

## Abstracts

1. **Development Forced Displacement and Resettlement:Urban Re-housing in Colombo from a Wellbeing Perspective** by Dhammika Herath, Asela Ekanayaka and Rajith Lakshman

Development induced displacement has attracted significant academic attention and the field has benefitted from the contributions from numerous studies around the world for the several decades. Major international organizations and governments around the world have also developed tools to address socio-economic and cultural issues arising out of displacement of people. However, government engineered development induced displacement in small cities, especially, targeting low income earners, has relatively had less research and policy attention. The urban regeneration programme of the government of Sri Lanka has the twin objectives of clearing underserved communities from the city and making lands available for development. Colombo has been the scene for rapid development for the last decade with the previous government placing heavy emphasis on city beautification and making Colombo attractive for investment. This also required the clearing away of the under-served communities. However, the government also made it clear that it wished to accommodate the low income earners in decent houses. This inevitably led to a process of eviction and displacement of underserved communities and consequent social, cultural and economic issues. This paper, taking the capital Colombo of Sri Lanka as a case, examines how this urban renege has impacted on the population concerned in terms of their wellbeing. It asks the vital question of whether people who have been resettled in multi-storeyed structures feel that their wellbeing has increased due to resettlement in modern housing intended to be of higher standard than those which housed them in the underserved communities. It also examines the change in social environment and aspects of safety and violence in the newly resettled communities. The research study has used a survey o 900 households and in-depth interviews with 40 informants in Colombo for the study. The study has been conducted for the past two years and is currently on going.

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2. **Going To School from a Relocated Urban Community: Struggling for Education within Imposed Walls** By Iresha M. Lakshman, Asela Ekanayaka and Rajith W.D. Lakshman

During the past few decades, relocation of shanty communities has become a developmental concern across the developing countries. After 30 years of internal conflict, Sri Lanka is currently undergoing rapid infrastructural changes particularly in Colombo. Relocating several shanty communities has been an inevitable consequence.

'Free education' policy of Sri Lanka advocates education free of charge for students in all government schools and universities. However, low-income communities face several problems in making the best out of this policy. Relocated children face similar and additional problems as a

result of being 'relocated'. The study which is part of a larger longitudinal study explores these issues based on information gathered through in-depth interviews from 17 relocated households (supplemented with survey data from the longitudinal study).

Several problems that negatively affect children's education were identified. This raises the question of whether relocated children's ability to make the best out of free education have really improved as a result of receiving more 'permanent' housing from the Government. A 'permanent' house is undoubtedly a promising initiative towards improving socio-educational opportunities available for these children. In addition to the more 'general' issues faced by children living in low-income communities, these children and parents had to adapt and find survival strategies to manage in a community where delinquent activities such as the abuse of drugs and alcohol is common. Many parents thought of the social environment in the new location as one not conducive to raising children let alone educating them. Many opted to keep their children away from the community or communal activities as a means of 'securing' their children. This strategy, though useful for pacifying the parents' immediate concerns, can have a serious detrimental impact on the integration among community members in the future.

The study stresses the need for further intervention to support these children gain full advantage of these houses. One suggestion would be the implementation of an 'after school academic programme' conducted for school-going children above the age of 10 years (Grade six onwards). This would not only offer better opportunities for reaching higher levels of education for the children but also improve networking among younger members of the community. A programme offering extracurricular activities along with this academic programme is also likely to receive a high demand from the community as parents seemed keen to see their children engaged in extracurricular activities as means of keeping them away from the community and also of improving their future employability. These programmes would need support and guidance from an external body during its initiation. However, it must be planned in such a way that the community is able to sustain the programme.

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### **3. Rebuilding lives: Stories of Struggle, Agency and Resettlement of the Development Induced Displaced in the suburbs of Kochi** By Ann George and S. Irudaya Rajan

This paper examines how does the contentious issue of displacement play itself out in a state like Kerala? The context of Kerala is important as it allows us to understand displacement experience in a state which has received much acclaim for its public action and public consciousness of its people. How would people in a state with historical precedence of struggles for improving their plight, across caste and class, react to something as life- destabilizing and rupturing as displacement from land acquisition? Does the displacement and resettlement experience in Kerala also contain violence and impoverishment as noted elsewhere in India?

