Yes, outside the camp
B: All the time?
R: Ya, since 1997 and still now I stay outside the camp
B: Outside the camp?
R: Ya
B: Why did you choose to stay outside the camps?
R: Aah, eehm... Because my children. I have three children. So for education purpose and for their future. The camp is eeh not eeh... comfortable
B: Aha ok
R: Yes, for the higher education and for the extracurricular activities for my children
B: Aha
R: And for my extracurricular activities. So the camp is not suitable for me (emphasis on "me")
B: Ok
R: So I chose outside
B: You chose outside?
R: Yes
B: For higher education and for extra...
R: Extracurricular activities yes. For hospital facilities also
B: Ok
R: Some things you can't get in the camp without get so many permission and get the permission from the higher offices also. That’s also. In outside it’s my own decision
B: Ya
R: I know all is own decision. I can went out and come back anytime, in camp that is not possible
B: Mm, no ok. You have more freedom?
R: Ya
B: Aha, more freedom... Eehm, how would you... How would you describe your life as a non-camp refugee?
R: It's ok. But we don’t have income so that’s the main problem.
B: Ok
R: I lost my husband in the war in Sri Lanka
B: Oh! My condolences.
R: I have three children
B: Yes
R: *Undistinguishable*... house. We pay 5000 rupees
B: 5000 rupees?
R: Ya. Indian money. So I depend on my sister, my parents for the income
B: Ok.... Do you...
R: Because I don’t have any job, any income. So there’s a problem. That’s the main problem that we don’t have income. We spend all money. In camp there’s a difference. They don’t spend education and food and... All is provided in camp. But on the outside, people, all need to spend their own education, accommodation, medical. All with own money.
B: Mhmm, is it hard for refugees in general to get employment?
R: We don’t have any. Because only we have this paper (shows police registration). This is the paper for Sri Lanka.
B: Aha for identity?
R: No, this is no identity. This is for Sri Lanka
B: Aha?
R: We don’t have identity card. We don’t have refugee identity card, or any. Only this paper. Police registration. That’s the only...
B: Aha, police registration form. That’s the only identification you have
R: Ya
T: There is no identity for them. This is the only identity for them
B: Yes
T: Provided by the police station
B: Provided by the police station.... Eehm... And employers want other identity documents?
R: No, only this...
B: Ya, ok, ya. But if you need job you need other?
R: Yes. Other documents. Identification, identity card or any *undistinguishable* card. So we don’t have any refugee card, no? In camp they give refugee card and this is ok for school and any job. But we don’t have
B: Mmm aha ok. Is it possible... You can’t eehm apply for id-cards or anything like that?
R: No
B: No?
R: No, we... *laughs* No way to apply because we don’t have any identity, no?
B: No?
R: We are refugee. We are refugee only. But we don’t have any identity.
T: Actually, according to the Indian scenario non-camp refugees are considered as foreigners so they will not provide any identity for them. But in the case of camp refugees they are provided refugee cards.
B: Aha ok
T: So they get facilities. They show their card and they get facilities
R: But we don’t have any identity card so we can’t get any facilities.
B: Ok, ok. Eehm. Is there any... Any organization or someone from the government that you can go and talk to about these problems?
R: Yes, one time there was some asking us. Otherwise it’s just ADRA R: *Speaks tamil
T: * Speaks tamil R: From government they one time go to our apartment asking some questions, but they’re... *speaks tamil
T: Actually there is one survey by the government where they can express their problems. But they don’t know what is the status of these interviews
R: They change government so I think they dropped them...
B: Oh, they have changed government since the survey?
R: Ya
B: Ok. Is there any, any organization among the refugees?
R: I don’t know.. No, no. It is impossible because the police problem. The security problems. They don’t want us together with others. So it would make a problem. Create, make a problem for law and order. Problem for that. So we can’t arrange *Speaks tamil
T: The Q-branch (*intelligence agency) and the other police officials controls the people to not make any organizations.
B: Aha ok
R: No they don’t want non-camp...
B: They don’t want you to...
R: They don’t want because the law and order problems created so we don’t like
B: Aha ok. Would you think it would be good if you were organized in any way?
R: Nono (looks a little fearful)
B: You don’t think it would be good. Ok.... So, for the future? What is your hopes for the future?
T: *Speaks Tamil.
R: Ooh future. I-I... My own experience... I don’t like to.. eeh refugee *giggles. I don’t... the identity of refugee I don’t like that. I’m Sri Lankan. I can any other nationality. But now I say I’m a Sri Lankan. I don’t want to say I’m refugee. I don’t like the word refugee for me or for my children. We are Sri Lankan. But otherwise if they give us the nationality for India, we would stay India.
B: Aha...
R: If they give nationality with them I would tell that I’m that. But now I’m telling I’m Sri Lankan. Sri Lankan Tamil.
B: Eehhm... Do you feel there is a lot of interest in society to learn more about your situation?
T: * Speaks Tamil
R: Yes everyday I read newspaper about Sri Lanka. And use Internet. My daughter is there now.
B: In Sri Lanka?
R: In Sri Lanka. Because she studied here but there were not any job for her
B: Aha
R: So she went to the island working there. She calls me and tell me what’s the situation. And it’s good. Sri Lanka is now ok. There are problems here and there are also some problems in Sri Lanka. But my daughter told me all the *indistinguishable. We are safe now she says.
B: Mm, She feels...
R: Yes, she feels that
B: Aha... Eehhm... Do you feel like there is a lot of interest from others to hear your opinions and your thoughts?
T: *Speaks Tamil
R: Yes, always they ask. Because the one problem. The one major problem is they don’t have income here. So they want to go their own places, their own house, their own relations, job opportunities. Because out camp people they don’t have any facilities here. So only safety. It’s good that here we are safe.
B: You are safe here?
R: Yes. But we don’t get anything. We spend all money on study. In Sri Lanka, free education. But in India we spend our own money on our children. Also we go to Sri Lanka our children get free education. We rent our house here. But we had our own house there. So our relations are there but we don’t any relations here. We don’t have any job opportunities. There are some people, but they are old age people, that want to be here
because medical facilities are here. Old age people want to stay in India. But the young generation want to go to Sri Lanka.

B: Ah ok
R: No facilities and no income, so how is it possible? Money is important, no?
B: Yes
R: So we don’t get any money. Some of the people have children that are abroad so they send money so they can live and everything. But we don’t have have any sending us. So how is it possible, no? We sell our jewels and everything to send study our children. So in Sri Lanka there would be facilities for us. Education, accommodation. I’m a teacher, my job you know?
B: Yes yes
R: So I would have something for me. Here I’m always at home. Sitting, watching TV. So it’s my opinion. I don’t like to sit and look, I don’t like. I want to be able to spend my time
B: And be able to work?
R: Ya
B: Eehm. Do you have a lot of contact with people inside of the camps?
R: Ya... Ya...
T: She has
R: Many people. There are 3000 people in KK Nagar, that are all us refugees *laughs. There are camp people calling me and other people also. I was working as teacher in Sri Lanka so my students are in the camp. So they contact me and...
B: Your old students are in the camps?
R: Ya
B: Aha ok *laughs
R: *Laughs
B: Eehm. Do you have... Do you have a lot of contact with Sri Lankans that have settled in third countries outside of India?
R: Ya ya
B: How would you say your contact is with them?
R: Ya, my place is KK Nagar. My place here is KK Nagar
B: KK Nagar?
R: Ya, 3000 Sri Lankans live here outside the camps.
B: In Trichy?
R: Trichy, Trichy. So we meet every day. The area full of Sri Lankans. One area full of Sri Lankans. But more than 5000 people are Indians. So every time we meet in the temple or in the market we talk about so how is it? When can we go to Sri Lanka? And ok, outside also in other districts some people have contact. With phone, always talking
B: So you have an active communi...
R: Communication, yes. We are talking about our country. What is our future? What is going on? What is next?
B: Yes
R: Ya. I lost my life, 19 years lost B: Aha
R: Since 1997 and still now. I lost my own country, my mother, my parents in Sri Lanka. My one sister in Canada, my one brother in UK. So they sent the money to teaching my children. So otherwise I’m sitting and looking. For my own me I can teach, I can work, I
can land farming you know. I can do lot of things. But only sitting looking on the roof, so is it. I am not the only person. With so many people this is the thing. They have no job. They can’t spend more money for *undistinguishable. So how will... like this... *undistinguishable. So my children be.... They studying. Engineering
B: Engineering?
R: Ya, so she study at *undistinguishable. And then she went to Sri Lanka. Now working in Sri Lanka. She live with my parents. Her grandparents. They are there. So my daughter is there. I am here. My son is here. My *undistinguishable is there. Ooooh, ahmm...
B: Ya, you are spread out
R: Spread. Spread out here and there because the war. So we lived together, enjoy our life. But we lost that at a young age. All are lost. All this... All the Tamils lost. We...
B: You are in the same situation?
R: Ya, same. Same situation. Parents are living alone here
B: Is it common that children go abroad?
R: *Undistinguishable for the future
B: Sorry?
R: The children are there. Only the parents are here. Noone there, no care.
B: Mhmm, mhmm. Only the...
R: When they are sick or ill who look after them?
B: Mm
R: In our country neighbours are helping. Neighbours, our neighbors and relations are there.
B: Eehm, you said before that you follow closely what happens in Sri Lanka. What are your sources for news?
R: Internet, newspapers, facebook, social networks, the phone...
B: Everything?
R: Ya, everything
B: Ok *laughs.. Do you follow Indian... What happens in India also? Indian politics and news?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Speaks Tamil
R: *Speaks Tamil
T: No, she doesn't want...
R: I do, but I don’t like. *Laughs
B: Aha ok
T: She doesn’t want to interfere in their politics
B: Aha ok
T: Just listening what’s going on
R: Ya, just listening what’s going on. I read news, but that’s enough *laughs. More, I’m not interested.
B: Eehmm ok... Ehmm. Is there anything you feel is important that you want to talk about, that I have not asked you about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Ya, so many foreigners come and asks to get an interview. But no have solutions for us. So they didn’t do anything. But you are student, young generation... And also we want to have nationality. India or otherwise identity card. They need to give jobs for our
children. The Sri Lankan children. Loans and other things, important. Important thing is they give job to women. So many women. The woman is the important builder of the house, you know? They need to get some job and some money to get their children to higher education, they spend no? And, eehm, we came from flight. Camp residents came from boat, sea sea. So we have to pay over stay fee. Over stay fee.

B: Over stay fees, aha.
R: Now I wanna go to Sri Lanka, I have to pay one and a half lahks (*150,000 rupees). Yes, 1997 I came here. Now 19 years, so every year they ask 8000 rupees, also one month is 300 something.
T: Per year now it is 4000 rupees. By next month it’s 8000.
R: 8000. So 20 years i have to pay one lakh 60,000 fine to the government. So how possible? I can’t pay the money, one lakh 60,000.
B: No
R: I am also refugee. Only difference between camp, they came boat I came flight. Only the difference is... Mode of the transport is the only thing different. They came boat, i came flight. So they collect the money from us. So I can’t pay one lakh 60,000. That’s a problem *laughs
T: So the major problems she says is over stay fees. The other is livelihood for the women. This is the major concerns that she says you need to take note of.
B: Yes. Over stay fees, livelihood for women and also documents, right?
R: Identity, identity yes. Identity is very important. Because we want to get driver’s license, birth certificates, identity cards. But we don’t have any! So how can I ride the bike or car? I don’t have any identification. If I want to go open bank account, they ask evidence.
B: Yes, for your identity?
R: I only have this (police registration form). They don’t accept this. In India this is not evidence T: It was provided by the police, but many will not accept this document.
B: Ok. Not for opening bank accounts? Not to get driver’s license?
R: Ya
B: Ok... Eehhm.... If you have anything you want to say, please do. Otherwise I don’t have any more questions for you.... Ok... I thank you. I thank you a lot for wanting to talk to me. I appreciate it a lot.
R: Ok *laughs. Thank you Benjamin, thank you.

Interview 2B (notes) : 5 men, Ages: 60; 43; 55; 59 and ?, non-camp refugees
The interview was not recorded since the respondents felt more comfortable with doing the interview together. An additional man joined a while into the interview, therefore I don’t have some of the background information on him. However he was very active in the conversation and showed to be somewhat of a leader/activist among non-camp refugees. Respondent 3 left just before the end of the interview because he needed to go and take his medicine.

Respondent 1 was 60 years old, married, hindu and working with cooking. Respondent 2 was 43 years old, married, hindu and working as a decorator. Respondent 3 was 55 years old, married, hindu and working as a driver. Respondent 4 was 59 years old,
married, hindu and working as a driver. No exact information on respondent 5 but he was an older hindu man that had taken many initiatives to try and improve the situation for non-camp refugees and he had been in India for almost 35 years. Respondent 1 and 3 arrived in India 1990, respondent 2 arrived in 1995 and respondent 4 arrived in 1999.

Respondent 1 had lived in the camps until 2005. Respondent 2 had lived the first three months in the camps. Respondent 3 had lived in the camps until 2005 when he went back to Sri Lanka, however in 2006 they came back and he settled outside the camps. Respondent 4 had lived 1 month in the camps.

When asked what the difference was between living in the camp and living outside, respondent 1 said that the living space in the camps is insufficient. Also the Q-branch in the camps would give them trouble. Respondent 2 said that there is too much surveillance and control within the camps. If they want to work outside of the camps they need to get a permission which makes it harder to find a job. However he said that nowadays the situation has improved a lot in the camps. Previously the cash dole was insufficient and therefore they needed to get a job outside the camps to survive, but the opportunities to go outside were severely restricted. Respondent 3 said that there is no freedom in the camp and he needs freedom. He also continued on respondent 2’s account that the situation in the camps used to be worse than it is now. For example they used to have sanitation problems. Respondent 4 continued telling how it used to be in the camp with no opportunities for children in the camp to go to private schools. However all felt now that they would like to go back again to the camp because the situation have improved a lot. Now NGOs are allowed to work in the camps and they have improved such things as sanitation and they are sponsoring children to go to good schools. The government has also increased the cash dole, so nowadays they will be able to survive on the cash dole. The situation has also deteriorated outside the camps. Rent has gone up and is now very high and it has become harder for them to find a job. Previously their police registration served as sufficient registration for companies, but now they need Indian ID, something they are not entitled to. They also can’t get a driver’s license, they can’t buy property or land, they can’t get cooking gas, they can’t get a bank account. For all these things they need an Indian ID. If living in the camp with refugee registration they would at least get some benefits from the government and there would be NGOs there that would help them. The only benefit they are entitled to at the moment is health insurance, up to 4000 lahks, which they very recently received. Everybody except respondent 2 (who seems to be the one most eager to go back to the camp) should be able to get new refugee registration in one of the camps. The reason that respondent 2 won’t be able to get a new registration is that he came to India by flight, using his passport. The others came by boat, without passport. Those who came by passport are not allowed to get registration if they decide to settle outside of the camps. Around this time respondent 5 is joining and he is also telling about how no Sri Lankan arriving to India after the war stopped will get any registration.

