

Complexities of Land Related Issues in the North

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Abstract: This study was conducted by the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) and looked at land related vulnerabilities in the Northern Province: Mannar, Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu. Land is a highly contested issue in post-war Sri Lanka, and for communities made vulnerable by the war, inability to access land resources adds another layer of vulnerability. There are many factors that influence the character of relationships that surround land and land transactions in the North: the multiple displacements, the complexity of the legal/policy framework, the institutions and state structures weakened by conflict; the entrenched cultural roots. Within this context, CEPA's study aimed to find out how clear and transparent, community oriented property rights/claims processes could be developed to include vulnerable groups such as women-headed households, orphans and the elderly. The study was informed by an initial scoping visit to the field, and the findings were based on secondary sources and primary data comprising a review of relevant literature, applicable policy and laws and, field research conducted in selected Divisional Secretariat divisions of the three selected districts, Mannar, Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. The work was carried out from May to December 2011.