

# **Alcohol Addiction on the Agenda of Rural Development in Sri Lanka**

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**Identifying the professional challenges in project of prevention of  
addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs, under the Samurdhi Programme**

By

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## Dedication

I would like to dedicate this hard work to my adorable mother who devoted entire life for us.

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## **Abbreviations**

DS – Divisional Secretary

F - Family

GSL – Government of Sri Lanka

HCR - Head Count Ratio

HH – House Hold

OPL - Official poverty line

PHCI - Poverty Head Count Index

RDC – Rural Development and Communication

SDO – Samurdhi Development Officers

SP – Samurdhi Programme

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## Abstract

Even though alleviating poverty is a multifaceted challenge, Sri Lanka is in route to reducing national poverty level and increasingly moving away from the safety nets for economic empowerments of the poor thus Ministry of Economic Development has initiated a number of participatory poverty alleviation projects under the Samurdhi programme. There are numerous causes for the vicious circle of infinite poverty one of the key underlying reasons is the addiction to local (illicit) liquor and narcotic drugs among rural people. Poverty cannot be discussed as an isolated component rather than plenty of other factors have caused to create wicked cycle of poverty. Concerning of Sri Lanka cultural context, frequencies of alcohol use among women are very low compared to men because of drinking and smoking are considered as a masculine habit cause to believe that the men are permissible to use alcohol and exhibit their power over women and children even in the form of open violence. Another aspect is that society does not hold open discussion about the alcohol behaviours are result to countless interconnected problems. Those problems are getting worse day by day pose to critical health issues, social threats and financial crisis are reckoned by the government to as the main causes for erosion of human values in current Sri Lankan society. However, Samurdhi Development Officers (SDOs) were recruited for the specific reason of implementing the Samurdhi Programme and participatory development efforts are the most favoured community approaches of the Samurdhi programme thus SDOs are responsible to convey of policies to the grass root level outcomes. Certainly various kinds of challenges may have to be countenance on the way of communication interventions of rural community. Therefore aim to identify such challenges and in-depth discussions, talk with people, interviews, observations and immersions are the effective strategies to get used to gather data for qualitative research of community and officers. As a result, positive communication interventions of SDOs make relief to the poor and long term impact to the society is evidently proved by this research. For instance organization, officer and community must be a balanced tripod for rural development through social change. Officers have to work very patiently for a long period of time, especially among alcohol addicted communities paying unique attention on them for significant change. However, it was identified that plenty of challenges under personal, social, cultural, financial and political levels must be undertaken on route changing of community behaviour.



## Preface

“Key words of alcohol, narcotic drugs, violence against women and children, poverty and cancer always beckon me to my unpleasant childhood memories. In the same vein, poverty and violence are not simply terminology emanating from theory as those we learn in the class room, but are facts of life. How people endure the hunger, and how women and children cope with the pain of being hurt, are not words for word sake, but stark realities of life. My beloved father died of lung cancer caused by long term smoking and superimposed on that, he was badly addicted to alcohol as well. I, myself, have experienced a childhood with fears caused by seeing domestic violence against women and the scarcity of resources at home due to addiction of the breadwinner to alcohol and narcotic drugs. Such memories remain as hard truths and worst reminiscences in me on recollection.

In my occupation as a public officer, particularly, as an administrative officer in remote rural areas, once familiar woes of addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs in the rural household set up, it started echoing in my personal environment. These were not just words that would pass by, but echoes of horrific haunted memories that could shake me emotionally.

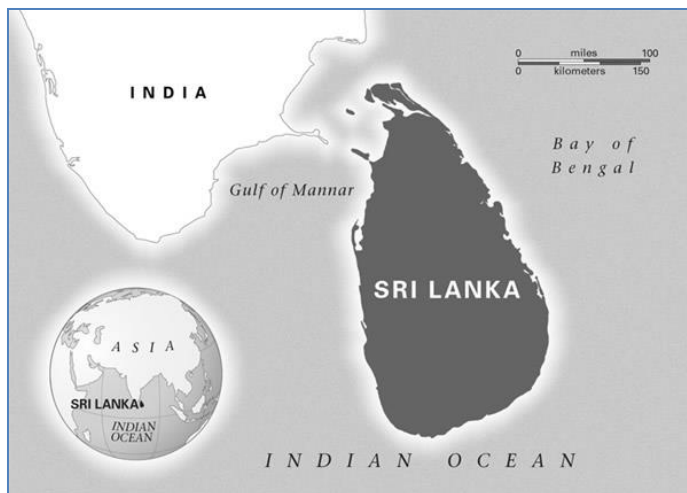
Being a classic witness of the impacts of addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs in the society, there was almost nothing new for me to explicitly understand the abyss of the wicked cycle of the poverty. I firmly believe it is my bound responsibility to counteract the alcoholic and narcotic drugs addiction among the rural community. I would like to acknowledge my own experience from a self-epistemological awareness perspective to the conducting of this research. The inherent knowledge is from the core of the social structure to continuous innovation and change the society.

At the same time this self-epistemological view may work to the harm of the research because of my prejudice. I am prejudiced towards alcohol addiction among men and the resulting poverty as much as it constitutes my motivation to work hard for this research. I realize that my prejudices should not keep me away from a sound research perspective in order to contribute to the further understanding of this issue.”

## Chapter 1: Deliberating the Background

### 1. Introduction

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is a relatively small country in the Asian region both with respect to its surface area of 65,610 km<sup>2</sup> as well as its population of around 20 million in the year 2011. Out of this population, 82% resides in rural areas with the highest recorded incidence of poverty with the maximum number of poor recorded as 15.7 % of the rural sector (Dep. of Censes & Statistics, 2012). Sri Lanka has made great attempts in reducing poverty, and poverty reduction has been a consistent priority of every Sri Lankan Government since independence. Even though alleviating poverty is a multifaceted challenge, Sri Lanka is on route to reducing national poverty level and increasingly moving away from the safety nets for economic empowerments of the poor (Samaraweera, 2010). The transformation can be clearly identified by the decline of the Poverty Head Count Index (percentage population below the national poverty line) from 15.2% in 2006/2007 to 8.9% in 2009/2010 (Central Bank Annual Report, 2012). But poverty still lingers being epitomized in the indices as the absence of access to basic human needs, as well as low rates of access to food, shelter, safe drinking water, health, sanitation facilities, and education and so on. (Dep. of Censes & Statistics, 2012).



Map 1 – Location of Sri Lanka in the world

#### 1.1. Alcohol addiction in the rural context

Based on the findings reported by Silva, Samarasinghe and Hanwell (2011) from the study of concurrent users of alcohol and tobacco, in poor communities more than 40 % of wage earners spend household income to buy alcohol and tobacco, while among the rural community 43.5% of breadwinners earn less than poverty line in Sri Lanka. Although the poor spend a lower percentage for alcohol and cigarette, there is no doubt that this pattern of expenditure contributed to the deterioration of poverty. Furthermore, Silva, Samarasinghe and Hanwell (2011) have found that nearly 80% of alcohol and tobacco users were non-singles and that they were parts of families. It indicates that their habits cause negative impacts on the entire household. Tobacco and alcohol have particularly serious impacts on health among the poor. Despite the fact that tobacco is not the solitary cause, the majority of the deaths are caused by avoidable causes in the world today. Worldwide about 4 million people die annually from tobacco related causes and by the late 2020's the estimated toll will be about 10 million (Silva, Samarasinghe & Gunawardena, 2009). According to the Department of Census and Statistics in Sri Lanka (2012) the per capita consumption of legally produced liquor has increased from 1.81 litres to 7.37 litres in comparison with data available for the last decade. This information throws light on the officially inaccessible data on the amount of consumption locally and illegally distilled alcohol of which the consumers are more often than not are those of the poor people at the threshold of adulthood. There are numerous causes for the vicious circle of infinite poverty. One of the key underlying reasons is the addiction to local (illicit) liquor and narcotic drugs among rural people. Men, mostly while being breadwinners of their respective families, spend a huge part of their income on consumption of liquor and narcotic drugs, sometimes far exceeding the income they generate (Baklien and Samarasinghe, 2004). Furthermore, Samarasinghe (2006) pointed out that control of illicit alcohol consumption and

sales may be an unachievable dream due to corruption of the relevant authorities and intertwined political interference.

The most common practice of illicit brew in villages in Sri Lanka is Kasippu which is brewed by mixing sugar with chemicals. Kasippu is the most popular illegal liquor variety in Sri Lanka. It is called local whiskey which is cheap, light smelly and colourless product (Whiskywise.com, 2006). Meanwhile traditional local liquor called 'Toddy' (fermented palm honey) is popular in the coastal areas.

Figure 1 - Local illicit drink in Sri Lanka (Kasippu)



Source – Photo gallery from Sri Lanka Police

Many people in the rural areas drink Kasippu because of the price and place utility. This means Kasippu is not only affordable in comparison with other liquor, but also very easily available for rural poor under scant hiding (it may be under the tree, by the river or on the rock covering by the bush etc.) Based on the study of alcohol and tobacco use among males in two districts in Sri Lanka by Silva, Samarasinghe and Gunawardena (2009), they have mentioned the types of beverages used by alcohol users. Some people are reported to enjoy more than one type such as out of the total study population while in the urban areas 16.9% drank beer, 26% drank arrack and 3.4% drank Kasippu, rural areas 5.1% drank beer, 16.1% drank arrack and 5.1% drank 'Kasippu'. Furthermore, it was found that consumption of imported beverages such as whisky, brandy, rum and gin was 3.3% in urban and 1.2% in rural areas. Even though 'Kasippu' users claim to drink arrack, as 'Kasippu' is an illicit beverage and its use is a social stigma in Sri Lanka, in each and every village two or three places of unofficial bars can be found. Describing the phenomena of drinking observables frequently, hard working men and hardly working men can be seen frequenting these bars especially in the evenings. Baklien and Samarasinghe (2004) are describing this moment as follows: "A few of them can be seen and heard singing the tunes of popular songs. When they get home, loud arguments, quarrels, wails, screams and shouts are heard from the houses. The noise of beatings and the smashing of pots and pans are not far behind." On the next day, they squander whatever the meagre income they generate on local liquor and narcotic drugs, sometimes causing legal expenses due to police raids of the unofficial bars or quarrels. Nevertheless they burden the economy with health issues caused by these "purchased ailments" as direct results of consumption of liquor and narcotic drugs. Superimposed on the same is their inability either to draw loans or pay back the already obtained loans. Baklien and Samarasinghe (2004) cited such practices as: "A wedding or other celebration is an occasion for the poorest to demonstrate that they, too, can afford to provide guests with unlimited amounts of alcohol, and the cost of just one such celebratory event often leads to decades, sometimes a life-time, of interest payments to rapacious moneylenders."

The social-cognitive factors and drinking motives have not been clearly identified in the context of Sri Lanka due to widespread illegal liquor production all around the country and no records of the sale or quantity are available. While Baklien and Samarasinghe (2004) observed that motivational factors in the village for the drinking habits were the facts that there was nothing else to do, to forget worries, to get rid of body aches after the day's work and relief from the mental problems and so on, Perera and Torabi (2009) cited and summarized it as a personal enjoyment, tension reduction and social pressure. Nevertheless in recent years, the government of Sri Lanka has taken several legislative actions to create alcoholism and tobacco free culture because it was founded that the total expenditure on tobacco and alcohol exceeded the amount of government assistance given to the community under the government policies of poverty alleviation (Mary, 2001).

## **1.2. Government Policies regarding Alcohol and Poverty**

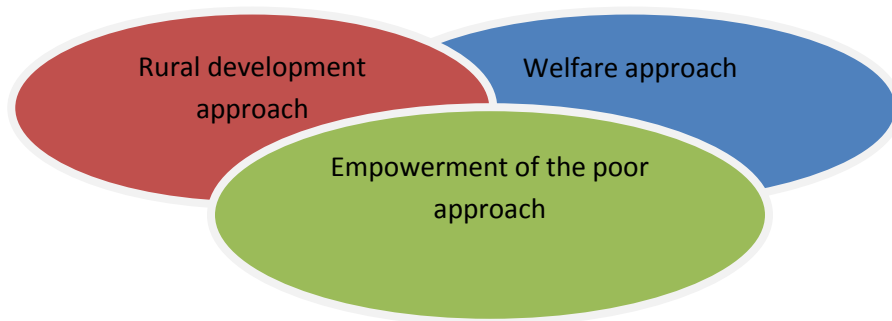
Government of Sri Lanka has recognized that addiction of alcohol and narcotic drugs among the poor cause severe impacts on community health, national budget and entire social fabric. Consequently the current government, in their manifesto, articulated a programme of 'Mathata Thitha' means literally: a full stop to alcohol. It has, thus far, become the main policy to eliminate alcohol and narcotic drugs from Sri Lanka (Mahinda Chinthana, 2005). In mean time, there are more than enough isolated rules and regulations, trying to get rid of alcoholic and narcotic drugs especially illicit alcohol in the rural areas. Accordingly, Abeyasinghe (2011) points out an argument stating that real outcome can be achieved by an overall strategy to eliminate alcohol abuse rather than the more trendy programmes. Further, he also explains that the overall strategies should have blessing of politicians and be condensed into law where an integrated approach to gear up all public and private sector agencies towards dropping alcohol intake. Afterwards, it should be extended from the Departments of Health, Police, Excise and Education up to the Ministries of Public Administration and Community Services. For example, if Police can enforce their laws of drink driving firmly without any bias, there would be less drunken driving and accidents. The similar would be factual if the government and the private sector offices had implemented a policy of carrying out a systematic screening for alcohol and drug misuse among employees. Other way around, government officials can give the message to the grass route levels through students, youth groups, religious community and small rural community group etc.

