Ethnicised Entitlements in Land Tenure of Protracted Conflicts: The Case of Sri Lanka

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1 Introduction

Land tenure is a politically sensitive issue in many change processes, in particular in economic and societal transition, be it from socialist to market economies (central and eastern Europe[ii], Cambodia, Vietnam), from Apartheid regimes to democratic rules (e.g. Namibia, Zimbabwe) or from civil war to peace (e.g. Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka). It is the third notion that this paper will have a closer look into. It does so using the perspective of the livelihood system approach, which analyses the life perspectives and opportunities of rural people in a holistic context.

Land tenure is, of course, only one, but essential aspect of rural livelihoods. In civil wars, forced mobility increases dramatically, since people have to flee their homes or prefer to migrate in order to survive. This mobility increases the 'fuzziness' of endowments and entitlements to land resources, since, for example, land is abandoned and no one knows whether or not the owner of the land will return and claim the land again. Sound institutional arrangements enforced through credible state or community institutions could offer temporary arrangements for making use of such dilapidated resources without loosing sight of the owners' potential claims. It is, however, a feature of protracted conflicts that exactly this credibility of key actors has vanished, if they are still present at all. The lack of credible civil governance institutions supports opportunistic behaviour and the rule of the fittest, in the case of war. The latter are mainly those sharing the oligopoly of military power.

The effects of war vary considerably for different ethnic and social groups. In situations of ongoing civil war, it is in particular the 'ethnicisation of entitlements', i.e. the perception that some (ethnic) groups benefit (or suffer less) from the war and can make use of their political networks to capture endowments and entitlements on natural resources, which is politically dangerous, because it steadily erodes any cross-communal bonds and communication. I do not refer here to the real winners of the war, the conflict entrepreneurs (cf. Goodhand and Hulme 1999), i.e. militants who utilise their oligopoly of violence to extract specfic rents from the local population, but rather to the farmers and fishermen. Based on case studies from Sri Lanka, I will show that it is in the end this erosion of societal bonds across one's own culture, which impede real peace building on a local level.[iii]

The paper will first explain the specificity of protracted conflicts, which are categorised as complex political emergencies (Section 2). I will then go on to elaborate the framework of analysis, the livelihood system approach, a holistic way of looking at rural communities and their functioning. I will also discuss the concept of entitlements, social

and political capital and what this implies for the situation in crisis zones, in particular with regard to land use (Sections 3 & 4). I will analyse four case studies taken from the war-torn areas of Sri Lanka to outline the role of social and political capital in resource management and its institutional arrangements (Section 5). The paper concludes that promoting conditions for co-operative relationships in resource management are to be a fundamental part of conflict transformation strategies in civil wars (Section 6).

2 The Setting: Protracted Conflicts

This paper looks at property regimes in a civil war. First, it is therefore essential to understand the logic of such 'complex political emergencies' (2.1) and the role, violence and power play in these extreme actors' constellations (2.2).

2.1 Sri Lanka. A Complex Political Emergency

It is essential to understand the ethnicised conflict in Sri Lanka as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, or a *conflict cocktail*. Social and political cleavages occur at various levels along many lines of dissent. The fundamental issue of the macro-conflict is the grievance between the Tamil minority and the Sinhalese-Buddhist majority which has escalated into a war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the largely Sinhalese armed forces. In addition to this major line of dissent, there are other social, political and ethnic cleavages between and among the three major communal groups (Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims), e.g. clashes between Muslim and Tamil communities in the East, the recent troubles between Sinhalese and Muslims in the more peaceful zones of the country, and finally two Marxist youth insurrections in the South in 1971 and the late 1980s as an escalated intra-Sinhalese conflict.

The term 'complex political emergency' is a label to describe the characteristics of ethnicised conflicts. Goodhand and Hulme (1999) have defined five characteristic features to denote conflicts as complex political emergencies. In the Sri Lankan case, these are reflected as follows:

- *Conflict within and across state boundaries*: The conflict is of a hybrid form where the conflict is neither purely inter-state nor intra-state war. In the Sri Lankan case, India, the regional super power, has always been involved in the civil and military politics of its island neighbour.
- *Political origins*: The civil war in Sri Lanka has political roots. The rivalry for power and resources is a central dynamic, and the distribution of power and recognition is crucial in politics and is determined by power plays based on ethnicity.
- *Protracted duration*: Although the civil war in Sri Lanka erupted in 1983, the ethnic conflict as such is an enduring feature since independence. The civil war is thus not a temporary crisis after which society will return to 'normal' (i.e. normal levels of physical violence), but part of society itself.
- *Social cleavages*: The civil war in Sri Lanka is an expression of existing social, political, economic and cultural structures and it affects every aspect of life in the

war zones. The conflict is an outcome of a prolonged and often violent struggle by communal (ethnic) groups (Sinhalese, Muslim, Tamil) for such basic needs as security, recognition, acceptance and equal access to political institutions.

- *Predatory social formations*: The ethno-nationalist nature of the conflict has triggered a virulent loyalty to one' s own communal group and strong feelings of antipathy towards other groups. 'Conflict entrepreneurs' and political opportunists often seek to reinforce ethnic identities and promote ethnicity as a defining feature for individuals and society.

Thus, the civil war in Sri Lanka can be described as a complex political emergency or a protracted social conflict as it is rooted in, and is an expression of, existing social, political, economic and cultural structures. It involves every dimension of society and the lives of the people in the conflict zones of Sri Lanka (mainly the Northeast). It is ethnicised or ethno-nationalist in nature, characterised by loyalty to one particular communal group, accompanied by strong antipathy towards other communal groups living within the same state.

2.2 Incentives and Disincentives for violence

Discussing the reasons for the eruption and protracted duration of civil wars, political economists have disagreed whether conflicts are driven by grievance, i.e. inequality, exclusion and poverty, or by greed, i.e. the ability to extract wealth out of violence and war (cf. Berdal and Malone 2000). In the broad debates on conflict, it is mainly argued that uneven development processes and extreme inequality contribute to grievances, particularly, when poverty coincides with boundaries along ethnic, regional or class lines. These underlying grievances might then explode in open conflict, when triggered by external shocks (cf. Goodhand 2001).

Collier (2000b), the main scholar of the greed argument, claims that civil wars occured when rebel groups are financially viable. Anthropological literature has argued similarly with the notion of markets of violence (Elwert 1997), where predatory formations extract economic rents through violence, and hence, do not have a real, 'honest' political agenda (e.g. social justice) for fighting the war. Jean and Rufin (1999), however, have warned to reduce civil wars to economic functions and stress that the causes of conflicts largely remain political, but that, due to the protracted duration, rebel groups would have to search for viable income sources to fund their activities and organisation. Greed might be essential to sustain warfare, but the original causes of conflict are still largely political. In this line, Keen (2000) argues that rather than stressing the dichothomy of either greed or grievance, it would be essential to understand the interactions and synergies between both.

