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Forced Resettlement in Turkey: the Ilisu Dam Project

The Ilisu Hydroelectric Dam in Turkey has become a highly controversial project because of its massive displacement impact, at least 55,000 people, perhaps more, displaced physically or economically. In addition, the dam has enormous disastrous effects on historic cultural heritage.

The population displacement and resettlement status of this project is the subject of a recently released important report. The Report is written by the independent Committee of Experts (CoE) on Resettlement for the Ilisu Dam Project, chaired by Professor Michael M. Cernea (USA), which includes also Professor Shi Guoqing (China) and Professor Yavuz Kir (Turkey). This Committee of Experts was appointed by 4 country Governments (Turkey, Austria, Germany, and Switzerland) to oversee the resettlement process. The Report is severely critical of the lack of resettlement preparation and the transgression of international standards and agreements.

Specifically, the Report analyses and documents the state of resettlement unpreparedness, and criticizes the Turkish authorities in charge of the dam. The report points out that the international agreement signed by the Export Credit Agencies of Germany, Switzerland and Austria has in fact been ignored by the Turkish Government and the agreed deadlines for formulating a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) and an Income Restoration Plan were not met. It also shows how the calculation of compensation for land and houses is not in line with international standards and impoverishes those displaced. The Resettlement Report also warns against repeating in Turkey the type of planning mistakes that have doomed resettlement caused by the Narmada Sardar Sarovar Dam in India.

Altogether, this Report is a genuine study of problems typical in R&R preparation, particularly when institutional capacity is weak and compensation is underfinanced and thus incapable of

restoring people's livelihoods. Resettlement practitioners and researchers of India and other Asian countries will find much relevance in this report for their own work on hydropower dams and other projects causing forced displacement.

The Report directly pertains to the Committee of Experts on Resettlement's first field visit to the project site and was submitted by the authors to the Government of Turkey and to the Governments of Germany, Switzerland, Austria and their Export Credit Agencies, which assist Ilisu project.

The Resettlement Report, along with reports on the Environment and Cultural Heritage impacts of Ilisu project, have been posted on the web and are available on the following site:

<http://www.agaportal.de/en/aga/ilisu/ilisu.html> http://www.agaportal.de/en/aga/ilisu/presseinfo/2008-03-05_ilisu.html (Statement of the Government of Germany)

Africa's Dams Not Helping Poor Communities

The barrages are meant to create energy and clean water, but the poor are the losers

Korinna Horta and Lori Pottinger

Ten years ago, the small mountain kingdom of Lesotho in southern Africa became a water exporting country, even though it does not have nearly enough water for its own needs, suffers from recurrent droughts, and a majority of its population has no access to clean water. Indeed, the United Nations last year called for Lesotho to be given emergency relief aid, including water for people and livestock, to address a growing humanitarian crisis.

The country became a water exporter when the Katse dam – Africa's highest dam and the first in the massive Lesotho Highlands water project – began sending water through kilometers of mountain tunnels to South Africa's industrial highland. The theory behind this World

Bank-sponsored project was that a country with a lot of water can earn for poverty-fighting programmes by exporting to a water-strapped neighbour. While the bank's financial support was critical in getting the project off the ground, other institutions – including the British government's Export Credits Guarantee Department – participated in raising the \$3.5 billion for the first phase of this massive project.

However, the promised development benefits for Lesotho have proved elusive. In fact, the country has suffered as its fragile mountain environment has been degraded and native fish and plant species have been pushed towards extinction. At least 27,000 people in the highlands have lost their homes, fields and other vital resources as a result of the project. A further 150,000

people downstream have had their drinking water, farming and fishing affected by reduced river flows.

Income from water exports was to be paid into a development fund that would "share the wealth", but the fund found itself caught in crippling mix of politics and patronage, and was closed in 2003.

Despite a clause to contracts that people should not be made poorer as a result of the project, compensation programmes have been largely ineffective and lost livelihoods have not been restored. An impoverished population, traumatized by pending resettlement, was also highly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS brought in by thousands of migrants building the dams – resulting in a growing population of orphans fending for themselves.