Respondent 1 is telling that going back to Sri Lanka means that if they want to go back to India aging they will have to do that by applying for a 6 month visa. Which in turn means that before these 6 months is over they will need to go back to Sri Lanka again where they again need to get a new visa to go back to India. This is the situation for his wife who went back to Sri Lanka to visit her family and to check on their land. Therefore she now needs to always be traveling back and forth, which is not only inconvenient for
them, it is also eating all their money. They all say that they miss their family in Sri Lanka, but everybody is wary of going back to Sri Lanka because this would be their situation if they did. Also they are unable to go to Sri Lanka in case of an emergency since it takes 1-3 months to get an exit permit. Respondent 2 feels that there is a misconception regarding the non-camp refugees financial situation. He says that everybody thinks that non-camp refugees are rich, but this is not the case. Respondent 5 fills in that maybe 35% is rich, but the other 65% are very poor and are actually in a worse situation than the camp refugees since they are not entitled to any benefits. But the common perception is that 100% of the non-camp refugees are rich. Respondent 2 continues by also saying that the lack of refugee status is also restricting them a lot because they can’t purchase anything even if they do have money since they only have the police registration. No land, no property, no driver’s license, no cooking gas, no bank accounts, not even a sim-card. They have to acquire all of these things illegally, i.e. in the name of an Indian.

Respondent 1 is continuing telling about the situation for his wife (and many others respondent 5 says). After the visas expires she needs to go back to Sri Lanka. Otherwise she’ll have to pay a over-stay fee, the over-stay fee is 4600 rupees per person and per year. Respondent 5 is telling that this do not only apply for those that have gone back to Sri Lanka. It also applies to all of them who came to Sri Lanka by passport, who’s passport has expired. If they want to go back to Sri Lanka they need to pay their over-stay fees before they are allowed to go. Some families want to go back to Sri Lanka but they are able to because it is too expensive. Many families are large families that have been here for decades and their passports expired since a long time ago. Hence they amount they would have to pay to go back to Sri Lanka is very high. And even if they pay they will get an over stay stamp in their passport, which means that they will not be able to go back to India for 5 years. Many of them will have friends and relatives here that they would like to visit. Others will have children whom they want to finish their education in India. Others have a medical issue that they are treated for in India. Respondent 5 says that people have died because they have gone back to Sri Lanka with an over-stay stamp and therefore been unable to get back to India to get the treatment they need. He tells that the reason they have to pay these over stay fees is that the central government of India views the non-camp refugees as foreigners and not refugees (The state government of Tamil Nadu views them as refugees however and they are the one providing the health insurance), hence they will go under the foreigners act.

When asked about their hopes for their future they all seem to want to go back to Sri Lanka sometime in the future because everybody starts to talk about the obstacles they are facing for repatriation. Since they do not have any refugee registration they will not be included in any repatriation program which mean that they will not get any benefits from the Sri Lankan government. They will also get no help transporting thane their things in India to Sri Lanka. It all means that they will have to start over from scratch again if they are going to Sri Lanka. They will have to sell all their things and go without having anything. They will have to buy everything in Sri Lanka and it is hard to get a job there, so it will be very difficult for them to do that. Respondent 2 says that in India they are refugees, but if they would go back to Sri Lanka they would also feel like refugees. Their situation would not change. Therefore he says that he at the moment is planning to stay put in India, hoping to be able to get some more benefits from the Indian
government. Respondent 5 says that the Indian and the Sri Lankan government will need to cooperate and create a program that is helping them if repatriation is to be possible. They need to be entitled to benefits in Sri Lanka and they need to get help transporting their things to Sri Lanka. They are waiting for such a program. He also mentions that there has been some talk between the two Prime Ministers regarding the possibility of the Indian government providing citizenship to them. However the other respondents don’t think there is any chance that this will happen because they have all been here for such a long time now (over 25 years) and not a single step has been taken towards them getting citizenship.

The respondents say that the non-camp refugees lack organization. It is not like in the camps where they have committees and leaders they say. But because of ADRAs beginning research on non-camp refugees and their plans to start up some help programs for them, they have started to get in touch with each other and started to discuss what they can do to collectively work to further their interests. They all feel it would be useful for them if they could create some organization like this. However they feel that they need a person with leadership abilities if they are to be able to have an effective organization. At the moment they are searching for such a person. Someone that they feel would be a good person to speak for their behalf publicly and in contacts with the government. They hope that they will have a leader and have created some sort of organization within the end of this year. Respondent 1 thinks one of the problems is that the trust among them is low. Respondent 5 tells that he has during a long time written to the State Government of Tamil Nadu, The Central government of India, The Central government of Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan embassies etc. and told them about the situation for the non-camp refugees and their needs. But he has not gotten any response. He got in touch with UNHCR here in Chennai who got him in touch with ADRA and it is because of this that ADRA has started their projects with non-camp refugees. He hopes that the authorities will listen better now when they have the support of a NGO.

Respondent 3 tells that they have never gone to the Indian authorities when they have any requests because they know that the Indian government does not perceive them to be their responsibility. They have gone to the Sri Lankan embassy instead. For example they can get a passport at the Sri Lankan embassy. But they can only get a passport to go to Sri Lanka, not anywhere else. They used to be able to get an International passport. For exiting India they go to Indian immigration office (this is the only time they have contact with Indian authorities). They fill out an online form and get a no objection form from the local police station (which they will get if they don’t have a criminal record) and then they will get the permit in 10 minutes at the Indian immigration office.

Children born in India cannot get any passport at the Sri Lankan embassy here. They need to go to Sri Lanka for passport and visas. This because they don’t have citizenship. If not applying for Sri Lankan citizenship before they turn 18 they will have to pay 25000 rupees for citizenship.

They are also telling that many go to Australia or various European countries illegally. If they settle there successfully they will have a lot of trouble uniting with their family, bringing them to their new country. This because a child needs the signature of both parents to get a passport, which is impossible if one of the parents (often the father) is in another country. Respondent 5 says there is three types of Sri Lankan immigrants in Australia and Europe. Those with permanent residency, those with work permits and
Those with refugee status. Those with permanent residency will get help from the country in question to unite with his family, the others will not get any help and will not be able to unite with their family.

Respondent 5 continues with outlining the many documentation problems facing non-camp refugees. It concerns birth certificates (both Indian and Sri Lankan), passports and citizenship. These problems are worse for those born in India. Respondents are saying that those born in other countries are provided citizenship and questions why this is not the case in India. Children born in India don’t want to go to Sri Lanka respondent 5 says, so they are in a very hard station. They don’t know anything about and don’t want to go to the place where they are entitled to citizenship. In India where they feel at home they are not getting citizenship. Respondent 5 continues by telling that also children born in India will get overstay fees if they go to Sri Lanka and then come back to India and stay longer then their visa period.

Respondents are telling that they do have contact with refugees inside the camp but this contact is not very close for the most part. However their contact with Indian citizens is closer and their relationships better. They all tell of how close friends they are with many Indian citizens and how many Indian citizens will help them out. They say it would be impossible to live for them without the help of Indian citizens because themselves are not entitled to buy anything. So they are dependent on Indian citizens to buy things for them in their names, They also all have contacts with people in third countries whom they talk regularly with on phone and keep in touch with on social media.

They all follow all news they can get their hands on. Both about India and Sri Lanka, but most about Sri Lanka. Respondent 2 phrases it like following what happens in Sri Lanka is ”their first duty”. But they are also very interested in Indian politics, because as they said before the Indian government and the Sri Lankan government need to cooperate if it is to be possible for them to go back. So they follow the positions the Indian government takes on their situation with great interest.

When asking in the end of their interview if there is anything they want to add they say that I should not interpret what they have told me as critique against India or the Indian government, They say they are very grateful to India for letting them stay this long in their country. They talk about the many problems India has and how many Indian citizens are poor and even homeless. But although many Indian citizens themselves are having a tough time, even worse than them, India has still welcomed them and let them stay and also provided for those in the camps and for that they are grateful they say.

**Interview 2C (Transcription): Male, 26 years old, non-camp refugee**

Benjamin: What is your age?
Respondent: I’m 26 years old
B: Are you married?
R: Ya, I’m married
B: Any family? (*meant to ask about children)
R: Yes, I married an Indian girl. I’m Sri Lankan but I married an Indian girl
B: Yes
R: And I am with my mother here
B: Your mother is also here?
R: Ya, I am with my mother
B: Do you have a job?
R: I don’t have a permanent job. Eeh ya… Only temporary jobs
B: Temporary jobs?
R: Yes, I don’t have any permanent jobs here
B: Aha. What have you worked with temporarily?
R: At this time I am working for (NGO-name)
B: Ah yes (NGO-name)
R: Ya. And also I go for driving. Ya, but I’m an engineering student
B: Engineering student? Ok. Do you have your degree or are you still a student?
R: Ya, I have my degree
B: Ok. Ehmm. What is your religion?
R: Hindu
B: Hindu
R: I’m hindu
B: When did you arrive here in India?
R: I arrived in 2006.
B: 2006?
R: Ya. I was in India before 2004
B: Ok
R: Basically first time I came to India was in 1999 and then I go back to Sri Lanka in 2004 and came back 2006
B: Ahaaha. You went back during the last outbreak of the…
R: At the time I was in Sri Lanka it was… Ah, eh…. There’s no war there
B: There were peace?
R: Yes, there were peace. But then war started so we come back to India.
B: Ehmm. Have you… Here in India, have you always lived outside of the camps or have you lived in camps before?
R: No, I lived in camp when I come to India in 1999, I stayed in camp. When I come to India in 2006 I didn’t go to any camps. I’m staying outside the camps.
B: Outside the camps?
R: Ya
B: What do you feel is the main difference between camp and non-camp?
R: Basically the main thing is we can get our freedom outside. If we want to go anywhere, if we want to go for any studies or things we can go. But in, when staying in camp you have to get permission. That’s the main eehm… Ya, and also we didn’t get any help when we stay outside. Like help means any basic helps.
B: Basic help?
R: Basic help. We can’t get any basic help. But when in camp we can get the basic helps
B: Aha
R: Ya
B: With… Money… And…
R: Ya, like in camps we are provided with rice. Rice and things like that. And a weekly payment or something
B: Weekly payment?
R: Ya, ya. Bu we didn’t get that…. 
B: Outside? R: Ya
B: So eeh… How would you yourself describe your life as a refugee outside of the camps?
R: Sorry?
B: How would you describe how it is to live as a refugee outside of the camps? In your own words R: I feel good in India. I don’t want to go to Sri Lanka and all this. If there is any permanent solution in Sri Lanka I don’t want that. I don’t want to go back. I feel that I want to get any identification, as an Indian.
B: You want to have identification?
R: Ya. As an Indian
B: Indian citizenship? Aha
R: I want Indian citizen. For that it would help me having a passport and I could go to other countries. For my job or for… anything. We didn’t have like that, any identification
B: No?
R: No we didn’t have like that
B: You don’t… You don’t have any?
R: No
B: Mhmm. Eehm. Is there any way for you right now to apply for identification or something like that?
R: Ya. I have a way. Because I am married to an Indian girl so I can apply. But eeh… Most of the cases they didn’t give the citizenship.
B: Aha ok
R: Ya, most of the cases.
B: Most of the cases?
R: Most of the cases they get rejected.
B: Aha. Eehm. Is there any way for you…. If you apply, and you get rejected. Is there any way you can appeal?
R: Ya, I can appeal. But the main thing is if I want to apply for citizen I need some eeh… help from a lawyer or something.
B: Aha. Legal help?
R: Legal help. So I have to pay for that. So I didn’t have eeh…
B: Money?
R: Yes, money. So I can’t go further.
B: Aha ok
R: I can’t apply independently. I need legal help.
B: You need legal help, aha… Is there eehm… Is there any way…. Are the non-camp refugees organized in any way. Do you have any coordination?
R: No. Or I don’t know. But to my knowledge there is not any.
B: Is that something you would think would be helpful to further your interests?
R: Sorry?
B: Is it something you think could be helpful for you to…
R: Ya, if there is any organization it is only (NGO-name). They are taking care about the non-camp refugees. But they are just now entering like this. So still now we don’t have any organizations.
B: And you are not organized yourselves either?
R: Oh, we are not supposed to do that! We are not supposed to do that. We should not
create any organizations. It is not allowed. Law and order problems. We should not organize any… organizations like that.

