



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
ETHNIC STUDIES

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PROFILE

Promoting Rights and Justice, Diversity and Coexistence, and Robust Institutions for Democracy

For 38 years, the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) has contributed to the world of ideas and has informed policy and practice through research, dialogue, the creative arts and other interventions.

The ICES vision is contained in a desire for a world that celebrates diversity in all its multiple shades. The institution's goal is to contribute towards relevant rigorous intellectual traditions that recognise our common humanity, promote diverse identities, and generate ideas that inform and guide policies and institutions in order to promote justice, equity and peaceful coexistence. The unique mission of ICES is to deepen the understanding of ethnicity, identity politics, conflict and gender, and to foster conditions for an inclusive, just and peaceful society nationally, regionally and globally, through research, publication, dialogue, creative expression and knowledge transfer.

The ICES has been an important player in the areas of reconciliation, justice, gender and human rights and has been particularly influential in shaping policy and the public imagination on issues of gender equality, ethnic diversity, religious coexistence, and constitutional reform in Sri Lanka. The institution has contributed to the development and promotion of minority and group rights and has previously worked closely with the United Nations' Special Rapporteurs, the several Working Groups and with the Treaty Bodies. In the past, ICES maintained a 'special category' consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and served as the Secretariat to the former UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Radhika Coomaraswamy.

In recent years ICES has carved a niche for itself as a centre for the study and promotion of diversity within a framework of democracy and human rights.

The ICES has played three broad roles: one of research, the other of policy advocacy and a third of providing space for dialogue. It has also used the creative arts to ignite the public imagination and promote truth, beauty, diversity and reconciliation. Following extensive academic, legal and political involvement in the constitutional and policy formulation in Sri Lanka through the 1980s and 1990s, and strong advocacy in the areas of gender, human rights and social inclusion, ICES has established a strong reputation for its capacity to generate high quality research that is politically relevant nationally, regionally and globally.

In recent years, it has generated important research on ethno-religious violence and coexistence, gender equality, women's economic empowerment and forced displacement. It has also provided a space for and encouraged creative expression as a vehicle for political and social change, through its support to documentary 'film making', socially relevant theatre, seminars for writers, and regular film and art festivals.

VISION

A world which celebrates diversity anchored in the fundamental unity of the human species.

GOAL

To contribute towards relevant rigorous intellectual traditions that recognise our common humanity and promote our diverse identities, and to generate ideas that inform and guide policies and institutions in order to promote justice, equity and peaceful coexistence.

MISSION

To deepen the understanding of ethnicity, identity politics and conflict, and to foster conditions for an inclusive, just and peaceful society nationally, regionally and globally, through research, publication, dialogue, creative expression and knowledge transfer.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

ICES in 2019:

Pursuing Justice and Social Harmony in a Volatile Environment

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies was founded in 1982 by the eminent historian, Professor Kingsley de Silva and the late Dr Neelan Tiruchelvam, constitutional lawyer and Parliamentarian. The following year, a 26-year long ethnic conflict broke out in Sri Lanka. Despite these difficult beginnings, ICES has thrived under its able team of managers and researchers and has acquired an enviable reputation both internationally and locally, for the quality of its academic research.

Our Mission is to promote ethnic harmony in an inclusive society that celebrates diversity. Our commitment to this goal has attracted scholars of repute both at home and abroad who have partnered with us in our journey over the past 38 years. Our endeavour is to build a critical body of opinion among persons who share our vision of cultural pluralism, tolerance and coexistence.

In 2019, Sri Lanka was beginning to recover from three months of Governmental paralysis, following the unconstitutional dismissal of the then Prime Minister by the President in October 2018 after the Supreme Court declared the dismissal invalid. But barely had normalcy begun to be restored when disaster struck once more. On Easter Sunday, 21st April, extremist suicide bombers professing a militant brand of Islam, blew up churches where Christian worshippers had gathered to celebrate Easter and also luxury hotels in Colombo, in a coordinated plot, designed to cause maximum casualties, and intending to incite fratricidal conflict between people of different faiths. Fortunately, the fervent appeal for calm addressed by the Catholic Cardinal and raids by the security forces on the accomplices and associates of the plotters helped prevent either a backlash or a second wave of attacks. However, tension between the majority and minority communities remains palpable.

In the lead up to the Presidential Election held in November, the candidate who was elected President by an overwhelming majority campaigned on the failure of the then incumbent coalition government to provide security to the public while the principal opposition candidate was hamstrung by divisions within his own party. The winner gave an undertaking to the country that he would abolish the 19th Amendment to the Constitution if the voting public would give him a 2/3rds majority at the General Elections scheduled for 2020, as he would thereafter enjoy enhanced powers under a new constitution to lead the people to a prosperous future.

Despite the heated political atmosphere that prevailed in 2019, the team of researchers and partners at ICES led by Executive Director Dr Mario Gomez, were able to engage in research and advocacy of lasting value. Building on its previous work over the past several years, ICES engaged in both research and other interventions around its core themes.

The ICES has identified the following thematic areas for its work, taking into account the challenges for a country seeking to address a legacy of violent conflict, and its move towards embracing diversity and inclusivity. These thematic areas were identified after an assessment of past work, current realities, institutional capacity, existing networks, and gaps in current civil society interventions.

1. Gender: both as a separate programmatic intervention and as a crosscutting issue
2. Social Inclusion and Vulnerability
3. Justice, Memory and Reconciliation
4. Diversity, Coexistence and Religious Conflict
5. Rights and Institutional Reform
6. Inclusive Economies and Sustainable Growth

ICES will continue to use research, dialogues, trainings, advocacy, art, including music, films and plays, the Online Museum, Research Archive, and the 'ICES Space', including its auditoriums, patio, libraries, and website, to pursue these broad programmatic themes. ICES will seek to strengthen its global and local networks and create a dynamic physical, intellectual and virtual space in the pursuit of these goals.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of ICES I wish to thank the Executive Director and his team of dedicated researchers and partners, the Librarian, and the staff of ICES for working to advance the mission and vision of the Centre.



C.D. Casie Chetty
Chairman – Board of Directors
August 2020

RESEARCH

GENDER

Understanding Women’s Livelihood Outcomes and Empowerment in the Eastern Province

This research study in the East was a sequel to ICES’ recently completed work on women’s livelihood outcomes in the five districts of the North. It investigated the individual, relational and environmental factors associated with women’s livelihood outcomes in the Ampara, Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts in the Eastern Province. The study, covering all three districts, used a mixed method approach to data collection and analysis.

The research was conducted against the background of slow economic growth, ethno-religious diversity and conflict, and resource abundance in the Eastern Province. The research sought answers as to how women at the grassroots level are faring as economic agents. While the macro-level statistics clearly indicate that most of the women are not in the labour force, it is important to understand what economic, social, cultural and religious factors shape these participation rates, and to investigate why those women that take up work do so and how their different ethno-religious backgrounds influence their decisions to participate in the labour force.

The quantitative survey collected primary data from 1,000 households, while the qualitative data collection included a combination of Household Interviews, and Key Person Interviews (KPIs) to obtain an understanding of women’s livelihoods, and the structures and processes that influence women’s choices on work. The data collection took place in the fourth quarter of 2018. The paper on the qualitative data has been published in 2019 titled “*Understanding Women’s Livelihood Outcomes and Economic Empowerment in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka*” by Nayana Godamunne. The paper on the quantitative data is being finalised based on reviewers’ comments.

Domestic Workers in Sri Lanka: An Exploratory Study

ICES commenced this three-part exploratory study on domestic work in 2017 to understand attitudes and practices involved in the field of domestic work in Sri Lanka. Although some research on *migrant* domestic workers exists, very little research had been done on domestic workers employed within Sri Lanka.

The study's objective was to provide an exploratory glimpse into attitudes and practices in the field of domestic work in Sri Lanka. It used three methods: an online survey with 85 employers, in-depth interviews with 13 domestic workers, and an analysis of newspaper advertisements collected over three months in 2018.

A comparison of the three provided useful insights into practices in domestic work as experienced and reported by both employers and workers. It also demonstrated the gap between perceptions about domestic work by employers compared to realities faced by workers. The study showed, for example, that although the median wage offered by employers for live-in workers in Colombo is Rs 25,000, some of the workers receive a wage as low as Rs 13,000. Workers are also expected to rest whenever they do not have work but may end up working 18-hour days due to this assumption of 'free time'. The discourse analysis demonstrated a heavily feminised field of work with very gendered expectations about what domestic work consists of and who is to perform it.

