

# Brief Analysis of Characteristics of the Disabled Persons

## Introduction

The Thirteenth Census of Population and Housing was conducted on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2001. The Census enumeration was able to carry out completely in 18 districts. These include all the 17 districts in Western, Central, Southern, North Western, North Central Uva, and Sabaragamuwa provinces and Ampara district in Eastern province. Due to the disturbed conditions in Northern and Eastern provinces certain areas could not be enumerated completely. Census enumeration was carried out partially in Mannar and Vavunia districts in the Northern province and Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts in the Eastern province. In Jaffna, Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi districts enumeration was unable to carry out.

The information about both physical and mental disabilities were collected in this Census through a special schedule. Such data were confined only to physical disabilities in previous Censuses conducted in 1946, 1963 and 1981. Disabled persons were identified during the preliminary Census. Simultaneously a specially designed schedule for disabled persons was used to collect the information about the type of disability, age at which the disability occurred and cause of disability. Disability information was not collected from persons present in non housing units and homeless persons.

## Types of disabilities covered

Following types of disabilities were covered during the Census.

- (i) Disabilities in seeing
- (ii) Disabilities in hearing/speaking
- (iii) Disabilities in hands
- (iv) Disabilities in legs
- (v) Other physical disabilities
- (vi) Mental disabilities

In addition to the disability, the age at which the disability occurred and the cause of the disability were also collected. Disabled persons could have more than one disability. Therefore the persons with multiple disabilities were included under each type of disability.

## Concepts and Definition

- **Disabled Person;**- A person who was unable or limited in carrying out activities that he or she can do due to congenital or long term physical/mental disabilities,

was identified as a disabled person. Short term difficulties due to temporary conditions were excluded.

- **Disability in Seeing:-** Totally blind, blind in one eye or weak vision were taken as disability in seeing. Persons who were unable to do their work without the help of others because of weakness in seeing were considered as persons who are weak in their vision. A person after wearing a pair of spectacles gets back his sight was not included under this category.
- **Disability in Hearing/Speaking:-** Dumb, deaf, dumb and deaf or speaking difficulties were taken as disability in hearing/speaking. Persons who were not able to speak at all were considered as dumb. Persons who were unable to hear from both ears were considered as deaf. Persons who were not able to both speaking and hearing at all were considered as dumb and deaf persons. A person whose speech cannot be understood clearly to others were considered as having speaking difficulties.
- **Disability in Hands:-** Loss of one hand or both hands, paralysis of one hand or both hands or any other disability in one hand or both hands were taken as disability in hands.

Persons who were unable to use one hand or both hands to hold or raise any thing, in attending their day-to-day work were considered as paralyzed in hand. Persons having any other type of disability in one hand or both hands not related to above types were considered as having other disability in hand/hands.