B: Ok
R: Ya
B: Do you feel like, eeh, you could see a solution in the near future? Indian citizenship or something like that? Do you think the situation could be solved in the near future?
R: I don’t think so. We don’t have a proper leader to lead us.
B: No?.. In India or…?
R: Ya, basically what I’m saying is we don’t have a proper leader to lead us to tell our problems to the government. *Speaks tamil
Translator: *Speaks tamil
T: What he is saying is all solutions are political there are no humanitarian solutions. They need a humanitarian leader.
R: Humanitarian leader
B: Aha. So how would you… How would you, you… eehm want such a leadership or representation to look like?
R: We can’t make any organization. So…
B: So it’s hard for you?
R: Ya. We can’t create any group or organization. That is illegal here.
B: Yes yes
R: We can’t register any organization. We don’t know what we can register or not.
B: Eehm. So do you feel there is a lot of interests from others, like Indians, to listen to you and what you think or your problems?
R: Sorry?
B: If you feel like there is interests from others to listen to you express what your problems is and to listen to your thoughts an opinions?
R: Ya, I don’t have any objections. I’m ready to share
B: You’re ready to share yes. But do you feel like a lot of people want to listen to you?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: I don’t know that. Some may listen to me. Some may not be
B: Aha
R: I do not know that
B: You don’t know that. But you want to share
R: Ya
B: Aha. So do you have, do you have a lot of contacts with refugees inside of the camps?
R: Yes, I have lots.
B: Would you say that there is generally a lot of contact between camp refugees and non-camp refugees?
R: Ya, eehm. Ya, they do contact. Even I have contact with camp refugees. I have friends staying in camps. I have.
B: Mhmm. Eehm. And how about contacts with Sri Lankans that have moved to other countries, a third country?
R: Ya, I have. I have in United States, Canada… In most countries
B: In most countries *laughs
R: Ya
B: How would you describe your relationships with them? Do you have a lot of contact?
R: Ya, through facebook and social networks I have contact with them
B: Aha. Eehm. Do you eehm.. Are you following the situation for the refugees here in India? Do you follow the news or…
R: No, I don’t follow them. Because I have to make some money. I want to make some money so I don’t have any time to follow the news B: No, you’re focused on the money?
R: Ya, I need money because I have family so I have to maintain them.
B: Yes
R: Ya
B: Eehm. Do you feel that there is… Do you feel.. Do you feel like there is something that connects the Sri Lankan refugees together? That you share some…
R: Yes we can connect the refugees. But already I said this that we should have a proper leader a proper organization to connect us. Most of the people are willing to be connected but they didn’t have any part for them
B: No, ok. You need a proper leader?
R: Ya
B: Aha. But do you feel that there is, culturally or something like that, something that brings you together naturally?
R: Sri Lankans
B: Ok… Do you mean nationality, shared history?
R: Sorry? I can’t understand you
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Yes, maybe in marriages or something like that
T: they come together for marriages and things like that
R: Yes even tomorrow we celebrate something but that is *Speaks tamil
T: For the religious festivals they can come together. But for the political agenda…
R: Ya, we can celebrate this. These kinds of things. Tomorrow we will provide food for those people they will walk to nearly 10 kilometres to a temple. They will do some…
T: People walk so they will provide food for these people who walk
R: Ya. They are going to temple. We will provide food and something like that. For that we collect money from Sri Lankan people and we organize these programs. We can do these kinds of things. But politically we can’t do anything.
B: But cultural…
R: Cultural we can do it. We have freedom to do that.
B: Is there anything you yourself want to address?
R: Sorry?
B: Do you feel that there is anything you want to address that I have not asked you about?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Mmmm…. Ya, basically Sri Lankans have problem that we can’t go out of India.
B: You can’t go out of India?
R: Ya, for that we have to get an exit. And for that we have to pay money so… that won’t be *undistinguishable thing. If there is no money for that it will happy for us so we can go to other countries, even we can go to Sri Lanka. For even, if we want to go to Sri
Lanka we have to pay some money to the government.
B: Yes
R: As over stay money
B: Over stay fees, yes
R: A fine we have to pay some money. If the government stopped taking money it will be happy for us.
B: Mmhm
R: Ya, and the main thing is there should be any organization to help us. Not to help us! To lead us! For political issues. That would be nice.
B: Mhmm, eehm. You said in the beginning that it’s hard to get a job, hard to get employment?
R: Ya, we can get employment (phone rings). Sorry. But most companies they won’t take Sri Lankan
B: Most companies?
R: Ya. MNC-companies they won’t allow Sri Lankan citizens B: Aha ok. Eeh… Do they say why?
R: Sorry?
B: Do they tell you…
R: Ya, because they say they have company in India they give job to Indian citizens.
B: Ok
R: Not all the companies but most of the MNCs. Some do. some companies give jobs.
B: Ok
R: In many college campus interviews we are not supposed to have any interview because we are Sri Lankan. We pass the interview and we go for *indistinguishable and we are rejected because we are Sri Lankan citizens
B: In college?
R: Yes, In college and attending my campus interview I pass two rounds and I go to my third interview…. Ya, I was Sri Lankan and I was rejected for that
B: Aha. But you did.. You got your engineering degree somewhere else?
R: In India.
B: In India. But at another university? Another college?
T: He took one interview at his college…
B: Aaaah a job interview!
R: Ya, a job interview
B: I thought it was to get into college. Ah ok a job interview
R: No, not to get into college. A job interview
B: So getting into college is ok?
R: Ya, it’s ok.
B: Aha
R: Getting into college is easy. But for getting a job…. *laughs
B: Very tough?
R: Ya
B. Would you say this is a common situation. That they have a college degree but no job?
R: Ya, ya. Most of the students have this problem.
B: Ok… yes… eehm…. Eeh
R: *indistinguishable for one month. My friend, my *indistinguishable friend. He had an interview, like the campus. He passed three rounds and the final round, *indistinguishable round he was rejected because he is Sri Lankan
B: Aha
T: Actually the companies *indistinguishable Sri Lankans because they can’t get proper work visas. Sri Lankans can’t enter into the MNCs
B: The?
T: Multi National Companies
B: Aha MNCs ok. But ok, so the smaller companies that are not MNCs…
R: No! Even smaller companies do that. Not only MNCs. Smaller companies also do that. They do not allow.
B: Aha, it’s the same
R: Ya, it’s the same. But some companies do allow.
T: The companies that have onsite projects wont allow them because they can’t send them abroad. So they block them from entering their companies. If the companies don’t ave any onsite projects but work in India only they will allow. But to a smaller salary.
R: Ya
B: Ok… I don’t have any more questions so please, if you have something you want to add?
R: Maybe… Maybe somebody else has other problems. I don’t have other problems. Maybe someone have other problems
B: Of course. Eehm, but do you feel like there are any problem generally among…
R: Sri Lankans
B: Among Sri Lankans that we haven’t talked about?
R: Ya. general problem is about when we go to any government… government officials, eeeh government…
B: Yes government offi…
R: Offices. We are treated like eeh… We generally have a symbol like refugee so they treat like that. When we go to any government offices we are not treated well
B: Aha ok
R: Ya, they want to avoid us.
B: They want to… Sorry?
R: They do not give proper answers to us. They will not respond us!
B: Ok
R: They will scold us. Be angered with us. Things like that.
B: Aha
R: Most of the government offices, government departments. If we go to government departments they will do that, all those things ya. Not everybody, but some. The persons who are in higher posts will respect us but those who are in smaller posts don’t respect us.
B: Aha. Is it hard for you to get in touch with those on higher posts?
R: Ya, we have to go step by step. At first we have to meet the lower posts.
B: Do you… Is this something that is, eeeh… That makes Sri Lankans hesitate to contact government officials?
R: Sorry?
B: Eeeh… Does this make Sri Lankans hesitant? That they don’t want to….
R: Ya ya ya. That’s the main reason
B: Aha… Ok… I am very thankful that you wanted to talk to me
R: Sorry?
B: I thank you for wanting to talk to me
R: Oh, it’s ok. Thank you. Thank you very much
B: I appreciate it a lot
R: Thank you

Interview 2D (Transcription) : Male, 70 years old, non-camp refugee
Benjamin: How old are you?
Translator: *Speaks tamil
Respondent: 70 years. Date is 11-03-1946.
B: 11-03-1946 *Laughs
R: Ya
B: And what is your marital status?
R: Sorry?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: Yes yes. Married.
B: Eehm. Do you have a job?
R: No. (Respondent holds up four fingers)
B: Four? You have four kids?
R: Four kids, ya. Two males and two females
B: Ok
R: All got married
B: Ah nice *laughs. Eehm.. What religion do you have?
R: Hindu
B: You are hindu?
R: Ya
B: When did you come here to Tamil Nadu, India?
R: In 1998, april.
B: 1998?
R: April, april.
B: Ok… Have you lived in the camps before or did you settle outside the camps from the beginning?
R: In the beginning, I stayed in the camp for two weeks.
B: Two weeks? Aha, aha
R: Ya, two weeks
B: But… yes please.
R: Only two weeks I stayed there. I asked the in charge officer: I want to go out. He asked me why.
B: Ok
R: I want… I told him I want to send my children to proper schools. For studies. That’s it. He said:
Why? Why are you going out. We have schools. So many surrounding schools.
B: Ya
R: Ya. *Speaks tamil
T: For education purpose he came out
R: Yes yes
B: Are the schools in the camps not good?
R: Nono, naah… *Speaks tamil
T: It’s a remote place. It’s a camp for Sri Lankan refugees. The people who came first stayed there. It’s in a remote place of Tamil Nadu, there are no proper schools so he came out for educational purposes for his children
R: We came by boat
B: To Tamil…
R: Yes yes. I landed here *Speaks tamil. Landed here…
T: Actually he came by boat and landed in *indistinguishable where all the refugees. It’s the place where all the Sri Lankan refugees come to that place only in the beginning and after that the Indian government take care of them.
B: Aha
T: So he’s come on a refugee boat
B: Ok… How would you describe your life as a non-camp refugee?
R: My case?
B: Yes
R: My case…
B: Yes
R: Very lucky
B: Very lucky?
R: Yes, because we came to India earlier. 98 we came here. At the time there was big war between the Sri Lankan army and the LTTE. It is… It was very very bigger than it was earlier in 1998.
B: Sorry? It was…
R: Bigger. We came to India 1998.
B: Yes.
R: After that
B: Yes
T: The war became worse after 1998
B: Aah ok, the war got worse. Ok
R: So that’s why when we came we are lucky.
B: Yes
T: They were not in Sri Lanka in the worst part of the war so they feel lucky
B: To have gone earlier?
R: Yes. On the way we pass the Sri Lankan water and we came to the Indian water. At the time Sri Lankan navy came and catch us.
B: Oh ok
R: Yes yes yes yes. And they took us back to Sri Lanka. *Speaks tamil
T: Actually he is saying that they initially tried to come to India but he was caught by the Sri Lankan navy in the ocean and they brought them back to Manar
B: To…
R: Sri Lanka
T: Sri Lanka yes. There was a misunderstanding between the police and the army. Why they brought back these people. After that they tried again to come to India in 1998.
B: Aha
R: April 16
T: Actually initially they tried April 12 but that time they were blocked. After that April 16 they tried and they came to India
B: Yes… And how would you describe your life here in India?
T: *Speaks Tamil
R: In my case personally?
B: Ya
R: I have no problems. Ok? I sent my four children to abroad
B: Abroad?
R: Ya. One daughter in UK
B: Ok
R: One, the younger daughter and my two sons they are staying in Canada.
B: Ok
R: Canada, Canada
B: Yes, Canada. Where in Canada? I have lived in Ottawa *laughs
R: Montreal *Laughs. Ottawa huh. Ottawa is the capital…
B: Ya… Eehm. Do you know how the situation is for others
T: *Speaks Tamil
R: Mmm yes yes. Most of them are in good condition
B: Good condition?
R: Good condition. But about 20 or 25%, they are suffering
B: Aha
R: Yes, because 75 77%, they are getting for their expenditures from their children who are staying out of India.
B: Abroad?
R: Abroad
B: Ok
R: *Speaks Tamil
T: *Speaks Tamil
R: Only about 25 or 30% are suffering here. They are helpless! No one to help them because they have, they don’t have any children or they have children and they are staying in here. If they have educated, even educated, it is hard to get a government job
B: If you don’t have education?
R: No no. If you have…
B: Aah even if you have education.
R: They are educated well but it’s very difficult to get a job. From government sources. Private sources they are giving. But the payment is very poor
B: Ok
R: *Speaks Tamil
T: There is no job for them in the IT-sectors either
B: No job in IT-sectors?
R: Ya
T: The big companies like (gives examples of companies) will not allow refugees to work in their companies
R: Yes
T: So for working in IT-sector they have to go to the small companies and there the pay is not very good
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually the person.. Sam?
R: Sam
T: Sam got a job in a bank and then they asked about papers, documents from government officials permitting them to work in India. So they contacted the Commissioner of rehabilitation in Chennai.
B: Aha
T: So if they got that letter they could go for the job that Bank of Switzerland…
R: Royal Bank of Switzerland
T: Royal Bank of Switzerland
R: Royal Bank
B: Royal Bank of Switzerland. They offered a job here in India?
R: India ya.
T: So for that they needed a work permit that they had to get from the Commissioner of rehabilitation. When they refused to give they could not go to the job. So it will be a problem for them to get a job.
B: Is it hard to get the work permits?
T: Sometimes
B: Is there any set rules or is it on case-by-case basis?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually they don’t have any source on how to get it so they approach NGOs like (gives examples of NGOs) and some of the welfare persons like (name) that they met in *indistinguishable
B: Sorry? That they met in?
T: Chennai
B: Ah. Ok.
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs. *Speaks tamil. He is ready to support them to get that letter from Commissioner of Rehabilitation. But we don’t know whether he’ll give or not. What is the thought of the Commissioner that we should not *indistinguishable
B: Ok. Eehm. So eehm… Your contacts with government go through organizations?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: No. Only this (NGO name). (NGO name)
B: Ok, you only go through (NGO name)
T: Through (NGO name) they came to know all this
B: Aha. Eehm… is there any organization or coordination between non-camp refugees?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: No no no. *Speaks tamil
T: Actually he is telling there is no coordination at all between the non-camp refugees. And also people are not interested to form such organizations or coordinate like that. Because they are living in various places so coordination is very difficult for them and also there is no unity among them. So that is one of the reasons for lack of coordination.
B: Aha ok. Eehm. So what is your hopes for the future?
R: Future?
B: Yes
R: Actually it depends on the central government of India and the Sri Lankan government.
B: Ok
R: It is not our decision B: Sorry?
T: It is not the decision of the refugees. It is the decisions of the central governments of India and Sri Lanka
R: Sri Lanka
B: Aha
R: If the Indian government, the central government ask: You have to go back to Sri Lanka. We have to go!
B: Aha
R: We can’t say no, we can’t go. We can’t say no. At the same time they are not giving permission to stay in India for long-term, for a long period
B: Mm
R: If they think, they can give Indian citizen. Ok? In my case, one of my sons bought land here.
B: Ok
R: That is there
B: Ya?
R: He is asking: Daddy, you build a house there. I’m sending money. I told him: We don’t know how long we are going to stay in India. If the Indian government send back to Sri Lanka we have to go back
B: Aha. So you don’t feel that there is any way you can affect your situation?
R: *Looks confused
B: For yourself?
T: Pardon?
B: Eeh… You don’t feel that you can affect your future yourself?
T: Actually, you didn’t understand what he was telling?
B: Yes I did
T: He was telling he has land. He want to construct a house in that land. But due to uncertain government procedures and policies he doesn’t want to build a house and waste money here.
B: No no: I - I understood. Eehm, but eeh… Ya…
T: What was the question actually?
B: If he feels that he himself can affect…
T: How to change…
B: No, eehm… If eeh. The future. If there is no way for himself to affect what happens in the future? Whether to stay or go back
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil. The northern part of Sri Lanka, you know?
T: Do you know about the northern part of Sri Lanka?
B: Yes
R: My native place is that.
B: Aha
R: Ok? *Speaks tamil
T: Actually, he doesn’t have any hope about going back to Sri Lanka. Because the places in the northern province, it was occupied by the army. So there is no hope of going back to their native place. So they don’t want to go back to Sri Lanka. And also one information he gave is he is updated by yesterday’s news. He use Internet
B: Internet aha
T: And he is telling one incident about *indistinguishable, it’s a big hotel in the northern area. It’s like *indistinguishable
R: *Indistinguishable
T: They want to use funds from the people. It has taken funds from the people and building a big hotel. So the present president want to give this back to the people.
B: Mhmm
T: So he saw this incident on the Internet. And he just got updated with this news
B: Aha
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually the land was a traditional one. For the *Indistinguishable. All were living in the same place only. But now it is the *indistinguishable of all of the army. So if they are going it will not be given to them. So that is the main *indistinguishable part of their life. So only they lost the hope to live there.
B: Aha aha. Eehm… How much interest do you feel that there is in society about the refugee situation?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: He is very interested
B: Sorry
T: He is very interested in knowing about the present situation
B: Aha… Here in India for the refugees?
T: *Speaks tamil
B: Or the situation in Sri Lanka?
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Both
B: Both. Ok. Do you feel… Do you feel that there is a general interest in society to know more about your situation?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Yes. It’s general information and he gets it from all over the world. If there are refugees out there he wants to know about them
B: Eehm. And do you feel that others have a lot of interest in knowing about your interests and opinions?
T: Sorry?
B: If he feels that others have a large interest in knowing about his feelings and opinions?
T: Others?
B: Others, yes… Eeh, about… Yes, others. Non-refugees. Either in India. Or people from outside of India. If they have an interest in hearing his opinions and his thoughts.
T: His opinions and his thoughts?
B: Yes, or the refugees thoughts and opinions in general
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually, he only discusses these issues with close friends
R: Close friends
T: Not with others. Just with close friends. Close neighbours like *indistinguishable
B: Aha. Do you have a lot of contact with refugees inside of the camps?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No, not much
B: Ok. Eehm. Do you… Do you have a lot of contact with non-camp refugees? Or do you mostly have contact with non-refugees?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Ya, he’s saying he has contact with non-camp refugees and also with Indian citizens
R: Indian
B: Aha
T: He is having a good report with both of them
B: A good report. Aha ok, that’s good. Eehm, ya. Do… Is there anything you yourself like to add?
Something you want to talk about that you feel I have not addressed?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: *Laughs *Speaks tamil.
R: *Laughs
T: Actually he wants to talk about the initial problem between tamils and the singhalese. But I told him it’s too political so… It is not good. We should not interfere with that. So I told him please tell if there is any other problem faced by non-camp refugees that he feels. Anything
B: Ok… Eeh, bu..
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually the over stay fee
B: Mm the over stay fee
T: The over stay fee that applies to the non-camp refugees. You have to take note of that and please write it in your thesis also. This is the major issue of the non-camp refugees
B: The over stay fees, aha aha
R: There are so many people. They want to go back to Sri Lanka. Because of this penalty they are not willing to go. Because they have no money.
B: No
R: Recently only the Indian government impose this much of tax.
B: This much?…
R: Payment
T: He is saying the amount they have to pay recently increased
B: Oh, aha ok. The fees have increased
R: Yes yes. Recently I came to know next may, now april, from next month, they are going to increase more
T: Actually now they are collecting 4000. He is telling that by next month they are
collecting more
R: Double, double. 8000 or something B: 8000?
R: Per year
B: Per person?
R: Now they are charging, now they are imposing the fine at I think 320 per month
T: 4000 per year
R: 320 per month
T: Oh is it 320 per month?
B: 320 per month, aha?
R: Ya. *Speaks tamil. So from next month it will go double. Yes
T: Nearly 9000 they need to pay every year for the Indian government for staying here. If they are staying for 10 years that means they have to pay 90000.
R: Yes. In my case no problem.
T: For him it is not a problem, but he wants to represent his own community.
R: Myself no problem. My mother-in-law no problem. At the same time my wife she has the same problem.
B: Ok
R: Yes
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually this problem is for his wife because she went to Germany one time and then came to Columbo then returned back to India. So from that *indistinguishable the over stay will be calculated for his wife.
B: Aha. Ok. So it starts… If you have gone outside of the country and come back, that is when it starts?
T: Yes
B: So it starts when you leave the country, aha
R: If we go out of India. Out of India. We can’t come back to India, no?
B: Ok, no? Then you’ll get the fee?
R: So we have to go to Columbo and get the Indian visa only. We have to come here, no?
From that they will count no over stay
B: No over stay? No over stay if you have a visa?
T: If you have a visa there is no over stay. But these people they came in 1998. They came with the visa of…
R: Only 3 months visa, no?
B: Aha, only 3 month visa
T: Actually his problem is different. Actually he come by boat. So he didn’t come with any proper visa. So he will be considered as a refugee. But his wife came by the air from Columbo in 2003 on a three month visa.
B: Ah ok so she only had a three month visa?
R: Yes yes
T: So she will be considered as a foreigner here
R: She came with me. She came with me to India, ok? In 2003, she went to Germany
B: Yes
R: Germany
B: Yes yes
R: Her brother got married with a german girl
B: Aha ok
R: Yes yes. So just she went to Germany. She stayed there for 6 months. She can’t come back to India so she went to Sri Lanka. Then she got the visa for three months and came back to India. Still she is here, no?
B: Ya
T: She came by 3 month visa only but she is living here more than 10 years
B: So the over stay fee will be calculated from the end of her 3 month visa?
T: Yes
B: Aha aha… Do you feel that there is any opportunity for you to protest the raises in the fee?
T: *Speaks tamil
R: *Speaks tamil
T: No, there is no opportunity for them and they don’t know to who they should report all these issues so they just started telling their issues to this (NGO name) so (NGO name) need to do that for the Sri Lankan refugees
B: Aha ok
R: *Speaks tamil
T: If he was a politician he would go talk to everyone but he is not anything like that. He is a *indistinguishable *laughs
B: Ok *laughs
R: *Speaks tamil
T: Actually he wants to tell this issue of over stay fees to the central government and other stakeholders. But he doubt this. That it will be discussed.
B: Aha, oh yes. Yes… Eehm, if you don’t have anything else you want to talk about I want to thank you for talking to me and express my gratitude for you taking your time to do this. I appreciate it a lot
R: No more question?
B: No, I don’t have more questions. *laughs
R: *Laughs. Ok, thank you
B: Thank you