Accordingly, Government of Sri Lanka has launched Samurdhi (Prosperity) Programme directing to poverty alleviation and social welfare projects which are implemented continuously such as Samurdhi subsidy card, self-employment promotion, access to micro-credit facilities, empowerment of women, prevention of addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs etc. It is a bid to improve the socio-economic conditions of people, who were, previously, living in poverty, because the selected poor families, who are under the poverty line called Samurdhi recipients, are focused to be empowered by harvesting the project outcomes.

### ***The Samurdhi programme***

Samurdhi Movement was launched as a national strategy to alleviate poverty by the Sri Lankan Government, in 1994 and also the Samurdhi Ministry was established to ensure the participation of the poor in the production process. (Administrative level attached as annex I). This is to be achieved through increasing the access of the poor to resources for self-employment, women empowerment, enhancing their health and nutritional status and improving rural infrastructure. Three main development approaches are clearly visible within the Samurdhi Programme as welfare approach, rural development approach and empowerment of the poor approach (Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka, 2013). These approaches can be defined as an attempt to apply the experiences of Sri Lanka's previous development strategies and a challenge to apply the lessons that history has taught of poverty alleviation.

Figure 2 - Triple development approaches in Samurdhi programme



Source - Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka (2013)

As shown in figure 2, while the welfare approach is the first approach, rural development approach is the second development strategy, and the third is the Samurdhi bank movement or the empowerment of the poor, approaches in collusion on each other. For instance, the financial support scheme is provided in the welfare approach and it is an influential reason to involve beneficiary groups in the development process under the rural development approach. From another angle, to a subsidy-beneficiary who works at a small farm or runs a small enterprise, loans from the Samurdhi Bank, as well as transport services and irrigation facilities are also critical issues. Infrastructure development under the rural development approach is a valuable support to alleviate poverty. Accordingly, although these approaches are described severally, it is essential to note that those approaches are inter-linked (Mittraratne, 2000).

Samurdhi programme attempts to increase ability of the poor to effectively create initiatives to develop the quality of life of the family in a sustainable manner and this inventiveness sustained by the provision of technical, managerial and financial resources to needy families such as skills, assets and other abilities for participate provides for their involvement. Poor people should be removed from poverty trap through enhancing of participation in these programmes and they are encouraged to engage in developmental activities of their preference utilizing locally accessible resources. The Samurdhi Programme therefore, envisages to co-ordinate all governmental and non-governmental agencies at the village level. This will ensure the participation of poor and other underprivileged households in this process. The co-ordinated efforts do not only improve the efficiency of service delivery of the government-funded programmes but also diminish the unnecessary overlapping of programmes at community level. Therefore, the main objective of the Samurdhi programme is poverty reduction by ensuring participation of the poor in the production process. The stated main objectives of the program are as follows:

- Broadening opportunities for income enhancement and employments
- Organizing Youth, Women and other disadvantaged sections of the population into small groups and encouraging them to participate in decision-making activities and developmental process at the grass roots level.
- Assisting persons to develop their talents and strengthening their asset bases through productive employment.
- Establishing and maintaining productive assets to create additional wage employment opportunities at the rural level.

(Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka, 2013)

Ultimate objective of Samurdhi programme is not to be responsible for poverty and dependence but to promote independence on the basis of nurturing of saving habits and the development of income generation self-employment. All Samurdhi beneficiaries will be encouraged to save a part of the income supplement-in order to develop a culture of thrift and savings.



Samurdhi welfare strategy has three components: The household, which aims to raise health and nutritional standards of the poor; the insurance scheme to reduce the vulnerability of beneficiaries in case of emergency; and the special development programmes strategy, which focuses on specially deprived groups such as the disabled, elderly destitute and alcohol and narcotic drugs addicts. The welfare components of Samurdhi Programme covers one-third of the entire population of the country (Mittraratne, 2000). Improving social and spiritual values through 'Mathata Thitha'- a programme designed to combat alcohol and narcotic, child protection, anti-suicide initiatives, among youth groups, child societies, women groups, voluntary groups, and programmes was launched parallel to the international days committed to women, elders, children, drug prevention, literacy and poverty alleviation and so on. Samurdhi Development Officers (SDOs) have to more focus on welfare programmes for families of prison inmates, disabled persons, alcohol or narcotic drug addicts and families whose breadwinner works abroad. According to the statistics of Samurdhi Authority in 2010, SDOs have been doing a good work in prevention of alcohol and narcotic drugs as mentioned below.

Table 1 - Prevented numbers from harmful habits in 2012 due to SDOs

No. of persons emancipated from the liquor habit	18,656
No. of persons quit smoking	17,991
No. of shops that stopped sale of cigarettes	5,651

Source- Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka, (2013)

### ***Samurdhi Bank Society***

One of the key strategies adopted under the Samurdhi Programme in alleviating poverty is the establishment of Samurdhi Banking Society. The Samurdhi Banks, in fact, are not financial institutions such as commercial banks. Poor community could not join the financial institutions because they have fear of being risked due to the fact that they do not have enough skills on financial management and bargaining power. On the other way round, the chief persons in the village manage these institutions. They did not consider the problems of poor. Due to these situations, the government elected in 1994, was forced to develop a new bank system focusing on the disadvantaged people. These are institutions, which provide loans through membership savings and external assistance (Dissanayake, 2000). The Samurdhi bank society is a lower level organization that exposes the poor to social animation by small group with 5 members. When a group is too large, individualism in members tend to surface. It also leads to create a separate group because of smaller group are greater inclined to the group sense. Development of small groups is an impulsive process, on their own persuasion such as neighbourliness, engaging in similar production work and friendship are all the causal factors leading to group formation. Samurdhi society meets every fortnight. Family health worker, village teachers and other public officers from support service selections are invited for consciousness building among the community. The Society also promotes capacity to build the leadership qualities, art work, handicraft, poetry performance and such others. Regular meetings of group and discussions create a very constructive situation to examine each other's problems and find solutions. Building a group fund, labourer exchange, wholesale purchase and sharing of consumer goods, exchange of home-made products, recommending bank union loans and follow up work are very important among small group activities to provide the experience to learning of financial management. Similarly, from this process, poor families gradually turn towards planning to get upper limit returns from limited resources. Samurdhi Bank Unions release loans on the trust of the 5 members of the group. Achievements are guided by the maxim from 'small loan' to 'big loan and continuous loan' is done to help the poor community to move from a relief culture to a credit culture. When releasing loans to the poor, bank

society do pay attention not only on the project but also on the human capacity to use up the loan properly and put the same into action in a profitable manner. The managing Board of the Samurdhi Bank Union meets fortnightly and approves loan applications to make available the chance to the poor to gain finance quickly (Dissanayake, 2000). The board of Management is elected by the general assembly of officials including Chairpersons of societies within the zone. This leaves the decision making power to the community but Samurdhi Manager and Samurdhi Development Officers (SDOs) assist in the programme behalf of the government. Protection of these basic features of democracy impacts on the openness of the programme and it may be spreading out on the needs of the community.

### **1.3. Problem statement**

Ministry of Economic Development has initiated a number of participatory poverty alleviation projects under the Samurdhi programme such as development of rural infrastructure facilities, micro credit schemes, improving health and nutritional conditions among rural community and creates self employment opportunities and so on. Among them the project on reducing addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs is a front-runner. These all project activities have been allocated approximately 4% -5% of the national budget per annum to provide well-being to the poor (Samurdhi Authority of Sri Lanka, 2013). Though the Ministry of Economic Development has deployed a considerable amount of resources for the project of alcoholic and narcotic drug prevention, various kinds of persistent negative socio-economic impacts can be identified due to the presence and consumption of illicit alcohol. The persons with a will to break away from alcoholism may search the assistance provided by such projects especially those families whose breadwinners are addicted to liquor or narcotic drugs. Samurdhi Development Officers (SDOs) were recruited for the specific reason of implementing the Samurdhi Programme and participatory development efforts are the most favoured community approaches of the Samurdhi programme. SDO appointments were rushed in 1994, because the officers had to be active members in the community at the period when the system was promulgated. Then the government expected good participatory approach from the officers to implement the government policies in the grassroots effectively. Shanaz (2007) findings support this as, participatory communications approaches from recognizing the attitudes, norms, values and aspirations of the rural people can be one of the communication methods applicable to inspire people for positive responses. Of course, in their respective jobs, one responsibility was to convene meetings of Samurdhi recipients and communicate with them over means of preventing addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs. Therefore, officers engaged in the system had to concentrate more on such families. In particular, Samurdhi Development Officers are those who are responsible as main conveyors of policies to the grass root level outcomes. Certainly various kinds of challenges may have to be countenance on the way of communication interventions in this project.

Therefore, this research study is to identify the professional challenges in the project of prevention of addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs under the Samurdhi Programme.

Chapter 1 of this thesis set out to explain the background situation of this research and chapter 2 is dedicated to a literature review. In order to define the research focus, chapter 3 illustrates the methodology, which was followed by the data collection and analysis. Findings and discussion are on Chapter 4 and 5 respectively. At last but not least, my conclusion and suggestions will be on Chapter 6.

## Chapter 2: Literature review

This literature review consists of two sections. The first section explores the impact of the research problem and harshness to identify the demarcations of problems like poverty and alcohol. The second section is the passionate search and thrash out of communication interventions such as communication theories, competencies with officers and community aspirations to change. On basis of this literature review, main research questions were formulated.

### 2.1. Alcohol and Poverty

#### Addiction motives

Drinking motives are defined as the ultimate decision to use alcohol may be caused to various kinds of influences, such as personality factors or alcohol expectancies, are arbitrated. The concept of addiction motives further illustrated that the people are initially drinking to celebrate special occasions with friends or to become intoxicated due to personal matter, and it was summarised as social motives, enhancement motives, and coping motives (Emmanuel et al., 2005). For instance most of the rural people are starting to drink at the young age as social motives mean accepting invitation from the friends and for the gang moral. Nevertheless highly stressful life events like isolation, violence and abuse may create a greater risk of alcohol and narcotic drug abuse as a coping method. Another perspective is that the person make a decision about whether to drink or not is a combination of emotional and rational processes and the decision is made on the basis of the emotional change that person imagine to reach by the drinking compared with not drinking. Such emotional change can be tension reduction, mood enhancement, peer acceptance or the indirect effects. Based on another research of 'who drinks and why' by the Emmanuel et al. (2006) are pointed out that alcohol addiction motives are based on the personal experience, situation and expectancies such as dependable link between drinking motives and socio-demographic characteristics. Furthermore, it was mentioned from the relevant studies, addiction motives are classified in three different categories: socio-demographic (gender, age, trends over time), personality (sensation seeking, low inhibitory control, extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, agreeableness, anxiety sensitivity) and contextual factors (drinking situations, culture)

#### Impacts of alcohol addiction

Drinking and smoking are considered as bad habits, while underpinning perception of consumption of either of them is attributed to be a masculine habit in the Sri Lankan cultural context. In all patriarchal culture, masculine power and behaviour are frequently given greater status than qualities of those of the feminine and the individuals in the society are caused to believe that the man should be the "boss". This perception creates a social order in which men are "permissible" to abuse alcohol or smoke and exhibit their power over women and children, even in the form of open violence. However, it remains a social taboo and open discussion of alcoholic behaviour is not promoted causes to the popular observation that community surveys on the use of alcohol and tobacco in Sri Lanka are few (Perera, Fonseka, Ekanayake and Lelwala, 2005). But the problem is getting worse day by day and poses critical health issues, social threats and financial crisis. Such results are reckoned by the government as the main causes for erosion of human values in current Sri Lankan society (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012).

**Health** - According to data of the Department of Registrar General in Sri Lanka, deaths caused by liver diseases that are caused by consumption of liquor has doubled during the past decade. Families with non-working or chronically in poor health have to deal with alcohol addicted breadwinners on top of the other issues like water, electricity, house hold scarcity of resources, child care, and children education and so on. In addition to the loss in family income, the weight on the family is worsened when the drinker falls ill resulting inoccupation loss and demand to medical treatment. Such is the evident of pattern in locally distilled alcohol and addiction to nicotine while gripping the lives of poor. A recent paper by Bonu et al. (2004) suggested as follows: "Drinking also costs money and can impact upon



resources particularly of a poor family, leaving other family members destitute. Also, it is worth noting that specific intoxicated events can also have lasting consequences, through home accidents and family violence. Child health effects of alcohol use are primarily through two distal determinants (indirect effects) - forgone household disposable income and caretakers' time for childcare. Diversion of scant economic resources for alcohol use that could have otherwise been used for seeking health care, may lead to self-care or delay in seeking health care. The other potential ways by which alcohol use can reduce the household income are through morbidity associated with the drinking habit among the consuming individuals, resulting in increase in medical expenditures and loss of income due to lost wages, and, sometimes, resulting in the premature death of sole wage earners in a household."