“They promised that our lives would be improved, but instead our dignity has been destroyed,” says a member of the local Survivors of Lesotho Dams group.

As with many large infrastructure projects, corruption was widespread and several prominent companies were found to have bribed project officials to secure lucrative contracts. Unlike most cases of corruption, however, this one took a David and Goliath turn when the Lesotho courts convicted several international consulting and engineering companies for their part in bribery. But the Western backers of the project appear complacent about their own nationals implicated in corruption. The U.K.’s Serious Fraud Office has had evidence against at least one British company for more than a year, but there is no indication when, or if, it will take action.

Africa’s history of large dams is filled with tragedy. Many have caused indebtedness, political inequities, widespread environmental degradation, and have sapped resources from more appropriate, smaller-scale development projects. Now, more megadams are planned

for countries around the world, with support from Western donors and, increasingly, from Chinese, Brazilian, and Indian investors.

The World Bank’s private sector arm, the International Finance Corporation, and the European Union’s European Investment Bank are supporting the controversial \$800-million Bujagali dam, now being built at the site of a beautiful cascade on the Nile in Uganda. As well as impacts on endangered fisheries and local communities, critics question the dam’s ability to provide affordable energy. “The high cost of the project will further limit funds for rural electrification,” says Frank Muramuzi, of the National Association of Professional Environmentalists, in Kampala.

Studies indicate that global warming could reduce outflows from Lake Victoria, affecting hydropower from Bujagali and making project even less viable.

In Mozambique, China and Brazil may cooperate to build a new dam on the Zambezi river, undermining a plan to restore the Zambezi delta and its rich

fisheries, wildlife areas, and farmlands by allowing more natural flows out of existing dams.

But the jewel in the crown that companies from around the globe are eagerly eyeing is the Grand Inga, the world’s biggest dam project, proposed for the Democratic Republic of Congo. At an estimated cost of \$80 billion, Grand Inga will be a magnet for corruption in one of Africa’s least stable region. Its price tag does not include distribution networks needed to supply energy to the long-suffering people of that country. Mining, timber, and other industries will be the main beneficiaries, while poor farmers and fisherfolk who depend on the river’s flow and nutrient-rich sediments will be losers.

Although affordable energy and clean water are critical if poverty is to be reduced, but there is no indication that megadams fill these central needs. Sadly, the current situation means that the poor are largely sidelined by the competition for a share in the global dam-building business. @Guardian Newspapers Limited.

Source: The Hindu, New Delhi, Thursday January 24, 2008 (p 11)

People’s Guide to Understanding Displacement

A major International Accountability Project (IAP) education resource

On 24 April 2008, Joanna Levitt Co-Director from the US-based advocacy organization International Accountability Project (IAP) along with IAP Research Fellow Anthony Fontes presented at the Council for Social Development, New Delhi on the process and findings of drafting their *People’s Guide to Understanding Displacement*—a major popular-education resource on the issue of development-induced displacement and resettlement. IAP advocates for international policies that respect the rights and livelihoods of people threatened by unjust development, and supports communities to defend their homes, environment and human rights (www.accountabilityproject.org).

The *People’s Guide* contains illustrated curriculum for community-level workshops on rights, risks, and organizing strategies relevant to development-induced displacement. The Guide will exist in country-specific versions. India and Cambodia are the first two countries for which the Guide is being drafted, in close collaboration with a number of local organizations. IAP staff shared insights from the over 30 interviews conducted with community leaders, NGO

activists and displacement scholars around India on the critical information and issues that must be covered in the Indian version of the Guide. The brief presentation was followed by a discussion with CSD members, staff and guests about key questions that have arisen in the process. These included:

- Most interviewees emphasized that development-induced displacement is happening at an unprecedented rate and scale in India. Interviewees identified key causes of this increase as: changing legal framework that has shifted more power to private sector and away from citizens and state, including in the realm of land acquisition; geopolitical interests; and growing energy demand. Do you agree? What else is driving this increase?
- During the same time period in which the interviews were being conducted, headlines in world news were focusing on the global food crisis. In this context, it is striking that a disproportionate amount of mega-projects and SEZs currently planned

for India are slated to happen in prime agricultural areas, where they will threaten local food security in favor of extractive and export-oriented development schemes (such as the POSCO project in Orissa). Many interviewees indicated that agricultural land is often acquired because it is already connected to infrastructure such as roads and water, and thus attractive to companies. Why is this being allowed to occur, and what other factors are at play in this trend?