Interview 2E (Notes): Female, 35 years old, Non-camp refugee
Respondent is a non-camp refugee. Her only job is as a volunteer for one of the NGOs in the camp. She gets a symbolik compensation of 5000 rupees for this. Her husband is a driver and runs a guide company. She fled to Tamil Nadu with her parents in 1990 when she was 10 years old. She stayed in the camps for 9 years. Then she married her husband who was a non-camp refugee. They would like to move back to the camps since camp refugees get access to benefits and welfare schemes. Unfortunately they are not allowed to move back to the camps after moving out.

R says her life is very hard. Her family has no stable income. Her husband might have a good income for one month, but then he might not have any income at all several months in a row. Recently her husband had his first job in three months. Lack of work is why she chose to be a volunteer for the organization. It does not pay much but at least it is a stable income. She very much wants her children to get a good education, but going to a good school requires paying a fee and she strâles to afford that. This year she could not afford to pay the fee. Unlike some other refugees she does not get any economic
assistance from friends outside of India. She says it is very expensive to be a non-camp refugee. Refugees pay higher rent than Indians, they have to pay a fee to the government if they change address, they have to pay to get access to gas. Almost all non-camp refugees have these issues and they struggle to raise enough money to survive. The cost of living is unsustainable for many. One of the big problems according to R is the “over-stay fees” refugees have to pay. The cost amounts to 4400 rupees per year for every refugee. Most people have lived in India for over 10 years and if they have not paid the fee they will have to pay a very high amount. It is not uncommon according to R that refugees have to pay around 40000 rupees in “over-stay fees”. As recent as yesterday she heard about someone having to layover 60000 rupees. In addition to the fees they also get a stamp in their passport that says they have over-stayed. This stamp means they cannot go back to India if they leave the country. If they want to leave India and then come back they have to go through a three month long bureaucratic process and pay a large sum of money. They therefore have no opportunity to visit relatives temporarily, for example in case of deaths.

R has some suggestions for how her situation and the situation for other refugees could be improved. She says it would be of great help if they had the possibility of taking loans. R and her husband need to borrow to invest in their business. There are private creditors that may give them loans, but for a very high interest rate. R and her family therefore decided not to take the loan.

According to R there is no government department, institution or authority that non-camp refugees can contact to get assistance. R does not believe either that there is any NGO to contact to get help. Non-camp refugees are on their own.

Non-camp refugees are not organized. They have no representative or organization/person speaking on their behalf. R would like it if there would be more coordination between non-camp refugees since it would make it easier for them to talk to government officials and improve their possibilities of getting assistance from the government. R says however that it is very hard for non-camp refugees to organize themselves because they are so geographically scattered. Communication between non-camp refugees is not coordinated but on a person-to-person basis. R is very curious about how other non-camp refugees are doing and what their situation looks like. She also likes to know what government officials think about them and their situation and she would like more people to give suggestions on how to solve their problems, rather than merely finding out what their problems are.

R expresses that she has no hope for the future. “There is no hope” she says. She sees no solution for refugees. She has been in India since she was 10 and still she is considered to be a refugee. She got an education, but can’t get a job. It does not seem like India is willing to include the refugees in society and give them citizenship. To go back to Sri Lanka is nothing she wants to do because she knows nothing about Sri Lanka or about life there. She says “My life is a question mark”. She has no idea what will happen in the future and she feels very insecure about her current situation. She fears that the Indian government will decide to force all refugees back to Sri Lanka and that she will be forced into a life she knows nothing about, in a country where she and her family would have to start all over.

R says that the preferred solution for her is not to go back to Sri Lanka. She would like local integration. She wants to have an Indian identity. She wants to be able to get a
job in India and a stable income. She wants freedom of movement. She wants her children to get access to a good education. She wants her children, born in India, to be considered Indian citizens, because they never set foot in Sri Lanka. The only life they know is in India. For them it makes no sense to become Sri Lankan citizens. They feel completely Indian. So does she. She does not even root for Sri Lanka in cricket, because why would she root for a country that forces away their population. First and foremost she wants to be considered by the Indian society as more than a refugee. She says ”the Sri Lankan refugees are people and they should be seen as people, not as refugees.”

R says she has good relationships with refugees in the camps. Her parents live there and she visits them often. In periods she lives with them. She has friends in France and Canada and she has regular contact with them. They call her once a week, but her contact with them is purely social. They don’t help her with money

R doesn’t know what happens in Sri Lanka and she does not follow Sri Lankan news. It is not that she does not have access to the information. She is just not interested of what is happening in Sri Lanka because she has no plans to go back. Sometimes friends and family talk about Sri Lanka. But she is not interested. She never asks them about Sri Lanka. But if they tell, she listens. She does not follow Indian news either. She says Indian news is just politics and misery and she does not like either one. She says she is not at all interested in politics.

R ends the interview by questioning why refugees still have to live the way they do. She does not understand how, after 25 years in India, they still can be considered refugees. She does not understand why they are treated with suspicion by the Indian government and she does not understand why they have to live an expensive life with limited possibilities to be self-sufficient. She says many people are interested in their situation and what their problems are. But none has any solutions. She would like to meet someone with actual solutions.

8.3 Interviews with employees of humanitarian organizations

Interview 3A (Notes): Employee of a humanitarian organization, male
Respondent (R) has worked for 10 years with the refugees in Tamil Nadu, within different organizations. He does not want the interview to be recorded since he intended to give me his own opinions rather than the official positions of the organization he works for. If his identity somehow got exposed it could mean trouble for both him and his employees. I agreed not to record the conversation and ensured him that he would be anonymous in the thesis

R started by emphasizing the importance of understanding the geopolitical history and the historically tense relations between India and Sri Lanka in order to understand the situation of the refugees. He embarked on a long historical exposé. He said one need to
go back to the colonial days since the British transported Tamils to Sri Lanka in order to work at plantations. This is why Indian Tamils live in Sri Lanka. Refugees are both Indian Tamils and Sri Lankan Tamils. When Sri Lanka became independent both Tamils and Sinhalese were living in Sri Lanka. The UK believed that a nation with two languages would become unstable and at the time of Sri Lankan independence they therefore decided to make Sinhalese the only allowed language. This was determined in the Sinhala only Act. This put the groundwork for the discrimination against the Tamil population. That the Tamil language became forbidden was not the only act of discrimination. Tamils’ educational opportunities got restricted, their employment opportunities for restricted.

Tamils started to protest against the discrimination. At the beginning the protests were peaceful. Until the mid 70s there were an agreement between the Indian and the Sri Lankan government that Indian Tamils that wanted to go back to India got Indian citizenship. And both the Indian and Sri Lankan government assisted their repatriation. Around 100.000 Indian Tamils went to India and and got Indian citizenship. Around 100.000 stayed in Sri Lanka. When the agreement was absolved, the Sri Lankan government decided that the Indian Tamils that had stayed were not to be considered Sri Lankan citizens. They became stateless. Sri Lankan Tamils invited them to their areas as an act of solidarity. 1983 the situation in Sri Lanka took a turn for the worse. 300.000 Tamils fled Sri Lanka and around 100.000 were killed in what came to be known as Black July. Most Tamils fled to Tamil Nadu because it was, and is, their closest refuge. Around 130.000 fled to Tamil Nadu around that time. It was around this time that the Tamil protests started to become violent. Organisations such as the LTTE was formed. At the time, they were allowed in India and they were allowed to move freely in Tamil Nadu. They even got military training and weapons in Tamil Nadu. R says India did this to revenge that Sri Lanka had supported Pakistan in the conflict between India and Pakistan. At this time refugees got a warm welcome in Tamil Nadu. There were no restrictions on them and they were integrated with the majority population.

In 1987, Rajiv Gandhi became the new Prime minister of India. He decided to try and improve the Indian relationship with Sri Lanka. As a part of this approach, India sent a peace-keeping mission to Sri Lanka. As part of the agreement that India would contribute with a peace-keeping mission in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan government agreed to give Tamils some regional autonomy and the same political rights as the Sinhalese. According to R, Sri Lanka did not keep the agreement. Tamils continued to be discriminated against and the conflict between LTTE and the Sri Lankan government intensified. India had to withdraw its peace-keeping mission. This was the time of the second period of a large refugee inflow from Sri Lanka to Tamil Nadu.

In 1991 Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated. The assassination could be tied to the LTTE. After this event, India’s attitude towards the refugees changed. Since then, all refugees have been treated as potential LTTE-members. LTTE was forbidden after the assassination in 1991. There are two closed camps in Tamil Nadu, in reality serving as prisons, where people that have or have had connections to the LTTE are placed. Refugees that have been found guilty of committing crimes in India are also put in these camps.

In 1991 a lot of refugees were forced to repatriate against their will. A lot of these people were forced to flee again in 1996-2003 during the third period of a large refugee inflow from Sri Lanka to Tamil Nadu.
inflow to Tamil Nadu. The fourth and final period of refugee inflow took place between 2006-2008 when the Sri Lankan government launched a massive military offensive and defeated the LTTE.

R believes that conditions in the camps have improved continuously during the last years. He says that one can see a massive improvement compared to when he started working with the refugees. According to him, India fulfills all the demands International Law put on host states, despite not being a signatory of the 1951 Convention on Protection of Refugees. R thinks they have not signed the convention as a protest against the UN abandoning India during the Indo-Chinese war.

The central government of India decides how much funds will be devoted to the refugee camps (around 1 billion rupees per year). But they have no responsibility over the administration of the camps. This responsibility lies with the Department of Rehabilitation in the State government of Tamil Nadu. Today 42 welfare schemes exist to improve conditions in the camps. The only thing R says is below International humanitarian standard in the camps is the lack of living space. Non-camp refugees are only allowed one of the benefits available to camp refugees, that is medical insurance. According to R, refugees have no involvement or participation regarding what schemes should be started and how they should be implemented. It is only the Department of Rehabilitation that decides this. The Department of Rehabilitation asks NGOs for advice. The refugee population in total have no representation. But in every camp there are informal representatives. R says refugees in the camp are often not in agreement about how the camps should be administered, different groups in the camps have different opinions. He is therefore unsure how well the representatives actually represent the communities.

The humanitarian situation may be ok, but R describes a situation where the political rights of the refugees are lacking. The refugees are not allowed freedom of movement past 18.00. They have to register where they go, and their destination has to be approved. They have to be present for a headcount once a week. They cannot own property or land. They cannot own a vehicle. Surveillance in the camp is widespread. Physically the refugees are not very restricted. There are no walls etc around the camps. But the government has a lot of Q-branch officers in the camps and they purposely creates tensions between different groups in the camps to get them to give up information about each other. If the refugees are caught breaking the rules their registration will be cut off which means that they loose their benefits. However they are not forced back to Sri Lanka.