The study also revealed a challenging environment for the pursuit of domestic workers' rights: although some employers support workers' rights they are hesitant to support trade unions, preferring legislation instead. Workers themselves are unaware of rights movements and those who have not faced injustice are complacent with the current *status quo*. This study provided important sociological insights into these attitudes and perceptions at a timely moment. A paper titled "***An Exploratory Study of Attitudes and Practices towards Domestic Workers in Sri Lanka***" by Annemari de Silva was published in 2019. In 2018 Cabinet adopted a National Action Plan and proposal to bring domestic workers under Sri Lanka's labour law. This paper contributes to understanding the field in which such action will need to be executed.

Gender, Justice and Security

ICES is part of 40-institution global network on 'Gender, Justice and Security' supported by UK Research Initiative and the Global Challenges Research Fund. The research network brings together approximately 70 researchers and practitioners from the Americas, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific region. It is a five-year research project working with local and global civil society, practitioners, governments, and international organisations to promote and advance gender, justice and inclusive peace. The project addresses three areas:

- The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on gender equality
- SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions; and
- The implementation of the UN Security Council Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda

The research includes almost 40 projects under six themes:

- Information and Empowerment
- Livelihood, Land and Rights
- Migration and Displacement
- Masculinities and Sexualities
- Law and Policy Frameworks; and
- Methodological Innovation

Within the larger project, ICES will embark on a study of gender and land and look at how access to land and livelihoods for women from different ethno-religious communities and socio-economic backgrounds in Sri Lanka can advance equality and promote security.

The first convention of the network was co-hosted by ICES in January 2020 in locations in Colombo and the East.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND VULNERABILITY

Migration and Collectives/Networks as Pathways Out of Poverty? Gendered Vulnerabilities and Capabilities amongst Poor Fishing Communities in Asia

This three-country comparative study included Cambodia, India and Sri Lanka, and was implemented over a four-year period. ICES led the Sri Lankan component of the study.

The study sought to understand whether migration is a potential route out of poverty for men and women in fishing communities in Puttalam and Trincomalee. The study combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches and focused on identifying disabling and enabling conditions for migration. It generated findings on the role of social networks and collective action in advocating for supportive policies for migrant workers and their communities, in order to reduce risks, violence and conflicts and to enable more secure livelihoods. The study also considered if current national policies relating to gender, fisheries and migration were adequate in addressing issues of migrant households in fishing communities.

District-level stakeholder workshops were held in August and October 2018 prior to commencing fieldwork in Trincomalee and Puttalam. District-level fisheries officers, divisional-level government officers, representatives of fisheries societies and local community organisations working on development and women's issues participated. A National Stakeholder Workshop was held in January 2019 where participants from the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, the Department of Fisheries and other organisations such as IOM, UNFAO and ILO engaged in proposing policy recommendations based on the findings of the study.

The community action component of the study involved engaging youth in the four research sites in producing short documentary videos under the common theme “Youth Perspectives: Livelihoods, Migration and Aspirations in Four Fishing Communities in Sri Lanka” with the pseudonyms (pseudonym 1, 2,3,4) for each village distinguishing between the videos. The process provided an opportunity for youth to express their independent opinions on their lived experiences through the documentary film medium. In addition, it also served to complement and consolidate the findings of the research study, as well as provide practical insight into the social divisions and dynamics (such as caste and age) that characterise the realities of everyday interactions within the four study sites.

Findings of the research were shared and validated with members of fisheries societies from the study villages, government officials, fisheries inspectors, officers from the Fisheries Department and representatives of civil society and grassroots organisations working with fishing communities. It was

also a space for members of fisheries societies to discuss their concerns with fisheries and government officials. The four short documentaries were screened and followed by discussions at the district and national stakeholder meetings.

A paper based on preliminary findings from the study was presented at the ICES conference ‘Addressing Labour’s Precariousness in Sri Lanka and Beyond’ in February 2018. The team presented the findings of the research study at two conferences in Thailand in October 2018. A paper titled “To Migrate or Not: Social wellbeing and gendered household decision-making in fishing communities in Sri Lanka” was presented at the Third World Small Scale Fisheries Congress in Chiang Mai from 21 to 25 October. Teams from Cambodia and India presented their findings as well. Another paper titled “Lives on the Move: Gendered Aspects of Migration in Fishing Villages in Sri Lanka” was presented at the Seventh ‘Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries’ conference at AIT in Bangkok from 18 to 21 October. The three-country project team also submitted a panel proposal titled “On the move: Inclusion and exclusion in fishing communities in Asia” which was accepted by the 2019 MARE People and the Sea X Conference held in Amsterdam in June 2019. The Sri Lankan team made a presentation on “Migration, resource access and contestation: Networks and rights discourses among fishers in the West and East coasts of Sri Lanka” at this panel. The team also contributed one of the four videos produced for the project mentioned above as a participatory video which was screened as part of the programme of the panel.

The Country Paper and the following research papers focusing on aspects of social wellbeing, conflict and social networks that impact migration among fishing communities in Sri Lanka will be included in an edited volume titled *Fisherfolk in Cambodia, India and Sri Lanka: Migration, Gender and Wellbeing* edited by Ragnhild Lund, Kiyoko Kusakabe, Nitya Rao and Nireka Weeratunge to be published by Routledge:

- Seasonal migration, resource access, contestation and conflict among fishers on the West and East coasts of Sri Lanka
by Nadine Vanniasinkam, Mohamed Faslan, Nireka Weeratunge
- To migrate or not: Social wellbeing and gendered household decision-making in fishing communities on the West and East coasts of Sri Lanka
by Nireka Weeratunge, Ramani Gunatilaka, Nadine Vanniasinkam, Mohamed Faslan, Dilanthi Koralalgama, Nirmi Vitarana
- Mobilising for and against migration: Gendered networks, cooperation and collective action in fishing communities on the West and East coasts of Sri Lanka
by Nirmi Vitarana, Dilanthi Koralalgama, Nireka Weeratunge, Ramani Gunatilaka

- Livelihood strategies, migration and movement: The distribution of consumption in fishing communities in Cambodia, India and Sri Lanka
by Ramani Gunatilaka

A policy brief, recommending more attention by fisheries authorities and other stakeholders to understanding internal coast-to-coast migration and fairness in regulation of access to depleting fish resources by migrant and host fisher groups, was released in Sinhala, Tamil and English.

Artisans and State Protection

Tourism development has been a prime focus in Sri Lanka recently, much of which relies on ‘selling’ the idea or image of Sri Lanka. These ideas are communicated through cultural practices and objects, such as handicrafts. The ‘crafts economy’ plays an important role in this economic agenda as well as being a major means of livelihood for many Sri Lankans. The country thus finds itself at a peculiar time vis-à-vis handicrafts, as a major factor at both macro and micro economic scales. Moreover, as one of the only four chairs in the Asia-Pacific nominations to the Inter-governmental Committee on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage, Sri Lanka has a global precedent to set in its handling of crafts and related cultural expressions.

The tourism industry began to flourish after the end of the war and was the third highest revenue earner. Craft artisans, another marginalised community, are crucial to Sri Lanka's tourism economy but their working arrangements are precarious. Although the state has endeavoured to be a protector to these artisan communities, the historical multiplication of caretaker state institutions overseeing their protection has resulted in conflicts of interest and divisions of labour that result in further jeopardising both the welfare and economic security of the artisans.

In this context, ICES worked on a study that mapped these structural conflicts between state bodies and documents the effects of these conflicts on the crafts community. The paper considered the policies and practices of the main state institutions mandated with the protection and promotion of handicrafts in Sri Lanka. It looked into the historical context of their establishment and operations, their current activities, and the challenges faced by the crafts sector.

This research on crafts is part of the ICES’ on-going interest in precarious forms of labour and its proposed work on interrogating state-owned enterprises. The situation of handicrafts is an especially poignant example of corruption in state-owned enterprises that have affected a whole industry and individual lives at a large scale.

What emerges from the research is a story of state institutions created with the best of intentions in the historical context of shifting from a closed to an open economy but that have deteriorated over time, some having become major sites of financial corruption, leaving the crafts community

floundering. Accepted practices in the crafts sector also exacerbate craftspeople's vulnerabilities, such as payment methods, the presence of middlemen, the expectation of entrepreneurialism from (usually low-income) craftspeople, and an over-dependence on tourism as a market.