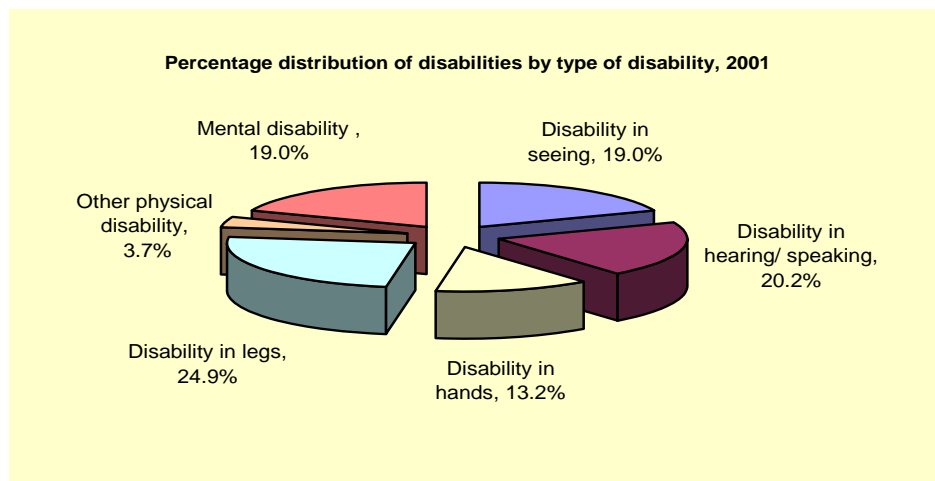
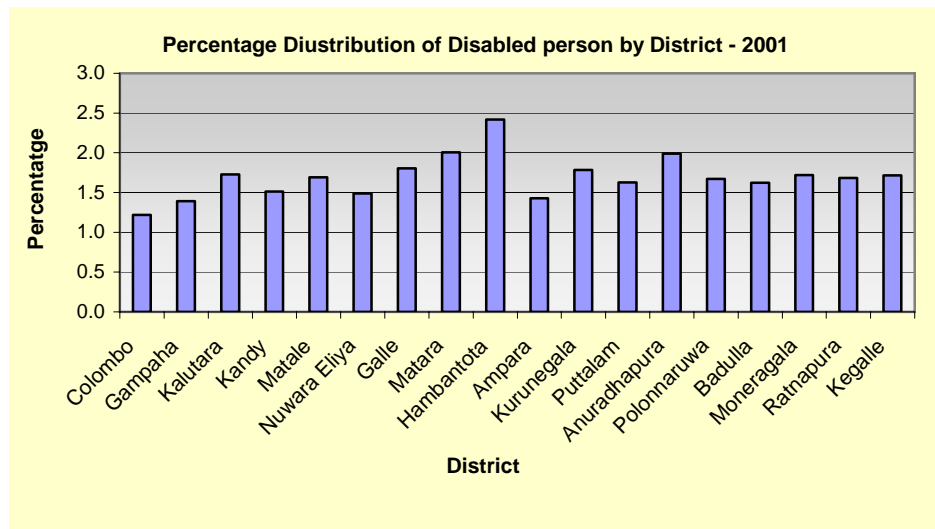
- **Disability in Legs :-** Loss of one leg or both legs, paralysis of one leg or both legs, or any other disability in on leg or both legs were taken as disability in legs. Persons having completely lifeless or inactive leg/legs were considered as paralyzed in leg/legs.
- **Other Physical Disability :-** Any other specific physical disabilities other than the disabilities such as seeing, hearing/speaking disabilities, disabilities in hand or disabilities in legs were taken as other physical disabilities.
- **Mental Disability :-** Mentally retarded and psychotic persons were taken as mentally disabled persons. A person who is backward in attending to his day to day work due to undeveloped brain was considered as mentally retarded. Persons with mental illness due to mental disorders were classified as psychotic persons.

## Summary Review

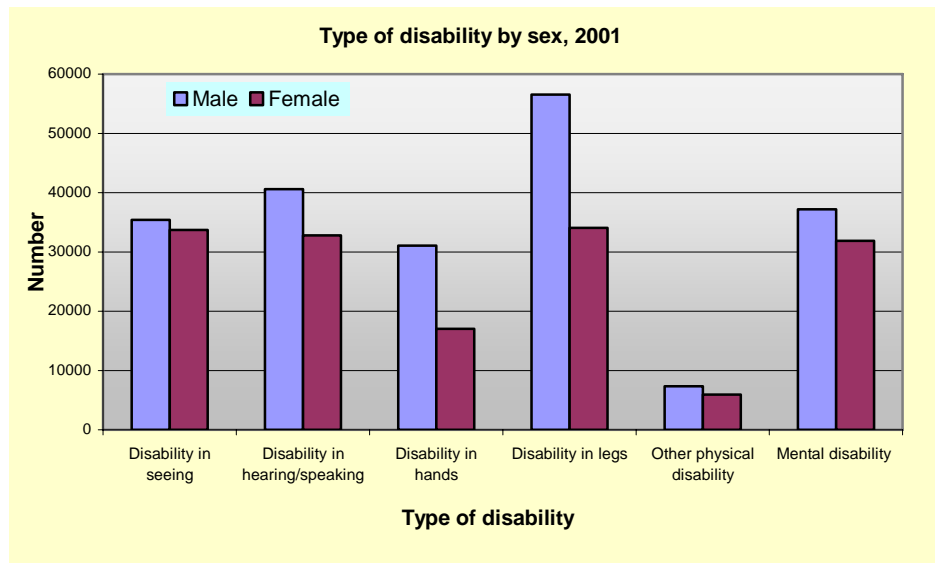
The total number of disabled persons of 18 districts, in which the Census was carried out completely was 274,711. Out of that 158,446 were males and the rest were females. More than ninety per cent of Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts could be covered