**Social** - Frequencies of alcohol use among women are very low compared to men in Sri Lanka. According to Perera and Torabi (2009) findings of research in Sri Lanka, showed a ratio of 5% versus 53% frequency of alcohol use among women and men respectively. In village social settings, alcohol drinking habit frequently symbolizes machismo and drinking behaviours are rarely used by women to dominate family members and neighbours. However, Baklien and Samarasinghe (2004) have discussed in their book as women in the village have opportunity to live independently or earn something for their family even though her husband could not earn anything. As far as concerning the research conducted by Galvani (2006) these findings are interesting, because women had not blamed alcohol for their partner's violence and they seem to have recognized that alcohol has introverted effects which are insufficient to explicate violence and abuse of partner. But Jayasuriya, Wijewardena and Axemo (2011) illustrated according to their findings that partner's alcohol or drug abuse and partner's extra-marital affairs are recognized as possible risk factors for severe violence against women. This kind of drinking, violence and extra affairs leads to quarrelling among neighbours and relatives, robberies and even murder can be seen as a part of the social fabric. In another perspective, women and children bear the burden of addictions of their husbands and fathers through accidents triggered by alcoholism and domestic violence, causing serious impediments to educational, communal and psychosomatic environments (Korhonen, 2004).

As far as concerning children and their education, alcohol addicted fathers' cannot perform their paternal functions or responsibilities. Furthermore, Baklien and Samarasinghe (2004) have discussed in-depth about the father drunkenness and school attendance of the children by a case study experience in rural area in Sri Lanka. In this case, the principal and the teachers stated that there were many instances where children did not come to the school because of parents' fighting due to alcohol use. "Some children said that due to the fighting there was no cooking, so they could not come to school and some other children had told that their drunken father had assaulted and chased their mother then 'We were scared, so we couldn't sleep'". In such environment there is no need to explain further such childhood fear and education half-done, that may culminate in long term negative social impacts because of the below par personality growth of the children and social annoyance among them. Such quotes summarize that the impact of alcohol on child development is relentless. It was found that children who become subjects of domestic violence may suffer a range of maladaptive outcomes which require intervention by the risk and protective factors. Another perspective is that outcomes are not only hooked on parental alcohol misuse single-handedly, but also on a combination of risk factors such as family demographics, individual characteristics, family interaction, and the psychological functioning of both parents (Burke, Schmied and Montrose, 2006).

**Financial** - It is observable that smoker's drink and drinkers smoke as exposed by research by Perera, Fonseka, Ekanayake and Lelwala (2005). It has also shown that cost incurred in smoking controls the poor's purchasing power of dietary foods. Countless programs of prevention and poverty alleviation have exposed the fact that the share of household expenditure, used to purchase cigarettes in a poor family, is significantly higher than the share in a rich family. Since these two substances are frequently intertwined, prevention programs that focus on both alcohol and tobacco may be more effective. Drinking and smoking not only cost for the family, but also the nation, billions of dollars. The hidden cost has not been calculated sector-wise in our country, such as the cost of medical care, lost productivity through absenteeism, accidents at work, loss of job skills, salaries for police and social workers, court costs, damage to property and cars, insurance payments, etc.(Mary, 2001).

## **Official poverty line (OPL) of Sri Lanka**

There are quite a few indices that can be utilized to identify poverty in the economic, social, political, cultural and spiritual fields, and there are two forms of poverty as relative and absolute. Economically, relative poverty exists in every society as upper, middle and low level of income, while absolute poverty is especially for the study determination so as to measure changes in poverty over time where it could be compared easily. The poverty level is measured by Head Count Ratio (HCR) which indicates the entire number of individuals living under the poverty line as a percentage of the total population. Then, the poverty line insists on minimum standard of living condition in the society to which every person should be eligible to enjoy from this minimum condition. Thus, the poverty line is the threshold line that classifies who the poor are and starting point of poverty analysis. The value of the Official poverty line (OPL) of Sri Lanka was Rs. 3,028 total outflow per person per month for the 2009/10 year survey period. It was done by measuring the expectation of household members' basic needs: the Cost of Basic Needs method (CBN) used to estimate poverty lines. The poverty line should adjust over time as a result of variations in prices and it means that poverty line depends on the true cost of living index. For the base year 2002, the Official poverty line (OPL) was estimated as Rs. 1423, real total expenditure per person per month and it was updated in 2006/07 for changes in the cost of living using Colombo Consumer Price Index (Poverty Indicators, 2012).

## **Wicked Cycle of Poverty**

Based on the compiled results of the case studies, Heise (2012) has pointed out that each and every society has poverty more or less according to official poverty line, hence should have to work towards ending poverty. Pick and Sirkin (2010) has built an argument that lack of psychological right of entry to the opportunities denotes a 'poverty trap' and the poor exhibit behaviours that make and keep them poor. Furthermore, clarification has been given as fear, shame and guilt feelings make the person backward which means even though an individual had enough chances and resources, the psychological access they may be remote due to lack of moral or actual control. Therefore, the influence of economic disparity and shortage of psychological admittance especially cause to fail the project and it is worthy to understand by the development services to reach their targets, unless all of these psychological, social, financial and structural barriers accumulate and feed off one other and create a cycle of poverty (McClelland (1961) cited by Pick and Sirkin (2010)). Another perspective is that less educated poverty-stricken community in the rural areas are much more susceptible to addiction of liquor and narcotic drugs, since they are already in the wicked cycle of poverty. According to the cumulative definitions of the wicked problems by Mascarenhas (2009), wicked problems are arising from extreme amounts of uncertainty, hazard, and social complexity such as crime, poverty, unemployment, financial crisis, national healthcare crisis, teenage suicide escalation and so on. On the one hand, such problems do not have clear solutions or even clear understanding or formulation of the problems to resolve. On the other hand, it is observed that such problems cannot be resolved with traditional logical approaches since wicked problems are inherently social in nature. Seemingly it was linked and interconnected with each and every other problem, for instance; poverty is linked with education, nutrition with poverty, the economy with nutrition, and so on (Kolko, 2012). Further, arguments have thrown around that every wicked problem is unique and each cause to another problem but solutions of wicked problems must be good or bad, not true or false.

## Complexity science

“Mixture is greatness” – Spanish saying

While the term complexity is illustrating a wide range of chaotic, dissipative, adaptive, nonlinear and complex system and phenomena, complexity thinking has radically reshaped persons' perceptions of their own fields, causing to go through a so-called paradigm shift of own thinking pattern. Bogg and Geyer (2007) have cited complexity science as a novel and exciting thing due to the fact that science and society are challenged to the old-style theoretical divisions, framework and paradigms. In the same logic, Downey (2012) has cited complexity science as a new kind of science because of the applying tools and results. Another perspective is that complexity science is not a quasi-spiritual hold of the great web of life, the hint is that everything interconnected with everything else (Capra, (1996) cited by Castell & Hafferty, (2009)). Social, political, ecological and economic systems implicate commonly used interactions to produce various kinds of designs. However, the capacity of complexity science for policy applications is the core of the system and the expectation of complexity science can be helped to work in advance and understand these key patterns. On the one hand, Downey (2012) has argued that any complex system can be easily understood by the model and moreover, his opinion is that models, falling under the umbrella of complexity. Accordingly, scientists are always demanding to understand complexity science by models, equations, hypothesis, and phenomenon and so on. There is a realistic portion meant not to be proved by scientific methods. Castell and Hafferty (2009) have cited that missing point and scientific findings create a discourse between complexity science and Buddhist philosophy. Complexity science is not a component of postmodernism or chaos theory, because modern science depends on the writings of politics and power, in spite of the fact that complexity science is not grateful to any specific moral or political agenda, but it has done various kinds of resolutions such as missile guidance, smart shopper card, biotechnology etc., and they will no more 'save' or 'destroy' the world (Capra (1996) as cited by Castell and Hafferty (2009)). However Complex social systems are fashioned by individuals and interact, changing their behaviours in reaction to each of others, thus adjusting to change the society (Global Science Forum, 2009). Mateo Willis builds an argument as an artist in her article of Art and Complexity: Complexity from the outside (Bogg and Geyer, 2007) complexity science is a useful tool to excavate deeper into the experience of the moment and through complexity undesirable space of community can be identified rather than the individuals, because art is built up upon the relationships between the individuals in society and the social forces that produce their actions or behaviour. Therefore, Castell and Hafferty (2009) recommended using extensive visualization techniques to express complexity science theories and methods because 'a picture is worth a thousand words'.

From this first section, it becomes elaborated that alcoholism is not an individual choice but it can be considered as contributively part of poverty trap. Then the research is aiming to search;

*What is the manifestation of alcohol addiction as a complex problem in rural Sri Lanka?*

- *What are the alcohol addictive motives in the rural community?*
- *How does the alcohol addiction impact to the family / society?*
- *What are the complexities of alcohol addiction and rural poverty?*

## 2.2. Communication intervention

“Communication can be defined as the process through which people exchange meanings.”- (Leeuwis, 2004)

“Communication is a systematic process in which people interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meaning” - (Julia, 2009)

Process, people and meaning which are the key words of above two definitions, support to get knowledge of communication meanwhile Stephen and Karen (2008) had expounded communication as

“the process that links discontinuous part of the living world to one another” and other way around it was simply cited as “a system for communicating for information and orders”. However authors’ point of view is that the theoretical study of communication started after World War-I, and social sciences become fully recognized after World War-II, Because community become powerful for persuasion and decision making in group were dominant on account of widespread use of propaganda. Hence, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists and businessmen and many other fields are trying to exhibit their findings to get benefit from adopting the communication models and theories and so many organizations work out interpersonal, group and mass communication practices, but whatever the label, they share a communication as central to human experience. According to the Stephen and Karen (2008) point of view of communication theory as a prism and it can be understood using this metaphor as follows: “Communication becomes a multifaceted process that impacts and is understood in terms of many contexts, some narrow and some broad, peer into it, and watch various reflections come off the surface as turn it at different angles. Like a prism, communication theory absorbs insight and reflects it back in colourful and interesting ways. Communication theory, then, can be a way to see many possibilities for how to think about and study communication discovers and understood how various theories correlate with and reflect one another, and gain insight into which surfaces of communication you prefer”. Communication skills needs to express the point of view and respond to those of others means ability to listen thoughtfully to a range of perspectives and communicate in a variety of ways in the civic and social life (Julia, 2009). Further developing idea from Leeuwis, and Van den Ban (2004) is the basic forms of interpersonal communication which are group meetings, bilateral meetings and discussions can be referred to face-to-face or non-mediated communication and they argued that to facilitate active communication generally need a number of specific skills like empathy, active listening, self-reflection, confrontational feedback, posing questions and probing, activating discovery, maintaining a structure and group dynamics. It is true that communication skills make sense to each other not only just to exchange the message but also change the world because communication is the effective tool to influence those who touch best outcomes may be personal, societal or global (Rubin, Rubin and Haridakis, 2010).

## **Communication for social change**

Human behaviour and the reasons for behaviour are complicated. So researchers and experts agree that some kind of human behaviours are based on result of the complex interaction of an individual's biological, psychological, cognitive (beliefs, thoughts, learning), and environmental (social, cultural, economic etc.) factors. Van Woerkum (1990, cited by Leeuwis, and Van den Ban, (2004)) explained that complex human behaviour as a simple way, by using model of communicative intervention connecting with other policy instruments and direct human behaviour.

Government of Sri Lanka launched Samurdi programme island-wide for the purpose of alleviating poverty which affects the people physically and mentally. The model which described link regulations, provisions, group pressure, subsidies and communicative interventions with community behaviour change is very similar to the foundation of Samurdhi programme. On the one hand, Samurdhi programme has own rules and regulations, active small groups, subsidy cards and communication interventions through SDOs to change the community behaviour so as to ensure empowerment of the poor. On the other hand, Samurdhi subsidies are basically targeting low income people to increase their lifestyle and growth in their income levels, however such a separate strategy cannot meet the social economic needs of the very large number of people, capable and willing to earn a living, but were left in poverty by the existing social system. In any poverty alleviation policy frame work conscious and deliberate planning is needed to incorporate these groups into the mainstream economic system.