R believes one of the big issues about the refugee situation in Tamil Nadu is that there seems to be no durable solutions in sight. He lists three possible durable solutions: Repatriation, Local integration and Resettlement. He says resettlement is impossible because their humanitarian situation in India is not bad enough to grant them asylum in a third country. Concerning repatriation he believes the new government in Sri Lanka have taken some positive steps. They have been talking about the possibility to remove an antiterrorism law that has been used to discriminate against Tamils, they have talked about granting some regional autonomy and political rights to the Tamils in accordance with the agreement with India and Rajiv Gandhi in the 80s. They are discussing the possibility of granting amnesty to repatriates for crimes committed during the civil war. Land that has been occupied have been given back to Tamils. The human rights situation has improved
and peaceful Tamil protests are now being allowed. R says that all this is conditions
refugees have cited as reasons for why they do not want to repatriate. If the new
government will follow through on everything they discuss, he therefore believes that
many refugees will want to go back. But so far it has been mostly talk and refugees are
generally wary of returning. Many of them, or their parents, have experience of going
back to Sri Lanka just to have to flee again a few years later. Many say they want to wait
and see how the situation in Sri Lanka develops before they take any decision. He is also
saying that many are now rooted in India and they do not want to go back to Sri Lanka
and start over. Many have children born in India that have lived their entire lives in India
and they do not want to go to Sri Lanka. The Indian government prefers repatriation
however. They have suggested a repatriation program to help refugees return. They even
devoted funds for it. But Sri Lanka have told them that they need to deal with their IDP-
situation before they can participate in a repatriation program.

R believes that a lot of refugees would prefer local integration before repatriation. As
it is today, there are no clear rules regarding who can gain citizenship. Every application
is processed as an individual case. If one applies today it is highly unlikely that one will
be given citizenship. A lot of refugees are also wary of applying because they do not want
to interact with government officials, since they are treated with suspicion and may be
investigate for potential connections to the LTTE. A lot of refugees hence believes it is
too large a risk to apply for citizenship. R does not believe chances are big that India will
start granting citizenship to a large amount of refugees since India have many large
refugee populations (from Tibet, Myanmar, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan. Bangladesh,
Syrian etc.). R believes it would be unsustainable to give all of them citizenship. It would
create tensions in the majority population. In addition, Sri Lanka still conceives the
refugees as their citizens. Hence it could create tensions between India and Sri Lanka if
India started to ”take their citizens”. Despite many wanting Indian citizenship, R says that
most refugees consider themselves Sri Lankan.

R believes that the difference between camp- and non-camp refugees is that there is
more humanitarian assistance in the camps. But there is also more restrictions and more
surveillance. Whether refugees choose to settle in camps or outside is dependent on their
economic situations. Non-camp refugees usually have contacts in the diaspora living in
western countries that send them money. There are not a lot of contact between camp
refugees and non-camp refugees. Neither between camp refugees and the majority
population.

R describes refugees as very interested in Sri Lankan politics and events in Sri Lanka.
What happens in Sri Lanka determines if they can consider repatriation. R says they
mostly get their information from the diaspora. He hence considers the diaspora a key
actor concerning the possibility to reach a durable solution. R says many people in the
diaspora are very nationalistic and can hence be a problem for the possibilities of
reaching a durable solution. Many in the diaspora demands a separate state, and their
influence over the refugees could make their attitudes towards repatriation more negative.
Interest in Indian politics is low.

R believed that because of the insecurity, saving is not a priority for refugees. They
have no clear future to save for. Therefore they feel they might as well just spend all their
money in the present. Debts are hence high in the refugee community.
Interview 3B (Notes): Employee of a humanitarian organization, male

Respondent (R) was very friendly and encouraged me to ask anything that could help my research. I was under the impression that this was going to be an initial meeting where we planned a future interview. I had hence not brought a recording device.

R started telling me that the refugees have many needs. A lot of people contact them to get help with getting proper documentation. For these issues they have to refer the refugees to another organisation. Double-work among the organizations is prohibited by the Department of Rehabilitation. Also, donors do not want to give money to project that other organizations are already doing. They are currently working with livelihood and protection. Previously they worked with water, sanitation, and housing. But these areas have improved greatly the last 10 years and the need to work with these issues are not very big any more. In the livelihood area they work with vocational training, micro-loans, catch-up education for drop-outs close to graduation and job placement. In the protection area they work closely with a protection committee consisting of refugees that they have formed and trained. The protection committee identifies problems within the camps such as domestic abuse, alcohol abuse and depressions and refer the troubled households/individuals to relevant institution/professionals that can help them. The protection committee is responsible for creating communication projects regarding issues in the camps. They have made everything from billboards, to wall-painting, to comics, to puppet-shows.

The protection committee consists of one representative from each of the camp committees in the region. There are a lot of committees in the camps with different responsibilities. The organization communicates a lot with these committees and the committees are regularly giving suggestions on what programs they should start up and ho they could change the implementation of existing programs. Unfortunately they rarely have the opportunity to implement their suggestions. Either because of budget restrictions, or because what is being proposed to them falls under the responsibility of another organization. In those cases they refer the refugees to the concerned organization. How much they work with the committees depends on what type of program they are running. But their own protection committees they work very close with. At least once month the implementation officer meets with the committee and every third month the notes from the meetings looked over by the Protection Officer.

It is the implementation officer that is responsible for all the projects in the camps. There is one implementation officer in every region, which means responsibility over 3-5 camps. The implementation officer is the one that has the most direct contact with the refugees. Through representatives of committees speaking with the implementation officer, the organization can receive suggestions and information regarding what programs are needed in the camps. Their most important source of information is a yearly survey conducted to assess the needs in the camps.

According to R there is a lot of interest among refugees to be active in the committees. If there is a need in the camps, the refugees are generally active lobbyists, trying to make sure their needs will be met and their situation improve. This is especially true if the need is not individual. if there is a general need in the community, everybody will engage actively to make sure this need is satisfied. R views to camps as very solidary spaces in this sense.

Concerning the issue of durable solution. R believes that refugees generally do not
know what they prefer. His perception was that refugees were split between repatriation and local integration, having one leg in Sri Lanka and the other in India. Many are hesitant about having to start over again in Sri Lanka. The biggest reason that many is so wary about repatriation despite there being peace in Sri Lanka since 2009, he thinks is that the situation for Tamils still is insecure. He tells that the situation historically has seemed to improve which has attracted a lot of people to go back, just to have to flee to India again when the situation again took a turn for the worse. The refugees carry with them these experiences, it affects their decisions and R understands them. He says it is too early to tell whether or not the current regime is sincere about respecting human rights and stop discrimination against Tamils. He also says that if there is a government change in the next election, the situation could change very quickly. Concerning local integration, he says that many would be interested if there was any opportunity to get citizenship. But there is not. To continue local integration, without citizenship and the restrictions that puts on their lives is however not an advantageous option. R believes it is impossible for the refugees to get Indian citizenship. India is actively lobbying for repatriation. Especially after the government change in Sri Lanka. The Indian government wanted to start up a repatriation program, but Sri Lanka said they had to deal with their IDP situation before they could participate in any repatriation programs for refugees. R agrees that it would not be sustainable for Sri Lanka to participate in a repatriation program before the IDP situation is under control. The high costs of hosting the refugee population is according to R the biggest reason that the Indian government are so strong proponents for repatriation. India has a big poverty problem, and a lot of resources being allocated to refugees can therefore be politically problematic. It is also politically problematic to grant citizenship to Sri Lankan refugees since it is a group associated to the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

According to R the refugees have no idea how the Indian government views the, Their access to information is limited. After the government change in Sri Lanka, India government officials visited the camps to inform about the government change, the new government’s promise to improve the situation for the Tamils, and to ask how many were interested in repatriation. After this visit, many refugees called the organization and they were afraid of being forced back to Sri Lanka. R believes this is not a risk they are facing. The Indian government have been very clear that any potential repatriation program will be voluntarily. However refugees are still concerned that an improved situation in Sri Lanka could be used by the Indian government to force them back. R believes that if the Indian and Sri Lankan government would cooperate and launch a repatriation program beneficial for refugees that will give them good assistance to build a life in Sri Lanka, many will choose to repatriate. But the lack of such a program and the remaining insecurity for Tamils in Sri Lanka makes many refugees wary of returning. He also says that many are simply incapable of taking decision about their future because after many years in the camps they have lost their independence. They are no longer used to taking their own decisions. He believes this is the refugees’ biggest problem. In order to be able to survive in the future, no matter what durable solution will be available, they have to learn to become independent again. Therefore he says that the organization focuses not on simply giving the refugees the assistance they need. They focus on giving the refugees tools to become independent and self-sufficient.

Just as R says the relationship between refugees are good, he also believe that the
refugees’ relationships with the majority population is good. According to him tensions are non-existent.

Interview 3C (Transcription): Employee at humanitarian organization, female

Benjamin: Ok
Respondent: Yes. So (NGO name) has been working with the refugees since 2006 and we started to receiving people in the shores when they were arriving with boats. So that’s how we started the entire program, because these people are traveling from Sri Lanka to India almost 6 hours by boat and they also go through so much trouble there, to reach that shore there in Sri Lanka and then come here. It is a tedious journey for them. And it’s really, slowly we realized all the needs and the conditions of the shelters, issues in the camps. So we immediately started to work with water and sanitation, because the camps were run by the government but there were not many water and sanitation complexes and facilities available. The reason is, I mean it’s not to blame the government, the reason is also that the government did put them in buildings, but they had actually used some of the old buildings which were already available for people. And they did not really build houses or shelters for refugees, so that’s how we…. So we started with water and sanitation and then we slowly moved on to shelter, because we had seen a lot of families staying in warehouses. So the warehouses we had closed and we shifted people to new households in *indistinguishable, one of the districts in Tamil Nadu. People were staying in big warehouses. The warehouses were built for *indistinguishable to stay earlier, so people had just put there with mats and cardboard walls built for them so they could just have some small privacy within the warehouse. But most of the people never stayed in the warehouse because there is no light, even during the day for the *indistinguishable and everybody they are out. Like women, girls. And there is lot of *indistinguishable also that we seen like girls are all the time outside the houses in the free areas and then anytime people can, lot of issues, protection issues we have seen. So that is one reason we thought we need to do the shelter for them. Why we started shelter. And then slowly we realized that a lot of domestic violence issues is happening within the camp. Mainly it is also because of frustration. They have been in the camp for so many years. And also the habit of drinking, I mean abusing alcohol. People say there is not a direct link between alcohol abuse and domestic violence but in the camps we see a very direct link between that. Because the more people are abusing alcohol there is more violence at home. Women are beaten, children are beaten. And children are seeing this. They are also getting into the cycle of violence. They are also saying women should be beaten. Even when they are 12 years old they are saying that girls should be beaten, otherwise they could go astray. So that’s the attitude that’s…. I mean the children also get, I mean that’s the cycle they are living in. So we thought we need to work with a gender based violence program. That’s why we started this whole program. Then we started working with men and women to have a good understanding between each other. Because the major problem is they have conflict between them and they don’t talk to each other to really reduce the conflict so this conflict prevails within the family. So we started with the importance to talk to each other so at least things could be sorted out at that level so that it’s not bigger….. I mean… And stop bringing it back down. Find something they are not able to work without. So that’s one thing we started working with. And for the children we started working with life skills. Education, that we thought was very important for
them to give a boost in their life. Because they have been in the camps, studying, but there are no job opportunities, which you have probably heard, so that’s a big thing. And also they don’t country. I mean here there is no citizenship, so what is next? So there is so many questions for them and they have no answers and there is nobody to help them get answers for that so frustration is very very very high. Because of that people do many illegal things within the camps. Sometimes it’s just that. And even police also, if there is an issue outside the camp, they immediately target them saying they are the criminals and they are the troublemakers. So that’s the situation they are living in. So then we thought we need the work with children. And also to see if we could break the cycle of violence. Otherwise it is just going to continue through out their lives. So that’s small prevention sessions we started doing on gender based violence, I mean preventing gender based violence in the camps. Also we have seen that there is so much need for people to talk to somebody. Also I mean talking within the camps also sometimes they can pick people…. I mean people don’t even share with others. And so much abuse is happening but there is nobody to share with. I mean the people are not really bound by any legal systems because they are in India. So we started thinking of having barefoot counsellors within the camp. So that people can talk with these barefoot counsellors their problems and then there is a lot of problems that can’t be handled by them so they refer to higher level of counseling, psychologists. They link them with the refugees. So a lot of sexual abuse cases that was reported for the parents, within the community, by their own family members. A lot of those were reported. So we are working with them and we are linking them with a lot of the social welfare schemes and hospitals and… something that they can come out…. And also some of the institutions to put them in hostels, children who don’t have anybody and with licensed education centres. So that’s one thing that we came up with. So this is the entire program

B: Ok
R: *laughs
B: *laughs. Is there eeeehm can I turn off the fan?
R: Yes
B: It makes so much noise…. Ok…. So the barefoot counsellors, are they…
R: People themselves from the cam
B: From within the community yes, ok
R: Yes
B: And how did you pick them out?
R: I mean basically we looked at volunteers because we can’t run the program giving salaries for years and also want sustainability. So we had identified women who were willing to do the job. But then they will be provided with all support. Like good job training support. That was their motivation to join. And also women who had good rapport with the community. People feel good about these women. So obviously there were multiple criteria and we had identified them and then trained them with very good business organizations. Like one organization was (organization name) so we had proper training for them and certificates. They can even use the certificates even when they move out or go out so that is one thing. We even had counsellors who have done all these trainings and they were so motivated they have taken up full-bound courses in counseling so that is also, it has to be another thing. But then we also had challenges where some of the counsellors could not really continue their job because of other priorities. And
sometimes what happens is that in the community the people think why do all these bad people go and talk to this woman. For example of a perpetrator, a perpetrator, someone that have done some issues in the camp. So then he (the husband) might think ”why is my wife going to that fellow”. Within the family. So we had to slowly work with the family of the counsellors to say that they are doing a good job and we need to appreciate. But some of them didn’t continue and we had to identify new people so that’s the challenges of having people from within the community.

