



# 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Sri Lanka Studies

“Sri Lanka after the War:  
Prevention of Recurrence, Reaching for Prosperity”

## ABSTRACT

18<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> March 2010  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

*Organized by*  
The Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka and  
The Open University of Sri Lanka

ICSLS

ISSN- 2012-7073

## **The impact of remittances and gendered process of international migration on children left behind: A case study of Kalutara District, Sri Lanka**

Sunethra Perera

Department of Demography, University of Colombo, Colombo, Sri Lanka  
pererasunethra@yahoo.com

Over the last three decades, emigration for foreign employment has shown a trend of increasing and such migration flows are significantly connected with the development process of the country. Previous research has widely discussed the contribution of international migration for mainstream macroeconomic development rather than micro level impacts. Therefore, this paper examines how remittances and gendered process of international migration impact on the children left behind. The study uses empirical data collected in 2008 in Kalutara district in Sri Lanka. The results reveal that remittances significantly improve family income, hence family consumption level and children's education in the short-run while it enhances land ownership, housing condition and local saving and investment in the long-run. Considering gendered process, results show male migration brings greater economic benefits to the household compared to the female migration. Children of migrant fathers receive better quality of life as it involves less social cost compared to children of migrant mothers. However, several other mechanisms such as transition of gender roles, inter-generational relations, modern methods of communication and community social capital are key agents that shape gendered process of international migration by minimizing social cost to the children left behind. The paper concludes with some policy implications on the left behind children in order to prevent negative impacts.

Keywords: international migration; / gender roles; inter-generational relations; social capital; foreign employment