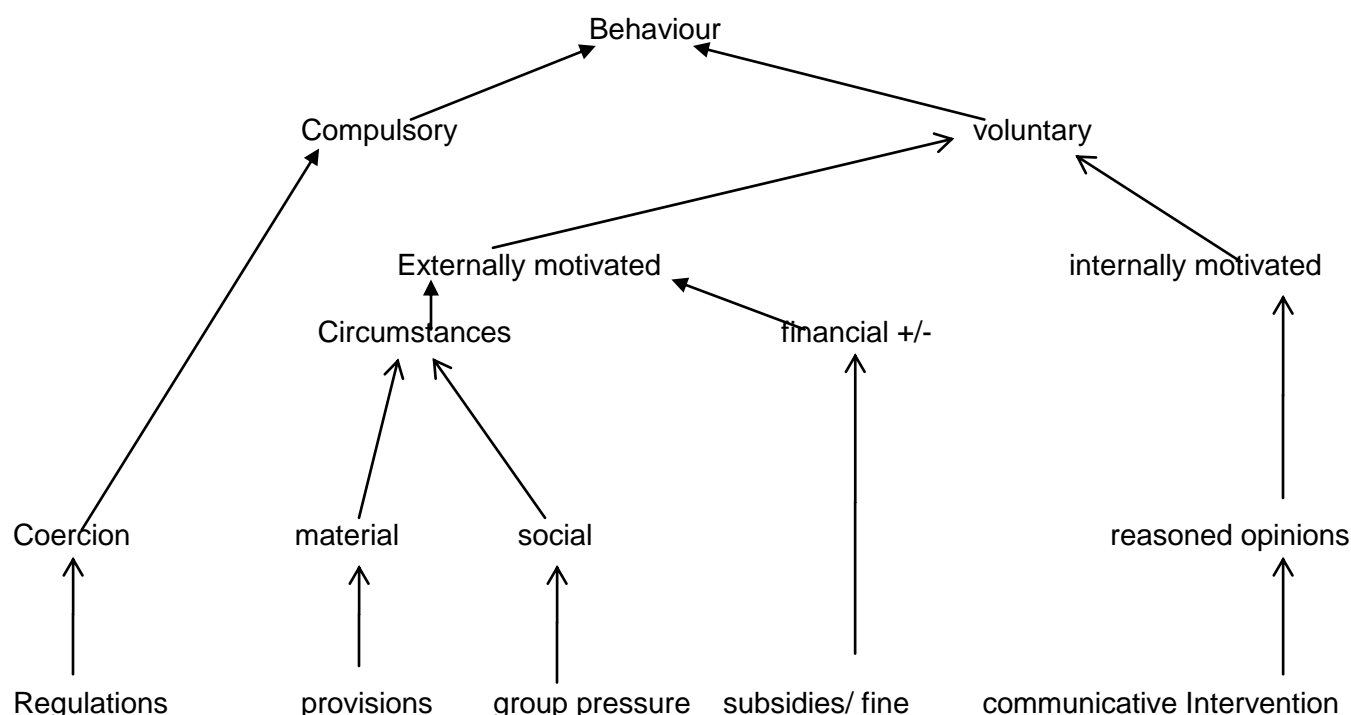


Figure 3 - The relationship between communicative intervention and other policy instruments aimed at stimulating behavioural change, as conceptualized by Van Woerkum (1990a). Policy instruments in bold (Cited by Leeuwis and Van den Ban, (2004).

## Challenges in alcohol prevention campaign

The starting point of alcohol or narcotic drug use may be a negative change in behaviour accordingly; prevention actions also should be based on changing behaviour so as to reduce the risk of death, injury or violence. According to the point of view of David, Philip and Ernest (2006) any behaviour has four broad areas of potential intervention such as: efforts to prevent the behaviour ever taking place, efforts aimed at ending the behaviour, efforts aimed at preventing the activity from harming third parties and efforts aimed at reducing the risks of those who engage in the behaviour. Authors strongly believe that for promoting prevention, cessation, and protection of third parties from continuing nicotine users, key step must be put the most hazardous products at the greatest marketplace disadvantage, because one of the challenges facing tobacco control efforts is smoking and addiction of the bad habit of substance (nicotine) use. Therefore, anti drug campaigns easily find common ground on elimination of smoking and doing battle with the tobacco companies. There are four basic analytical challenges for cross-national drug policy analysis as data scarcity, poor data quality, comparability and generalization (Robert and Peter, 2002). Nations and cultures differ in numerous ways, and that causes variations of alcohol and drug policies. Furthermore Wenyan Yin et al. (2010) illustrated in their article important challenges such as lack of strong political commitment, increasing the number of beneficiaries, improving accessibility of services, improving the quality of services offered, increasing the range of services offered, providing on-going staff training to improve the quality of their services to increase their understanding of drug addiction and enhancing their professionalism and enhancing multi-sector cooperation and so on.

## Communication and prevention methods for alcohol addiction

As human beings, generally, people like to search different kinds of changes not only in the form addiction to a certain harmful behaviour, but also in the form of prevention from those addictions. Even though complex combinations of biological, psychological, and social factors motivate drinking or drugs addictions, some need self-discipline and others need to control their drinking. Some people can avoid

their problem of drinking without assistance of others, but many others need a direction which means no single method would work for everybody. According to the preview of human beings, generally, they carry on behaviours in certain ways, and what they earn as feedbacks either positive or negative will decide their tendency to carry on, just like person's social group drinks heavily and those who can get positive feedback from friends for drinking will be more likely to continue the pattern. In the same way, if a person gets other rewards from drinking, he may also learn to use alcohol as a way of getting that reward and as a way of coping with painful feelings. Noteworthy is that these positive consequences may be more emotionally powerful than negatives. National and international best practices for treatment and prevention on alcohol and narcotic drugs are outlined as flexible program of harm reduction strategies and attention for safe-drinking education. Korhonen (2004) has verified that serious inadequacies in knowledge, services, and counsellor skills are rooted to be unsuccessfulness of alcohol prevention and treatment programs. Copello, Velleman, and Templeton (2005) have noted that five step approach looks at behaviour change of person's thinking about alcohol use and problems. For instance, giving the family members an opportunity to talk about the problem, providing the relevant information, exploring how the family member responds, observing and enhancing social support and discussing the possibilities of onward appointment for further specialist assistance.

Based on the second section of the literature review of communicative interventions, challenges with people who are trying to get prevent from alcoholism or smoke; second research question and sub questions are formulated as follows:

*What are the professional challenges of Samurdhi Development Officers when intervening for social behaviour change?*

- *How do Samurdhi Development Officers cope with the addicts?*
- *How do Samurdhi Development Officers intervene for social behaviour change?*

## Chapter 3: Methodology

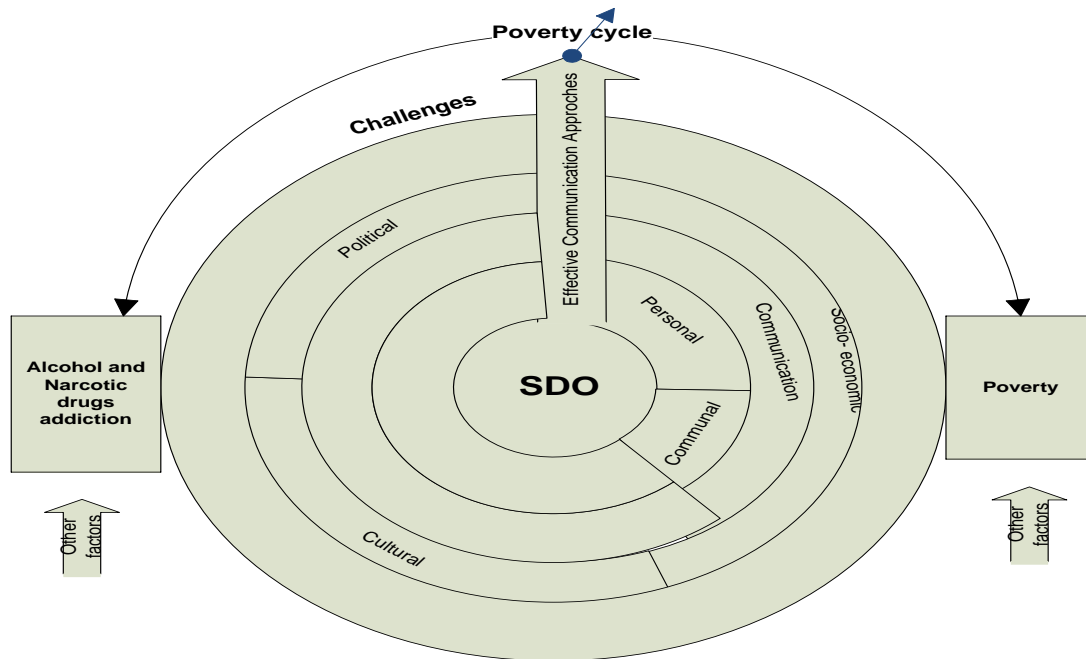
### 3.1. Researching Poverty, Alcohol addiction and Rural Development

During the literature review, researching or finding methods for collecting the data for alcohol addiction in poor communities was a multifaceted task, on one hand owing to all of the psychological, social, financial, structural and cultural facts accumulate and feed off one another. On the other hand, such problems do not have clear solutions or even clear understandings or formulations of the problems to resolve, creating a psychological backwardness among the poor community to partake in research and provide real information. Therefore, the influence of socio-economic disparity and shortage of psychological admittance, in particular, have to be understood and when conducting a research among poor communities. Individuals, who are insiders in the research background, are considered to be a community, a workplace, or some other social system, frequently have a real view and more knowledge of those settings than the outside researchers who are conducting the study. As I mentioned in the self-epistemological awareness, I was an insider in that society and have good experience and knowledge about underpinning causes of the problem and know how the people respond to the researchers. Now, I have to see this social situation from the angle of an outsider of that society as an administrative officer in a professional manner. It does not mean that my unfamiliarity of these complexity issues, though outsider experience is setting under study as a visitor and temporary work for a known period of time.

#### Conceptualizing

Poverty cannot be discussed as an isolated component rather than one among the plenty of other factors that have caused to create wicked cycle of poverty. In my research, I am conceptualizing one and only factor of alcohol and narcotic drug addiction causing poverty and other way around. The poor run deep into the abyss in cycle by siding with two corners of poverty and alcohol addiction, thus the poverty cycle operates worse day by day until it is broken from anywhere and somehow or other. Therefore, successive governments and government officers have targeted to break the cycle so as to eradicate poverty. Even though they have launched so many projects to break this cycle, unidentified or less identified facts have influenced as hindrances to achieve best results. My perceptions is such that Samurdhi development officers can do crack the cycle by using effective communication methods by intervening with rural community. In this case, officers have to tackle a lot of challenges such as political, socio- economic, structural, and cultural and so on. At this moment organizational support or motivation is much more essential to do their work best. Organization, officer and community must be in a balanced tripod when considering significant social change. What I seek to identify is the socio-economic challenges with the perspective of communication, which consists of personal and communal of SDOs. My special attention is to identify the officers' professional challenges towards the alcohol and narcotic drug prevention project in the rural community. This conceptualization can be shown in a model as follows;

Figure 4 – Conceptual framework



(Source: formulated by the author)

### 3.2. Research strategy

Poverty scale, number of violence and addicts can be illustrated from the flow charts, bar charts, tables or histograms, but how do we explain hunger, pain, fear or addiction by the data of quantitative survey. Of course, as facts of chapter 2, such problems cannot be resolved or reviewed with traditional logical approaches since wicked problems are inherently social in nature. Influence of complexity issues such as poverty, alcohol addiction and rural development may differentiate family by family or person by person and a researcher is driven to do such research case by case. Keeping confidentiality and understanding of the situation of the person is essential qualities when doing a case by case research. In depth discussion, talk with people, interviews, observations and immersions are the effective strategies to gather information for good qualitative research.

#### Case study

Case study is not a method but a research strategy and it is broadly used in managerial studies and across the social sciences for instance, in sociology, organizational psychology, anthropology, employment relations and political science studies etc. Case study research consists of comprehensive study and frequent data collecting, timing of events within own context, but the idea is to provide an investigation of the context and process which enlighten the theoretical issues to be considered. Certainly, it may be interesting, since the desire is to understand how behaviour or practices influence the context. Case study usually contain numerous methods so that research results can be the most excellently addressed, throughout this strategy, such as participant observation, direct observation, immersion, ethnography, interviews (semi or unstructured) focus group discussion, documentary analysis, an even questionnaire may be used or in combination (Catherine and Gillian, 2004).