Indeed, the displacement experiences of the state show a continuum of its historical pattern of a public, conscious of its rights and acting relentlessly to achieve the same. One finds the launch and execution of a prolonged struggle (agitations, litigations and so forth) for a fair compensation. What is remarkable is that the struggles have been primarily of the victims themselves but unlike in the earlier struggles, the support of political parties has been just cosmetic, the vacuum of which is filled by the civil society. The agency and skillful negotiations and bargaining of the people have eventually got demands accepted for some projects, although not for others.

**The detailing of the struggles reveals that rather than fundamental protests against land acquisition on grounds of losing their agricultural land, ecological reasons, changing way of life and so forth, they were primarily about better rehabilitation packages and its execution. The absence of a fundamental protest is to do with people considering the land acquisition as inevitable. But it is also to do with the fact that for some sections of the displaced, agriculture for long had become unviable and difficult, and land acquisition therefore gave an opportunity to gain asset value for the land which was fast turning redundant, signaling a ‘thinning of development dilemma’ as happening elsewhere in India.**

**As result of their struggles, both collective and individual, one finds majority of them now resettled in reasonably fine looking houses after four years and more. Their narratives, however ask us to go beyond the obvious signs of progress to look at their accumulated debt.** That the displaced had to go through the unnecessary and avoidable struggle of promises not delivered or delivered with long delay is quite characteristic of the stranglehold of the state’s inefficient bureaucratic machinery failing yet again a timely delivery of the execution of decisions arrived at. The state also could not do much to help its displaced people suffering certain common issues across states of having to run around for restoring basic services without these being fast tracked for them, hassles with tax for compensation amount and the unnecessary condition of banning land transferability for stipulated years.

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**4. Development Induced Displacement (DID) and Conflict Induced Displacement (CID): Commonalities and Differences in Socio-economic impacts and Wellbeing among Resettled Populations** By Danesh Jayatilaka, Kopalapillai Amirthalingam, Rajith W. D. Lakshman, Asela Ekanayaka and Rianne Laan

Researchers studying resettlement had documented the asymmetric impacts of displacement. The divides between Development Induced Displacement (DID) and Conflict Induced Displacement (CID) had been particularly troubling with calls for greater investigations using enhanced methods. Victims are known to face a range of problems at individual, household, and community level as they transit between various phases of vulnerability. Instruments such as the Impoverishment Risks and Livelihoods Reconstruction (IRLR) model had been particularly useful to assess the deprivations and risks people faced in development settings, while giving

propositions for reversing the negative effects and facilitating recovery through assistance. Though no such tool has been generated for conflict settings the Department for International Development (DfID) Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) has been suitable for analyzing capabilities and the dynamic ways people respond to livelihoods challenges in stable grounds and complex emergency situations. People are known to rely on innovative ways to make the most of their lot by harnessing various assets available to them. Studies on wellbeing, though strictly not in the displacement or resettlement settings, have lent opportunities to understand the multidimensionality of human needs in material, non-material, objective and subjective terms. They have shed light on the complexity and interrelatedness of a broad set of elements that either enforce or diminish wellbeing. In this light, combining the macro oriented IRLR approach with the micro perspective of the DfID framework can bring about an alternative method to analyze social and economic impacts of displacement and resettlement on the wellbeing of people.

This paper provides empirical findings from a qualitative study conducted in the post war environment in the years 2013/14 in Sri Lanka due to funding from the Safe and Inclusive Cities (SAIC) global project of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The investigation targeted two displacement and resettlement settings associated with the displacement divides, namely Colombo for DID and Jaffna for CID to assess the socio-economic impacts victims had undergone in relation to their wellbeing. The research carried out included 40 long in-depth interviews in equal half at the two sites, Colombo: Sinhapura, Sahaspura, Wadulusevana, Lunawa and Halgahakumbura; and Jaffna: Jaffna Division and Nallur Division generating a rich data set. The in-site interviews were further divided on a 50:50 break between displaced and non-displaced populations so as to ensure the research looked at the DID and CID bifurcations, along with affected and non-affected in post conflict environments. In line with the remit of the study three crucial lenses were brought to bear: poverty; inequality; and violence, to assess the socio economic wellbeing and how people experienced, perceived, coped, and maximized on their situation. Through qualitative analysis the researchers was able to draw up an intricate causality framework with shared variables that cut across multiple divides but with unequal influences.