What is important from this debate for our analysis of property rights in protracted conflicts is that rebel groups use networks of social capital, based for instance on clans or ethnicity, to build group identity and cohesion. Collier argues that conflict needs to actively create divisions (Collier 2000a). Rebels generate grievances and the associated groups. Ideology is utilised as tool of a rent-seeking strategy for predatory leaders, perhaps. In many cases, conflict entrepreneurs integrate existing social networks in their

ideology and war economy. Goodhand (2001: 26) indeed notes that they appear to have ‘an extremely nuanced understanding of community dynamics and how social capital [networks] can be mobilised for [their] perverse outcomes’. Keen (1998) distinguishes top-down economic violence, incited by political leaders and entrepreneurs, from ‘bottom-up’ violence, which is embraced by ‘ordinary’ people (civilians and low-ranking officers), which, according to his analysis of civil wars in Africa, is triggered largely by deep social and economic exclusion, absence of strong revolutionary organisation, and impunity for violent acts. Opportunistic behaviour can become extremely rewarding in such predatory war economies.

The debate on the political economy of war shows that complex political emergencies combine both, a rent-seeking war economy, and emotionalised ideologies and grievances, which are, however, often captured by conflict entrepreneurs as an instrument to stabilise their realm of power.

3 Analytical Framework: Livelihood Systems and Entitlements

Even under the conditions of civil war, people are not helpless victims in dire need of assistence, but dispose of (though) limited assets and opportunities to make use of them for survival. The livelihood system approach is an approach for understanding the interplay of the different factors in a household’s livelihood (3.1).[iv] The notions of entitlements (3.2) and of social and political capital (3.3) are crucial to understand the functioning of livelihoods.

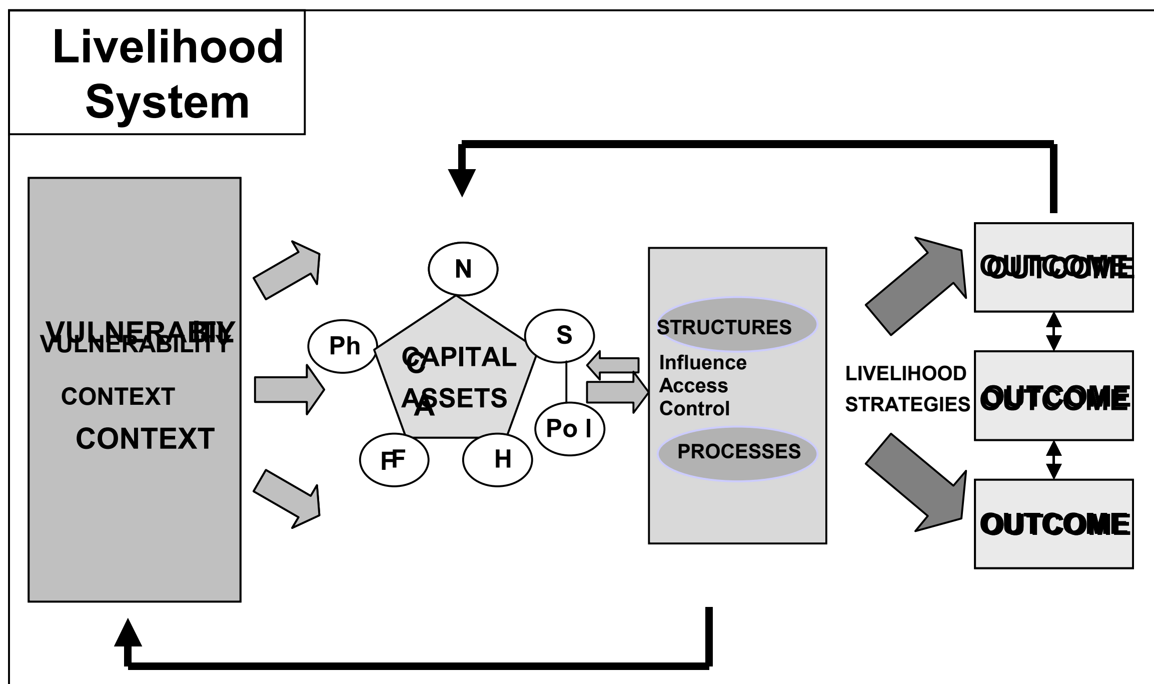
3.1 Livelihood System Approach

The Livelihood System Approach (LSA) is a way of thinking about the objectives, scope and priorities of development and is promoted by the British government's Department for International Development (DFID 2000).[v] The approach is a combination of various concepts in participatory research and draws on the work of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The framework of the LSA was intended to improve understanding of the mechanisms of rural livelihoods and the impacts of policy measures upon them. In addition, the livelihoods systems approach is useful as an analytical tool in observing and understanding behavioural patterns of individuals, households and communities in complex political emergencies.

The major strength of the LSA is that it does not perceive people as vulnerable and helpless victims, but as dynamic actors, which adapt to trends and cope with shocks imposed through external conditions, their *vulnerability context*. The vulnerability context contains the natural, social, economic, political and cultural conditions which determine the life of people. These factors can hardly be influenced by a single villager or community itself. This, however, does not mean that the vulnerability context is static. It is indeed very dynamic. In complex political emergencies, the impacts from violence, the presence of militant actors and economic decline become predominant for village life and strategies to secure livelihoods. The occurence of sudden shocks superimposes a gradual downward economic, political and social trend.

Livelihood strategies are determined by how individuals combine their assets in order to arrive at certain results (outcomes). People employ various sets of social, economic and political livelihood strategies to derive certain outcomes. These strategies are realised through the activities, assets and entitlements by which individuals capture their livelihood opportunities. Even under difficult circumstances, people still are able to make a choice out of a bundle of options, and to access resources for their livelihoods activities. Individuals thereby make use of their capital assets (physical, natural, human, financial, social and political).[vi] Apart from the vulnerability context, transforming structures and processes will influence and shape behavioural patterns of people. What 'structures' (organisations, laws, rules, policies) can be found in the livelihood context and how are these structures functioning or applied ('processes')? Transforming structures and processes – or institutional arrangements - are critical in determining who gains access to or influence on which assets and to define the actual value of certain assets. Markets and legal restrictions have a profound influence on the extent to which one capital asset can be converted into other types of capital assets. This leads us to the concept of entitlement discussed in the following section.

Figure 1: The Livelihood System



Source: Department for International Development (DFID 2000), modified by the author

It is therefore essential to assess the feedback loops (positive and negative impacts) of the different livelihood outcomes on the capital assets, and in the longer term on structures and processes. While resource management tends to emphasise the environmental effects of coping strategies and outcomes for the livelihood system, it is equally important to

look into the social, economic and political feedback loops to the household capital assets (positive as well as negative).