Contrary to common perceptions of the handicrafts sector as 'dying' and of craftspeople as 'backwards', the paper shows that the decay of the handicrafts sector can be attributed to the combined effect of a decaying ecosystem of support and diverse sectoral challenges, both of which can be addressed.

The research was released in a paper titled "*Craft Artisans and State Institutions in Sri Lanka*" authored by Annemari de Silva.

Strengthening Social Inclusion: Aspects of the Climate Resilience Multi-Programmatic Approach

ICES produced the Sri Lanka Country Report for this project. The project involved field work in two sites in the Kelani river basin. ICES Researcher Ranmini Vithanagama did the field work and wrote the report. The project was part of larger World Bank supported multi-country initiative.

The objective of the project is to reduce the vulnerability of exposed people and assets to climate risk and to improve the government's capacity to respond effectively to disasters. The project will be implemented in three phases over an eight-year period. The country report was prepared with specific reference to Stage 1 of Phase 1 of the project. The objective of Phase 1 is to enhance the capacity of the government to deliver an improved weather and climate forecasting and early warning system, and to reduce flood risks in the lower Kelani river basin (Hanwella to Kaduwela).

JUSTICE, MEMORY AND RECONCILIATION

Psychosocial Wellbeing of the LTTE Ex-combatants in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu

This study was designed using a concept developed by the Psychosocial Working Group (PWG 2003). “Psychosocial wellbeing” is basically the psychological and social wellbeing of an individual or community. The need to analyse the psychosocial wellbeing of ex-combatants was realised because there is limited information on their lives as a vulnerable group of people living in a post-war context. By analysing the psychosocial wellbeing in a holistic manner, the study sought to identify specific areas that seem to affect the overall wellbeing of the ‘ex-combatants’ and their community, and by doing so develop better-suited interventions to tackle those issues.

Using the PWG framework as adapted in Colombo (2003), the study explored the current psychosocial wellbeing of ex-combatants who went through the rehabilitation programme, through the accounts of key informants. The ex-combatants could not be interviewed at this stage of the study due to resource constraints; therefore, information was gathered from those who work closely with ex-combatants in the North. The key informants included rehabilitation officers, government officers, civil society representatives, and psychiatrists who work with ex-combatants particularly in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu. Based on 37 in-depth interviews conducted with key informants during June – August 2018, the authors were able to identify multiple psychosocial issues faced by ex-combatants in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu.

With the stigma of being former LTTE combatants, combined with the militarisation of society and lack of communality and agency, ex-combatants live in fear of interrogation and harassment, and are excluded from multiple aspects of society. They seem to lead a resigned and passive life. Female ex-combatants and disabled ex-combatants face additional constraints with regard to marriage, securing a sustainable livelihood, lack of basic facilities, and lack of support from the government and community.

The collective trauma due to war and psychological distress experienced by ex-combatants is conveniently overlooked by society at large. Apart from providing basic mental health care, the ex-combatants are excluded by the government from engaging in traditional means of remembering, grieving, and catharsis. The ex-combatants hardly engage in religious or cultural activities and have limited opportunities and space to express their feelings and concerns.

Multiple domains of psychosocial wellbeing were analysed in the study in order to have an overall understanding of the status of ex-combatants in Sri Lanka. The findings of the study point to the

conclusion that psychosocial wellbeing of ex-combatants is challenged under each and every domain and that they are in need of immediate psychosocial interventions. Further research can be done to trace the causes and consequences of the issues significant to this vulnerable group of people. By identifying areas that impede the wellbeing of ex-combatants, better-suited interventions can be developed to alleviate their distresses. However, interventions must take a consultative approach and the voices of the ex-combatants need to be heard to better grasp the ground realities.

The findings discussed in the paper titled “*From Combatant to Civilian: The Psychosocial Wellbeing of Ex-combatants in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, Sri Lanka*” was authored by Viyanga Gunasekera and Kasun Pathiraja.

Fostering Pluralistic Memories and Collective Resilience in Fragile Transitional Justice Processes

In the aftermath of protracted civil conflicts, as in Sri Lanka’s case, truth and reconciliation processes have come to be accepted as the normal process forward to foster public rituals of truth telling. There is growing academic evidence internationally that post-conflict truth and reconciliation processes and the sharing of collective memories has had significant value in bringing about reconciliation between communities, strengthening democracy in the civic sphere, consolidating a lasting peace between peoples and providing a space for healing after the trauma of conflict.

The Pluralistic Memories Project (PMP), coordinated by the University of Lausanne in Switzerland was a study rooted in the discipline of social psychology and focused on memories of conflict. Sri Lanka was one of three countries in the study: Burundi and Palestine being the others.

The study looked at memory in conflict through multiple lenses and stages of conflict. In Burundi the country had begun work on a Truth and Justice Commission but has since lapsed into conflict. In Palestine, the project worked within protracted conflict and occupation; and in Sri Lanka, the project looked at memories within a transitional stage after the end of war by military defeat.

The project sought pluralistic narratives, and to build an archive of data and testimonies that challenges the hegemony in official narratives and memorialisation. It is envisaged that these interventions will facilitate spill-over effects that will lead to community healing through the sharing of memories and the first steps to encouraging positive critical social change.

In 2019, the PMP project focused on conducting the community interventions and completing the last phase of the survey. Under community interventions the project worked with two communities: Kebithigollawa in the Anuradhapura district and in Kandavalai in Kilinochchi district. The purpose of the community interventions was to share anonymised extracts of previously collected testimonies with the participants and provide a space for them to share their own individual and collective memories of the conflict and generate pluralistic memories. Towards the end of the meetings, the participants were tasked with producing artistic creations that represent their memories.

The longitudinal field survey was carried out in September 2019, through household interviews, and was aimed at collecting information on individual and collective life events, conflict memories, opinions on transitional justice as well as attitudes towards reconciliation. Since the survey is representative in design, participants were selected randomly using voter lists. The survey was carried out in selected divisions in the Kilinochchi and Anuradhapura districts.

The sample size was 900, chosen from a random sample and a network sample. The random sample consisted of 300 participants per district, and 150 participants per district in the network sample. The recurring survey was conducted to assess the impact of community interventions (which focused on sharing pluralistic memories) on participating individuals as well as the larger community, prior to and after the interventions.

COEXISTENCE AND RELIGIOUS HARMONY

Tracking Coexistence: Understanding Perceptions of the Religious ‘Other’

What does one religious community think of ‘the other’? Under what conditions may communities be willing to resolve differences through dialogue rather than through violence? These are some questions explored in this study which analyses people’s perceptions of the religious ‘other’ using data collected from Ampara, Colombo, Galle and Mannar. The data was collected at the end of 2019 by interviewing 1,000 respondents in the four districts. The sample consisted of Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Roman Catholics and Christians in equal proportions.

The study generates some preliminary findings on how different communities perceive religious tolerance and coexistence. By presenting different life scenarios and talking to 1,000 men and women of different age groups from four areas reflecting the diverse religious composition of Sri Lanka, the study sought to enhance our understanding of inter-group and intra-group relations, as the country struggles to build social harmony and religious cohesion. The study seeks to influence law, policy and social interventions that can eliminate or least reduce religiously motivated violence and promote respect for and tolerance of ‘the other’.

The initiative had been in the pipeline for several years, and in 2019 ICES was able to secure the resources to take this perceptions study forward. Globally, there has been an increasing use of barometers and surveys of this nature, especially in the sphere of reconciliation. In several parts of the world, civil society has used household surveys to gather empirical data to track perceptions, attitudes, social behaviour, and personal experiences, and to map trends and patterns, in different political and social contexts. These surveys have helped build understanding of inter-group relations and have been used by policy makers, practitioners, academia, and others, to drive policy change and social interventions.

This perceptions study by ICES is different from some of the reconciliation barometers that have been employed elsewhere, in that here the focus has been mainly on ethno-religious relations in Sri Lanka. The survey was implemented against a backdrop of a rise in religiously motivated violence and tensions over the past several years and builds on the work that ICES has previously been doing on inter-religious relations and peaceful coexistence. The study is intended to help shape policy, enhance our understanding of inter-group relations, and provide guidance for interventions by the state and civil society.