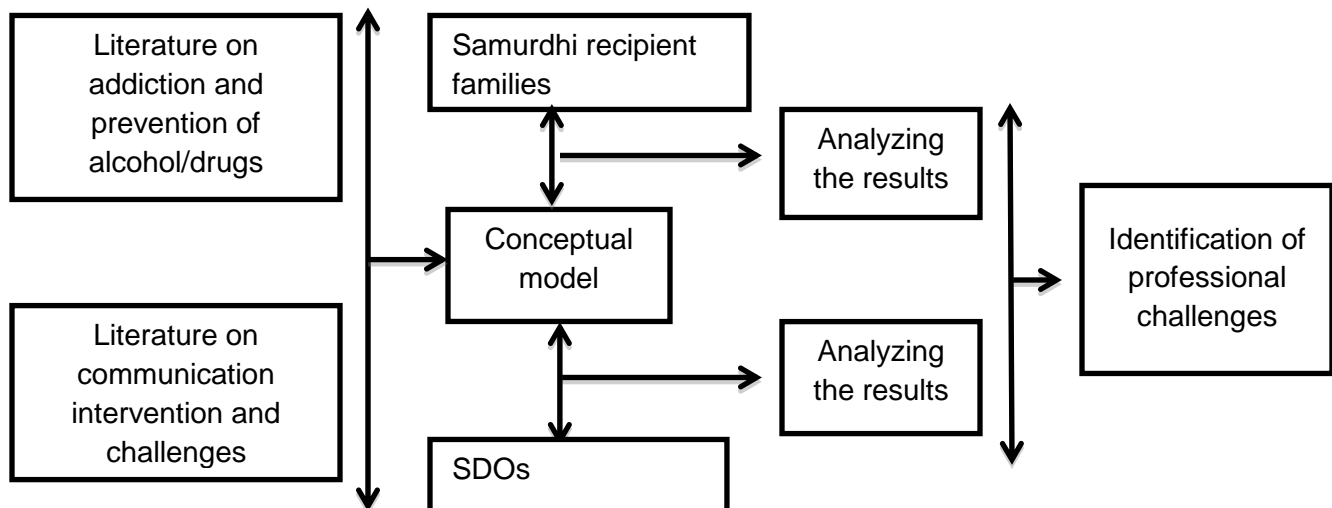


### 3.3. Data collection techniques

Literature review is conducted to get exposed to and familiarize with the theories such as government policies of poverty alleviation, alcohol and poverty, impact of harmful addiction, theories on rural community behaviour, communication approaches and communication intervene challenges etc. While self-epistemological awareness may give good start for me to search each and every tiny reasons and theories on communication, it also guides me on line with RDC concepts. Research study was based on in-depth discussions with 4 Samurdhi Development Officers by equal representation of gender because female officers had a various kinds of communication challenges for intervention in prevention of addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs according to the Sri Lankan culture and ethics. As a matter of verification, Samurdhi meeting and small group meeting was observed. For real understand the problem situation family members of 04 Samurdhi recipients who are affected by the alcohol and narcotic drug project were interviewed with specific concern over the communication intervention. Divisional Secretary in respective divisions contributed as informant for additional information.

Interviews and in-depth discussions were used to get descriptive explanations of reasons for existing situation of small group operation or individual to reveal information, which cannot be obtained through the questionnaire. Checklists were prepared for fulfilling this objective (attached as an annex II). Interview guidelines according to the research questions guided me to an interview approach, which is focused on the depth of the interview rather than the amount of interviewees. As a final point analysis of data so gathered and discussion of collected facts were final records of my suggestions on communication challenges. Accordingly, my research framework is as follows;

Figure 5 – Research Framework



(Source: formulated by the author).

### 3.4. Research area

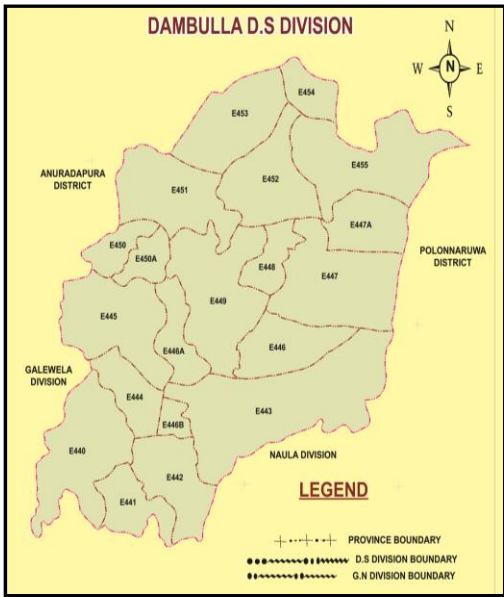
The research has a qualitative approach and data were collected through case studies from Dambulla Divisional Secretariat area in the Central Province in Sri Lanka. Because of Dambulla is located in between of North-Central and North-western provinces which are dense with cultural and tourist attractions. However, this area is considered as urban-rural marginalized division and it may be contented to discuss alcohol and narcotic drug issues. Although Dambulla Divisional Secretariat area

belongs to Mathale District, 2/3 of its area surrounded by the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa Districts. Dambulla lies between latitudes 7° 44 and 8° 3 and longitudes 80° 35 and 80° 52 in the world map and it is situated on A006 main road from Colombo city to Trincomalee with distance of 150 Km from Colombo and 72 Km from Kandy in Sri Lanka. This area fits in to semi-arid region in the country, which is sustained by the monsoon raining with comparable water scarcity.

Map 2- Location of Dambulla in Sri Lanka



Map 3 - Dambulla divisional secretariat area



Source – Resource profile, (2012) – Dambulla Divisional Secretariat

According to the resource profile, (2012) population and ethnicity and religious composition of Dambulla Divisional Secretariat area is as follows;

Table 2 - population composition in Dambulla

Total population	Male	Female
74391	36367	38024

Resource profile (2012) – Dambulla Divisional Secretariat

Table 3 - Ethnicity composition in Dambulla

Ethnicity	
Sinhala	71030
Tamil	893
Muslim ( <i>Yonaka</i> ) <sup>1</sup>	2430
Burger and Malay	43

Table 4 - Religion compositions in Dambulla

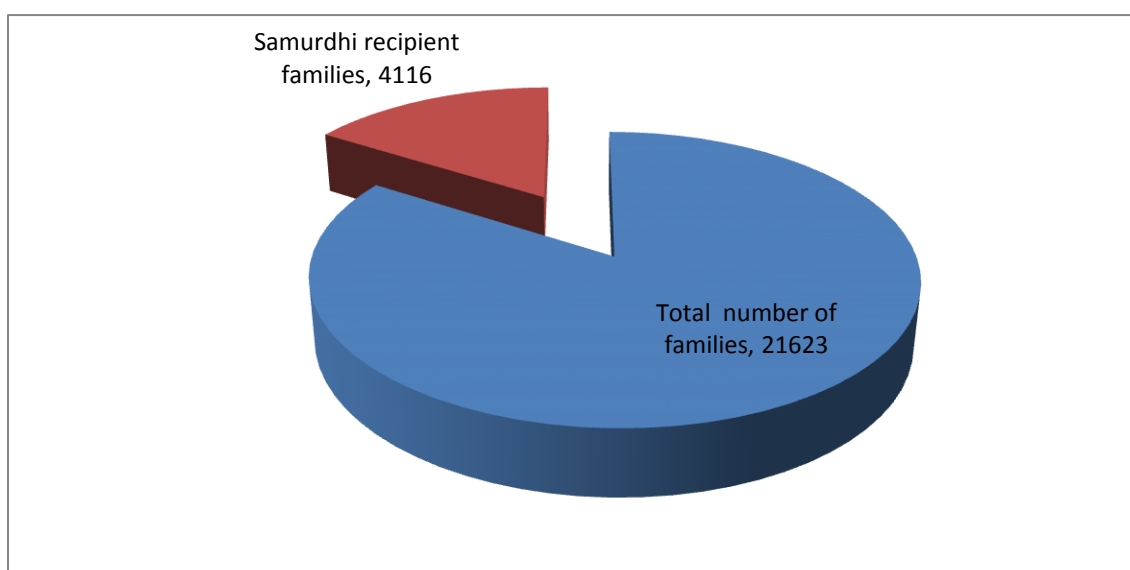
Religious	
Buddhism	70236
Catholic	1041
Muslim	2449
Hindu	660

Resource profile (2012) – Dambulla Divisional Secretariat

<sup>1</sup> Although Muslim is a religion, majority of Sri Lanka consider it as ethnicity. But real local ethnicity name is Yonaka.

Furthermore ancient Dambulla cave temple complex, the world famous Sigiriya Rock fortress and International Cricket Stadium are located in Dambulla with the greater attention of scenic beauty and historical value. Currently, Dambulla can be considered as a transit point especially to the people travelling to North and East, especially, in the aftermath of the war. Hence, rapid structural developments have taken place as developments of main and rural roads, irrigations, water supply, electricity etc. Paddy, onion, vegetable and spices are the main agricultural products in the area and they are cultivated depending on the North – East monsoon rain. In summary, agriculture based economy and tourism promotion activities have become the key livelihood of the population in the area. Although more luxury five star hotels like Kandalama Hotel, Elephant corridor and Hotel Sigiriya are placed on the map of Dambulla and attracts the richest to such locations, more than 22% of out of total population in the division are chronically poor as shown below ;

Figure 6 - Samurdhi recipient families compared to the total number of families in Dambulla division



Resource profile (2012) – Dambulla Divisional Secretariat

## Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter the findings of the research are presented. At first, a description is provided on the implementation of the research and it is followed by findings presented per family. In these family findings both family observations as finding from the interviews are presented. The second section reports on the research activities with SDOs such as the findings of individual experience and group meeting extractions and opinion of the DS is presented.

### 4.1. Observations and immersion in villages of *Inamaluwa* and *Sigiriya*

The researcher stayed 10 days at the small guesthouse, which is situated among two villages called *Inamaluwa* and *Sigiriya*, hence research respondents are in these two villages. Because the guesthouse is small like a normal house, researcher had better opportunities to hold extra discussions and observations of rural people behaviours, livelihoods and alcoholic behaviours. Two government schools called *Inamaluwa* College and *Sigiriya* Central Collage, small government hospital and police station are the main government offices in these villages. Buddhist temple in each village and Catholic Church in *Inamaluwa* area are all but providing service for all villages.

Paddy and onion cultivation is the main income to the farmers in this area and in the daytime, hardworking men in the fields are observed. Identified other livelihoods are teachers, government officers, health workers, carpenters, three-wheeler drivers, tourist guides and daily labourers. Moreover, amongst others even though statistical are reported as a few of professional employees are in these villages, the researcher could not meet them in her short stay.

Every morning the researcher saw school children and teachers walking to the schools. Transport services are crowded in the morning hours with office workers, school children and teachers and daily workers heading to the town. In same way after school, children walk home under the hot sun without any shade like umbrella or hat, even some children did not have shoes except for a pair of old slippers. In the evenings, there are various kinds of paid tuition classes in the city but the researcher did not any see poor children going there. As the researcher had observed they spend the afternoon playing in the house or working with their parents in the field.

Most of the houses in the village are half-built with cement or small houses built with clay bricks. Most houses had electricity, but did not have water supply, which effectively means they used wells as water resource. Next-door chatting and roadside gossiping among women are often observable and teenage male group gathering in the evening was obvious on the roadside or junctions too. After 7 pm walking people are very rear because of wild elephant cross over to the village.

Every day, late evening researcher observed people walking along the road after the day-to-day work especially farmers and labourers. Most of the time, it was very easy to identify their occupation by their dress. While some walked on the road talking with each other, some walked along the road in uncontrolled way of shuttling and blaming to everyone around giving away their identity of being alcohol users. The researcher noticed a person riding a bicycle in a very risky manner under the influence of alcohol. Most of the poor who are using alcohol in these villages are drinking Kasippu because of the village Kasippu shop. Even though she wanted to observe illicit liquor shop in the village, it was not allowed since it was done in hiding and social taboo for women stands so tall that the researcher was no exception.

The owner of the guesthouse in which the researcher found accommodation was a widow and she managed the hotel with the support from her son. Another boy of early twenties age and middle aged women worked for salary. The researcher had allocated her late evening time to discuss with them because in the night it is imperative to stay at home due to wild elephant entrance to the village. The husband of the guesthouse owner had died by a car accident on the way after a party; hence she believes it may have been a result of drunken driving. Further she said that her son is not using any

alcohol or narcotic drugs and he learnt from the experience of his father. The same but a different story that the researcher paid attention is to the boy who work in the guest house as he has four younger siblings to take care of due to the fact that his father had died of an elephant attack on the way home after drinking. He also does not use any harmful things and his aim is to give good education to his siblings to break away from the poverty trap. I noticed every night a man came with a torch to pick the women who works in the guest house who the researcher guessed to be her husband and one day researcher stayed in the garden in the hotel and arranged a little talk with them. Husband was in carpentry work and they have two school children. Husband said after his day job, he did some work in home garden and then came to pick the wife, while children studied. It was remarkable that this lady has been the only person who told me that her husband is usually a sober but he is lovelier and more joyful only after alcohol intake than without alcohol.

In the day time researcher allocated the time to visit poor families and all respondents explained their feelings in Sinhala language which is their own language and the researcher translated her notes in Sinhala language in the same day night at the restaurant so as to grasp the unique arguments and retain the content value therein. Researcher was very much keen about her dress type as Kandyan Saree which is local dress so as to get closer to the poor community and to make them feel the researcher is not an alien to them. The researcher guided the interviews according to her questionnaire checklist that consisted of questions on drinking and smoking habits of the respondents, their attitudes and aspirations to refrain from addiction.