3.2 Entitlements and Property Rights

It was Amarthya Sen (1981) who introduced the notion of entitlements into development economics, in particular for famine and poverty analysis. At the time, he was predominantly concerned with legal ownership of commodities. Subsequently, Devereux (1996) criticised what he views as fuzziness in the understanding of Sen's entitlement approach and stressed the importance to clarify units of analysis (individual, household, community etc.) and property rights. He develops a hierarchy of claims or property rights over a resource or commodity, ranging from influence (weakest), access, control up to ownership (strongest). Control refers to rights of determining use and exclusion, access to possibilities of use, and influence is only a limited say over access and control. In this logic, ownership includes all influence, access and control rights.

Furthermore, it is instrumental to differentiate between entitlement and endowment within common property regimes. Devereux (1996) distinguishes endowment as ownership, control or access to the resource from entitlement, which is the ownership etc. of the benefits and utilities derived from a resource. Formal and informal institutional arrangements (structures and processes) shape the process of endowment mapping and help mediate the disputes which may arise between different resource claimants. The question is who ultimately gets the effective command over making actual economic use of a resource and its products. These entitlements are influenced by the interplay of institutions (e.g. customary rules, division of labour, dispute resolution mechanisms) and often result from negotiations among social actors involving power relations and debate over meaning (Gore 1993). Local institutions can either promote or hinder the mobilisation of some endowments (e.g. social capital) that are necessary to make effective use of others (e.g. natural capital). The entitlements which are derived from endowments in turn enhance people's capabilities, i.e., what people can do or be with their entitlements (Leach et al. 1999).

3.3 Social Capital, Political Capital and the Capture of Institutions

The concept of 'social capital' has become more and more popular in the discussion of rural development and collective action (cf. for example Ostrom 1994), but remains contested amongst social scientist (cf. Hariss 2001). In the various approaches to understanding and defining social capital, we can distinguish an individualistic approach (cf. Bourdieu 1992) and a social systems perspective (Putnam 1993). Bourdieu (1992) understands social capital as the potential and actual resources associated with networks and relations an individual can mobilise for his or her benefit. Bourdieu's approach looks particularly at the exclusionary forms of social capital. Putnam (1993) claims that social capital understood as networks of civic engagement is instrumental for a society to solve social dilemmas. Coleman (1988) explored both aspects of social capital. What is striking is the widespread perception that social capital, understood in the collective view, is something *per se* positive, (cf. e.g. Putnam 1993, Ostrom 1994). Hariss (2001) hypothesises that the normatively positive terms social capital and civil society were so attractive, because they offered a somewhat peaceful picture of democracy without

accepting the contestational politics and clashes of ideas and interests, which are equally part of democratic societies.

In the subsequent analysis, I understand social and political capital as individual endowments and entitlements, which determine the individual person's access to and influence on the transforming structures and processes (viz. institutional arrangements) in the livelihood system model (Figure 1), and thereby, the ability to make use of certain resources to carry out livelihood strategies and to achieve outcomes. In the capital assets of each household (or individual), we can distinguish social and political capital assets: Social capital of an individual is the asset to make use of family, clan and neighbourhood support in a community. Social capital therefore looks at the social entitlements of an individual on a horizontal level. Political capital, on the other hand, determines the access to and influence on larger institutions in society, particularly the administrative, political and military power holders. Political capital is thus a vertical link and looks at how individuals are able to capture resources and political advantages through patronage networks on a horizontal level.[vii]

4 Effects of Conflict and Violence on Livelihoods and Land Tenure

What is specific about living in complex political emergencies, and how do the political and economic circumstances affect land tenure as an institution? This is the guiding question for Section 4. In Sri Lanka, the civil war is one important vulnerability context for livelihoods and has dramatic effects on the household assets. It also alters the structures and processes, which determine the endowments and effective entitlements of households to use their assets. This has clear impacts on people's behaviour and their livelihood strategies.

The main effects of the war can be summarised as follows:

- increased risk and uncertainty,
- deformation and disruption of social networks,
- decline in effective entitlements,
- fuzzy property rights.

These four features have a fundamental bearing on the behaviour of people and reduce the livelihood options and the portfolio of household strategies considerably. With a view on the situation in the war-torn areas of Sri Lanka, I will discuss the role of risk and vulnerability for livelihood strategies (Section 4.1), the effects of the conflict on social networks (Section 4.2) and on household entitlements (Section 4.3). Finally, I will elaborate how property rights are effected by the civil war, with a focus on land use rights (Section 4.4).

4.2 Risk and Uncertainty

The major effect of war on livelihood systems is an increase in uncertainty and risk. In a vulnerability context shaped by random violence and the rule of armed forces and gangs, it can become a risk of life to continue livelihood activities based on agriculture or

fisheries: paddy (rice) lands are partly in insecure areas close to the jungle (and thus under control of LTTE), while the security forces impose restrictions on fishing due to activities of the sea tigers. Furthermore, people have experienced displacement, having to flee homes to the jungle or other areas of Sri Lanka during sudden eruption of fighting or violence.

It seems hence that the lack of stability be a main feature of a complex political emergency such as the civil war in Sri Lanka. According to the vulnerability concept, households face three elements of livelihood risks (adapted from Chambers 1989, Bohle 1993):

(i) *Exposure to crises, stress and shocks*: In civil wars, political shocks are the most prominent feature, while we can also observe long-term declining trends (dilapidation of infrastructure, decline of agricultural production).

(ii) *Inadequate coping strategies*: Civilians have very limited possibilities to cope with severe consequences of violence and fighting (political shocks). The main strategy seems to be leaving the arena of struggle (displacement, migration) by those who have the means to do so.

(iii) *Severe consequences*: The shocks and crises, households experience in CPE, seriously harm the recovery potential of households to prevent a deterioration of their (re-) productive potential. A reduced (mentally, socially and economically degraded) situation becomes normalcy.

Livelihood strategies will differ with regard to whether people have to deal with gradual trends or sudden shocks (Rennie & Singh 1996):

- Adaptive strategies denote changes which are more or less conscious and deliberate in the way people adjust livelihood strategies to long term changes and challenges (trends).
- Coping strategies are short-term responses to periodic stress or sudden shocks to both natural and political hazards.

In complex emergencies, there is an overlap of adaptive and coping strategies. However, due to the high incidence of sudden shocks, it is coping strategies that determine the daily survival of people to a great extent. In many cases, coping strategies with a focus on short-term survival might not be sustainable in the long term. In protracted social conflicts, however, the duration of violence and political crises urges people to stick to unsustainable coping strategies due to the high incidence of insecurity and risk. Hence, over time, coping strategies may evolve into adaptive strategies. Goodhand (2001) points out that coping strategies collapse more often when associated with violence than with environmental or economic shocks, since conflict entrepreneurs might systematically undermine survival strategies.