in this Census. The total number of disabled persons for Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts were 1937, 4818 and 4166 respectively

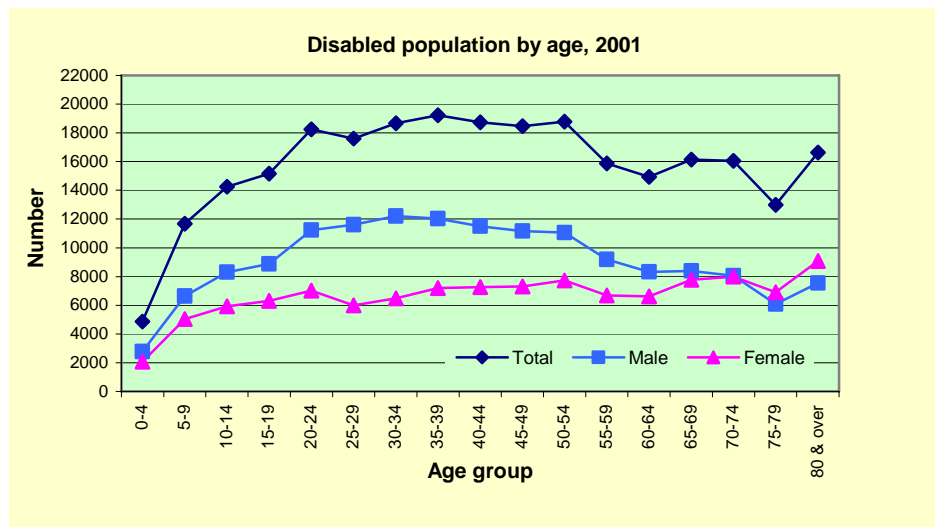
The highest percentage (viz. the number of disabled population for 100 persons in each district) of disabled persons was reported from Hambantota district and second and third places were taken by Matara and Anuradhapura districts respectively. The lowest percentage of disabled persons was reported from Colombo district. But Colombo district was taken the second place according to the number (viz. 27430). However, the highest number of disabled persons was reported from Gampaha district (viz.28683).