Promoting Human Rights, Inclusion and Religious Harmony in Sri Lanka and Beyond: Equipping Communities to Resist Violent Conflict

ICES partnered with Equitas (the Centre for Human Rights Education in Montreal) to promote human rights, inclusion and religious harmony in Sri Lanka and Myanmar. This is a sequel to the project ‘Promoting Religious Harmony and Interfaith Dialogue’ which was completed in March 2016. Through research, forums and capacity-building activities the project aimed to promote increased religious harmony, respect for human rights and inclusion while mitigating the risk of religious conflict in Sri Lanka, principally in four districts: Ampara, Galle, Jaffna and Mannar. One aspect of the project was to work with key ‘drivers of resilience’, including religious and community leaders, educators and youth, to enhance their capacity to withstand violent triggers and rely on dialogue to resolve inter-religious disputes. The project also aimed to share lessons learned and increase the capacity of key actors in Myanmar. The ICES led the conflict mapping and research in Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

The project aimed to generate the following results:

- Improved mitigation strategies, particularly through inter-faith dialogue and early warning systems, for addressing inter-religious conflict among communities in Ampara, Matara, Jaffna and Mannar.
- Increased capacity of community leaders and educators to conduct human rights education activities in select communities in Sri Lanka.
- Increased capacity of community leaders and civil society organisations in Myanmar to promote religious harmony and to reduce conflict based on religion and ethnicity

ICES did a gender-sensitive mapping of inter-religious relations and tensions in the four districts. The mapping contributed to the existing body of ICES’ research on inter-religious relations and informed the design of capacity-building workshops on Human Rights Education for Children and Conflict Mitigation Strategies for Human Rights Workers.

A report on *“Inter-religious Conflict in Four Districts of Sri Lanka”* was published in June 2019 and Tamil and Sinhala translations published in September 2019. The study drew from qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with women and men from the four districts and unpacked the intersecting domains of contestation among Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists, including the agents and enabling conditions that fuel conflict. It adopted a localised and context-specific lens

to the analysis of inter-religious conflict, as well as conflict resolution mechanisms with a focus on the role of women's participation.

The study discusses how inter-religious conflict manifests differently in the four districts while the underlying reasons for conflict remain the same. Its findings indicate that conflicts stem from different types of encroachment of space, identity, and power of one ethno-religious community by another, which is facilitated by national and regional enabling conditions such as institutionalised ethno-religious majoritarianism, religious extremism, regional ethno-religious nationalisms, business rivalries, and cultural aspects such as caste and poverty. These dynamics also shape community approaches to conflict mitigation differently. The study concluded that while misconceptions and prejudice against religious others exist, they manifest into violence primarily due to the impunity granted to and enjoyed by the ethno-religious majority in each district.

Outcomes of the project included a forum on 'Promoting Human Rights, Inclusion and Religious Harmony', a capacity-building workshop, two community-actions workshops, and two research papers. In addition, Equitas conducted training workshops on 'Conflict mitigation using a human rights-based approach' from February to March and in September 2018 in Colombo. The findings of the conflict mapping report were used to design the training manual for the workshops. A regional workshop on 'Freedom of Religion in Divided Societies in Asia: Law, Politics and Rights' was held from 10 to 11 September 2018.

The following research papers were published through the project's work:

"The Chronic and the Entrenched: Ethno-Religious Violence in Sri Lanka"

by Gehan Gunatillake;

"Freedom of Religion, the Role of the State, and Interreligious Relations in Myanmar"

by Nyi Nyi Kyaw

"Inter-religious Conflict in Four Districts of Sri Lanka"

by Nadine Vanniasinkam, Kasun Pathiraja, Mohamed Faslan and Dinushka Jayawickreme.

ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Sri Lanka continues to struggle with celebrating diversity and memorialising loss. This is despite centuries of cultural confluence, a location at the crossroads of trade and travel over centuries, hundreds of shared religious and cultural spaces, rituals and traditions, a long history of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity, and several encounters with violent ethnic, religious, and other social conflicts.

Museum of Memory and Coexistence (MoMaC) <<http://momac.lk/>>

In an environment where the state has been reticent to celebrate diversity and archive loss, the ICES has sought to provide a dynamic and interactive space for people to remember, dialogue, and creatively express their experiences of violence, conflict, and exclusion, as well as the positive experiences of coexistence, diversity and solidarity. The objective seeks to build a centralised site to collect personal narratives and oral histories. Through this initiative ICES seeks to create a Museum of Memory and Coexistence (MoMaC) – a digital platform that will aim to promote a sharing of experiences, facilitate dialogue across groups, and shape the public imagination while reflecting on and archiving the diverse heritage of Sri Lanka – which will fill this gap in Sri Lanka’s post-war reconciliation architecture by reflecting on the violence of the past and celebrating diversity and coexistence,

‘Shared Sanctities’ seeks to build a counter-narrative to the current narrative on inter-religious and inter-ethnic relations in Sri Lanka. The current dominant narratives tend to be hegemonic, exclusivist and rooted in violence against the ‘other’. This multimedia initiative seeks to generate a more nuanced narrative around art, architecture and religion by producing a series of research articles (written in a semi-academic format accessible to diverse audiences), photographs and documentary films on shared religious spaces and shared religious histories across the years. It will showcase shared religious traditions, monuments, and art as evidence of shared cultural history that goes back a long way.

Four photo-essays have been completed:

- Island of Encounters: Faith and Fusion amidst the Indian Ocean
- Temple as Museum, Religion as Art: Exploring Thivanka Image House in Polonnaruwa
- Conflict, Confluence and Continuity: Tracing the Architectural Lineage of Kandy
- Tale of Two Masjids: Beginners’ Guide to Islamic Architecture in Serendib

Documentary Films

Four scripts were completed and reviewed by a panel of external experts including Architect Anjalendran, Architectural Historian Dr Shanti Jayawardene and Historian Ramla Wahab Salman.

The shooting and recording of 14 expert interviews were also completed. The experts came from the fields of architecture, art history, archaeology, history and anthropology, and included C. Anjalendran, Sunela Jayawardene, Sagara Jayasinghe, Prof. Jagath Weerasinghe, Dr Sirinimal Lakdusinghe, Prof. Albert Dharmasiri, Dr Vajira Nalinda, Dr. Janaki Jayawardenene, Ramla Wahab Salman, Dr D. B. Nandadeva, Dr Senerath Dissanayake, Dr Malathi de Alwis, Dr Sunil Wijesiriwardene, and Asiff Hussein.

‘It’s Not What You Think It Is’ will be a YouTube channel that will focus on generating Sri Lankan content in the areas of history, politics, art and other related subjects, which will inspire its viewers to reflect and re-think frequently held assumptions about history, politics and art. It will feature Q&As, short videos, expert interviews promoting critical thinking, and reflection on topics of popular or academic interests. Generating content in English, Sinhala and Tamil, it will tackle popular and often controversial topics ‘head on’ provoking reconsideration, appreciation and alternatives. The YouTube channel will be streamed through digital platforms such as MoMaC and will be shared through other social media platforms and interest groups.

Home and Belonging will host stories of *loss*, *revival* and *connections* and will showcase stories and lived experiences from persons living with disabilities, women heads of households, ex-combatants, displaced persons, people working in low-income trades, plantation and rural households, the urban poor, unemployed youth and other marginalised groups. Through a series of multi-modal digital and physical exhibits, this endeavour hopes to artistically represent the multiple stories and experiences of people who have lived through difficult and turbulent times and have stayed resilient despite adverse circumstances.

‘Sangeetham’: Music for Social Change

ICES initiated a preliminary discussion on music for social change with its first ‘*Sangeetham*’ on 29th July 2016, the anniversary of the assassination of its founder Neelan Tiruchelvam. In November 2019, ICES revived ‘*Sangeetham*’.

Resistance music and music for social change are rarely discussed in Sri Lanka. There is a dearth of research on the role and potential of music in voicing dissent, creating counter cultures, promoting resistance to oppressive structures and driving social change. ‘*Sangeetham*’ aims to create a space for sharing traditions of protest music throughout Sri Lanka’s history.

The objectives of ‘*Sangeetham*’ are:

- To create platforms for a cross-sharing of musical traditions of resistance of the different ethno-religious communities in Sri Lanka
- To document and archive songs of resistance and their historical trajectories
- To generate an understanding of the role of music as a form of resistance in Sri Lanka

‘*Sangeetham*’ in Jaffna

‘*Sangeetham*’ was held in Jaffna on the 10th of November 2019 at the Thanthai Chelva Auditorium.