4.3 Anti-social Capital

One much debated issue is the impact of conflict on the social networks of a society.[viii] Social capital, i.e. the individual's access to support, trust and co-operation among families, kin and communities, is a crucial element for livelihood strategies. A protracted conflict can undermine and even destroy social capital: In complex political emergencies, conflict entrepreneurs – new political actors legitimised by the rule of force and violence - often play a fundamental role in determining access to resources. They often patronise their own clientele (their own ethnic group) and thus reinforce intra-ethnic identities and inter-ethnic grievances. Conflict entrepreneurs could thus use their oligopoly of violence to discourage civic engagement and intimidate the citizens. Goodhand and Hulme (1999) use the term 'anti-social' capital and anti-social networks to denote these forms of engagement which triggers factionalism and sustain warfare. They assume that anti-social networks might be established comparatively quickly, while the incremental process of building up social capital and societal bonds is a long-term process.

In the war-torn areas of Sri Lanka, militant groups have largely imposed a war economy: the LTTE and other Tamil militant parties intimidate the population and establish a taxation system, while soldiers at army checkpoints claim bribes from farmers, traders and fishermen. Traders with close networks to political and military power holders have imposed economic oligopolies which disfavours the agricultural producers (cf. Goodhand and Lewer 1999; Korf et al. 2001).

4.4 Conflict and Entitlements

War has a range of impacts on the entitlements of poor people, which is a serious challenge to traditional coping pattern. Goodhand (2001) analyses household entitlements in war conditions and distinguishes direct entitlements from market, civic, public and extra legal entitlements. He identifies an increased dependence on direct entitlements from subsistence production, because markets get largely disrupted and transaction costs increase (market entitlements). Civic entitlements, i.e. the social capital of an individual to receive support from family, neighbourhood and community, becomes more refined towards smaller and closer groups, because of lack of trust. Especially displacement seriously distracts social bonds and thus the social capital of individuals. Furthermore, the deterioration of social safety nets can also be the result of a conscious strategy of war.

In Sri Lanka, the state continues to provide important sources of public entitlements for the war-affected population in the North and East. Basic welfare programmes (food stamps) mitigate at least some of the effects of the conflict (cf. O'Sullivan 1997, Goodhand 2001). Extra-legal entitlements in the form of trafficking, smuggling, but also robbery and Mafia activities become more and more important also for rural people, who employ opportunistic behaviour to acquire their share in the market of violence or they simply use the fuzziness of the whole political situation for their survival.

4.5 Fuzzy Property Rights

Secure rights of access to land form the basis of smallholder agrarian livelihoods. Land also is an important component of more diverse livelihood strategies for vulnerable households which rely on wage labouring in agriculture (cf. Quan 1998). Communities' rights to common pool resources (CPR), such as forests or aquatic resources, merit consideration due to their importance especially for the poorer households. Secure land entitlements are a precondition for the resilience of livelihoods, viz. the capacities of households to absorb shocks and to adapt to stresses induced by climate, price instability, unemployment and, in complex emergencies, political crisis. The degree of security in land use rights and resource endowments has a fundamental impact on the livelihood options of households, and consequently on their planning possibilities and investment decisions. Local conflicts over resources often intensify during protracted conflicts, mostly because the resource stock becomes more scarce, in particular the resource stock which is accessible and can be utilised.

Complex political emergencies cause changes in the structure of land occupation due to population displacement and land seizures. Furthermore, existing governance structures at local and regional level might collapse or are seriously undermined in enforcing the rule of law. Conflict is often rooted in inter-group competition over land and resources. In post-conflict situations, it is essential to establish tenure institutions which can resolve land disputes and tenure claims in a transparent and 'neutral' manner. Land tenure arrangements and the reliability of land use rights determine land use patterns and the utilisation of land resources. It is therefore essential to distinguish between the rights, entitlements or endowments to land use and the physical and economic utilisation of land resources which are an outcome of these institutional arrangements.

In the war-torn areas of Sri Lanka, property rights to land come under direct threat and reduce the effective access and control of farmers on resource stocks and the possibility to make economic use of their household capital assets. The armed forces have restricted the movement of persons and goods to certain areas. Furthermore, the security risk prevents people from entering certain areas for cultivation, in particular those close to jungle area which is mostly under LTTE control. Militant parties also determine the utilisation of open-access resources. All these constraints prevent an efficient economic utilisation of land resources.

In such times of uncertainty and distress, people might rather concentrate on short-term survival than on sustainable management of natural resources. Opportunistic and free-riding behaviour and moral hazards might become more prominent, partly due to the short-term horizon, and partly due to the decline of social bonds. Individuals realise that it might not be worthwhile to invest in their social capital, since it will not yield much benefit under the given circumstances. Mutual support might concentrate on the close family rather than the wider community. The 'tragedy of the commons' (Hardin 1968) might become even more tragic under such conditions.[ix]

5 Case Studies on the Political Economy of Land Use Rights in War-affected Communities of Sri Lanka

I will now employ empirical findings of qualitative, comparative village research from the Trincomalee district in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.[x] The district has been subject to communal violence between the three dominant ethnic groups, Sinhalese, Muslims and Tamils. The Trincomalee district provides a good example for the complexity of civil wars, since it is a cocktail of various intertwined conflicts. The dominant feature is the civil war between the Sri Lankan armed forces dominated by the Sinhalese, and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Apart from this war, which shapes and dominates everyday life (fighting, army road blocks, security restrictions), there are resource conflicts mainly between Tamil and Muslim villagers, and the historical grievances of Tamils towards the Sinhalese settlements in the interior of the district, which was one of the triggers for the escalation of the Tamil-Sinhalese conflict.

In Sri Lanka, it was in particular state-led land colonisation in the Eastern Province[xi] which had an important impact on the entitlements of Tamils, because it triggered alienation of the Tamil population from the state and general grievance towards the government and the majority ethnic group (Cf. Goodhand 2001). Grievances over land resource distribution in large-scale settlement schemes (e.g. Mahaveli, Gal Oya, cf. Klingebiel & Rösel 1999) have been major reasons for the ethnicised conflict and its escalation of communal violence in the East. In the war-affected areas of Sri Lanka, land use for agricultural production has been severely affected by the conflictbecause people had to abandon their land or cannot access it due to the war. The current volatile and fuzzy land entitlements seriously threaten the societal bonds across communal boundaries, constrain development efforts and contribute to confirm old and create new socio-political cleavages among the communal (ethnic) groups in the Trincomalee District.

What are the main impacts of conflict on land use patterns and household capital assets in the research area? The protracted war has seriously harmed the access to resources and the economic opportunities to make use of those which are still accessible. The two main effects on land use patterns are:

- Limited access to land and jungle resources: The security risk prevents people from going to fields close to jungle area or to make use of the jungle resources, since they suspect LTTE presence in the jungle. In some cases, the armed forces do not allow villagers to access certain areas. The LTTE, on the other hand, restricts the use of certain resources (e.g. fire-wood collection in the jungle). In some cases, the villagers' homes are located on one side of the borderline between LTTE and government controlled area, and the paddy fields on the other. In tense times, people are then reluctant to pass the checkpoints to access their land resources.
- Abandoned natural resources due to displacement and migration: Many people have left the district to escape from the unstable security situation. These migrants

or the displaced are often those who were more affluent in former times. They leave their land and assets behind.

