

“Beyond Land-for-Land: Towards New Paradigm of Resettlement Policy”

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Implications of resettlement associated with dams in ten Asian cases were examined by an international research project. The research considered livelihood rehabilitation of resettlers in 14 dams built in Indonesia (Bili-bili Dam, Koto Panjang Dam, Saguling Dam and Wonorejo Dam), Japan (Kusaki Dam, Miboro Dam, Sameura Dam, and Tokuyama Dam), Laos (Nam Ngum 1 Dam and Nam Theun 2 Dam), Sri Lanka (Victoria Dam), Turkey (Ataturk Dam) and Vietnam (Song Hinh Dam and Yali Falls Dam). Major issues addresses in the field survey on these dams were as follows; (a) How was the compensation provided (by money, land, or both)?, (b) Did they have any choices among alternative resettlement schemes?, (c) What kind of job did and do they have before and after resettlement?, (d) To what extent did their income change after resettlement?, (e) What do they miss after resettlement?, (f) What did they want government or dam developers to provide?, and (g) Was the resettlement an opportunity for them to improve their life? Many similarities were found among cases and useful lessons for projects in future were identified. Many resettlers were concerned about the future of their children, and they tended to select resettlement destinations based on which destinations could provide their children with better education. Some resettlers may prefer changing their occupations along with resettlement to aim at higher income and better livelihood, despite the fact that doing so has more risks than following the traditional land-for-land policy. In some cases, resettlers thus moved to distant cities to secure better livelihoods than before. The traditional land-for-land policies suggest that a poor farmer remains a poor farmer even after relocation. In a country like contemporary Indonesia or Japan in early 1960s, land-for- land policies make farmers relatively poorer, while non-farmers benefit substantially from the country's rapid economic development. The study concludes that land-for-land should still be a major option for resettlers, while resettlement packages not based on land-for-land scheme should be provided as alternative options for resettlers.