- Across the board, all interviewees emphasized the need for development decision-making that is actually democratic and which genuinely minimizes and avoids displacement. They see hope for reform in growing national and global concern for sustainability, along with the growing movement toward re-valuing local agricultural systems and traditions. What do you see as the most hopeful avenues for moving beyond the dominant development model’s excessive and unjust displacement?

Minefield Ahead

New mineral policy pushes privatization at people's cost

In April 2008, India announced a new national mineral policy (for non-coal and non-fuel minerals). The objective of the policy is to promote privately-owned, large-scale, mechanised mining, preferably by MNCs. The national mineral policy was earlier revised in 1993 as the country then

needed foreign direct investment (FDI). Emphasis on this policy however is mainly on environmental and social issues, which are viewed as obstacles to the development of mining industry. The policy fails to take into account the impact of mining on tribal

cultures and biodiversity. It takes a narrow view of mining as a simple mechanical process, ignoring the fact that mining is creating enormous environmental and social problems and that it is important to address its negative impacts.

Conferences

Social Sciences and Forced Population Displacement

Memphis, Tennessee, 25-29 March 2008

At the 68th Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) held in Memphis, Tennessee, March 25-29, 2008, the International Network on Displacement and Resettlement (INDR) and the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) jointly held an international

conference on displacement and resettlement. Organized by Michael Cernea and Ted Downing, the theme of this conference was 'Social Sciences and Forced Population Displacement'. This section included a plenary session with keynote speakers Professor Michael M. Cernea

(George Washington University) and Professor Theodore Downing (University of Arizona). It also included more than twenty other separate sessions, with notable speakers from around the globe participating and discussing displacement and resettlement issues and concerns.

Postponement of 2008 IUAES World Congress

The 2008 IUAES World Congress, scheduled to be held in Kunming, China, in July has been postponed indefinitely. The

National Research Centre for Resettlement, Nanjing, China had planned to hold a

symposium on resettlement issues on this occasion.

New Publications

Hari Mohan Mathur 2008 **India: Social Development Report 2008 (Development and Displacement)** New Delhi: Oxford University Press/ Council for Social Development

This Report, focused on issues related to development and displacement, examines India's displacement crisis mainly from the perspective of project-affected people who are seldom compensated adequately for their lands and livelihoods that they lose due to development projects, usually lack the voice in decision making forums, and often denied even their basic human rights.

Displacement by development projects has recently emerged as a major development issue causing widespread concern and requiring immediate intervention. The sheer magnitude of the problem is mind boggling – some 60 million people displaced and reduced largely to a state of permanent poverty in India since Independence. The situation is unlikely to improve in the foreseeable

future, given the insatiable hunger of private companies, MNC, and now the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for land fuelled by investor-friendly policies being pursued under the globalization pressures.

In spite of the dismal experience of poor implementation of resettlement policies and plans, the authors of this Report do not consider opposition to every project involving displacement as tenable. No country can develop and at the same time shun all such projects. Instead, the Report emphasises the need to reform resettlement policies and practices in ways that minimize displacement, properly compensate and resettle those forced to relocate, and give the displaced a permanent stake in project benefits.

In addition, the Report highlights

major developments in the social sector that have taken place in the last two years, especially laws concerning the right to information and the right to employment for rural people. It also reports on progress in education and health sectors, and provides an updated social development index (SDI).

The Report includes contributors from a wide background who are well known social scientists, resettlement researchers, development practitioners, and human rights activists. This Report will be an invaluable resource and research tool and will be of particular interest to social scientists, economists, policymakers, planners, administrators, industry managers, MNCs, international development agencies, NGOs and also the media.