However, the impacts of war on land tenure arrangements bear significantly different outcomes depending on locations, ethnic affiliation and other factors. It is essential to analyse the reasons behind the different outcomes and to derive the key issues, which could explain the striking differences in institutional arrangements. For my analysis, I have selected four villages in the Trincomalee district, which all four have distinct features of their own.

5.1 Coping for Survival

How do people manage to survive after extreme alteration of their resource base and property regimes? Two case studies from Trincomalee reveal that the outcomes differ largely even though the effects are dramatic in both locations. In one case, villagers were able to capture new opportunities and to stabilise their livelihoods (though at a low level), while in the other case, the villagers were unable to capture new economic opportunities and remained in the poverty trap, squeezed between powerful militant actors (5.1.2).

5.1.1 Ithikulam: Turning Threats Into Opportunities[xii]

The first case looks into a village in uncleared area. 'Uncleared area' is a term to denote those regions in the Trincomalee district, which are under full control of the LTTE. Entrance to these areas requires a pass from the Ministry of Defence in Colombo. The army has imposed restrictions on the transport of persons and goods into these areas, and army checkpoints control the flow of goods and persons.

Ithikulam village was formed by displaced villagers from an ancient village, Sreenivasapuram, which is three kilometres from Ithikulam and situated at the very border of the uncleared area. Before 1985, when the villagers lived in their original village, they cultivated paddy as tenant farmers on lands which are situated in the cleared area. In 1985, the army established a military camp close to Sreenivasapuram and fighting between army and LTTE occurred frequently. During each attack, villagers were temporarily displaced and then returned to the village after a few days. The situation became increasingly more difficult when villagers had to pass the checkpoint to cultivate their fields in the cleared area. In response to the insecure living conditions, most villagers moved to Ithikulam and engaged in highland rainfed cultivation and other income earning activities for their livelihood. Although the army requested villagers to return to Sreenivasapuram to occupy the deserted houses, only those villagers who owned a permanent house returned and the poorer people of the community remained in Ithikulam.

The *vulnerability context* (see Figure 1) of the village is shaped by two major factors: dependence on external economic actors and the presence of both conflict parties which restricts the mobility of people and goods and has created fear and desperation. On the other hand, the irrigation schemes in the surrounding areas provide opportunities for wage labouring in paddy fields. We can associate adaptive strategies with long-term trends and coping strategies dealing with sudden deterioration of the security situation.

As an important agricultural activity and income source, farm families cultivate diversified highland crops which has several advantages in this context. It also shows how rural households adapt to the increased baseline vulnerability in uncleared areas: highland cultivation demands lower investment and reduces thus the dependence on loans, which are only available to unfavourable conditions (high interest rates or dependence on traders). This ensures households a subsistence on highland crops and a reliable, though moderate income during the cultivation period of five months.

Furthermore, households engage in alternative income-earning activities, in particular wage labouring in paddy fields in neighbouring villages in cleared area, thus supplementing their cash and paddy income. Highland cultivation allows sufficient flexibility in household labour allocation since women and children also work on the fields, an uncommon feature in paddy cultivation. How do villagers cope with a deterioration of the security situation or with sudden shocks? Some households change their cropping pattern and cultivate corn (maize) in tense times, since they can store this crop more easily and thus can assure subsistence of food throughout the year, even though at this low level, when they cannot access outside markets. Another coping strategy is their preference to send women to the market which is on the other side of the borderline in cleared area, since men are afraid of harassment by the armed forces. These coping strategies appear to allow households to secure a basic subsistence even during tense periods.

In addition, villagers have to cope with the demands of armed actors in the form of taxes or bribes, which is often a precondition for carrying out livelihood activities. People in Ithikulam normally satisfy these claims and, as a consequence, have to accept reduced profits. The LTTE has developed its own rules and regulations to compensate for the destablishment of civil law and order. Problems between the villagers are not brought to the Sri Lankan police but to the LTTE and their court. Inquiry, arrest, judgment, imprisonment etc, are carried out by LTTE according to their rules of law in addition to restrictions on the exploitation of natural resources like jungle, wood, sand, and land, as well as rubble. The LTTE has introduced a permit system for exploitation, where payments have to be made to the LTTE to make use of these resources. In addition taxes are imposed on cart owners, big scale cattle keepers, paddy farmers, government staff and wealthy people.

It is essential to note that the social and political capital in Ithikulam is limited. The village does not have any community-based organisations (CBOs) to access external funds and agencies. There does not appear to be any established social or religious body to promote social and religious matters and thus provide the base for a social network in the community. In addition, people in Ithikulam have no access to politicians and other power holders. With regard to land use rights, only a few farmers possess legal documents for land titles. Nevertheless, people feel that their land is secure through an informal system of assurance, since all villagers know from each other who cleared which land and neighbours can therefore stand as witnesses in case of disputes. Meanwhile, land is informally split up for dowries and is thus fragmented. However, informants clearly pointed out that the LTTE controls the clearing of land for cultivation

and enforces rules on the use of jungle resources (e.g. firewood collection). Nevertheless, villagers also approached the cultivation officer (CO) in order to apply for permits – and subsequently gain – titles for their land. It appears that farmers seek title documents from both parties in order to be on the safe side regardless of who will be the future power holder in the area. Some Tamil farmers started cultivation of Muslim lands close-by, which was abandoned because the LTTE does not allow Muslims to enter their area. However, after one cultivation period, the LTTE did not grant permission for such practices any more and farmers did not dare to continue cultivation on these lands.

In the case of Ithikulam, villagers were able to convert an externally imposed threat (conflict) into a new economic opportunity: highland cultivation ensures a reliable, though moderate income and has enabled some of the villagers to increase their financial capital and in turn to invest in house building in their village of origin, thus re-establishing their physical and social capital. Tenant paddy cultivators in the surrounding villages, on the other hand, reported that they cultivated at very low profits due to the high cultivation costs imposed on them due to more expensive inputs (transport to uncleared area), unfavourable loans and marketing conditions (traders' cartel in Thop-pur).

5.1.2 Kumpurupitty: Missing the Onion Boom[xiii]

Kumpurupitty is a Tamil village at the coastal belt of the Trincomalee district. The village consists of a traditional community and of Indian Tamils, new settlers originating from the plantations in the center of Sri Lanka, who fled the living conditions in the plantation sector and the rising perceived threat among Tamils in that area.

The vulnerability context in Kumpurupitty is characterised by a dichotomy of, on the one hand, great economic opportunities and a very tense security situation with a high level of risk and uncertainty. Kumpurupitty is located in an officially cleared area, which is still non-stabilised with high presence of and frequent clashes between the conflict parties. The Sri Lankan armed forces suspect almost every Tamil male below a certain age of possible collaboration with the LTTE or even of being one of them. This places male Tamils in a very susceptible and vulnerable position and spreads fear and desperation. As a consequence, most families who have the means to live somewhere else, have left the area. The poor often had to come back after being temporarily displaced several times in the late 1980s and early 1990s during escalation of violence, because they did not have enough assets to start a new life somewhere else.