B: Aha. Eeeh. A lot of the sexual abuse problems… Are they ever brought up to the police?
R: Now they have started to go to the police. But then….. You see the legal system I would say, it has a wonderful framework. The legal system is excellent. But then sometimes the implementation is, ehm, a big problem. But sometimes the community doesn’t want them, the police…. I mean the cases to be reported to the police because they think it is a stigma and they can’t live in that community. So the community reporting itself is a big problem. And after all the support that the government is providing they go to the police and the police sometimes try to mediate it without even writing the first… F.I.R - First Information Report, even taking it as a case. The moment it is reported as a case then police will also have to do *Laughs

B: An investigation and everything
R: A lot of work and everything. So they try to mediate. But there are cases that has been taken up but…. but yes, I would say there is a big gap in the… Because the legal…. I mean the police really don’t take up the cases seriously. Because they also think they are refugees, so things should be sorted out at their level

B: Ah. But you say the legal framework is excellent?
R: Excellent! Yes! So good. But you understand…. Because we also have an anti-trafficking program that we are working with apart of this. Where we see that even this… I mean it is always the survivor that is being attacked in all the courts. The perpetrator is only…. I mean, ok. The victim is question what rape? What happened? All this. But the perpetrator is, what is the question? he is not questioned at all! Not anything. So that is how it is, like…

B: when you say the legal framework is it the Indian legal framework or a legal framework for refugees?
R: I mean these people are bound with the Indian legal framework so that is how it is
B: Indian, ok…… Yes… So are you working anything with the leadership in the camp?
R: Yes. So we are working with the camp leaders, especially for the G.B.V.P program

B: W-w-w-what is G.B.V.P?
R: Gender Based Violence Program
B: Ok

R: Sorry we use so many jargons. So I mean basically when the counsellors identify someone where they really needs support from the community to take up the cases, they can’t do it individually, and even the family also need some backup. So we are training these camp leaders, the camp committees in fact. So even when the cases are taken to the police the camp committees also accompany them into the police station and they follow-up. So that is one big job the camp committees is helping us with. And then there is also a lot of trainings because the attitude. The serious attitude within the camp itself is that it is ok for a woman to be beaten. Women are ok to be beaten so that is the attitude itself that prevails in the community so sometime… I even remember when we were hiring staff
and we were asking him "Is it ok for women to be reason" and he said yes, so I mean
*laughs… You can’t blame that person. That is how the culture is. It is so much deep-
rooted so it is hard to bring that attitude a shift within the community
B: Eehm…. But how do you think the system with the committee and the camp leader is
working? For the refugees?
R: Yaaa…. We are actually, we are not working in all the camps. We are only working in
26
B: 6?
R: 26 camps yes
B: 26 oh!
R: So that is how we have one. And I think that in at least 24 of them it is really good I
mean the way they are moving. But in the other two camps we have issues with the
leadership. Again there are other community dynamics, that the community is divided
again. But at least in 24 camps it has been really good where we have examples where
one of the camp leader has built a library in the community, saying that it is needed for
the children. So there are also a few camp leaders that have worked with the government
to get money and build sanitation facilities. So I mean a few camp leader have also
supported the counsellors and taken their cases to the police. So there has been a lot of
changes within the, I mean in the systems that we have been working with. And we have
been working with this program for two years now so now we are thinking just
monitoring it by far to see if it is still working or if it…. 
B: So eeehm… In the community, are there a lot of interest in participating in your
programs?
R: Yes
B: Yes?
R: There are
B: Ok… In what ways?
R: I mean we have programs that are different for each age category. Men, youth,
children, women. Everybody have different programs. But we try to make the roles stick
together. Like for example we are working with husband and wife for couple sessions.
That is one of the prevention sessions we use. We do simulation exercises with the
couples. Making them think about some of the fights they have had in the families and
how that has affected their children. So some simulation exercises
B: Are they coming one and one or are they…
R: In groups. Like maybe 10-15 couples together. So we organize small games. Like
maybe there is one game we organize where we ask men to fold the Saris of women
*laughs. Because they can’t even think about it *laughs
B: Ok *laughs
R: Men can’t even think about it. I mean because it’s womens’ job. That’s ho it is. So
small simulation exercises like this so they can.. They have spaces to interact. Because in
the families there have always been. There have always been problems that they have
been trying to work on. But then it is also that it is always that the mother-in-law is
coming there, the second level of women. And they also think like men should be treated
like this. I mean the mother’s of husbands. So it’s also an attitudinal change that needs to
happen at their level. I mean so different key messages are being drafted for people at
different levels. With the ultimate goal of reducing Gender Based Violence
B: How many are coming to these…
R: So there are maybe…. We plan a session like in every street there are approximately 20 families and we try to target it street-wise.
B: Ok
R: So we can at least….. The participation of women has been almost 50%. The participation of men has been…. I mean when we work with couples it has been 40%. But if we work only with men we don’t reach 40% so that is maybe 35% participation. Women have been higher.
B: I see. Why do you think women is more prone to participate?
R: Aaah….. Men they say that they go out to work and women are at home. So… And men think it is not their job to attend all of this. Women should learn and then come back and teach them *laughs
B: *Laughs. Ok… And eehm…. And eeehm, yes. How do you do when you inform about your programs?
R: How do? Sorry?
B: Yes? How do you inform about your programs? Say that you are going to a street to conduct one of your sessions. How do you tell the street that this will happen?
R: So we have camp based people who are implementing the programs. So they are actually, they go to a lot of trainings. I mean so this is one of the key messages: Talk to each other. So this could be one of the key messages we give to the couples. Every session is like this. One small key message. So then we build up a facility guide along that key message. What are the different steps that we have to explain on that. And even on how we need to do the community mobilization. That aspect is also there. Talk to *indistinguishable. Different strategies is identified. And then for example, in the camp maybe they go attend the previous day when we say “we will have a small meeting tomorrow, can you participate?”. And in these small meetings they will be given small prizes if they win a game. I mean it will be just maybe a pen. Very small. So that they are actively participating in the games. And then after that we give out this message. And the games will not be just any games. It is games that are really planned to see that this key message is given out. And then from there we have these simulation exercises.
B:Mm… Do you have any livelihood programs as well?
R: Yes. So we have occasional skill-training programs for youth. So we, we identify them, we train them and we place them for the jobs. And then we follow up with employers to see how they are performing. And then we give them *indistinguishable so we can continue with that. So that’s our livelihood, I mean skill-training. And we also have a grant program where money is being given. Small groups form within the camps with representatives from different organizations, camp committee leaders. So this is not one camp. Rather it is one district where 5-6 camps are there, and so the grant is being given to people and then the people use it and repay it. And then the grant accumulates and then they revolve that for the person that wants the next grant. So that is happening but we don’t just give away materials or anything. The philosophy is that if people really want it they take it and then they use it and then they pay it so that others in the camp can use the funds. So that’s how, that’s one program we have there.
B: Ok… And what is eehm…. What does most of them want to do? For example with skill-training. What is the popular skill at the moment?
R: Yes. So one is, people have gone into this IT. IT is one and then there are a lot of
youth that have gone with automobile. Automobile….. Eh, I mean…..
B: Repairing?
R: Repairing cars and bikes. So they can actually take some good places like this. Like good positions. But then we don’t really place them at the higher level because that case what happens is people will have to move away from the camps and stay. Because I mean the job opportunity may not be available in the community. So we place them in the midlevel organizations. And then from there, people, when they really get interested in the job they start looking for higher jobs by themselves. But otherwise what happens if we really place someone at a higher job we have to ship them from the family and we don’t believe in migration from their own family, staying away. So that’s why we don’t believe…. The reason is people don’t really sustain with that job. So they will just be there for 6 months and then they just go away. And, and also for them I mean… One thing about it is that they sometimes go for jobs at the local level, daily wage labours. So they go for this painting job. There, they do this job and they get per day 300-400 rupees. But it is not there for all the time, throughout the year. But then during that time they really drink and get into all these habits that start at a very young age. Like their health is completely deteriorated and they are really not able to work. So that is a problem that we are trying to address with them, saying that you have done a very good graduation course. Graduations are doing daily wages work. So we are just telling them, we are just giving them the additional skills that could actually get them, help them to get into a job. Like hospitality or such or IT-jobs. Or something like that. And then we place them, and then…. So eeh… Getting them out of the house and placing them in work doesn’t work at all so we just need to find out within that area what is available for them. And also the trainings are done based on the market assessments that we do. So what are the skills available in the market and what are these peoples’ skills and how can we match. And if in case we think that jobs are not available in that area for the refugees than that is a problem. We will not be able to work then. So we talk to them about that. So they also understand. Otherwise giving them a skill with no place in the local market doesn’t make any… sense
B: No… Eh, yes. So you have kind of a, how to put it, you have kind of a skill-training book? That they can choose from?
R: Yes. So it’s a model they have to follow. A 3-step model. 1 month on the job training support which they get. So the next model is a lot it speaks about employment interview skills, how they should present themselves for a job to the technical training that they have to go through B: And you already have contact with companies?
R: So we actually. We don’t directly implement the programs. So we have partners. We identify partners who are specifically skilled in certain areas. So we have a partner called aided action who do skill-training for the people
B: But after skill-training do you have contact with companies…
R: Yes yes. So we have a resource bank where all the companies names are there.
B: Ok. And are there a lot of companies that want to hire refugees?
R: So… Companies that are at a higher level they don’t want to take them. But then at the mediumlevels where they take them as contractual jobs then it is fine. But then on roll they don’t want to take them. Because they are refugees. Because their HR-policy does not allow them to… yes…
B: Eehm, yes… So if they get a job in another area, can they keep their enrollment and
work somewhere else?
R: See that is also another problem. Because when there is a cash dole to be given they have to come back to the camp, so then they loose that one days job there. And then sometime when they come here the cash dole is shifted to the next day then they loose one more day. So all that tension, it is big tension for the families. But sometimes they say, I mean for first time they don’t have to be there. They get an understanding with the people there. But it is… I mean it changes so much. The officials change things just to change. So… So that’s all it is
B: Is there trust between the officials and the refugees?
R: That’s also.. *Laughs. Like maybe the officials say ”Ok, you go and take care!”’, just that. But then, I mean as per the government orders they can go out if they inform. But then sometimes the attitude of the officials and the way they behave. And then sometimes their experiences are that people behave bad or they try to escape or their whereabouts may not have been known so that is a country security they think so we can’t even blame the security, I mean the government officials for that because it is their job that they are…. 
B: That they are doing
R: Yes. So… *Laughs
B: Yes, but how is the… Yes…. But how is the relationship between the refugees and the officials? Is it good? Or are there a lot of tensions?
R: It is good. I mean there are tensions in a few areas I would say, but overall it is good. And sometimes even they are also pressurized. The government officials are also pressurized. ”Go go. Do this. Find out how they…”. But otherwise they gave been really supportive. At least in the programmes. They have been very supportive to what… Sometimes they say ”Why don’t you build a toilet for them? Why don’t you do this…”. So I mean they really talk about, they also know that these people have stayed in the camps for years so they also know about that. But then there are a few officials, I mean, but that is ok *laughs. But the majority of them are really good. They are really nice.
B: Before you implement your programs…
R: We get the permission at the state level, we get the permission at the district level and then we implement the program.
B: Ok. And so do you…. Do you get a lot of help from the officials?
R: Yes yes yes. A lot of help. Otherwise we can’t implement. So they basically need information on what we are doing, how we are doing it all these things. So if we give them this information they are fine. And I think it’s ok. That’s how it should be.
B: And eeh, yes. Before you start up new programs, do you talk to the… When you identify the needs, how do you do to identify the needs?
R: Basically we have. We have, I mean we have a good assessment model that we really use in the field so assessment are made down at the camp level so tools are all developed. What are the key implementation needs based on the tools developed. Then we do assessments in the camps and then we also work with other stakeholders to understand what are they doing and what are the gaps. Then we work with the government to understand whether they have the money to do that program me or whether we should do it. So assessments are done at different levels to understand the gaps. And then also sometimes we work with the, I mean work with the camp committees and then let the people see how can we address this gap. So most of our proposals, I mean we call it our
program development or proposal development, we have people from the camp itself part of the development process that we go through. And that is how the activities are identified. And then after, after… I mean after the programmes are identified we inform people so this is what we are planning to do from the assessment and we even share the assessment results with them informing them this is what has come from the assessment and this is what we are planning to do, what is your thought about that? So such discussions. So it is part of all the beneficiary accountability we are having with I mean… Talk about that with organizations which we work with implementing. So even after the program is implemented, to get the feedback to how that has been done so feedback what is worse. Install… Even postcards given out to them for them to write back on the same, obviously, their issues. All that is part of the… But then there are different levels of discussion
B: And eeh…
R: Can you just give me 10 minutes of time. I have a call that I need to make
B: Yes, sure.

(Turned off the recorder and forgot to put it on again until the end, the following is from memory)

The respondent put emphasis on that the protracted refugee situation was putting a lot of strain on the refugees. Living in constant uncertainty is very hard, making the frustration in the camps very high. This frustration is according to the respondent the underlying reason behind much of the problems in the camps. Regarding future solution the respondent think that around half of the refugees would prefer a return to Sri Lanka while the other half wants to stay in India. She thinks that the main deciding factors behind the differing preferences is ownership of land and the generational aspects. Those who own land are more likely to want to go back to Sri Lanka. Since there, at the moment are no program in place to assist repatriation for refugees, the refugees without land would return without anything. The refugees that owns land at least have their land, they have a place they can live in Sri Lanka. The respondent states that many refugees deems it impossible/ unthinkable to return as long as there is not a good repatriation program that will help them recreate their lives in Sri Lanka. And the respondent sees several obstacles for such a program in the short turn. The Sri Lankan government states that they need to deal with the issues of IDPs before they can start thinking about a program to help returning refugees. The respondent understand this position by the Sri Lankan government, but the IDP-problem in Sri Lanka is very big which could mean that it could take a long time before they are ready to launch a repatriation program. The Indian government on the other hand would like to launch a repatriation program without the Sri Lankan cooperation, something the respondent seemed hesitant against. She also told how the refugees had respondent anxiously to the Indian governments attempts to launch programs with the objective to help them return because they are afraid of forced repatriation. The state government of Tamil Nadu have opposed the central government in this matter and don’t think a repatriation program can be launched until the Sri Lankan government is on board/the IDP-problem in Sri Lanka is solved. With regards to the generational aspects, the younger refugees who have lived most of their lives (or may even be born) in India want to stay in India because they know nothing and have no
personal relationship to Sri Lanka. The older refugees who lived a large part of their lives in Sri Lanka generally want to go back. This can put some strain within families where parent/grandparents want to go back, while the children want to stay in India. There are instances she says where she has talked to families that have moved back to Sri Lanka who believe it was a big mistake just because many members of the families do not feel at home in Sri Lanka, but in India. However there are also families she has talked to who have returned to Sri Lanka and are living very happy lives. With regards to Indian citizenship for those who want that the respondent doesn’t think it is very likely. She says that you never know with a new government, but the government has not said or done anything that points in that direction (quite on the contrary the government wants them to return to Sri Lanka). With regards to possible resettlement in a third country the respondent says that this is something that most refugees would be very open to and that are constantly on many peoples’ minds. But it is also something not many people have an opportunity to do. But almost everyone knows someone that has resettled in another country and that they have close contact with, by phone and social media. And through them they get to know about opportunities in other countries. Almost everybody also have friends and/or family in Sri Lanka who they have close contact with who always tell them about what is happening in Sri Lanka. The refugees are always way more updated than her about Sri Lankan politics and recent events and they get their information from their contacts in Sri Lanka. Regarding the new government in Sri Lanka and the refugees’ perceptions of it, the respondent is a little avoiding, saying that some positives steps seem to be made but the refugees are still unsure and wants to see what the new government actually will be doing. Further the respondent talks about the organizations decision not to work with non-camp refugees. The decision is in part practical. Camp refugees are all in the same place making it easy to reach them with the programs. The non-camp refugees are scattered and hard to reach. Before implementing the programs hard work regarding identifying non-camp refugees would have to be made. But the decision is also need-based. The organization reasons that since they have chosen to settle outside they have made the assessment that they can do without the benefits in the camp. The respondent says that she knows that this is an over-simplification and that she knows that some non-camp refugees are struggling, and that the non-camp refugees are not allowed to go back to the camp if they discover that they made a mistake settling outside. But in general she thinks that the non-camp refugees have some more resources than the camp refugees. She says there are some contact between camp refugees and non-camp refugees. But the contacts are not very close, because since the non-camp refugees have decided to keep away from the camps that is generally what they are doing. The camp refugees ties with the host community is generally stronger she says. There are a lot of mixed marriages between Indian citizens and refugees, meaning that many Indian women come to live in the camps and many female refugees go out of the camps to live with their Indian husband. There is also a lot of trade and commerce between refugees and Indian citizens. Indians come to the camp to sell their products, vegetables etc. And the Sri Lankans go outside of the camp to the local markets to sell their products. Many refugees have many Indian contacts. In the camp she says that the relationship between the refugees are generally good. She says they have some issues, but not more in any other community. And generally trust is high in the community and solidarity is high. When I am out of questions I asks her if she has something to add. She again stresses that the
protracted refugee situation is causing a lot of frustration. Then she also adds that one of the biggest issues in the camps are lack of documentation and the organization is helping them with this. With birth certificate, marriage certificate etc.

