

## **Provision of alternative livelihoods for project-affected communities: examples from dam projects**

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Proper planning is needed to implement dam-related resettlement schemes so as not to devastate local socioeconomic systems and leaving people without acceptable alternative livelihood rebuilding options. Dams are often located in remote areas that lack dynamic economies able to absorb them from their traditional means of livelihood. Often, they are risk-averse and not psychologically prepared to move and begin new occupations in unfamiliar locations. They might often risk changing occupation rather than moving to new locations even with better compensation. Here we discuss two cases, where resettlers were offered alternative livelihoods, their successes and failures in restoring their income levels after relocation: (i) Saguling dam project, West Java, and (iii) Kotmale dam project, Sri Lanka.

Resettlement scheme in Saguling dam was planned with emphasis on transmigration, however, only 4% of the households opted for this. Although the reservoir caused a loss of fertile farmland leading to loss of jobs and living resources, the new aquatic resource provided alternatives. Therefore, aquaculture development was promoted as an alternative to compensate resettlers, and as a result the affected people enjoy superior economic and social benefits derived by fisheries. Assuming the resettlement scheme as highly successful is perhaps true because integrated fisheries systems have increased the number and diversity of jobs and the number of higher-paying jobs. However, many questions remain which raises doubts whether resettlers were able to reap maximum benefits; these are discussed in this paper.

Alternative compensation schemes had to be formulated for resettlers of Kotmale project, as providing them with the same amount of farmland in the vicinity seemed impossible. Two options were offered: move to new settlements away from affected areas after receiving farmland, or to resettle in riparian areas of the reservoir with plots of productive tea provided as compensation. More than two decades after relocation, the resettlers express their satisfaction and believe their socio-economic conditions are better than those who were not affected by the project. Those who moved to new settlements have rebuilt their livelihoods to a better level than who opted to receive tea plots. Analysis of these cases gives us insights for proper planning of resettlement options to make the resettlers better off after relocation.

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