With regard to land tenure, the conflict has dramatically altered the situation in Kumpurupitty. The paddy fields, traditional backbone of the pre-war economy, are not accessible, because they are close to the jungle where the LTTE has the upper hand. Consequently, farmers are afraid to go to these areas, and, in addition, the army does not allow them to go their in any case. This disrupts farm families not only from paddy fields, but also from the jungle as an open access resource for various complementary income sources. However, in such desperate situation, the conflict has provided a great economic opportunity to these coastal areas, due to the disruption of the Jaffna onion production

from the national markets. Onion cultivation is high investment farming with high returns, and high economic risk.

Many of the wealthier landowners did not return to Kumpurupitty (yet). A considerable amount of the highland is therefore currently abandoned (absentee landlords). Some villagers have encroached either these abandoned lands or state land, which is tolerated by the government authorities. Encroachment in abandoned land is informally confirmed through annual land permits issued by government authorities. Procedures are not transparent and prone to patronage and nepotism, since it is the authorities in charge deciding in which case they are out-ruling formal law and granting informal arrangements. Especially encroachment on abandoned land is a sensitive issue, since it is not clear how claims of returning landowners are dealt with. This bears a high breed of potential land disputes in a post-conflict period.

A large number of households own highland, which is suitable for onion cultivation, either as private deed land or as alienated state land. Many landowners, however, do not utilise their land themselves, but lease the land out to tenants from Nilaveli, a larger village with more wealthy farmers, who have the required financial capital for investment. At the same time, landowners keep the right to work as wage labourers on their own land for the tenant. The tenancy arrangements are based on a fixed rent to be paid in cash in advance for one cultivation season. Landowners thus externalise or outsource the cultivation risk to the tenants. Traditionally, crop sharing was coming as a tenancy arrangement, but a general trend in all research locations was to shift towards fixed land rents. A hypothesis behind is that crop sharing requires trust between landowner and tenant, whereas a fixed rent is easier to control and handle by the landowner. Furthermore, landowners avoid long-term tenancy relations, since they fear that tenants cultivating land for a long time could claim ownership of the land.

Social ties are very weak in Kumpurupitty. Repeated displacement has destroyed old bonds, and, in addition, former community leaders have largely left the area or are reluctant to expose themselves as leaders again. This is easily understandable, since, as Klem 2001 reports, the navy has several times detained influential village leaders, if these became too powerful in mobilising people (and initiating demonstrations against the practice of the navy forces to detain young Tamil boys suspected of collaboration with LTTE).

In Kumpurupitty, outsiders capture the economic opportunity of the onion boom, since local farmers are hesitant to invest due to either the security risk, a lack of entrepreneurial spirit or lack of investment capital. The tenants have little incentive for sustainable land use practices, since they only receive tenancy contracts for a short period. They externalise the negative environmental effects[xiv] of onion cultivation to the landowner. It is interesting to note that farmers in Nilaveli, who are also living in a tense area, nevertheless, take the economic courage to invest in onion cultivation and reap a high profit.

5.2 Grievances over Land

Land use disputes can take a very serious level in the ethnically mixed district, in particular, if ethnicised issues seem at stake. I will analyse two case studies of escalated land conflicts, which both underline the rising importance of political networks with powerful militant actors for institutional arrangements in resource management.

5.2.1 Kalyanapura: Fragile Prosperity on the Fringe of Power[xv]

Kalyanapura is a Sinhalese settlement and border village,[xvi] which has suffered from frequent attacks from LTTE. Its main agricultural resources are based on a tank system, which provides water for paddy (rice) cultivation. In the face of increasing insecurity due to war, farmers have adopted several strategies to reduce the security risk of cultivation:

- A considerable number of villagers reside outside the village and stay with relatives in their places of origin. They return only during the cultivation periods to their fields in Kalyanapura. Some lease their land out to tenants.
- Other farmers hire Muslim wage labourers for harvesting work, since this communal group is less susceptible to LTTE attacks than the Sinhalese farmers. Farmers thus outsource their personal risk of life to others.
- In general, farmers in Kalyanapura work in the fields in groups to reduce the security risk. The external threat has thus strengthened traditional forms of labour sharing as a means of risk minimisation.
- During tense times, the army protects the fieldwork of farmers during daytime.

The conflict has provided employment opportunities in the form of home guard services, i.e. young villagers guard the community at night and receive weapons and salaries for this service from the government. Many households therefore feel little economic incentives to diversify their agricultural activities and confine themselves to paddy cultivation, since home guard employment secures a steady cash income.

The case of the Behethkawewewa tank provides some important insights about how land tenure arrangements are handled by the various actors. Behethkawewa is an abandoned tank, which was recently rehabilitated with funds from an international agency. Farmers of Behethkawewa contributed labour in food-for-work schemes during construction work. After the construction work was completed, the government authorities were reluctant to distribute the land to the farmers, especially landless families, due to unclear land ownership of those earlier cultivating under the tank. The farmers in Kalyanapura, however, have a strong local farmer organisation with a wise and influential leader, who approached various powerful administrators and politicians at district level to support a solution in their favour. They argue that, since it is them staying in insecure areas unlike other more wealthy farmers who have left the area and only come for cultivation, they would have a moral right to utilise the land.

Farmers in this case seek alliances with power holders for the acquisition of land titles. Farmers make use of their strong political capital to derive favourable solutions and occasionally, to relax rules and regulations in their favour. They have patrons at various levels, for example at the top level of administration in the district and with their member

of parliament. They also have a strong local leader who can bundle their political capital and approach the patrons as a strong representative of a united community. Furthermore, their patrons have powerful instruments in hand to urge administrators to take decisions in favour of their clientele. The top administrative official in the district, a Sinhalese, has a close rapport with the army, which protects him from attacks of the LTTE. The army also provides protection to the village as was outlined above: Soldiers have established checkpoints to control the area and are present in the fields during crucial moments of cultivation.

With such powerful supporters in hand, it is quite easy to pressurise administrators to alienate land with unclear property status. What makes this situation look like playing with the fire is the ethnic dimension, which is covered underneath. Tamils in Trincomalee suspect that the land earlier belonged to Tamil families, since Sinhalese settled in the area only in the 1970s, and that the patrons of the farmers, Sinhalese, would try to create facts on the ground by enforcing the alienation of land. The LTTE perceives such strategy as a provocation, and has indicated that it considers attacking the tank in order to destroy it to prevent 'Sinhalese cultivating Tamil lands'. The case is striking, because it revives old rivalry over land and grievances among the communities. Identities along communal lines between 'them' and 'us' are reinforced, which is a serious impediment to conflict transformation on local and regional level.

The Behethkawewewa case is also important to underline how important a conflict impact assessment is to elaborate how projects supported by international donor agencies might contribute (unintentionally) to deepen ethnic grievances and thus causes of conflict, and it would be essential to identify interventions which strengthen civil society, peaceful mechanisms for resource management, and thus local capacities for peace (cf. Heinrich 1999, Anderson 1999).