This event brought together four writers and folk artists from the Up-country – Mr M. Sivalingam, Mr K. Vimalanathan, Mr Pasarai K. Velayutham and Mr V. Kathrikaman – to engage in a discussion interspersed with performance, on the role and power of music and song among the Up-country Tamils, in memorialising the past, contesting the present and calling for social change. The event also featured selected scenes from Janakaraliya’s original play ‘Thiththa Kahata’ which provided a historical context to the speakers’ interventions.

The music of the Up-country Tamils in Jaffna was chosen due to long-standing tensions based on identity that simmer beneath the amicable relations and distance (ideological and geographical) shared by both communities. Up-country Tamils have always been viewed by the Tamils of Jaffna as different and distinct in terms of ethnic origin and caste. Hence, they were not included within the Tamil separatist struggle, though Up-country Tamils suffered from ethnic violence and discrimination as a consequence of the ethnic conflict. This event provided an opportunity for sharing and dialogue between the two communities and a space for building relationships based on mutual understanding and empathy.

More than a hundred attended the event and the audience consisted of university academics, students from the Departments of Fine Arts and Drama and Theatre, journalists, members of independent drama groups the general public and representatives from the NGOs.

The artists discussed and performed folksongs on the following themes:

- A history of oppression through folk songs
- The role of humour in folk music in questioning and challenging inequalities
- Contemporary use of music in the Up-country to challenge discrimination
- The future of the arts and music in the Up-country

ICES will broaden and continue this dialogue and engagement with art of this nature, expose it to a wider audience and engage the public in a discourse of the role of arts in battling issues of social injustice.

World Art and Memory Museum (WAMM)

The World Art and Memory Museum (WAMM) is a curated virtual space for artistic expressions from six countries, Brazil, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Russia, Sri Lanka and South Africa, to deal with issues and processes related to memory. It brings together different countries and contexts, featuring artists and their creative work drawn from a variety of genres in visual and digital arts.

Artists around the world, confronting dire situations of war and human rights violations, often find themselves struggling alone, putting their lives at risk in vocalising their realities through their work, as their work is often seen as instigating conflicts that are ‘over and better forgotten’. They receive little support from governments, corporate industries, or even people themselves, especially, if they bring painful issues of the past to the table.

Many countries in the global south lack curatorial expertise due to under-developed local art scenes and markets. There are few opportunities for artists, even fewer for curators, to come together in a reflective process to compare and reflect on the body of work in their countries. Simultaneously, civil society activists and educators, dealing with issues of truth, justice and reconciliation struggle with reaching and engaging average audiences, especially youth due to lack of innovative approaches and pedagogical tools to facilitate dialogue and reflection at the local level.

WAMM addresses some of the issues above by creating a common global platform where artwork can come together while respecting differentiated cultures of remembrance. It will foster appreciation of artists and artwork beyond their national borders. It will highlight commonalities and differences of how cultures remember, repress or express. It will provide information and insights on local artists, their artistic processes connected to local memorialisation efforts as well as educational material and further links to get involved.

First, it is the first digital museum with a focus on art and memory bringing together artists from the global North and the South. Then, it is a collective curation process which brings together curators across borders. They are given the opportunity to work on both the local and global level simultaneously by focusing on their specific contexts as well as comparing and complementing the work from other regions and artists.

An initial workshop was held in Cape Town in July 2019 at which Hasini Haputhanthri and Annemari de Silva participated. Development of the digital space is on-going and will be launched in 2021.

MoMaC Exhibits

The exhibits ICES has produced thus far take on a plethora of perspectives and use several different art forms, making use of photography, personal narratives, documentaries, archaeological sites, music, and even comic strips to provide a holistic view of Sri Lanka, as it recovers from decades of conflict. These exhibits are shaped by previous ICES projects from other partnerships, ICES has collated and curated to allow for this research to reach a wider audience in more engaging mediums.

The following is a snapshot of the exhibits:

‘Home and Beyond’ is an oral history and audio-visual initiative, which tries to capture how differently we remember the same events, depending on where we were, and who we were, by exploring how communities remember themselves.

‘Mother North Rising’ offers a series of photo-essays born out of interviews with 10 mothers from Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Jaffna and Vavuniya, examining their personal stories while juxtaposing them with the wider geopolitical context in which the narratives occur.

‘Music for Change’ an initiative supported by GIZ, displays photos and videos of performances, as well as panel discussions, from *‘Sangeetham’* – a music festival that looked at how ‘protest music’ questions and subverts the status quo, socio-political issues and institutional forms of oppression.

‘On the Mirror of the Other’ is a short-film series exploring the conflicts between religious communities in post-war Sri Lanka. They narrate lived experiences and provide a means of broaching the sensitive issue of inter-religious coexistence among communities.

‘Picturing Coexistence’ displays a gallery of comics that facilitate conversation across ethnic, religious and linguistic divides through stories of first-hand experiences.

‘Island of Encounters’, created by artists commissioned by GIZ, is a gallery of 12 ancient sites that highlight cultural confluence and shared spaces in Sri Lanka. This poetic narrative explores the many blends of Sri Lankan culture, many visitors and settlers have collaboratively created.

ICES RESEARCH ARCHIVE

Initial work has commenced towards the establishment of a digital research archive at ICES. The archive will host data from ICES and other research projects, catalogued in a way to make it easily accessible for future researchers to find rare and comprehensive data sets. The archive purposes to promote the reuse and sharing of valuable social science research data within the research community.

The Pluralistic Memories Project of the University of Lausanne (UNIL) supported the purchase of infrastructure for the archive including a dedicated server, air conditioning for the server room and the internet and firewall facilities set up at the ICES Colombo office. The dedicated server on which the research archive is hosted has enabled the amalgamation of the digital research archive with the digital library and the digital museum, to make ICES an e-resource hub.

A short video has been made to promote the ICES' repository to external researchers who may be interested in depositing their work and sharing it with others. In this way, data sets were sought from other think tanks on social science research, with some positive interest forthcoming from several academic institutions. A workshop was held for ICES staff to engage researchers and to seek feedback on its practical use and usefulness. This feedback was incorporated into the repository interface.

In 2019, a Swiss team of experts from the FORS archive of the University of Lausanne visited ICES to assist with the technical issues on the repository. Presently, the archive team is engaged in data preparation for archiving and uploading ICES research data sets. The ICES research archive will continue to solicit data from other academic institutions to build its online collection.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

“Humour and the Performance of Power in South Asia: Anxiety, Laughter and Politics in Unstable Times”

27 – 28 June 2019

Organised by ICES and the Department of Sociology, South Asian University, New Delhi.

What does humour do or how does it work when the political circumstances in which we live experience ruptures or instability? Can we see humour that emerges in these circumstances as a very specific narrative on the nature of democracy in the region? It does not appear that social sciences in South Asia - as a collective enterprise - have posed such questions in intellectual terms so far. The basic premise upon which the conference was conceptualised is that humour generated in these circumstances is not merely a matter of simple ‘jokes’ with an inbuilt sense of liminality but is meant to circulate over time with many after-lives.

In this context, such a body of commentary on contemporary politics deserves more sustained scrutiny. We know that in the most dire circumstances of the Nazi concentration camps during World War II, jokes created by Jewish prisoners served as commentaries of their tragic lives, within which the prisoners managed to see humour not only in their own life-threatening conditions, but also in the seemingly limitless power in the hands of their tormentors. Much further into the past and closer to home, South Asian folklore and ritual performances also served as forums for humour. Much of this humour targeted the powers that be at the time and worked as ‘weapons of the weak’ in the sense suggested by James Scott. They were sanctioned political commentaries by the oppressed against their tormentors, which carried no repercussions.

The 1980s saw ‘jokes’ or humorous narratives on powerful politicians in the region circulating by word of mouth whenever democratic practices or institutions were threatened. The recent constitutional crisis in Sri Lanka between October and December 2018 also saw the generation of considerable political humour and satire, and much of this was ‘performed’ online. All these are effectively the ‘voices of the people.’ They are public commentaries without specified authorship. Today, in general this kind of political humour has more decisively entered the internet using cheap and easily available online technologies, rather than being circulated among people by word of mouth. But they continue to serve the same purpose they have already served over a considerable period of time: to be political commentaries of evolving politics, and generally without negative consequences. How do these commentaries emerge and in what circumstances? What do they seek to achieve? Under what conditions have their performative parameters and dynamics changed over time? These were some of the questions that were explored in this multidisciplinary conference.