Menon-Sen, Kalyani and Gautam Bhan 2008 **Swept off the Map: Surviving Eviction and Resettlement in Delhi** New Delhi: Yoda Press

“The forced eviction of informal settlements in India’s cities is one of the most brutal manifestations of the current reorientation of public policy in favour of privileged interests. While bringing unique depth, quality and humanity to the study of this critical issue, this book also adds a new dimension to the subject by putting it in a feminist perspective.” Jean Dreze, in his endorsement of this book

In January 2004, the Tourism Ministry of the Government of India

announced its plan of developing 100-acre strip of land on the banks of the Yamuna into a riverside promenade, to be marketed as a major tourist attraction in the lead-up to the Commonwealth Games (to be held in 2010). In February and April 2004, homes and community buildings in this area were razed to the ground leaving thousands of people homeless. This book, the outcome of a two-year long research study, tracks the lives of nearly 3,000 of these evicted households who were

relocated to Bawana on the margins of the city, and describes their struggle to live with dignity in the face of assaults on their identities, home, rights and lives. The book presents data and evidence on a wide range of social and economic indicators to show how eviction and resettlement have eroded the rights and undermined the livelihood of resettled families, leaving them in a state of permanent poverty from which escape seems unlikely if not impossible.

ADB 2007 **Capacity Building for Resettlement Risk Management: Final Report** Manila: Asian Development Bank

This publication was prepared in conjunction with an Asian Development Bank (ADB) regional technical assistance (RETA) project on Capacity Building for Resettlement Risk Management, covering three developing member countries in the region, namely, Cambodia, Peoples Republic of China (PRC), and India.

Michael Cernea’s risks and

reconstruction model (RRM) identifies eight risks in involuntary resettlement that, when identified early in the project cycle, can help plan appropriate risk reduction strategies. These risks are: landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, increased morbidity and mortality, food insecurity, loss of common

property resources, and social disarticulation.

The RETA aimed to generate knowledge based on country studies to identify risks and improve the capabilities of ADB and developing member countries to address impoverishment risks associated with involuntary resettlement.

Kalshian, Rakesh (ed) 2007 **Caterpillar and the Mahua Flower: Tremors in India’s Mining Fields** New Delhi: PANOS SOUTH ASIA

One of the most incongruous faces of India’s modern, globalised economy is to be seen in the country’s mineral-rich states such as Orissa and Chattisgarh. As multinational conglomerates walk away with state blessings to prospect for resources under the earth, the original custodians of the land, the Adivasis, find that their homes and livelihoods are being bulldozed to make way for industries. While the lavish lifestyles and expensive tastes of mining moguls are chronicled in minute detail, the struggle of Adivasis seldom gets the attention it deserves. *Caterpillar and the Mahua Flower: Tremors in India’s Mining Fields* attempts to correct that anomaly, with a series of essays that

examine the manner in which mining has ripped apart the ecological, cultural and social fabric that holds Adivasi communities together. The essays expose the murky and underhand state-industry nexus that allows mining companies to function despite blatantly violating rules while also recording the popular Adivasi resistance movements that have sprung up in these parts. The book endeavours to illuminate the dark corners of India’s mining corridor, and hopes to provoke debate and action against a system that allows the ruthless exploitation of a defenceless people for the benefits of the privileged.

RESETTLEMENT News published twice a year in January and July reports on current operational, research and capacity building work in resettlement from around the world. The aim is to disseminate practical experience, information and ideas among those working for resettlement agencies, development research centres, and management training institutes. It is published by the Resettlement News Network- an informal network of individuals with a concern for the fate of people who are forced to relocate due to development projects.

The submission of material relating to any aspect of development-induced resettlement is welcomed, and should be addressed to:

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The Perspectives Team 2008 **Abandoned: Development and Displacement** New Delhi: The Perspectives Team

Displacement has become a fact of life. In the present economic paradigm, it has become synonymous with development. Its inevitability is unchallenged. Even the loudest of its critics regard it as a necessary evil and only ask for rehabilitation of the

displaced, rather than questioning displacement itself. This book questions displacement, and through it, questions the model of development that is being followed in the country and elsewhere in the world.