The study showed there were significant differences in socio-economic impacts and well-being between the two forms of displacement. First it is important to note that DID in Colombo involve relocation while CID in Jaffna was return and resettlement to original site, which resulted in differences in scale of losses, magnitude of violence, support received, levels of recovery and control over life events. Those caught in development events, many of whom were forced to move, indicated their lifestyles changed, networks ruptured and livelihoods restricted, while material components of housing improved. Individuals from conflict, having undergone multiple displacements and faced harsh violence, expressed contentment in returning to their former living patterns and having increasing freedoms in movement, access to facilities etc., albeit worried about cultural and social norms that were increasingly eroding and facing challenges in certain income generating occupations. The study found people in the CID category were generally happier in comparison to DIDs and they showed greater resilience, mobility, optimism, and a strong capacity to adapt. They also experienced 'home' and 'belonging' more than the

others. There were elements of insecurity among both groups, including when compared to non-IDPs, and well-being needed examination in sub areas, rather than just universally.

Neither the DID or CID population were wholly happy or secure in their situation, due to different reasons, and subjective well-being in particular required unraveling aspects such as self-perceptions, exposure to violence, reconciling past events, aspirations etc. of individuals while looking at the collective experiences. There were differences in what people considered as 'important' and their rating at the two main research locations, which implicated happiness under the present circumstance. By all means broadening the analytical lens with the qualitative fieldwork unearthed rich findings differentiating DID and CID impacts that are relevant for wider research, including questions for existing policy in development and post-conflict resettlement and their objectives. Taking into account both groups bore material and non-material brunt due to displacement and the findings are showing asymmetric impacts, much of it from a personal nature, they have raised new questions and further analysis is needed to make quantitative type examinations on the differences.

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5. **Resettlement of Urban IDPs in Jaffna, Sri Lanka: An analysis of Livelihoods and Income Inequality** By Kopalapillai Amirthalingam, Rajith Lakshman, Asela Ekanayaka and Danesh Jayatilaka

This paper looks at the impact of displacement on livelihoods and income inequality in Northern Sri Lanka following the end of its civil war in 2009. The focus is on a group of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who were returned and resettled in urban areas of Jaffna, which is the largest city directly affected by the conflict in the country. This study is based on an on-going three-year research study on urban resettlement and relocation in Jaffna and Colombo. This paper focuses on the data collected in the first year of this study where the research focused on resettled communities. The corresponding non-IDP control groups were selected from the same location in Jaffna. This study is entirely based on primary data collected from 450 IDP households and 450 Non IDP households. In addition, 20 in-depth interviews were also conducted among these families to triangulate the information. This paper tends to examine the impact of displacement on livelihoods and income inequality. To investigate the impact of displacement we categorized the households as fishermen, migrants, salaried workers, labourers and entrepreneurs based on the highest income source of the heads of the household. The finding of the study reveals that the average income of non-IDPs individuals is higher than that of IDPs individuals except entrepreneurs. Fishermen laborers received the lowest monthly income and the income of IDP fishermen is lower than that of Non IDP fishermen. The IDP laborers earned the lowest income than non IDP laborers. There was no significant income difference between the IDP and non IDP salaried workers, which is the expected result because, whether IDP or non IDP, a salaried worker will get the same income. With regard to foreign employment non IDP migrant workers households received the highest income, more than IDP households, because many non IDP migrants are in western countries while many IDP migrants are in the Middle East. Interestingly IDP entrepreneurs get more monthly income than non IDP entrepreneurs because many IDP entrepreneurs in the fishing industry have quickly increased

their income due to the relaxation of the restrictions imposed on them for a long period of time. By and large, these findings clearly indicate that displacement has clear negative impacts on the income of former IDPs. Therefore, it is evident that mere resettle of the people will not solve their livelihood issues. According to our survey and our in-depth interviews, since the overwhelming majority of the households did not receive any compensation, either for housing or livelihoods from the government, proper compensation mechanisms should be devised to provide housing, and separate comprehensive programmes should be devised for livelihood support. Since our focus area was the coastal belt, fishing is the main livelihood of the people. However, the poaching by Indian fishermen is a serious issue for the local fishermen. Many are unhappy about the current status of the fishing industry and they complain that they will be forced to abandon fishing, their traditional livelihood, if the issue is not addressed by the Sri Lankan and Indian government at the earliest.

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