(Noticing my recorder is off and putting it on)
B: Ok
R: So that’s the… I mean it’s a process. We are supporting them to get the certificates.
B: And eeh… Yes…. So what’s the problem they face when they don’t have proper documentation?
R: Uuhm… So basically their birth is not registered. Marriages are done but then the husband sometimes just leaves the… and the women can’t even say she is married cause there are no certificates. Then when children are applying to schools they will not, the birth certificates are not there they can’t get into the schools properly. And parents, I mean the marriage certificate is not there…. I mean even if the spouse is dead they can not claim their land so all… a lot of issues around certificate issues
B: Ok. Eehm… Do they have a refugee identity card?
R: Yes they have. Issued by the government and they have that
B: Ok. Can they get a driver’s license?
R: Uuhm, driver’s license permit… Yes. Yes they can get
B: Can they get a bank account?
R: No
B: No bank account
R: But some are getting it. But actually they can not get a bank account.
B: Ok. Eehm… How about Sim-card by the way? Can they get that?
R: Sim-card they can get. Everybody gets that. It’s not a problem
B: Yes. I also have but I think I can’t have it really, in actuality
R: *Laughs
B: *Laughs. In actuality I can’t have it
R: Yes…
B: But…. Eehm… And eeh…. How about land or property?
R: No no.
B: Ok…. I don’t… I actually don’t have anymore questions
R: Can you just write your name and the university you are from and the study of… We need to keep a record of foreigners visiting
B: Ok….
R: So when do you have to submit the thesis?
B: Actually my deadline is in one week
R: Oomphf
B: But I am not going to hand it in then. I will hand it in in August instead
R: It’s too short a time
B: Yes

**Interview 3D (Notes): Employee at humanitarian organization, male**

Respondent (R) is responsible for the livelihood programs at the humanitarian organization. He starts be emphasising how the people in the camps live in very different conditions and have different level of skills. Some are well-educated and have good vocational training. Others are lacking both eductaion and vocational training. Some may
have a business idea, but they lack the funds to see it through, or they might already own a business, but they are facing some obstacles preventing them from running it the way they want to. They have therefore decided to split their livelihood programs into four areas: Education, job-matching, entrepreneurial support and vocational training (with a specific focus on agriculture).

Regarding education they focus on dropouts close to graduation. R says that the number of refugees dropping out of school is very high and so they don’t have the funds to focus on everybody. They have chosen to support those close to graduation since it is a group they have the opportunity to support efficiently. They organize catch-up lessons. If there is someone in the camp that is qualified enough to tutor the students, that person is recruited as their tutor. If not they contact an educational institution that will help the students catch-up and gives the necessary tools to graduate. All education is always paid.

Regarding entrepreneurial support, they work with micro-loans. They start by identifying who could have use for these funds and who have a business model that could work. R says that an advantage of entrepreneurial support is that it is a sector with high gender equality. As many women as men, if not more women, run their own businesses. Those that already have their own businesses but that need support to buy for example a machine, they will give smaller amounts. Those who want to start a business from scratch they give larger amounts. The process starts by the refugees filling out applications for funds. From these applications the organization makes a selection based on need and business model. Those selected are invited to a workshop where successful businesses participate to coach the refugees in entrepreneurial ability and their business models are refined. After the workshop there are granted the funds. They never get money in their hands. The organization buys what they say they need in order to control that the money is used for the correct purposes.

Regarding job-matching R says it is an important service for those refugees that already have skills sought for in the job market but who don’t know how to get in touch with companies that need their skills. They have started an recruitment office in every district. It is run by refugees themselves. The reason it is not run by the organization is that they want to make the refugees less dependent. If the humanitarian organizations for some reason would disappear from the camps, they will still have this institution since it is run by the refugees themselves. The refugees working at the recruitment office are volunteers as they do not get paid, except for a small boys they receive from companies when a job placement has been successful. He says this is enough motivation for the refugees. The interest to participate in running the recruitment office is big. Those who volunteer are trained by the organization in how to approach and communicate with companies, and how to match job with skills. They themselves collect information about what skills exist in the camps, and they talk to companies and involve them in programs. They organize walk-in interviews and job fares in the camps. The recruitment offices in the different districts have contact with each other and employment opportunities are shared between offices. A refugee can through its local office get employment in another district. All refugees are allowed to live outside the camps to work without losing the rights to the benefits and welfare schemes in the camp. This according to a decision taken by the central government of India. However they have to fill out an application that the authority in the camp has to approve. They also have to be present for a headcount once a month. The organization helps them with the process. When authorities have not
approved the refugees to move, they have helped the refugee fight the decision by referring to the decision taken by the Indian government.

Regarding vocational training, the organization serve as a mediator. They contact educational institutions for vocational training and form partnerships with these. The responsibility of the institution is to give the refugees an adequate education and place them with a company after they finished their vocational training. Some even help the refugees sell what they learn to manufacture. The organization pays for all the trainings. The process starts with the organization trying to identify 15-20 skills that are particularly in demand in the job market. They then write an information brochure that refugees can read. In addition to information about the skill and the vocation they also include information about the vocational training. After receiving this information, the refugees can apply to participate in their program (they can apply for an alternative education than the ones the organization suggests). The organization then selects participants based on whether or not the skill is believed to be able to improve the persons livelihood. To insure that the quality of the education is up to standard, the implementation officer visits every core at least three times. The officer responsible for the livelihood programs visits every course at least once. Participating refugees fill out an application twice during the course. One hallways and one when it is finished. It is constructed to give the organization information about how pleased the refugee were with the education and if the partners lived up to their responsibilities.

The organization has identified agriculture as an important area, because in the case of repatriation they will return to Sri Lanka maybe with nothing but land. R says most of the refugees don’t own land in Sri Lanka, but in a potential repatriation program it is likely they will at least be given some land so that they have somewhere to settle. Knowledge of agriculture could then become a matter of life and death. Even if they don’t have enough skills for large-scale industrial agriculture, they will be able to provide for themselves. Small-scale farming is very easy to start up and it does not take much resources. R says that the refugees are taught organic agriculture, because the soil in Sri Lanka is contaminated at places due to the civil war. By teaching the refugees organic agriculture they will be able to farm even in contaminated soil.

They rent land outside of the camps where refugees participate in their agriculture program and learn organic agriculture. The agriculture program is developed in cooperation with India’s leading expert on organic agriculture. The refugees grow rice and vegetables. The organization helps them sell their rice, but they take the vegetables to the local market and sell it themselves, R says that both the rice and the vegetables are sold with ease and that many people want to buy rice when they are told it has been grown by the refugees.

R says there are two purposes with getting the refugees in to the local job market/help their companies be competitive. There is the obvious reason of improving the refugees’ livelihood opportunities. But another purpose is to improve their local integration. By becoming a part of the Indian job market/the local economy, they will get in touch with the Indian local community. He says the relationship between the refugees and the Indian majority population is very good. They are only physically separated.

Psychologically and socially he thinks the refugees are very well-integrated. There is a lot of economic exchange between them. The refugees go to the local market to sell what they produce, and Indians are coming to the camps as well to sell what they
produce. But they also have social relations. R believes that the good relationship is due to shared language and culture.

R is throughout the interview obviously proud over the programs he is responsible of, and no matter my question he quickly returns to describing the programs and their good results.

**Interview 3E (Notes): Employee at humanitarian organization, female**

Respondent (R) is the Protection Officer at a humanitarian organization. This means that she is responsible for the organization’s protection programs. She says that their work mostly concerns identifying vulnerable people and then referring them to the relevant authority/institution/expertise. Common problems in the camps are alcoholism, domestic abuse and depression. She says there are common problems they can’t work with because other organizations are already working with these issues. If they identify someone with these issues they have to refer them to that organization. R sees lack of documentation as the most common problem for refugees. It is hard for refugees to get documentation (ID-card, birth certificate, marriage certificate) because they they don’t know how to apple for it. Many refugees are themselves contacting the organization to get help with documentation issues, but they then have to refer them to the responsible organization. Other common protection issues that are not under their ”jurisdiction” are child protection and psychological support.

R tells how they have created a protection committee to better be able to identify refugees in risk. It is according to R easier for refugees themselves to get information about sensitive issues, since they open up more to people of their own community. The protection committee is in direct communication with the government authorities in the camps and they inform them about what issues needs to be addressed in the camps. The organization is also devoting much of their resources convincing government authorities to actively work to prevent certain problems and give suggestions for how they can work to reduce these problems.

The organization also work a lot with information campaigns. R mentions a campaign to prevent suicide. The campaign helped them identify several high-risk individuals that they could offer support and psychologic council.

R says a big problem is that refugees try to travel to Australia. They work to prevent this since it is very risky due to Australia’s strict immigration policy. However they do not prevent anyone physically from going, but if they identify someone planning to go, they strongly advice them not to do it and they inform the person about how risky it is, that Australia don’t let anybody inside their territory and that there is a big risk they will die outside on the ocean. And even if they succeed getting into Australia, they won’t get asylum but will be sent back to India. R says that most people going are not aware of the risks since their opportunities to get access to information is limited.

R says that every camp has a camp leader. He is a refugee. The camp leader is often appointed by government officials. Sometimes however the camp leader is appointed by the refugees. In those cases it is not a formal procedure, but either something growing organically with one individual taking on the role of the leader, or it is a spontaneous decision taken on an occasion when the majority of the camp population was at the same place at the same time. R says that the camp leader does not work as a representative for the refugees. The camp leader is actually forbidden to engage in ”rights-based activities”.
The role of the camp leader is instead to function as a link between the government and the refugees and forward information from the government to the refugees. Since the refugees in the camps are gathered in one place and the government have the camp leader to communicate through, R says that camp refugees have a fairly good access to information. They know how to access help and assistance they are entitled to. Non-camp refugees have less access to information. Since they are geographically scattered it is hard for the government to reach them. In addition they are not used to contact with government officials and institutions and they are hence wary of contacting them. Generally R says that the organization has very little information about the needs of non-camp refugees since they just started working with them. However she believes that one can already identify two major issues. The first issue is access to information. The second issue is documentation, which she believes is an even bigger issue for non-camp refugees than for camp refugees. Because camp refugees have established contact with authorities, but non-camp refugees don’t.

R previously said that refugees’ access to information is limited. But she says that when it comes to the situation in Sri Lanka they are very well-updated. They are also well-updated about Indian policy changed concerning refugees. After the change of government in Sri Lanka and the Indian government officials visits to the camps, many called the organization and were very worried about forced repatriation. R estimates that a majority don’t want to return to Sri Lanka and would prefer local integration in India. But she believes the impression would change if there would be a good repatriation program that took the needs of the refugees into consideration. She estimates that non-camp refugees are a lot more positive than camp-refugees about repatriation.

In conclusion R believes that the situation in many camps have improved since 2006 when several NGOs were given permission to work in the camps. However she believes that the most important thing, the possibility of a durable solution, is still not being met and she does not believe it will be in the near future. Hence there are a lot more to do to improve the situation for refugees.

Interview 3F (Notes): Employee at humanitarian organization, male
L is the former director of J but is currently doing a PhD about the Sri Lankan refugees which he hopes will end up exploring how refugees build and use social capital in order to deal with the challenges they face.

L starts by telling me that the refugees are desperately at search after a new identity. After 25 years as refugees they are sick and tired of the refugee label. After 25 years away from Sri Lanka a lot of the refugees do not want to go back. They have rooted themselves in India and no longer feel Sri Lankan. On top of that, their land is usually occupied by the military, so they will have nothing to come home to. On top of that the refugees generally do not have much economic resources and they would need economic support if repatriation would be possible. The situation is also according to L very volatile and dangerous for the refugees in Sri Lanka, which means that it is very uncertain what type of welcome the refugees would receive and if they would receive any help. L says that the international community is very hopeful that the situation will change for the better with the new government in Sri Lanka, since they have started to talk about some measures that would start a reconciliation process and increase the rights
of the Tamils. However, L says, the refugees as well as the Tamils in Sri Lanka feel that this is merely lip service, nothing has really changed. They feel like they, and the international community are being played, and that this is merely a victor trying to smooth things over and avoiding commotion while intending to preserve domination. L says that the influence of the army is still very high in Sri Lanka. In the northern (Tamil) parts there is a soldier every 100-200 metres according to L and surveillance is very high. L says that the Sri Lankan government and military uses the tactic of "divide and rule" to control the Tamils. The same tactic used by the British during the colonial era. L says that the Tamils in Sri Lanka today feel defeated and exploited in every way possible: culturally, economically, politically. L says that many refugees feel a big disappointment that 25 years of struggle gave them nothing in return. There is neither any chances of a long-term solution in India because the Indian government is not giving out citizenship to anybody and they are not making any efforts to find a durable solution for the refugees within India. So this situation makes refugees desperate in their search for their new identity. Which for example leads to some people taking the risk of dying when going by boat to Australia. L has talked to many parents who saves money to be able to send their children by the boats to Australia. When L tells them about the risks and that they might die on the journey, and if not they will still probably not arrive in Australia but at the Indonesian border they will probably be sent to African coast instead, it turns out that many of the refugees are aware of the risks. They know there is a large risk of dying on these boats and they have often heard of others that has gone by boat without ever hearing from them again. However they say that they have been refugees for their entire adult life and they are not going to let their children go through the same. Their children have often gotten a good education and the parents don’t want it to be wasted on a refugee life where they are not allowed to work and use this education. In other terms they are so desperate for a new identity that they will risk death to find it. L says that the refugees need to get a rightful place. If they don’t get a place where they can stay permanently and participate fully L feel that they will be culturally degenerated.