5.2.2 Menkamam – Dehiwaththa: Grievances over Land[xvii]

The second case looks into a long-standing ethnicised dispute over agricultural land between a Tamil and a Sinhalese village. The Tamil village Menkamam and the Sinhalese settlement Dehiwaththa are located at the borderline between the two communal groups at the interface between Muthur D.S. division and Seruvila D.S. division and have both irrigated paddy land under the Allai Extension Scheme (AES), a large scale irrigation project under the extended Mahaveli scheme. A long-standing land dispute over tank bed encroachment in the traditional tank Menkamam has fuelled grievances between the two communities for over four decades. This case is interesting, since it highlights how politicisation and ethnicisation of land disputes can prevent any constructive conflict resolution on inter-community level. Menkamam – Dehiwaththa are just one example of many similar cases in the area.

Encroachment of grazing land at Menkamam tank started even before 1950 by Tamil farmers, who subsequently sold the land to Sinhalese settlers. In late 1960, a court case demanded the vacation of the encroached land. The illegal cultivation continued regardless of court order, further expanded and water-spread area (tank bed area) too came under eventual encroachment. This situation was even more delicate, because when

water was retained in the tank to its full capacity, illegal cultivation in the tank bed was submerged and when the water was not stored to the full capacity, paddy lands depending on tank water lost proper irrigation. Menkamam villagers complained that, whenever they stored water in the tank to full capacity, Sinhalese farmers from Dehiwaththa would cut the bund and drain the tank water or block the channel, which supplies water to the tank. The problem contributed to gradual building up of enmity and resentment between the two villages.

Both sides utilised networks with power holders to resolve the land dispute in their favour. While the Tamils approach administrators, viz. the divisional secretary and the Department of Irrigation, the Sinhalese counted on the support of the armed forces and the police as well as politicians. What made a resolution of the dispute difficult was that both sides perceived that a settlement would only bring benefits to one of the two conflicting parties, i.e. others' gain would be understood as one own' s loss. The situation has become tenser after the outbreak of the civil war with LTTE as a new player and influential party in the area. Farmers from Dehiwaththa claimed that they were forced to pay taxes to the other conflict party in order to be able to access the fields and cultivate. Farmers from Menkamam, on the other hand, feel threatened by the presence of army, police and home guards in the neighbouring Sinhalese village. They reported that in a few cases, home guards confiscated roaming cattle from Menkamam.

Government institutions in charge of settling tank encroachment were reluctant to take action and responsibility in solving the case and pointed to the responsibility of other institutions or delayed decisions and procedures. They fear that any decision for a conflict settlement could backfire on them and that the powerful patrons of either side (in particular army and LTTE) who might feel disadvantaged might put pressure on them.

5.3 Using Social and Political Capital for Survival in War [xviii]

How the individual and communal social and political capital developed, since the conflict escalated in the early 1980s, differs considerably between the different research locations. [xix] In Ithikulam, a powerful militant actor enforces the rule of law by sheer pressure and the rule of force, which lead to the situation, that collective action takes place successfully, e.g. in reconstruction projects of international agencies, due to a 'forced' mobilisation. On the other hand, villagers in Ithikulam face various burdens to satisfy the claims of armed actors from both conflict parties. In Kumpurupitty, our second case, social bonds within society have declined. The political capital is limited as well, due to the displacement history of this location and the high political risk of potential leaders to expose themselves, which would make them vulnerable to pressure from the conflict parties as a consequence.

In Kalyanapura, strong social bonds within the community are a precondition to make collective use of their strong political affiliation with powerful administrative, political and military actors in order to derive direct benefits. It is the presence of a strong political leader, who can convert the strong social bonds into political capital for the whole community, a form of collective political capital. In the case of the land dispute in Menkamam-Dehiwaththa, both parties have political affiliations to specific actors,

however, none of their patrons is strong enough to achieve a breakthrough. It is a sort of deadlock with the consequence that the unresolved conflict pertains for fourty years. The civil state authorities are divided within the powerful actors and follow a coping strategy of burying their heads in the sand (‘Vogel-Strauss policy’).

Political capital, viz. the ability of a household to access political, administrative or military power holders, largely determines the access to important economic resources, such as marketing networks, fishing grounds, etc. The political capital of households or communities, i.e. the access of farmers to and influence on formal and informal power holders, determines access to resources and relaxation of rules and laws in favour of one party. Can we observe an emerging system of patron-and-client-based political economy of ethnicity? A society at war where market and non-market entitlements of households are increasingly determined by ethnicity and political affiliation contributes to deepening social cleavages and grievances along communal lines and to undermining civic engagement. In the long run, the patronised system of granting informal land use rights, for example, undermines the accountability of government institutions, and thus trust in governmental decisions and arrangements. Villagers might react and try to access political capital (networks with politicians, armed forces or administrators) for their individual benefits. In the long run, this contributes to reduce social bonds and civic engagement on community level, which discourages collective action, since farmers seek individual alliances with power holders rather than co-operative solutions.

Political capital in the research area is heavily ethnicised, providing some communal groups with a comparative advantage with regard to accessing security forces and achieving relaxation of their regulations. This contributes to deepen ethnic grievances and fuels the grass-root causes of communal violence in the eastern province. Social bonds within and across communities are gradually undermined by the increasing importance of political capital: arrangements or disputes are not discussed and solved through intra- and inter-community institutions, but more and more by the rule of the fittest, i.e. those with the stronger link to power holders. It is also apparent that within each (ethnic) community, some are better able to utilise political capital than others. In some cases, strong political capital (e.g. close relations with the army) enable economic ventures, mainly in the field of trade, and thus build the foundation for a strong social position within one’s own community. Political capital leads to enhanced social capital within the own community. However, the strong ethnicisation of entitlements has disrupted inter-ethnic exchange modi, and where they continue to exist, e.g. in the case of Tamil farmers marketing their products through Muslim traders, this is more borne out of lack of alternatives, because, as in the case of marketing, Tamil traders face a whole set of comparative (informal) disadvantages with regard to the institutional arrangements at army checkpoints.[xx] What we observe in a majority of cases, strengthening social capital among the (ethnic) communities, but decreasing social bonds between the communities causes a high toll in political terms, because it constantly reinforces the logics of the civil war.

One important questions needs further careful research: what role cultural (or religious) capital exerts and how it interplays with social and political capital. The conditions of

war challenge the identity of people and there is a hypotheses that this increases the importance of social and cultural capital as a means of re-establishing identity. Investment in religious institutions and symbols (temples) could contribute to strengthen other institutional arrangements at a community level. Religious leaders might be crucial for the political capital of communities in that they determine how villagers can put pressure on power holders and lobby for their interests. The research findings point out that there is a considerable difference between the three main religions in Trincomalee and the role played by the religious leaders to stabilize community life (cf. Korf 2001b). Especially in Tamil villages potential village leaders have either left the area or keep a low profile, i.e. remain invisible, resulting in the of lack of leadership. Exposing oneself implies a high personal risk: Nobody wants to become a 'hero', since this might mean endangering one's own life. In contrast, Buddhist monks (in the Sinhalese villages) and the Muslim clergy play an important role as political leaders and as influential advocates for their communities in regional politics.