Select papers from the conference are being edited and will be released in an edited volume.

“Migratory Justice: Legal Histories of South Asian Migration”

8-9 July 2019

ICES partnered with the MacMillan Center, and the South Asian Studies Center at Yale University, on this initiative that was attended by approximately 20 scholars from different parts of the world.

“Gender Equality and Freedom of Religion”

13 August 2019

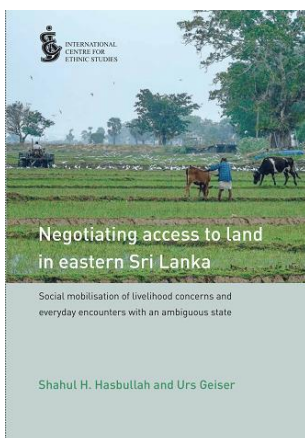
The ICES, together with the Centre for Asian Legal Studies at the National University of Singapore, and the Ralph Bunche Institute at the City University of New York, organised this workshop to support the mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Dr Ahmed Shaheed.

Women’s and LGBTQI+ rights activists, representatives of human rights organisations, and policy researchers were among the panellists and participants of the conference, and shared their experiences and insights on subjects such as personal law reform in Southeast Asia and in Sri Lanka, the role of religion in discrimination against women and LGBTQI+ communities, gender discrimination within religious institutions, and inter-religious disharmony and resulting infringements on the freedom of religion or belief.

PUBLICATIONS

The ICES has published almost 160 books, monographs, and reports, which make it an important source of information on contemporary ideas. These include publications on human rights, religion, anthropology, politics, women's studies, sociology, the legal system, education, and ethnicity, as well as periodicals, research papers, working papers and lectures.

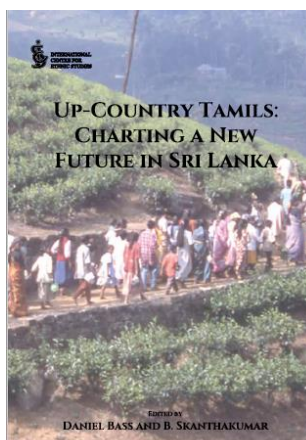
BOOKS



Negotiating Access to Land in Eastern Sri Lanka: Social mobilisation of livelihood concerns and everyday encounters with an ambiguous state

by Shahul H. Hasbullah and Urs Geiser

Conflicts around land in eastern Sri Lanka are often explained as a consequence of colonisation schemes by the powerful and ethnically biased state. But does this emphasis on a strong state, and on ethnic identity suffice to understand land conflicts? Our bottom-up research showed that people's concerns with land are above all informed by everyday material livelihood needs that vary enormously, as do peoples capabilities to meet them, across ethnic markers of identity. This highly differentiated rural populace encounters a state at the local level that is fragmented and ambiguous. Local organisations display agency in negotiating land-related claims of competing local groups and demonstrate surprising skill in dealing with the local state. All of these insights escape the easy shoehorning of land conflicts into politicised discourses centred on 'ethnic disputes' or 'state patronage'.



Up-country Tamils: Charting a New Future in Sri Lanka

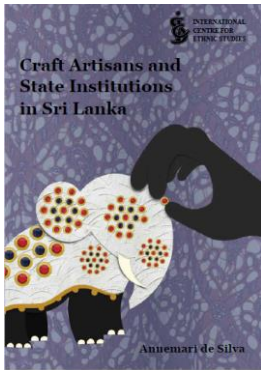
Edited by Daniel Bass and B. Skanthakumar

The book emerged from a conference organised by the ICES in August 2017 which brought together a broad range of scholars and practitioners who have been researching and working on the area with an aim to enhance understanding of the issues and challenges on the subject and generate recommendations for law, policy and practice. The book addresses the many problems that Up-country Tamils face in contemporary Sri Lanka, politically, economically and socially, as well as the historical origins and structural determinants of their current predicament. The individual chapter authors pay particular attention to the changes that have taken place for Up-country Tamils since 2009 and their implications for the future of the community.

ICES RESEARCH PAPERS

Craft Artisans and State Institutions in Sri Lanka

by Annemari de Silva

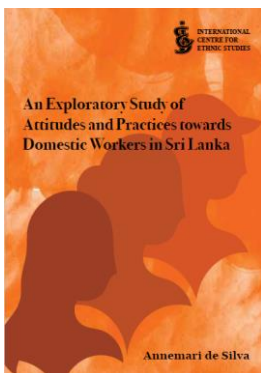


Handicrafts have been the subject of many an art history or anthropology study. This study looked instead at the policy, economy, labour, and welfare considerations of handicrafts and craftspeople. It mapped the historical development, mandates and activities of the main state institutions responsible for the protection and promotion of handicrafts in Sri Lanka and then considered the policies and practices in the crafts sector. The study problematises certain aspects that underscore the crafts sector, such as the entrepreneur approach to handicrafts and dependence on tourism, and it details production challenges for craftspeople, from sourcing raw materials and dealing with middlemen to purchasing practices and marketing in the digital age.

Though historically artisans have had a gainful relationship with the state, this ecosystem has deteriorated in the recent decades. Craftspeople are often viewed as a charitable project, but this study shows that institutional failure, including financial mismanagement and corruption, has destabilised the handicrafts sector and affected craftspeople's welfare and economy. While the private sector has been a boon, it ultimately has no obligation to be a protector of handicrafts, even if it is in its interest to promote it. The study thus argues for adequate revision and revitalisation of policy and practices by the state. The cross-cutting findings of this study are relevant to those interested in crafts, tourism, micro entrepreneurship, cultural policy or the informal economy.

An Exploratory Study of Attitudes and Practices towards Domestic Workers in Sri Lanka

by Annemari de Silva



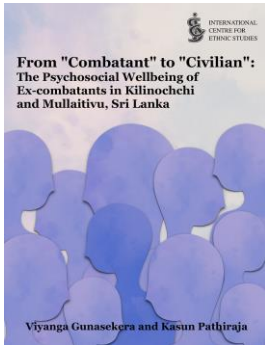
This study explored what the field of domestic work looks like in Sri Lanka: what general employment practices are like (e.g. salaries, recruitment, living conditions for live-ins, nature of agreements), what attitudes towards domestic work(ers) are, and perceptions about workers rights.

It uses the findings of three methods: an online survey carried out with employers (primarily from Colombo); in-depth interviews with live-in and live-out workers from Nuwara Eliya and Colombo; and an analysis of newspaper advertisements for domestic work. The study considers the gendered dimensions of paid domestic work, the micropolitics of employer-employee relationships and being like part of the family, attitudes towards

agencies, while also establishing descriptive statistical information on salary variations and characteristics of demand.

From Combatant to Civilian: The Psychosocial Wellbeing of Ex-combatants in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, Sri Lanka

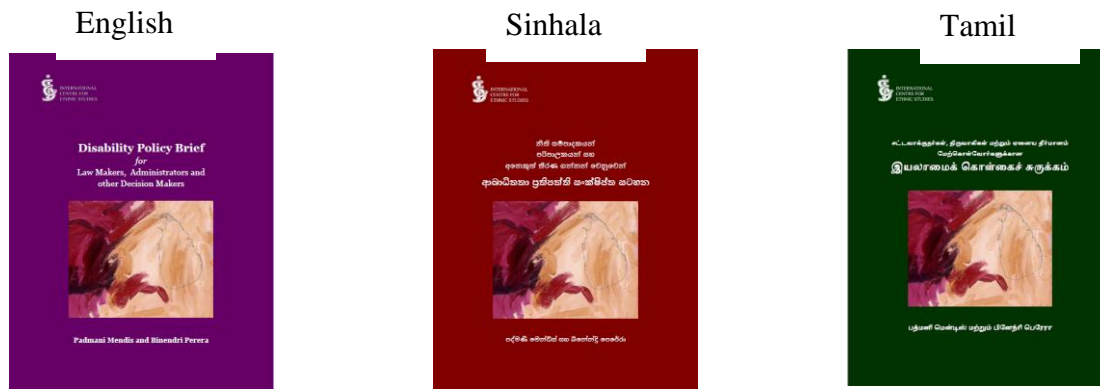
by Viyanga Gunasekera and Kasun Pathiraja



After the end of a nearly three-decade civil war in 2009, the combatants of the LTTE were enrolled in a rehabilitation programme conducted by the Sri Lanka Army to train and provide means for the ex-combatants so that transition to civilian life would be smoother. Ten years since the end of the war, it is doubtful whether the reintegration into communities is successful despite the efforts of the government. This study was conducted to explore the current psychosocial wellbeing of the ex-combatants, specifically in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts. Using information and statistics gathered from the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation (BCGR) and other focal points who all work closely with the ex-combatants in the North, the study concluded that ex-combatants face numerous challenges in their day-to-day lives and that multiple domains of psychosocial wellbeing are severely affected.

