



## **Developmental Projects, Displacement and Rehabilitation**

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### **Abstract**

Large-scale development projects, such as dams, reservoirs, power plants, highways, plantations, urban redevelopment, and oil, gas, and mining projects, result in the forced relocation and resettlement of millions of people every year throughout the world. The acronym "DIDR" stands for "displacement and resettlement due to development." Inevitably, with progress comes collateral damage. As a nation progresses, it inevitably sacrifices something or someone. In the framework of development projects, the property on which a community formerly lived is acquired by the developer, who then has complete jurisdiction over the site. Wildlife reintroduction and the establishment of biodiversity zones are only two examples of conservation initiatives that displace locals.

**Key Words:** Developmental, Projects, Displacement and Rehabilitation etc

### **Introduction**

Positive results from development programmes have been admired in many nations. Economic expansion and a surplus have become almost synonymous with progress on a global scale. Large-scale irrigation projects and consolidated businesses have been seen as emblematic of this progress, which was meant to lead countries toward modernization and development via the industrialization process. To make up for lost time and catch up to the world's wealthy nations, many countries, especially those in the developing world, are tapping their natural resource bases without much regard for the consequences. There has been a reckless exploitation of natural resources in the name of national or regional development by industrial and commercial interests in cahoots with the state's techno bureaucratic machinery. Therefore, many people in the developing world believe that progress is permanently burdensome. In numerous situations, people have been forced to relocate because of development initiatives. The bulk of the refugees have not been relocated or compensated fairly.

### **A Brief Historical Background**



**DOI : 10.5281/zenodo.7588932**

When planned development was implemented in India in the 1950s, it finally caught up to the country's industrial revolution, which had begun in earnest during World War II. Power, irrigation, and industry initiatives from the first and second five year plans were the true cornerstone of industrialization. Since then, the country's industrialization has proceeded at a rapid clip thanks to the discovery of abundant natural resources across the board and the widespread availability of cutting-edge equipment made possible by increased funding for R&D. Rapid industrialisation has resulted in the widespread relocation of indigenous peoples and the decline of their traditional economies. While the country benefited from industrialization, the indigenous peoples were wiped out by it.

### **Current Scenario**

India has a big number of development projects and, as a result, may also have a large number of people who have been forced to move because of such initiatives. As a result of these construction initiatives, the Indian Social Institute estimates that 213 million people were forced to relocate. The construction of the Sardar Sarovar dam and irrigation complex on the Narmada River is one of the most high-profile and divisive examples of development-induced relocation in India. Local communities have voiced concerns that the government's claims that the Sardar Sarovar Project will irrigate 1.8 million hectares of drought-prone land in Gujarat and 75,000 hectares in Rajasthan and provide domestic water to 2.4 million people are exaggerated and that the projects will displace as many as 320,000 people and affect the livelihoods of thousands more. According to the WBED report, in 1993, 49.6 percent of the overall World Bank budget went toward projects in India. When looking at the causes of population shifts in World Bank projects, we see that dams, irrigation, and canals account for 66.4% of the total, while urban infrastructure, water supply, sewage, and transportation account for 22.6%. The relocation of 4.8% of the population was due to thermal power developments (World Bank, 1993).

### **Development and Displacement**

"If you are to suffer, you should suffer in the interest of the country.

- *Jawaharlal Nehru, speaking to villagers who were to be displaced by the Hirakud Dam, 1948*".

### **Development induced displacement**

Huge infrastructure development projects, such as dams for electricity and irrigation, highways, urbanisation, mining, thermal power plants, etc., have proliferated in India since the



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country gained its independence in 1947, driving the country's economy forward. Large dam proponents argue that only such large-scale projects can help the Indian economy and the lives of millions of people. On the other hand, more than 42 million people in the nation have been uprooted as a result of these changes.

Forced relocation is a primary cause of dams built for irrigation and electricity. About 15 million people throughout the world have to relocate every year because of major construction projects.

Most frequently, those who are already at the bottom of the social ladder are the ones who suffer the most from eviction, and they are not compensated enough for their loss. Several families that have been uprooted have done it several times. Over the last half-century, 50 million Indians have been forcibly relocated in the name of "national" benefit. Parshuram Ray, "Development-Induced Displacement in India," SARWATCH”

### **History of dams and displacement**

The building of massive dams is the primary cause of relocation in India. Millions of people have been uprooted from their homes and places of employment throughout the nation, yet state governments show little interest in helping them with even the most fundamental of needs. The millions of Indians who have been forced from their homes are, in fact, refugees from a conflict that is seldom spoken in public.

The state's apathy might be explained by the fact that "most displaced individuals are assetless rural poor like landless workers and tiny and marginal farmers (Gandhi's last man). More than 40% of the displaced population is thought to be tribal people, even though they only make up 8.08% of India's total population. Twenty percent of the homeless population is made up of Dalits.

Dams and canals have caused devastating and dehumanising displacements. It had a profound impact on the family's livelihood, family, kinship systems, cultural identity, and informal social networks. Even more disturbing is the women's predicament. A lack of a regulatory framework and social protections has left people feeling unsafe and emotionally fragile.

Displaced people were not given enough money to rebuild their lives. Unfortunately, the government's hollow promises have never been realised, and as a result, lives have been lost. In spite of massive investments, the construction of dams has yielded little tangible advantages. While many projects only irrigate 20% of the command area, the human and environmental costs are nevertheless high.