6 Conclusions

The livelihood system analysis is useful tool to identify the striking features, which affect resource management of households in war-affected communities. The concept of social and political capital is important to understand transforming structures and process, and to what degree and how individuals can access and influence these. The research findings from Sri Lanka suggest that access to and priority claims for resources are critical in determining differences in coping strategies between villages in complex emergencies and in peaceful areas. The freedom of choice is seriously restricted in the conflict zones due to limited access to resources because of the security situation. Furthermore, in the multi-ethnic context of Trincomalee, the conflict is based on about which (ethnic) community has better access to resources and to support. Research findings confirm that resource entitlements in Trincomalee are 'ethnicised' (cf. Korf 2001a) in the sense that opportunities and access to resources are unequally distributed among the three communal groups, which reiterates perceived grievances among those who feel at the losing end.[xxi]

Political capital as such is not something to be perceived negatively. It is a common feature in democratic societies that groups try to bargain for their interests among political actors. Such venture is, however, politically dangerous if it takes place in a political system of patronage and nepotism, where power is utilized for the advantage of close political and ethnic allies and clans. In the case of Sri Lanka, we can observe how such clientelistic political system seriously endangers movements towards peace building on a macro-level, since the logics of the ethnic conflict are constantly reiterated on local and regional level, which undermines the trust of people in the functioning of local governance. Conflict transformation theories therefore point to the importance of so-called 'track III' strategies and the logic of local empowerment (cf. Reimann 2001): Conflict can be a positive agent for change. Hence, track III strategies aim to support local struggles for social justice as local capacities for peace, which promote conditions for co-operative relationships.

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Notes:

[i] This is a completely revised and extended version of a paper presented at the Friday Seminar, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Colombo on 26 October 2001 (cf. Korf 2001a). The findings go back to a joint study of the Center for Advanced Training in Agricultural and Rural Development (CATAD) at the Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany and the Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP), Sri Lanka, carried out by a German-Sri Lankan research team comprising Rathnayake M. Abeyrathne, K. Devarajah, Dharsanie Dharmarajah, Tobias Flämig, T. Sakthivel, Christine Schenk, Monika Ziebell, Julia Ziegler, with R. Singarayer and the author as team leaders (cf. Korf et al. 2001). Valuable comments from Konrad Hagedorn and Stefanie Engel on an earlier draft are gratefully acknowledged.

[ii] Cf. the KATO project, e.g. Hanisch 2000, Schlüter 2001 for case studies in Bulgaria and the Czech Republic.

[iii] In the Sri Lankan case, which we will investigate a bit closer, we can observe the dichotomy of a peace process when looked at it from the national and the local level. Since the beginning of 2002, the national government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the two fighting parties in this civil war, have gradually approached each other and finally found a truce agreement in March 2002. In Colombo, the capital, benefits for the local population are clear (less police road blocks and controls) and there is a wave of peace feeling, whereas in the war zones in the North and East of the island, people still face many obstacles and feel harassed by the fighting parties. Peace building and conflict settlement has to address the various levels of society and this will be a long-term process.

[iv] Even though I take a household's perspective at this stage, I am aware of the dangers this implies (which Devereux 1996 rightly points out), since it neglects intra-household resource allocation. For the purpose of this analysis of the *inter-communal* differences in property rights, this simplification is, however, justified. The alteration of gender relations through the civil war in Sri Lanka are discussed in Goodhand and Lewer 1999, and in Korf et al. 2001.

[v] For detailed discussion cf. Scoones 1998; Carney 1998; Chambers & Conway 1992.

[vi] The asset approach can be employed for different units of analysis, e.g. community, household, individual. I take here the household as a unit of analysis and will later elaborate on some aspects of individual entitlements and assets, in particular of youth and women in the civil war of Sri Lanka (see also footnote iv)

[vii] The political system in Sri Lanka, though a 'democratic' one, has created wide-spread incentives for clientelism. In exchange for support, political candidates promise direct benefits (jobs, welfare) to their supporters. Dunham & Kelegama (1997) characterise Sri Lanka as a weak state in which patronage, clientelism and populist policies prevail. The situation in the war zones is even more complex, which will become clear in the subsequent chapters.

[viii] In the literature mostly referred to as social capital. To avoid a confusion between the social capital of indivdiuals (in the livelihood system) as we use it in this paper, and the rather vague term of societal social capital (e.g. Putnam 1993), I prefer to talk simplistically of social bonds, which would correspond with Putnam's definition of social capital as networks, norms and trust that facilitate collective action.

[ix] Even though we are aware that, as Devereux (1996) points out, the commons dilemma of Hardin was more a problem of open access resources.

[x] The detailed findings can be found in Korf et al. (2001).

[xi] and education policies which disadvantaged Tamil students, affecting the 'education business' in Jaffna peninsula. Education policies, however, have never been at the forefront of the East, which has a rather low educational standard (cf. O'Sullivan 1997).

[xii] Cf. Ziebell & Ziegler (2001).

[xiii] Cf. Dharmarajah et al. (2001).

[xiv] A survey of the Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP) has revealed the dramatic status of water and soil resources in the onion cultivation area with degrading groundwater quality and declining water tables (cf. Panabokke et al. 2001).

[xv] Cf. Abeyrathne et al. (2001).

[xvi] A border village is a village in cleared area (under control of the Sri Lanka armed forces), but close to the area under control of the LTTE. Such border villages are often attacked or drawn in the middle of fighting and violence.

[xvii] Cf. Devarajah et al. (2001).

[xviii] Birner & Wittmer (2001) describe how social networks can be utilised to build political networks and utilise the case of forest management in Thailand. This confirms that political networks are important determinant in resource management, not only in complex political emergencies.

[xix] The two cases have highlighted disputes between Tamil and Sinhalese villagers, however, there are also cases of disputes between Muslims and Tamils. In fact, it could be observed in the early months of 2002 that in Muthur, a sub-district of Trincomalee, clashes and grievances between Tamils and Muslims escalated, in particular, because Muslim farmers and traders feel increasingly embarrassed by the taxation practice of the LTTE, which extracts rents from them by violence.

[xx] This is partly because the army suspects Tamils to be collaborators of the LTTE, partly, at least it is as such perceived by many Tamils, as a strategy to undermine the economic role of Tamils. Many people in the armed forces extract a rent out of granting the (informal) oligopoly of trade to only a few traders of the Sinhalese and Muslim communities.

[xxi] And I have outlined here only entitlement patterns related to natural resources. An analysis of trade patterns and related economic entitlements in the Trincomalee district would confirm the strong ethnicisation of entitlements and the clear comparative advantages of some ethnic groups due to the possibility to make use of political capital (cf. Korf et al. 2001; Goodhand and Lewer 1999).