Disability Policy Brief for Law Makers, Administrators and other Decision Makers

by Padmani Mendis and Binendri Perera

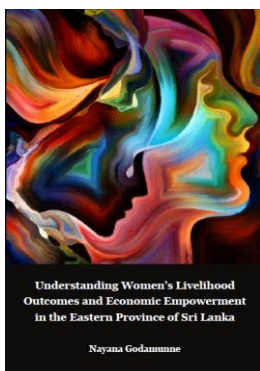


Sri Lanka has had a rights-based national policy on disability since 2003. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was ratified in 2016. To implement this the National Action Plan on Disability was approved in 2014 and two National Human Rights Action Plans (2011 - 2015 and 2016 - 2020) have included disability. Yet no meaningful steps have been taken to-date to alleviate disadvantage and distress and improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in the country through the achievement of their rights. This publication is meant to be used by law makers, administrators, and other senior decision-makers to assist them in deciding on appropriate rights-based

policies and how these may be implemented. It informs persons with disabilities and all interested parties about the current status of the on-going dialogue on disability rights. In so doing it aims to further enhance continuing discourse, discussion, debate and consensus leading to action that will draw closer to the realisation of the rights of persons with disabilities in Sri Lanka.

Understanding Women's Livelihood Outcomes and Economic Empowerment in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka

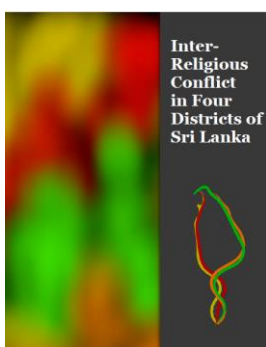
by Nayana Godamunne



Since the end of the war in 2009, the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka has benefited from state and non-state investments in large-scale infrastructure, resettlement, and reconstruction. However, ten years on, the province continues to have significant populations in poverty. Unemployment figures are also high with the figure for women being three times that of men. These poverty and unemployment figures persist despite the government and donor-assisted programmes that aimed to rebuild livelihoods through investments in improving connectivity, developing the tourist industry, and expanding access to credit in the years following the war. Using qualitative methods, this study explores how these interventions have impacted on women's livelihoods in two districts, Batticaloa and Trincomalee, and the barriers they have faced in accessing and engaging in employment and livelihood activities. The study concludes that women continue to encounter challenges and restrictions in accessing employment and livelihood opportunities; where they do, they are often in conditions of informality and in work that lacks recognition and dignity.

Inter-Religious Conflict in Four Districts of Sri Lanka

by Nadine Vanniasinkam, Kasun Pathiraja, Mohamed Faslan and Dinushka Jayawickreme



The study draws from qualitative interviews and focus-group discussions with women and men from the districts of Mannar, Jaffna, Ampara, and Matara in Sri Lanka and unpacks the intersecting domains of contestation among Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists including the agents and enabling conditions that fuel conflict. It adopts a localised and context-specific lens to the analysis of inter-religious conflict as well as conflict resolution mechanisms with a focus on the role of women's participation.

The study discusses how inter-religious conflicts manifest differently in the four districts while the underlying reasons for conflict remain the same. It argues that conflicts stem from different types of encroachment of space, identity, and power of one ethno-religious community by another which is facilitated by national and regional enabling

conditions such as institutionalised ethno-religious majoritarianism, religious extremism, regional ethno-religious nationalism, business rivalry, cultural aspects such as caste and poverty. These dynamics also shape communities' approaches to conflict mitigation differently. The study concludes that while misconceptions and prejudice against religious others exist, these manifest into violence primarily due to the impunity granted to/enjoyed by the ethno-religious majority in each district.

The Chronic and the Entrenched: Ethno-religious Violence in Sri Lanka

by Gehan Gunatillake

Sinhala



Tamil



The political transition of 2015 promised an end to ethno-religious violence in Sri Lanka. Three years later, this promise remains largely unfulfilled.

In this study, Gehan Gunatilleke, examines how ethno-religious violence has persisted, particularly in its chronic form, and looks at some of the factors that entrench and sustain such forms of violence. He concludes by arguing for a cultural transformation that will confront the root cause of this violence. Sinhala and Tamil translations of this study were released in 2019.

LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS

- “Learning, Organised Religion and the Transformation of Consciousness: Bringing the Thinking of Jiddu Krishnamurti into Politics in South Asia” by Sasanka Perera on 22 January 2019 (Kandy)
- Literary Forum with Chiranthi Rajapakse and Jayatissa Gamage on 8 February 2019 (Kandy)
- “LGBTI Equality in South Asia: Extending Decriminalisation from India to Sri Lanka and Beyond” by Robert Wintemute on 18 February 2019 (Kandy) and on 20 February 2019 (Colombo)
- “Shared Sanctities: Art and Architecture of Religious Syncretism in Sri Lanka” by Hasini Haputhanthri on 22 February 2019 (Kandy)
- “Kandy City Walk” with Hasini Haputhanthri on 23 February (Kandy)
- “The Law and Politics of Presidential Pardons in Sri Lanka” by Kalana Senaratne and Shyamali Ranaraja on 27 June 2019 (Kandy)
- “Learning about the Tigers from the Tigers” by Michael Roberts on 8 August 2019 (Kandy)
- “Planning for the Future of Kandy”, : A presentation by Sudharshan Seneviratne on the recently published monograph authored by G. H. Peiris on 15 August 2019 (Kandy)
- “Negotiating Access to Land in Eastern Sri Lanka: Social Mobilisation of Livelihood Concerns and Everyday Encounters with an Ambiguous State” by Shahul H. Hasbullah and Urs Geiser on 4 September 2019 (Kandy) and on 6 September 2019 (Colombo)
- *Sangeetham* – “Folk Songs of the Up-country Tamils: Resisting Discrimination and Calling for Change” at the Thanthai Chelva Auditorium (Jaffna Central College), Jaffna, 10 November 2019
- “Moved by Mozart: Classical Music Screening” curated by Soprano Tharanga Goonetilleke on 14 December 2019 (in Kandy with Atelier)

FILM SCREENINGS

Films

- Fireworks Wednesday (Iran) (2006) by Asghar Farhadi – 15 February
- Padman (Hindi) (2018) by R. Balki – 13 March (Kandy)

American Movie Classics (March and April) (Colombo)

- The Treasure of the Sierra Madre (1948) by John Huston – 15 March
- Battle of the Bulge (1965) by Ken Annakin – 22 March
- Witness for the Prosecution (1957) by Billy Wilder – 29 March
- The Graduate (1967) by Mike Nichols – 5 April

International Women’s Day Film Festival (From 8 - 13 March) (Colombo)

- Daughters of the Dust (1991) by Julie Dash – 8 March
- Two Women (1960) by Vittorio de Sica Masterpiece –12 March
- Incendies (2010) by Denis Villeneuve – 13 March

Documentary Film

- Demons in Paradise: A film by Jude Ratnam (2017) – 31 January (Kandy)

WEBSITE

The ICES website was re-designed in order to reflect the mandate of the institution as a research centre. The ICES worked closely with the web designing team to develop a suitable template that would showcase ICES' past and current work. The interface was made more user-friendly, and incorporated visual and multimedia content to engage better with its users. The projects and gallery are arranged thematically to represent the broad range of areas of research in which ICES has made forays into, including women and development, disability, religious co-existence, transitional justice and social inclusion.

The events calendar highlights the various ways in which ICES disseminates its research with a strategic objective of public engagement through movie screenings, literary evenings and panel discussions hosted at ICES. The ICES publications are featured on the website, and can be accessed directly by scholars, academics, students and others. An archive is available to access all past research publications of the organisation. The library and auditorium facilities are also promoted through the website. It was felt that the library was under-utilised and needed to be showcased on the website to increase its benefit to more researchers, academics and students, given the rich and extensive collections it holds. The facilities in the auditorium have also been listed so that it will continue to be used for diverse purposes including discussions, screenings and performances.