L says that India wants to start repatriation now. However Sri Lanka says they want to wait until they have taken care of their IDP situation. L thinks that if it would be possible, the Indian government would have liked to force back the refugees to Sri Lanka like they did after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. However today that is not possible. UNHCR is present in order to monitor exactly this. The refugees have sympathy among the local population (which lacked after LTTEs assassination of Gandhi) and there are small local Tamil parties that would protest heavily. It is also a little easier today for refugees to themselves voice their concerns. If a repatriation program was to be introduced, L thinks that it is imperative that it is monitored by a third independent part. He does not trust the sincerity of the Indian and Sri Lankan governments. Preferably he would like the whole process to be left to the UNHCR. Further he expressed that although good, and at this time crucial, with a durable solution for the refugees a repatriation or rehabilitation program does not do the refugees justice. In such a program he says, inhabitants are turned into beneficiaries. People owing land, having to flee that land, comes back and are supposed to be thankful for "being given" the same land as is rightfully theirs.

L says that their are three generations of refugees and that these three generations differ on important aspects:

• The first generation he says was born, grown-up and got married in Sri Lanka.
They feel strong ties to Sri Lanka and they love their "motherland" and want to go back.

• The second generation he says came to India when 10-20 years old. They have a feel for the ethnical tensions that drove them and their families away from Sri Lanka and they often have strong opinions about the conflict. They came with their parents. It is not uncommon that their parents decided to leave Sri Lanka because the LTTE wanted to recruit their children. L says it is also not uncommon that the children wanted to fight, but the parents would not let them and therefore decided to flee instead. He says that it is not uncommon that bot first and second generation refugees sympathizes with LTTE. The second generation are generally most concerned with livelihood. For them it is not important in itself whether to go to Sri Lanka or stay in India. They want to be where they have the best livelihood opportunities.

• L is very concerned about the third generation. They are either born as refugees in India, or they came to India with their parents when they were only a few years old. They have no memories of Sri Lanka and they have no connection to Sri Lanka other than phone calls with relatives. Therefore they don’t want to go back. They feel more at home in India. L tells that he met a family which had moved back to Sri Lanka. The children in the family told him that their parents had made a big mistake taking them back to Sri Lanka since they had their heart in India. According to L the third generation is very susceptible to psychological issues and he says that such things as depression, suicide and exploitation of women is common in the third generation (he also mentions "issues" such as pre-marital sex and divorce). L thinks that the third generation is more easily exploited and negatively affected by the practices of the local community than the first and second generation because the third generation don’t have as strong cultural affinity and strong religious beliefs. He also thinks that the horrible experiences of war that the first and second generation have gone through has toughened their minds. He thinks that the self-esteem and the priorities among the first and second generation are very good because they still have a strong sense of traditional culture and strong religious beliefs that gives them guidance.

The first and second generation works very hard to get good food and clothes while the third generation is vain and spend their money on accessories and luxury items, while neglecting the necessities. And while the first and the second generation have very high self-esteem and refuses to be exploited by the local community, the third generation is constantly letting themselves get exploited due to their lack of self-esteem according to L. They are feeling like they are getting exploited politically by local political parties that want to make political points on them and their situation and they feel exploited economically by the local economy.

L believes that the only reason for why the Sri Lankan armies succeeded in defeating the LTTE was that they got help from the Chinese and Indian armies. L says that India’s motivation for maintaining good relations with Sri Lanka is to hold an expanding China at bay. According to L China has military ships outside the coast of Sri Lanka which worries India who don’t want China too close to their border.

It is the state government that run the camps and in every camp the Q-branch is present and access to the camps is very restricted. All who want to visit the camps need
permission, all NGOs that wants to work within the camps need permission and the NGOs that have permission to work their need permission for every single one of their activities. L feels that the Q-branch is suspicious of the activities of the NGOs and that they would teach LTTE-propaganda to the refugees, something he deems as absurd. Further L states that refugees within the camps are not allowed to express their opinion. The Q-branch is, according to L, actively trying to crush the democratic freedom of the refugees. The refugees do have a camp leader and L says that this position previously has carried a lot of weight. The camp leader used to be a spokesperson for the refugee community. Refugees could go to the camp leaders concerns and issue and the camp leader would try and organize support and lobby for some measure that would help the refugees deal with these issues. However L says that nowadays most camp leaders are nothing but puppets for the Q-branch. They are in most cases informants who exploits the other refugees for their own gain. This ties into the widespread corruption that J says is in the camps. For example if a refugee is not in camp to collect their benefits the government official will take it and put it in his/her own pocket. And sometimes it is not possible for refugees to be physically present because they are working or studying.

L talks a lot about the entrepreneurial spirit of the refugees and how they are very hard-working and always seem to find ways to do well with very little. He tells of how the refugees themselves have renovated and maintained the houses/shelters in the camps during the years. They have done this mostly with material collected from old warehouses and from the side of the road.

Women are among the most entrepreneurial groups among the refugees. It is often women that are starting up businesses, taking the self-help programmes run by NGOs in the camps. The position of women among the refugees are generally high according to L. They enjoy a lot of equality in the household. They have a voice and they do use it to speak up frequently. The position within the family is very good. Women are also very much involved in public life and they work and enjoy full freedom of movement. The culture among the Sri Lankan refugees are in this way more modern than the one among the Indian local population according to J.

J puts emphasis on the need for the organizations working in the camps to get the camp community on board with their programs in order to make the implementation of the programmes successful. I ask L if he has experienced a situation in which the camp population has not been cooperative and how this has manifested itself, what effects it has gotten and how J has been trying to deal with this. J does not understand the question. I try to explain and after a while J says ”Ah! Yes, you are completely correct. Sometimes there are misunderstandings”. This seems to be a ”close enough” representation of what I wanted to know so I let L expand from here. L says that avoiding misunderstandings is something that is very hard for every organization and something that every organization puts in a lot of work to avoid. He says that all refugees want help with all of their issues. However, organizations are restricted, in part due to budgetary restrictions and in part due to restrictions on what they have permission to do. Therefore they can’t help everybody and this can lead to jealousy and resentment and hence loss of support within the community. It is therefore imperative to be active communicators and explain meddle and rationalize to get the local community to understand why they can’t do certain things or why there are certain restrictions on certain programs.

With regards to non-camp refugees J does not work with them. However J does know
a few. These are persons with relatives or friends abroad who send money to them. That way they can afford to live outside the camps and avoid the surveillance and restrictions within the camps. However I think there is one big benefit of living inside the camps and that is security. The camp refugees are at least safe, while non-camp refugees lack protection.

L mentions that the Indian origin tamils are a particularly vulnerable group among the refugees. The distinction between Sri Lankan origin and Indian origin is not made in the camps. But L thinks that it is evident that they have very different self-esteem with the Sri Lankan tamils having higher self-esteem than the Indian origin tamils. He says it is also possible to distinguish only by sight because there are slight differences in the way they dress and what they eat. L says that there is historical reasons for the differing self-esteem between Indian origin and Sri Lankan origin tamils. The Indian origin tamils are also called ”Plantation Tamils” because they were brought by the British during the colonial era to Sri Lanka to work at the plantations. So they were the people with the lowest stays already in India (that’s why they were chosen), then they were brought to Sri Lanka to be plantation workers (practically slaves). And still today their situation in Sri Lanka is very bad. During the 70s there was an agreement between the Indian and Sri Lankan government that Indian origin tamils could go to India and get citizenship there. However after this agreement fell apart there were still many Indian origin tamils left in Sri Lanka who the Sri Lankan government then decided to withdraw their citizenship from. After living as IDPs they later regained citizenship but a highly restricted one. It is still this citizenship they have today. In the event of a repatriation program there is therefore a lot of questions about what will happen to the Indian origin tamil refugees. Will they be included? Will they be given citizenship, and what kind of citizenship? What is the situation awaiting Indian origin tamils in Sri Lanka. L had a student that was a plantation tamil from Sri Lanka. He therefore arranged that I could talk to him after we were finished talking.

8.4 Summary of Consultation Workshop about the needs of non-camp refugees

Mr. U from ADRA India welcomes everybody to the workshop and describes the outline of the event. As well as explaining that the reason for the workshop is that the needs of non-camp refugees have been neglected

V introduces ADRA

Mr. V informs of ADRA’s 5 main sector: Food security, economic development, primary health, emergency management, basic education. ADRA India have protection programs, livelihood programs, health programs and disaster reduction programs. ADRA work with programs on water and sanitation, building shelters, protection and livelihood in the refugee camps in Tamil Nadu. ADRA have implemented more 150 projects in India
worth more than 35 million USD in India and have a good working relationship with government departments in Tamil Nadu. Z explains the purpose of the gathering Z explains that the motivation for ADRAs intention to conduct a need assessment study regarding non-camp refugees is that the needs of non-camp refugees have been neglected, even more neglected than the needs of the refugees in the camp area. For example, UNHCR will not assist them within their voluntary repatriation program ADRA have therefore started to focus more on the non-camp refugees and they are the only organization working with non-camp refugees. There is do data available on non-camp refugees. The first order of conduct must hereby be to identify non-camp refugees and understand their issues in order to create programs. Z further informs that the purpose of the consultation meeting is twofold: First of ADRA want to initiate a discussion on non-camp refugees. Secondly ADRA would like to get assistance and input regarding how to conduct the need assessment.

Prof. Y talks of ADRAs Durable Solution study and the needs of non-camp refugee Prof. Y starts off by stating his belief that non-camp refugees are becoming invisible and their needs are forgotten. He sees the Durable Solution study that he did together with ADRA as a first step to learn about the needs of non-camp refugees. The study shown that most non-camp refugees have police registration and they have a Sri Lankan ID-card. However many are unemployed or work in the informal sector. Many non-camp refugees have connections abroad that supports them and allow them to be able to live outside the camps. Most non-camp refugees have been in Tamil Nadu since 1990 or longer. Further the study shown that protections for non-camp refugees is very insecure. They are not part of the programs that camp refugees can take part in, they face psychologic issues and they face economic hardship, not the least because prices are higher for them (e.g. for accommodation). Many feel like peace and security must improve in Sri Lanka before they will consider to return. Therefore many non-camp refugees would prefer local integration as a durable solution.

Prof. Y finishes by stating that the situation for refugees overall is insecure since India is not a signatory to the 1951 UN convention on refugee protection and neither have a national policy or a legal framework. He calls for the creation of a legal framework on refugee protection and emphasizes that non-camp refugees need to be included in a policy/legal framework.

Community Voices
The non-camp refugees present express that they have no job opportunities and no support for education (e.g. student loans) because they are Sri Lankan citizens and not Indian. If they are to have a chance to get employment they need to update their visa. To get their Sri Lankan visa updated, they need to go back to Sri Lanka and if they go to Sri Lanka they can't go back to India. They do not perceive this to be an option for them since they don't think Sri Lanka is a safe place for them at the moment.

During the following discussion it is pointed out that employment falls under the responsibility of the national government and it is hence their responsibility to make sure that also the refugees have employment opportunities. It is also pointed out that a main issue for non-camp refugees is that information doesn’t reach them. They don’t get
directions for what to do to access rights/services. Camp refugees are provided information since they have an authority who is accountable for them (dep. of rehabilitation). Non-camp refugees don't have an authority accountable for them providing them with information. Further it is clarified that non-camp refugees settling often have chosen to settle outside of the camps because they have some support that makes it possible for them to live outside of the camp, some is forced out of camps though due to e.g. missed roll calls.

The refugees explains that their decision to settle outside of the camps was based on that when they arrived, the conditions in the camps were bad while accommodation outside was cheap. Today accommodation has become more expensive and conditions in camps have improved and they would therefore like to move to camps but have no opportunity to do that. They also state that they chose to stay outside of the camps because expectations at arrival was that it would be a short-term situation. Further they address the possibility of returning to Sri Lanka and say that this is not preferable as long as the situation in Sri Lanka stays like this because the situation as an IDP in Sri Lanka is worse than as a refugee in India. Finally they describe the problems they face in their contacts with authorities. When the non-camp refugees apply for a service they get the answer from the department of rehabilitation that they are only concerned with non-camp refugees. They send them to the police who tell them they should find work in the non-formal sector. There is no organization in place to deal with the needs of non-camp refugees.

In the following discussion Prof. X advised ADRA to start up a separate advocacy wing, due to the government being sensitive to the issues described by the refugees. The separate advocacy group would therefore protect ADRA against bad will from the government through what Prof. X likens to "plausible deniability". It is important that ADRA’s other projects and programs that are reliant on a good relationship with the government is not spoiled. Prof. Nair suggests that the advocacy group preferably can be made up of a group of lawyers since the main problems the non-camp refugees are describing is of legal character.

**Needs and problems of Non-camp refugees:**

The following nine items was identified as issues for non-camp refugees: 1. Identity: Documentation (e.g. Birth certificates, letter from home owners to change address, police registration) 2. No authority in charge 3. Education 4. Job opportunity: Unemployed and underemployed. 5. Social Amenities 6. Requests for camp registration 7. Over stay: Generates fee and stamp in passport. Stamp makes visa to third country very hard to get. 8. Repatriate vs refugee 9. Mixed marriages. Citizenship is not granted to Sri Lankans moving to India after 1983. Marriage to Indian makes it possible to apply, but ruling is done on case-by-case basis.

The issues of identity and authority in charge was identified as the key issues since these problems affect all the other issues very negatively. Regarding the lack of birth certificates among the children of non-camp refugees it was noted that Sri Lanka is a signatory of child rights convention which means that they must provide a birth certificate. If an application is refused they are violating the convention. It was also noted that to both get a fine and a stamp in the passport for over staying is double punishment. The stamp, which in practice makes it very hard to get a visa to a third country, is
therefore illegal. It was again noted that the problems of the non-camp refugees to a large extent are legal. Hence ADRA need strong legal advisory when assisting the non-camp refugees. Finally the possibility for non-camp refugees to resettle in a third country was brought up. It was pointed out that UN rank Tamils as one of the population with the highest irregular movements which means that they are low on the list for resettlement programs. It was also pointed out how hard it is for refugees to enter the EU since the Schengen agreement

**How to address the issues above**

One proposal on how to address the identified issues is the aforementioned establishment of a separate legal advocacy wing. As stated above identity and authority in charge was identified as the most pressing issues and focus should therefore be on them. Further it was suggested that it would be beneficial to start with detailed illustrative cases in order to effectively lift the issues with government. It would be of great support if the dep. of rehabilitation and the Q-branch would agree to share their database on non-camp refugees. But a problem with this database is that much information (e.g. addresses) is likely to be incorrect. This is due to non-camp refugees fear of being arrested or forced back to Sri Lanka if they report at the police even though they are supposed to register.

**How to conduct need assessment**

First of all it was pointed out that it is crucial to remember that the study should not expose people and cause harm. It is important to remember that many of the respondents may be afraid of exposure and it should be clear to the participants that all information is voluntary. No answer information should be forced out of any respondent. After this discussion of the importance of the ethical considerations when conducting the need assessment there were some suggestions on how to improve the outline of the preliminary survey. For example it was suggested that questions regarding registration is sensitive and should therefore be put at the end of the study rather than at the beginning, it should be specified that questions about previous migration in Sri Lanka concerns forced migration only and instead of asking for past movements in Sri Lanka it may be beneficial to ask directly about where in Sri Lanka they would like to return in case of repatriation.