#### **4.2. Observations and interviews with families**

With members of four Samurdhi beneficiary families, in-depth interviews were conducted to explore the influence of alcohol and narcotic addiction, domestic violence and care-seeking behaviour of women's own perceptions. The researcher interviewed family members in varying arrangements; initiated by the researcher and also by the interviewee, in case they sought privacy and/or an opportunity to participate in the research. Especially women prefer to talk with her in the absence of their husbands. They arranged her to come at moments the husbands were not at home or other locations were used to talk such as road side small boutiques, premises of Samurdhi meeting etc. but the young children did not have any consent to discuss or talk about their father's behaviour. The researcher had a chance to talk to one girl, when they came to play with children of SDO and she answered in a very shy and fearful manner. Simultaneously, the researcher met the husbands at their convenient time at their home where they prefer to meet to avoid grabbing other peoples' attention. According to the research objective, definitely the respondent should be a Samurdhi recipient, meaning poor rural person who often have subsidy frame of mind. Therefore, they did not like to reveal their names and to the photos due to fear that Samurdhi subsidy may be cut down. It caused the researcher to omit the real names and some of the pictures are used in this report similarly to prevent recognition. Another aspect that inflicts on the implementation is the main religion in Sri Lanka. Buddhism is strongly in opposition to the use of any addictive substance as same as civil law, which does not encourage the use of alcohol and drugs either. All these create a social ethic as alcohol and drugs are social taboo not fit to open discussions of alcohol or smoke. Hence, most of the husbands were reluctant to accept their addiction and nonsense behaviour. It could be clearly observed among women and children when they exposed themselves to be are very shy to talk about their teasers and had double feelings as on one hand they wanted to release stress while on the other hand they were afraid of husbands/ fathers who may find fault with them.

The researcher knows the names of the respondents but in this report names are omitted and respondents are identified as follows;

Table 5 – Description of interviewed families

Name	Composition	HH members interviewed	Occupations
F1	Husband, wife, son, 2 grand children	Husband F1, wife F1 , son F1	Husband – labourer Son –labourer Wife – house wife
F2	Husband, wife, 2 children	Husband F2, wife F2	Husband – labourer Wife – self employer
F 3	Husband, wife, 2 children	Husband F3, wife F3, daughter F3 (10 yrs old)	Husband – labourer Wife – house wife Daughter – schooling
F4	Husband, wife, 3 children	Husband F4, wife F4	Husband- farmer(recently prevented from the alcohol addiction) Wife – house wife

### Family 1

When the researcher visited family 1; husband, wife and two grandchildren were in their house. It was a very small house made with clay bricks and did not have much furniture inside the house. The researcher did a brief explanation of her research in order to wipe out their fear of losing Samurdhi subsidies or any other provisions and about privacy of the research. They agreed to discuss without even signing the translated research consent form, then the researcher started to discuss with husband and wife in a relaxed environment in front of the house. **Husband F1** who is a daily labourer appeared careless in mood expressing that he is not ready to listen any one and bare burst. He was more reluctant to talk and the researcher asked several questions but he gave short comments. Asking for eventual drinking habits he explained:

*“I am not consuming alcohol regularly. When I am tiredness or physical painful after a day of hard work, I take a small amount of liquor. Sometimes, if I had chance to get more money in my pocket than usually, I have a tendency to drink, but I never cause trouble to my family members or neighbours. I do not smoke I can stop this drinking habit, but this is the one and only activity which I am doing to enjoy the life. Why am I stopping my day happiness?”*

Trying to find out if he joined the Samurdhi programme he told *“I am not going to Samurdhi meetings; because I don’t have time due to my work. Normally I am not going to the temple or to meet the monk.”*

When **wife F1** started to explain her experience, her husband called her to home inside. Then the wife went inside and left the interview. During the researcher’s departure she found an opportunity to talk with her and asked her to come back next morning when the husband is not at home. Researcher visited her the next day, and she talked about two hours with tears.

*“My husband assaults me every night after having alcohol. He does not need a reason for these violence and harassments. You may see that my hands are swelled because of this violence throughout past many years. One night, after having a drink, he destroyed all the rice and curry pots and thrown dirty water on me and smites in a rigorous way. I escaped from back door and whole night I was in the jungle with the wet dress.”*

*“When my kids were small, they were very scared of this situation and I had taken them out and hide under a bush closer to my home or stay at a neighbour’s house until sun shines. I couldn’t cook anything for the breakfast for my kids and they have to go to the school under starvation. I tried to*

*educate them as I can, but it was havoc due to my two sons are also following their father's footstep and now addicted to alcohol and smoking, especially my elder son. Therefore, the wife of my elder son has gone away by leaving his two kids in this house as a result of my son's alcoholic behaviour. I have to take care of these two kids as well. My daughter has gone away with her boy friend while schooling at a low age because of her father's alcohol addiction."*

*"My husband doesn't like to talk and explain his alcoholic influences with you or any other persons and he squabbled with me yesterday. Now I am totally frustrated about this life and thinking of going away to a monastery. But I have to stay further because of this small granddaughter. I am the only one who can take care of her at this 'alcohol addicted home'. According to the Buddhism, these are our dooms. We have to pay-off all these dooms at this life-span."*

Figure 7 – Family 1 husband and wife



Source by author

**Younger son F1:** unmarried person who is doing a temporary job in the city agreed to express his view after his mother. He started to talk with the researcher in repenting manner.

*"Now I am 25 years old but I don't have a permanent job as I couldn't pass the exams. My home background was not suitable for education. My elder sister was capable enough to study, but father's behaviour did not allow her to continue the studies and sister got married when schooling and went away. I don't like to talk alcohol behaviour of my father. My elder brother is also addicted to alcohol not because of our father, but because of the political parties."*

*"I am a sober. Sometimes my city friends invite me to have a fun with them. When I am stressed without good job and more thinking of my ad hoc life and future, I am going to the bar. I had a girl friend. But her parents disagreed to get marry her to me due to my family setting and my joblessness."*

## **Family 2**

**Husband F2** was met in his home in the morning before going to work. The house was built with cement but not completed. There was a well-grown home garden on the back side of the house. Initially, he was uncomfortable to talk with the researcher about use of alcohol or smoking, as it was a social taboo. After the researcher's explanation of the research objectives he agreed to discuss a little as follows;



*"I am not drinking daily. Special occasions and friends' invitation make me to take little bit alcohol. Usually I am addicted to one cigarette in the morning; that's only. After liquor I do not make any quarrel or harm anyone, calmly come home, eat and sleep."*

*"I am not going to Samurdhi meetings but my wife is a very keen to participate all meetings. It is good to set up small groups consisting majority of female members as they make use of money for a success after obtaining loans. If these groups consist with male members, definitely they may get together and drink by using total sum of the loan".*

After talking with husband the researcher stayed around 15 minutes till husband goes the work as the request of **Wife F2** who is an active member in Samurdhi program and her experience is a good example to explain about the regress of the social values among the rural communities of the country.

*"I got married twenty five years ago and my husband drank since that long period. He assaulted me since then. We have two children and I have to tolerate all these harassments because of these two kids and also because I didn't have a job. My parents also were very poor and they couldn't support me in economic or other means."*

*"One day my elder son assaulted my husband as he broken his patience because of the way my husband harassing me. He tried to kill his father and fortunately our neighbours intervened and settled it. I was scared about my kids as they may get involved with these matters and that would be cause a bad impact on their future. My children did not get proper education in this bad environment. The age of my elder son is 18 years. He does not like to live in such situation and found a small job in the capital."*

Figure 8 – Family 2 husband and wife



Source by author

### **Family 3**

**Husband F3** is a person who the researcher met at home at the early evening; he had an alcohol smell at that time and his wife was not in the house since she had gone to participate in a Samurdhi meeting and two children were seen playing. He had a rough appearance and sound. When the researcher explained about her research, he listened very carefully. Though he totally refused to sign the consent, he didn't refuse to relate his alcohol addiction and said as follows;

*"I earned more than one thousand rupees per day by working as a labourer, but spent about three hundred rupees per day for alcohol consumption, but it is not daily. There are no any causing factors to drink; this is my habit and fun with my friends. I am not addicted to smoke but when I am drinking, one*



*or two time smoking. Sometimes I assaulted my wife because of her unnecessary wards when my backing home after small drink."*

*"I do not like to visit the Samurdhi meetings. Because Samurdhi meetings are very time consuming 'talk shops' which are an utter waste of time. Usually I am not going to the temple, but special festival days in the temple I am going there, but not going to face "Nayaka Thero".*

**Wife F3**, who the researcher met on the way of Samurdhi meeting and she agreed to sit down on wooden seat near the road and explained her feelings of addiction to liquor, but she asked the researcher not to inform to the husband that she discussed with the researcher.

*"We are married for last 15 years; he used to drink since the marriage. He started to hammer me since early stages of the marriage. We have two children. I sacrificed for that stupid harassment; because of I don't have any job except for looking after my children. The most difficult situation in the house is his harassment. I can say many things about his harassment. Shouting after liquor is more common to him, but occasionally he hammers to me without any reason. Sometimes my husband assaults me by using furniture and I had attended to hospital because of the injuries caused. Finally my tolerance was broken-up and I complained to the police about this violence. He was arrested by police and locked-up for a day and they warned him strictly prior to release. However, after this incident the harassments were very rigorous because he got annoyed with me as I complained against him to the police."*

*"I don't have any inner peace in my mind to involve for cleaning the house, even to plant a flower plant around my home and I am totally frustrated about my life. Still I am living without committing suicide because of my kids".*

**Daughter F3** is ten years old small girl joined the researcher's discussion in very shy manner when they came to play with children of SDO and explained as;

*"My father used to drink everyday and shouted using slang words to my mother and neighbours. Then he assaults my mother and we feel scared about it and still I am afraid of my father. Some days he hammers to my mother so inhumanely, so my mother is used to escape from the home with me and my brother to the next door. We wait there without any foods for dinner. We felt hungry very badly, but nothing is left for us to do. During the mid night again we return to home after father went to sleep. So we don't have any chance to do home work given by school.*

Figure 9 – House of family 3



Figure 10 – Two children of family 3



Source by author

#### **Family 4**

**Husband F4** has discontinued the consumption of alcohol because he is now an active member of *Gihi-Pirith* team. He explained the past and present situation as follows;

*"I was addicted to alcohol and cigarette in 2 years ago. Now I have realized it as an unusual habit wasting money and status. At that time I wasted lot of money for liquor with my friends. I didn't concentrate on my farming as well. Not only my lack of attention for education of my children, but also I violated to my family responsibilities as well."*

*Now I am active member of the Gihi- Pirith team due to my fluency of chanting Pirith. SDO motivated me to join to the team and that has caused me to give up my bad habits. Sometimes my old gang is inviting me to join them, but I want to be strong enough to avoid such bad habits."*

**Wife F4**, who is a victim of domestic violence for more than 20 years, the researcher met her on the site of Samurdhi meeting and explained her life experience as follow;

*"My husband is a farmer. He has paddy land. He earns considerable amount of money by cultivating. But, we are still poor because of his alcohol lovely behaviour. He did not give money for the education of my children. Previously he hammered me and shouted to all neighbours after liquor. Recently it has been seen his prevention of alcohol use because of the Pirith team, but still I cannot believe it and have fear that he may start again to drink and do violence. All my neighbours have electricity facility, other than our houses. We were unable to get this facility because of our poverty. I got a loan from Samurdhi bank to get electricity facility for house."*

Figure 11 - Husband F4



Source by Author

#### **4.3. Observations and interviews with Samurdhi Development Officers**

The researcher visited SDOs' meeting and small group meeting to observe and get knowledge of their special experience with this issue. Hence a small group meeting and SDO's awareness meeting was observed and those were used to get the direct information of the small group operation on the field and message transfer. To mobilize people in the primary requirement to deliver service to the poor in the mechanism of this effort is small group system. In this island wide structure of the Samurdi movement the grass root level unit of this programme is the small group and it consist of 5 members, which is the smallest unit of the poor. Each of the small group conducts its weekly meeting, exchange their knowledge and experience, builds a fund, borrows money, exchange labourer, buys consumer

goods and distribute them among the members and recommends loans to the bank association. The Samurdi association also has its own procedure. It holds meetings every fortnight with the mediation of the SDO. Members of small groups are mostly equal in some characteristics and factors such as income level nature of economic activities, education background, family problems and behaviours like alcohol abuse and lack of resources, but they are not homogenous in every aspect such as caste differences, party politics and ambitions etc.

Furthermore the researcher conducted individual discussions with four officers (two male and two female) and group discussion was held with 10 – 12 officers to discuss major challenges. (Name list of the officers are attached as annex III). The researcher arranged to discuss with DS as an informant as well to get opinion of the alcohol and narcotic drug issues. It was noticeable that the research issue is one among plenty of work. She explained that she did not have time to concentrate her attention to this wicked problem. She engages herself in regular administrative work without delay and she tried to explain government policies and organizational creative activities. Below the findings from the observations and interviews are presented.

### **Addiction motives**

The researcher has received quite a variety of answers when the factors that positively motive addiction to alcohol and smoking were traced. But those all answers can be identified as coping motives and social motives for example husbands of all four households responded stating that being tired, complaining body pain after hard work, habits and the mere of having some additional disposable income at hand as reasons that influence them to get addicted to drinking or smoking. SDOs have identified many other reasons for addiction such as less education, social ethics and shame, social cohorts and other aspects that combine into multi faceted causalities.