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## **Rehabilitation and resettlement: Policy framework**

Since the 1950s, India has been acquiring vast tracts of land in order to construct massive irrigation, electricity, steel, and heavy industry projects. To make matters worse, we lacked effective legislation to deal with the problems of rehabilitating and resettling the displaced. The Government of India replaced the prior national strategy on rehabilitation and resettlement from 2003 with a new one in 2007 as a result of the growing violence of protests against displacement led by people's organisations and environmental groups.

There hasn't been any policy implemented yet that provides recommendations for dealing with evictions other than moving.

Land Acquisition and Resettlement and Rehabilitation (LARR) Act, 2013 was enacted by the Indian government in August 2013. To ensure that relocation and rehabilitation are not overlooked, the Act integrates these two processes with land purchase. Land may be purchased by the government only if it serves a "public purpose," which is defined below.

The aforementioned laws ensure that individuals who have lost their means of subsistence, such as landless people and renters, are supplied with a full relocation and rehabilitation package. Each household is guaranteed access to clean water, as well as schools, parks, health facilities, roads, and electricity, according to the provisions of the Act. It is now crystal evident that the gramme sabha plays an important role and must be consulted by the government. The government must also follow the Land Transfer Regulations in Schedule V (Tribal) Areas and the Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996. These laws protect the rights of indigenous people and forest dwellers.

## **Damning the dam: Case of Narmada Bachao Andolan**

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) is a prominent anti-dam organisation that opposes multiple large dams being built across the Narmada River in the Indian states of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Approximately 30 large, 135 medium, and 3000 minor dams were built after the government approved them in 1979 per the verdict of the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal (NWDT). Locals were against the massive dam projects because the government not only disregarded environmental regulations, but also had no rehabilitation plans in place. Countless low-income people were being forced to relocate as a result of the dams (dalits and tribals). The debate over whether or not to increase the height of Gujarat's Sardar Sarovar Dam was the movement's primary flash point.

## **Impact of Development Projects**



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The construction of dams has had a number of negative effects, including the disruption of riverine ecosystems and forest ecosystems, the displacement of local populations, and the loss of resources upon which their traditional ways of life rely. However, development, whether organic or induced, often brings both advantages and societal upheaval. Any project that requires people to move will inevitably cause economic, social, and environmental hardships (World Bank, 1990). Numerous studies have also addressed the genuine difficulties and obstacles connected with relocation and rehabilitation, in addition to those that concentrate on the scale of the issue. For example, over the course of around four decades, India's development programmes have displaced more than 20 million people, but only about a quarter of them have been "rehabilitated," according to the study. They are still struggling to make ends meet, and the great majority of India's development settlers have actually fallen into poverty as a result. For the most part, the literature glosses over the problem of gender inequality in relocation efforts. Forced relocation has been demonstrated in a limited number of studies to have disproportionately negative effects on women.

### **Issues Related to Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy in India**

Although many various development projects were launched in India after the nation gained independence, neither the federal nor state governments ever developed a comprehensive programme to handle the problem of population relocation. Resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced had hitherto been relied on ad hoc plans, ordinances, and decrees made for individual States or even projects as the need arose. In the lack of a national Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) strategy, various State governments and ministries of Central Government adopted varying approaches to the issue. Most state governments instead depend on ad hoc administrative directives, which are more in line with the bureaucratic tendency for a case-by-case approach, rather than on legislation or uniform policy. The World Bank was the first major development organisation to take a stand against relocation in 1980 with its policy on "involuntary resettlement." As time has passed, this strategy has been refined and used as a template by a wide range of international organisations. The Bank's stated policy objective is to "restore and, when feasible, enhance the living conditions and earning capacity of displaced individuals." However, the Bank lacks information on the 'living conditions and earning capacity' of displaced people before and after relocation for the overwhelming majority of dams it has financed (World Bank, 1994). Currently, only a few Indian states have resettlement laws, including Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Karnataka. In Orissa, the mining, industrial,



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thermal power, and water sectors each have their own R&R strategy. Due to the lack of coordination, many displaced people were denied the rightful compensation they deserved. Before 2004, there was no overarching strategy to direct the restoration of State-funded irrigation, electricity, mining, etc. projects. In response to the growing number of development projects around the country, the Ministry of Rural Development issued notice No.A.C.Q. 13011/4/2004, establishing national R&R policies for families affected by such projects for the first time. A draught of the National Rehabilitation Policy (NRP) for 2006 has been made public after this announcement's initial release by a few months. For the benefit of the Project Affected People (PAP), especially the marginalised sections of the community, which are soft targets in any development project that displaces people, the Draft NRP 2006 is an attempt to improve upon some of the provisions of the National Development Projects and Displacement in India R&R policy of 2003.

### **Conclusion**

The present global developing process has made displacement inevitable in many places. Infrastructure development, public utility construction, hydropower complexes, irrigation canals, mineral extraction, and other similar projects displace local residents in almost every country. In numerous situations, people have been forced to relocate because of development initiatives. Many people are forced to relocate because of construction projects, most notably dams. From 40 million to 80 million people throughout the globe may be forcibly relocated as a result of this crisis. There are no reliable estimates on the number of people forced to relocate due to development projects throughout the globe. Large dams have been constructed on key rivers in numerous nations as part of their development plans. More than 45,000 major dams had been built in more than 140 nations by the end of the twentieth century (ICOLD, 1998). By regulating floods, increasing food production via irrigation, and powering the industrial revolution with much-needed energy, large dams were hailed as a panacea for world hunger. Large-scale environmental damage and "population displacement" are two results of this. About two-thirds of the people relocated as a result of World Bank-funded projects were affected by major dams.

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