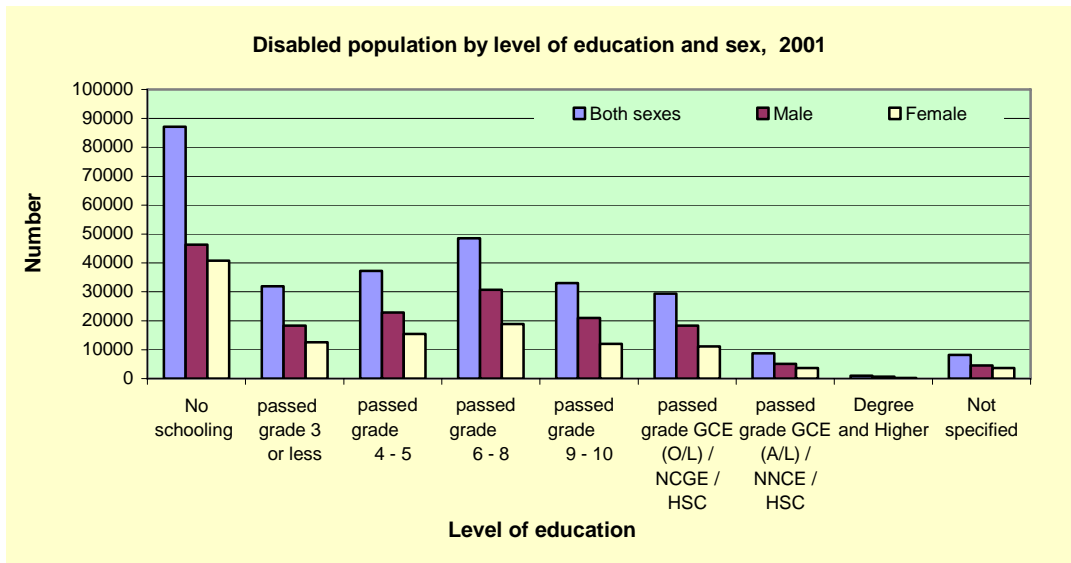
The highest percentage of 24.9 per cent was recorded for any type of disability in legs, while 9.8 per cent of the persons from disability in legs have lost their one or both legs. Other physical disability was taken the lowest percentage of 3.7 per cent. Disability in hearing/speaking, disability in seeing and mental disability have also reported significant percentages.



The sex differential was highest for the persons with disability in legs and it was fairly substantial for the persons with disability in hands. The main cause of disability was illness for both types of disabilities.



The disability was very high among the persons of 20-54 age group in the total disabled Population. The lowest number of disabled persons was found for 0-4 age group. The disabilities were more prevalent among males than females up to age 75 and the pattern reverse thereafter.



Largest number (87105) of disabled Population did not go to school. It was 31.7 percent of the disabled Population. The same phenomenon can be seen for both sexes. The disabled person who did not attend school was higher for female than male (viz 46340 vs 40765). Among those who received education, the highest number passed grade 6-8 for both sexes. Those numbers were 29566 and 17832 for males and females respectively. At the same time the disabled persons with degree and above level of education was very few and it was 545 and 238 for males and females. Disabled persons who did not pass grade 1 but attending grade 1 have been included under pass grade 3 or less category.

### Principal means of livelihood by sex, 2001

Sex	Total	Employment	Support by family or relation	Support by government/institution/organization	Begging	Other	Not specified
Total	274,744	39,512	201,264	16,969	1,025	15,856	76
%	100.0	14.4	73.3	6.2	0.4	5.8	0.0
Male	158,446	33,594	104,606	9,285	758	10,152	51
%	100.0	21.2	66.0	5.9	0.5	6.4	0.0
Female	116,265	5,919	96,666	7,684	267	5,704	25
%	100.0	5.1	83.1	6.6	0.2	4.9	0.0

Majority of disabled Population (73.3 percent) was supported by family or relation. The percentage of females supported by family was higher than that of males. The percentage of disabled persons who were living in institutions was 3.7. It was 4.3 for males and 3.0 for females.

Total number of disabled persons of aged 10 and over was 258179 according to the Census. The Census collected the data on vocational training if the person was trained for any vocation as disabled person. Information was not collected in this Census on the vocational training before the person became disabled. The data revealed that only 3.3 percent of the disabled Population aged 10 year and over has received vocational training after they became disabled. The percentage distribution was quite similar for both sexes. A significant number of males have taken machinery wood carving/carpentry and tailoring as vocational training. Highest proportion of females trained as tailors. 16.1 per cent of disabled Population aged 10 years and over had any type of occupation. The number was 41521. Highest percentage of them has engaged in elementary occupations and the figure was 37.2 per cent. Labour force participation of mentally disabled persons was very low and their percentage of employment was 4.1 .