### **Complexity to demarcate the impacts of alcohol addiction and poverty in practice**

The researcher always observed that the strong link between alcohol addiction and poverty in the rural area. Therefore it was very difficult to identify practically which are isolated stories of such impacts of the alcohol addictions as mentioned in the literature review. For instance health impact causes social impacts and financial impact links with health impacts and the other way around. Therefore the experiences of SDOs are noteworthy to better understand. Poor rural men who are not with developed personalities, are not much strait forward to tell their needs or to get help from others. Especially, when it comes to sexual issues among rural community are seldom discussed in the open and they are innately guided by Sri Lanka traditional cultural context. However, an experience which was explained by the officer is;

*“In a family, we observed that husband always fights with his wife every night after consumption of alcohol. I discussed personally with this husband to identify the root cause for this behaviour. Because of poverty, these families normally used to build single room houses, which made out of clay bricks. They do not have any separated rooms and that has caused them to sleep all together with their kids. This situation has psychologically influenced this husband to stay away from his wife and prevented them to having intercourse regularly to enjoy their family life. Then I discussed with Our Samurdhi volunteer group and organized a volunteer work a campaign to build another separate room made out of clay bricks attached to the same house. Finally we were acknowledged that the peace and harmony sustained in this family throughout”.*

This story is more interesting to identify the critical relationships of poverty, social ethics and alcohol consumption. Furthermore Samurdhi officers explained their experience related to alcohol addiction of poor rural people. According to SDOs' point of view, uneducated, family oriented women have become one reason for addiction of alcohol by the rural poor men. One lady officer who is directly involved with these families explained her experience on alcohol addiction of poor males;

*“There are several reasons to get addicted to alcohol by husbands in poor families. In one family, which I supervised, the wife supported the family in economic means by managing livestock farm. She was breeding cattle and poultry and she had worked throughout the day at her farm. Therefore, her husband feels bad about the odour always contain in his wife. We also feel the same whenever we visit her place. When we discussed with her husband about the reason that he consumed alcohol every evening before return his home, his reply was “I can’t reach her without alcohol because of her terrible smell”, which is a reasonable answer we could expect from an uneducated rural individual. We educated this poor woman and given her some branded soaps to use every day before her husband return home. Finally we had known that her husband has refrained from the consumption of alcohol”.*

Most of the Samurdhi recipients are low-income farmers or labourers who do their work through labour sharing. Therefore, they are more vulnerable to be grouped and to the formation in the evenings effectively ending in malpractices. For instance, politicians try to grab the poor for promotions in their election campaign and the wages offered may be a bottle of liquor. Such beginnings end in addiction. According to the view point SDOs’, this condition is widespread in the time period of election. Another perspective, as explicated by the DS, is:

*“Due to Kasippu production and politicians have got involved, Kasippu menace will not decrease though police raids are conducted continuously. It can be seen that there is a strong relationship between the politicians and Kasippu, because of poor drunken people may wrathful for their election campaign activities.”*

Figure 12 – SDO meeting



(Source by the Author)

## Communication for social change

**Based on the communication** - SDOs do have extensive work schedules to put into practice, such as small group formation and supervision, women empowerment activities, credit and saving promotions, social security fund activities and so on. Among those all activities, only several SDOs have considered to touch on the alcohol and narcotic drug prevention project and to conduct it creatively. For example, the researcher interviewed the SDO who motivated husband F4 to join the *Pirith* team and he expressed his strategy to prevent people from harmful addiction;

*“Attachment to religious activities is the best alternative to prevent some poor people from alcohol or smoking. ‘Pirith’ chanting is considered as very popular and most sacred religious activity in our rural community and normally these activities are totally handled by most senior Buddhist monks who reside in the temple of the area. But I created a Gihi-Pirith team (Laymen-Pirith; with blessings of Nayaka Thero in the temple, capable civil people (Laymen) also allowed to do a Pirith chanting ceremony). To be a member of Gihi-Pirith team, one should be a vegetarian and also refrain totally from consumption of alcohols.”*



*"I used this religious activity to prevent them from alcohol addiction. I organized a Gihi-Pirith team which consisted of some senior community members who are well recognized among the community and also I invited some alcohol addicted members who were willing to get rid of their alcohol addiction. As a rule, to be a member of Gihi-Pirith team they should stay away from consumption of any meat or alcohol at least a week prior to Gihi-Pirith ceremony and week after that. Being a member of Gihi-Pirith team they shy themselves away from consuming alcohol any more. I have countable examples to highlight the success of this approach".*

SDOs considered that religion is a good approach to use creatively to prevent the poor from addictions and it has been exemplified by another story which was presented by the Catholic lady officer about her efforts to prevent people from getting addicted to harmful habits using Catholic Church in a rural village, because majority is Catholic in under the area of her control.

*"I requested the Chief Priest to describe the consequences of alcohol addiction and warn them if someone consumes alcohol they will be terminating to obtain Baptism. Then the father had advised his followers to stop alcoholism and violence. Unless they stop it, father has terminated the Baptism. Catholic community has considered termination of Baptism will be a magnificent loss for their sacred future and therefore, these catholic communities could be preventing from using alcohol and family or social violence by enforcing religious regulations."*

**Based on the social pressure** – The model of relationship between communicative intervention and other policy instruments aimed at stimulating behavioural change (Van Woerkum (1990a) cited by Leeuwis and Van den Ban (2004) is appropriate model to explanation of activities of the SDOs. For instance, a number of officers had started to select the most alcohol addicted person as a chair person in the Samurdhi meeting in the village so as to indirect forced to give up alcoholism and violence by thrusting responsibilities of the prestigious position added by social pressure. The officer who is initially stated this strategy was explained that as;

*"Two years ago when I was appointed to my present working area, I identified that a person every day came to the Samurdhi meeting after alcohol consumption and making mystify the meeting. But I recognised that the person is very knowledgeable cause to nominate this person as chair person in the next meeting. At that moment several members were totally rejected it because of his alcoholism violence behaviour, however I gave the explanation of my strategy and got the responsibly. This rejection and discussion may be given an impression to the person about his status and accountability of the position result was he stopped drinking and violence after drinking. Now this strategy became a good example and other officers started to implement on their field."*

Also other ideas that build on social pressure which were started to implement, was mentioned by the DS as follow;

*"Our SDOs have started new project to do awareness programmes through school students. With the support from principle, our officers are taken one hour awareness for students as to how to get fathers out of harmful addiction strategically, because fathers may not be refusing a request of his small child."*

**Based on the policy** – Although government policies, rules and regulations are focused to create alcohol and narcotic drug free culture in Sri Lanka, a practical implementation is very tricky due to interaction of the detrimental factors among each other. However, organizations and field officers are accountable for implementation of the policies so as to reach the goal of rural development. Accordingly DS explained the government policies and organizational creative activities as follows; *"Present government has launched a several programmes to minimize the usage of alcohol and narcotic drugs. Accordingly we start awareness programmes, art and essay competitions, road role-plays, workshops and school seminars and so on. It is based on the National Narcotic prevention day of 31 of May every year. Simultaneously, we arrange Narcotic Prevention Flag Day collection under the guidance of Samurdhi Development Authority and such collected money is used to build houses or give housing aids for alcohol or narcotic free poor families and scholarships for poor children."*

## Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter brings a discussion of the empirical findings on the viewpoint of theory and practice. A brief sum up of the issues of poverty and alcohol addiction in the rural area is lead to conclusion and suggestions for further consideration.

### 5.1. Addiction motives

Even though it is not surprising it requires due consideration that the accounts of the husbands in the four families and other family members and those of the neighbours report are quite contradictory to each other over drinking behaviours. Husbands of all four households interviewed replied that they are not consuming alcohol regularly and they never trouble their family members. According to the men, they attribute tiredness, body paining after hard working habits, as reasons for taking alcohol getting some additional cash in hand are also some reasons for them to have a tendency to drink. On the contrary the other relatives and neighbours opinion is that men in the rural community are drinking alcohol because of the habits and social gang. SDOs' life experience based stories pointed out another side of the social motives such personality or human behaviour that directs individuals to get addicted to alcohol mixed with sexual feelings, ethics and shyness. This coincides with what was mentioned in the literature review: fear, shame and guilt feelings make the person hesitant which means even though an individual eventually had chances and resources, the psychological access they may be remote due to lack of moral or actual control.

### 5.2. Impacts of alcohol addiction among the poor

**Health** – Not any of the respondents reporting health issues directly caused by the alcohol or smoking but one aspect found relates to fatal accidents due to alcohol. The main issue reported by relatives as wife F1 described her chronically hand paining and according to the wife F3, she admitted to the hospital because of the alcoholic violence and she is always under the stress condition. Comparing other home-gardens these houses seem very unfortunate since house wives are in stress situations. Findings seem to imply that stress has a negative impact on back yard garden leads the house wives to give up growing even a flower plant.

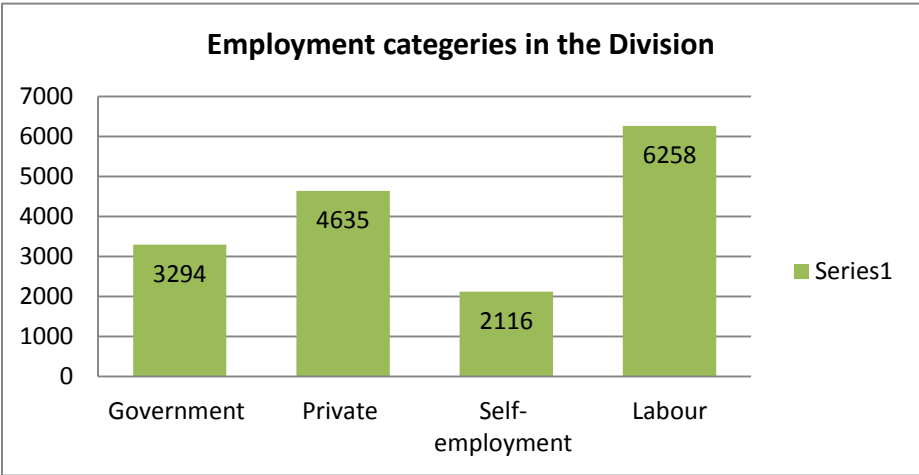
**Social** - All wives of four families are living under very stressful situations because of alcohol addiction, violence, money wasting and roughness of their husbands. This is true according to the wife F3. It has seen women do not have voice in front of the husband about alcohol behaviour and violence because wife F1 was stopped the discussion of alcohol and violence due to fear of her husband. In addition they do not have love or any other kind feelings for their husbands as exposed in explanations of wife F1 and wife F3. It has been observed that the women who bear the brunt of this problem such as conflict in the home, abuse and depression among children, non-working or less earning husbands, household scarcity and so on. On one hand, wife is worried for her husband since he is not getting her word for his mind and on the other hand children cannot be advised; as they are asking tell to father to stop drinking or smoking. In another perspective sons of alcohol addicted fathers do not use alcohol or narcotic drugs by being educated through their bad experiences.

The father- child seems to be directly affected because children may not love their fathers, but may hate. This can be clearly seen from the incidents discussed by the wife F2 as son had tried to hit or kill father. There is no need for any other examples as evidence for the alcohol addiction ruins families and contributes to the collapse of the basic social fabric of the society. As far as concerning children and their education, alcohol addicted fathers' cannot perform their paternal functions or responsibilities are clearly pointed out by the wife F1 as her clever daughter got married at a very early stage, because of father's violence. In such environment there is no need to explain further such childhood fear and

education half-done, that may culminate in long term negative social impacts because of the below par personality growth of the children and social anger among them.

**Financial** – Three houses of respondents are half way built by cement and one built with clay bricks (F1 house) and F3 house did not have electricity. However, these houses had a lot of shortages such as no furniture even chairs to sit, clothes and daily stuff and so on. Drinking and smoking are not only cost the family, but also to the nation. Husband F3 has mentioned that he is earning Rs. 1000 per day as daily wage, and may spend Rs.300 per drink. He said that he is not doing any harmful things to the family or neighbours, just drinking, eating and sleeping only. But his wife and children, neighbours complained him to be a daily drinker and every day troublemaker disturbing their children's study. Samurdhi recipient families mean considerably poor families where they are engaged in day to day labourer work.

Figure 13 – Employment categories in Dambulla Division



Resource profile (2012) – Dambulla Divisional Secretariat

Their daily income may be more or less Rs. 1000 (roughly 8 US \$). But they spend Rs. 300 (roughly 3 US \$) for their drinking. This situation is very clearly described by Mary (2001) as poor households tend to spend a greater percentage of their income on alcohol. More than 30 per cent of their total expenditure is spent on alcohol and between 30 and 50 per cent of the income of low-income families are spent on alcohol and/or tobacco. It is found that the total expenditure on tobacco and alcohol far exceeded the amount of government assistance given to the community under the government's poverty alleviation programme.

### 5.3. Communication Intervention for social change

Rural poor villages are more often uneducated and sometimes they fail to identify or analyse the underlying factors of surrounded problem and real solutions for it cause to lose track and search easy solutions in the vein of using alcohol, smoking or moving away from home and so on. At this point, positive communication interventions of SDOs make relief to the poor. Long-term impact to the society is evidently proved by the stories of SDOs. Other creative activities are very enthusiastic and innovative as well because they used the respectable feelings of humans and fear for sin to get rid of the addiction to alcohol or harmful behaviour. For instance, catholic communities could prevent from use of alcohol by enforcing religious regulations. However, among Buddhist communities, they do not have such religious framework in legal nature to enforce religious regulations on them. Therefore, people who are addicted to alcohol do not visit temples. Other way around Buddhist monks also do not even visit

households where alcohol addiction is prevalent. This tragic situation arises as an additional burden to SDOs who are volunteering to prevent rural communities from alcohol addiction. They have to work very patiently for a long period of time by closely supervising these communities by paying special attention on them.