LIBRARY

The two libraries in Colombo and Kandy constitute the central academic facility of the Centre, both in resources and standing as the repository of knowledge. The library specialises in social sciences and women's studies with substantial collections on ethnicity, culture and history. It also has an excellent collection on law, religion, anthropology, transitional justice, and fiction. It contains one of the best collections on ethnicity and identity politics in Sri Lanka. The library plays an important role in all academic activities of ICES. It is used not only by the research staff of the Centre, but also serves scholars, academics, senior government officials, politicians, media people, universities and other research institutes. The library holdings include material usually unavailable to scholars from the Asian region.

ICES Colombo completed the digitalisation of its library catalogue, a total of 12,000 titles of books, journals, research papers and reports. The catalogue is now accessible to both national and international audiences online. Each year, ICES adds new collections in the areas of transitional justice, gender, peace and conflict resolution, contemporary conflicts, national and international

politics and terrorism. Professor K.M de Silva's personal collection of books was donated to the Kandy Library.

AUDITORIUM

The ICES auditorium, which initially started in a 'thatched patio' in the previous building adjacent, has over the last 38 years been transformed into a modern and attractive facility. Over the years it has played host to multiple conversations, academic discussions, film screenings and poetry readings, ranging from constitutional reform to displacement to religious freedom, as well as hosting plays and exhibitions 'about the past'.

The auditorium's facilities have recently been enhanced, with the addition of a state-of-the-art sound system, two ceiling-mounted projectors and two large screens at both ends of the hall. It also encompasses facilities for simultaneous interpretation and a patio for informal discussions and receptions. The auditorium has a maximum seating capacity for about 90 persons. The area has Wi-Fi coverage. A generator has been added as well. These facilities have seen a rise in bookings by various organisations for hosting their events at the ICES auditorium.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTARIES

- 1 'Estate Workers in Sri Lanka: An Account of the Legal and Policy Framework' by Tessa Martin

[Estate Workers in Sri Lanka](#)

- 2 'Tracking Coexistence: Understanding Perceptions of the Religious 'Other'' by Ranmini Vithanagama with contributions from Mario Gomez and Kasun Pathiraja

[Tracking Coexistence](#)

- 3 'Understanding Women's Livelihood Outcomes and Economic Empowerment in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka' by Nayana Godamunne

<http://ices.lk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Understanding.pdf>

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Her Palmyra Basket (English)
- 6 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SW2UwOWUmyQ>
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- 7 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmdfqCebotk>
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Together

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- 15 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFJrz67FdEI>
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Ethics, Secularism and Institutions of Governance (Part 1, 2 and 3)

INTERNS

- Panuga Pulenthiran, Master's Student at Science Po Paris (August 2018 – January 2019)
- Reihshan Deen, Master's Degree holder from University of Edinburgh and University of Colombo (10 December 2018 – Continues)
- Tessa Martin, McGill University (6 May – 26 July 2019)
- Lakshmi Sanmuganathan (10 June – 31 July 2019)
- Sanjna Yechareddy, South Asia Center, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. USA (20 July – 23 August 2019) - Kandy
- Neelima Paleti, South Asia Center, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. USA (6 June – 7 August 2019) - Kandy

VISITING FELLOWS

- Prof. Victoria Page Fortna, University of Columbia (August 2018 – June 2019)
- Meghana Nallerjerla, Fulbright Scholar (November 2018 – 30 April 2019)
- Prof. Sasanka Perera, South Asia University (1 January – 30 June 2019)
- Dr Ravi Vaitheespara, Senior Scholar and former Associate Professor of Modern South Asian History at the University of Manitoba, Canada (11 December 2018 – 2019)
- Dr Lia Kent (5 February 2019 – Continues)
- Dr D.B. Subedi, University of New England (13 September – 16 November 2019)
- Prof. Surabhi Chopra, Chinese University of Hong Kong (19 November – 13 December)
- Dr Rehan Abeyratne, Chinese University of Hong Kong (February 2019)

STAFF

Executive Director

Mario Gomez (PhD, University of Colombo)

Emeritus Fellow

Radhika Coomaraswamy (LL.M, Harvard; JD, Columbia)

Research Fellows

Nireka Weeratunga (PhD, Anthropology, University of Toronto)

Hasini Haputhanthiri (MA in Asian Studies, Lund University, University of Sweden;
Postgraduate Diploma, Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo)

Danesh Jayatilaka – (PhD) University of Colombo

Research Staff

- Kasun Pathiraja – Senior Programme Officer, MSc. (Environmental Economics), University of Peradeniya
- Nadine Vanniasinkam – Programme Officer, MA; LL.B (Applied Linguistics), University of Melbourne
- Ranmini Vithanagama – Researcher, MA (Economics), University of Colombo
- Harini Dias Bandaranayake – Programme Officer, MA (Development Studies), University of Colombo
- Annemari de Silva – Researcher, MA (South Asian Area Studies), School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
- Viyanga Gunasekera – Programme Officer, Postgraduate Diploma (Psychology), University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya
- Esther Surenthiraraj – Researcher, MA (Linguistics), Georgetown University, Washington DC

Administrative, Finance, IT and Library

- Chalani Lokugamage (CIMA, UK) – Finance and Administration Manager
- Ponnudurai Thambirajah – Chief Librarian (*Left in May 2019*)
- B. M. Mowsil – PA to the Executive Director
- Gallage Ayoma Shyamalee – Finance Officer
- Bhagya Wijayasooriya – Accounts Executive
- Dimuth Geethananda – Assistant Librarian/IT Officer
- Lakmali Alwis – Assistant Librarian
- Anthony Christopher – Receptionist
- Kandiah Raveendran – Office Assistant
- Rengasamy Arumugam – Office Assistant
- Iranga Silva – Librarian; Publications Officer; Managing Editor-IJESS (Kandy)
- Vasantha Premaratne – Programme Coordinator (Kandy)
- Samarakoon Bandara – Administrative/Accounts Executive (Kandy)
- Saleeka Peiris – Secretary/Receptionist; Assistant Librarian (Kandy)
- R. Wasantha Jayawathie – Office Assistant (Kandy)

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Ms Radhika Coomaraswamy

Former Senior UN Diplomat

Prof. K. M. de Silva (Emeritus)

Chancellor, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Historian, political analyst and specialist in ethnic studies and conflict resolution; former professor of Sri Lanka History, University of Peradeniya; founder and former Chairman and Executive Director of ICES

Ms Shafinaz Hassendeen

Former Senior ILO Officer and Labour/Gender Specialist

Mr Tissa Jayatilaka

Former Executive Director of the United States-Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission, and presently a Member/Council of Management, Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS).

Dr Wijaya Jayatilaka

Former Senior Lecturer of Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Peradeniya and former Executive Director of Transparency International

Ms Gnana Moonesinghe

Civil Society Activist and Writer/Author

Prof. Jayadeva Uyangoda (Emeritus)

Former Professor of Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo and Emeritus Professor, University of Colombo.

FINANCE REPORT

Financial Position as at 31st March 2020

A summary of the financial statements for 2019/20 are given below:

INCOME STATEMENT

Incoming Resources	Rs
Project Grants	70,551,620
Income from Funds	11,764,243
Other	5,738,362
	<hr/>
Total Incoming Resources	88,054,225
	<hr/>
Expenses	
Project Expenses	70,551,620
Administration	18,883,394
Finance	-
Income Tax	413,019
	<hr/>
Total Expenses	89,848,033
	<hr/>
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,793,808)
	<hr/> <hr/>

BALANCE SHEET

Assets	Rs
Current Assets	51,739,618
Non-current Assets	496,936,705

Total Assets	548,676,323
	=====
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	3,245,441
Non-current Liabilities	13,091,051

Total Liabilities	16,336,492

Accumulated Fund	
Restricted	98,431,270
Unrestricted	193,933,886
Revaluation Reserve	239,974,674

Total Accumulated Fund	532,339,830

Total Liabilities and Net Assets	548,676,323
	=====

COLOMBO OFFICE

2, Kynsey Terrace, Colombo 8, Sri Lanka

Tel: 94 11 2679745; 94 11 2685085

Fax: 94 11 2698048

KANDY OFFICE

554/6A, Peradeniya Road, Kandy, Sri Lanka

Tel: 94 81 2232381; 94 81 2234892

Fax: 94 81 2234892

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