#### **5.4. Professional challenges with Samurdhi Development Officers**

Samurdhi programme was started at all island level with the purpose of alleviating poverty, which affects the people physically and mentally. Therefore, responsibilities of the Ministry are to ensure that the basic needs of the poor are met, the poor should not be let go down from their current life standard (not to go down from official poverty line) and their purchasing power is enhanced, savings and aspiration for development be put into action with SDOs as change agents. At the same time SDO can make the poor free from isolation or becoming marginalized or excluded by enhancing their participation in the national development process. As already discussed in chapter two, communication interventions for social change is not an easy task, because plenty of challenges may be in the nature of personal, social, cultural, financial or political that have to be undertaken on the way of behaviour changing of community.

##### ***Personal***

Lack of relevant trainings such as knowledge, skills or experiences to understand the human behaviour may influence the low competencies of the SDOs'. Meanwhile, the researcher identified a perception among all families as SDOs are engaged in political bias actions and they do not have a good impression of the SDO staff, due to such political motivations., It appears that the society does not rely on their fairness, courtesy and good public relation and this situation causes to reduce the effectiveness of the small group functioning. More opportunities and guidelines for handling the public meeting and public speaking events may be a good investment to enhance the effectiveness of change agents from SDO.

Above all common personal challenges, other special challenges are identified by the lady officers as highly related to the cultural context. According to the Sri Lankan culture women do not hold open discussion with men about the addiction of alcohol or smoking and even though they discussed men hesitate or shy away from accepting their pejorative habit. On other perspective, if lady officers have given an advice to a rural man in the morning about his drinking habit or violence, definitely in the evening he would be insulting her after drinking. Therefore, lady officers are vulnerable in discussions over the subject of alcohol.

##### ***Social / Cultural***

Women participation is recognizable in the Samurdhi meetings. Therefore, it is no new strategy to address the alcohol issue with men in the Samurdhi programme. Samurdhi programme has mainly drawn women, because of men have no time to participate all small meetings and labourer sharing activities. They have to do daily income generation work and men do not like to take time to get loan or subsidy from the bank or any other office as pointed out by the husband F1. Samurdhi banking society is giving a loan for acceptance of 5 members of small group. Men do not possess the patience to bear up banking procedure and when men were approved the loan definitely the 5 members will start to drink that day using half of the loan as mentioned in husband F2. It was observed that the SDOs are doing awareness of alcohol addiction and smoking in the fortnightly Samurdhi meetings. Nonetheless this effort is unnecessary because the attendees are women who do not drink and also when they going to inform to their husband about the information cause more violence.

Newly started programme of alcohol awareness to fathers through school children is a creative idea but lack of enough finance and fluent mediators influence badly to the programme as commented by the Divisional Secretary and members of SDO group.



Figure 14 – Majority is women and children in the Samurdhi meetings



(Source by the Author)

### ***Financial***

According to the point of view of DS and SDO – Dayaratne; SDO is a government officer who does not gain enough salary to get all facilities to do a part time job or home garden activities to earn extra money. Therefore, they may not have enough time to concentrate more on the community as regular home visits or group meetings. On the other way around, they are not provided any transport facilities or motivational allowances to do their best. As I came across from the villages; SDOs have low recognition among the community not because of the political biasness, but because of the corruption.

### ***Political***

According to the collected data from informal discussion with villages and formal discussion with SDOs and DS, Kasippu production and politician have grown a healthy connection; it cannot be curtailed though police raids are done continuously. It can be seen that the politicians and Kasippu have strong relationship, because of poor drunken people may be wrathful at their election campaign activities. Another viewpoint is alcohol addiction is promoted by the politician because politicians want to grab the poor for promotions of their election campaign and the wages are very economical may be a bottle of liquor. Consequently the uneducated poor in shrinking poverty are more attractive to the political parties than SDOs' discourse.

## **5.5. Alcohol addiction and Gender**

Alcohol issues cannot be discussed ignoring gender because alcohol addiction and violence against women is literally bound with biasness of the gender issues. Concerning of Sri Lanka cultural context, frequencies of alcohol use among women are very low compared to men. The literature review showed a ratio of 5% versus 53% frequency of alcohol use among women and men respectively. Another aspect is that women do not hold open discussion with men about the addiction of alcohol or smoking result to special challenge to the lady officers. According to the Sri Lankan culture on the one hand drinking and smoking are considered as bad habits and on the other hand it is considered as masculine habit in Sri Lanka. Noteworthy in all patriarchal culture, masculine power and behaviour are frequently given greater status than the feminine and cause to believe that the men are allowable to use alcohol and exhibit their power over women, even in the form of open violence. It is clearly explained by the wives of all households and even researcher could see women had not voice in their house or even to complain their harassment to the police. In this case women had double feelings as on one hand they wanted to release stress while on the other hand they were afraid of husbands. On other perception of

that the women are not strength enough to own income cause to live under the husband though unbearable harassments. According to the explanation of wife F1 and wife F3, they are hiding in the jungle or neighbour house without sleeping to get avoid alcohol violence. Accordingly women are faded away their human rights to even sleep in their own house.

Despite the above mentioned aspects women participation is recognizable in the Samurdhi programme means no way to address to the men about the alcohol issue. According to the husband F2 small group is consisting majority of women and it is good for financial management in rural community because men are more vulnerable to addict to the alcohol than women. A more articulated gender perspective might be needed to enhance the effectiveness of the Samurdhi programme.

## Conclusion

The research make it manifest that alcohol addiction among the rural community of Sri Lanka has proved a problematic trap which keeps poverty lingering among the said community as mentioned in the theories of literature review. It is important to comprehend that, low education levels lack of psychological right of entry to the opportunities are explanatory causes of addiction to the alcohol and it affects rural communities beyond the individual problem of one addiction person. Addiction gives out various kinds of short term and long term impacts, not only on the poor families, but also to the nation through issues such as health issues, financial breakages, and violence against women and children etc. causing serious stains on the entire social fabric. Certainly, they are trapped in the poverty again and again as a result of these impacts; just as much as a prey gets further entangled in a spider web. The awareness and knowing that it happens so is limited and carries taboos.

At this moment, effective intervention from competent officers must be more essential to identify the problem and the root causes as a complex problem so as to enhance the physical and mental access to the brains and hearts of the poor. Therefore, positive communication interventions of SDOs make relief to the poor and long term impact to the society is evidently proved by this research. For instance organization, officer and community must be a balanced tripod for rural development through social change. Officers have to work very patiently for a long period of time, especially among alcohol addicted communities paying unique attention on them for significant change. However, it was identified that plenty of challenges under personal, social, cultural, financial and political levels must be undertaken on route changing of community behaviour. The research gives insight that poverty and alcohol addiction issues are complex to understand, because addicted men are victim of the system leads to circulate cycle of poverty. The research revealed that the alcohol and narcotic drug prevention project under the Samurdhi programme is no more efficient to address the alcohol addicted rural men. The complexity of the problem, the associated taboos and the low competencies of SDOs handling addiction and prevention contribute to the downfall of project. Therefore; the government will have to resort to a new forum to discuss this wicked issue, because high potentials in the rural areas are liable to go wasted if not for creative interventions focusing rural development.

## **Suggestions**

Based on the analysis of empirical findings and discussions the following key suggestions focus on putting a gender perspective in place and enhance training of SDO staff.

The Samurdhi programme could draw policies and activities especially for women considering their role in the livelihoods and households. Considering the limited participation of the men the way to involve them needs to be reconsidered. In such a background, the Ministry should re-structure and realign the project on alcohol and narcotic drug prevention focusing the participation of male.

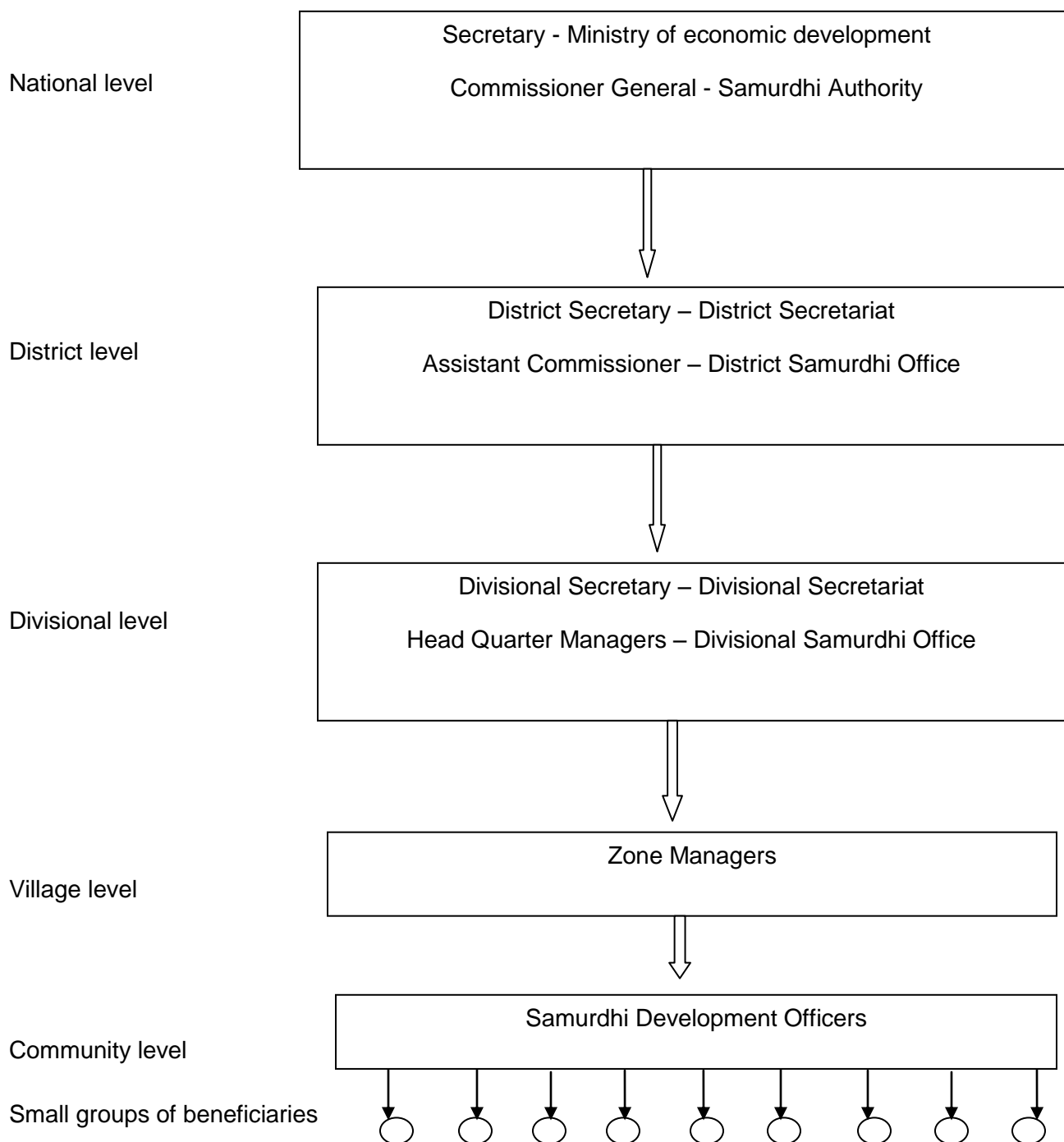
SDOs have to be given an adequate training to enhance their competencies such as knowledge and skills while developing their attitudes towards the rural community. Moreover, a good motivation system should be crafted to enhance their aspirations towards the prevention of alcohol and narcotic drugs in the community.

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## Annexure I: Administrative levels of Samurdhi Programme



Source – Samurdhi Authority (2013)

## **Annexure II: Check lists**

### **Check list for SDOs**

1. Involvement with alcohol or drug addicts
2. Learned by experience and special stories or efforts
3. Prevented families
4. What the reasons and how they were prevented
5. Regularly how to meet beneficiaries
6. What are the influence or challenges for prevention of alcohol and narcotic addiction project
7. What are the communication challenges when lunching this project success
8. What are the personal barriers/ competencies
9. How are the community , higher officials support or motivate
10. Observation of SDO meeting and small group meeting

### **Check list for Samurdhi families**

1. What are the causal factors to the addiction
2. Barriers to prevent
3. Perception about violence, money wasting etc.
4. How severe it
5. Affects for women, children, society
6. Affected women's perception
7. Affected children' s perception
8. Government officers involvement and support
9. Aspirations Observation of all surroundings and happenings

### **Annexure III: Name list of the officers**

Divisional Secretary Ms. Lakshmi Hewapathirana

Mr. Athula Bandara

Mrs. Karunawathie Manike

Mr. A. Aberathne

Mrs. Wimala Jayarathna

Mr. A.G. Bandara

Mrs. Sisila Kumari

Mr. K. G. Ranbanda

Mr. Bandara

Mr. B. Dayarathne

Mrs. Somawathei

Mr. Nawarathne Banda

Mrs. Anusha Herath

Mr. Gamini Bandara