

(144)

Ex-Post Environmental and Social Review of Tsunami Involuntary Resettlement Housing Schemes in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Disaster induced resettlement subject is widely discussed in recent past due to massive disaster events all around the world. The critics of resettlement projects usually argue that relocation creates tremendous negative impacts on communities. Whatever the cause of the displacement, some level of service provision are required to normalize and restore peoples' lives and to put in place sustainable solutions-to compensate for losses, address vulnerabilities and rebuild lives and livelihoods and to increase the resiliency of community. The impacts caused by involuntary resettlement due to 2004 tsunami, by appraising the level of satisfaction of resettlers after 10 years of the disaster were studied. In addition, existing practices, policies and planning were reviewed to highlight issues considered in planning, implementation and practices of environmental and social elements of each selected scheme. In Sri Lanka there are 485 tsunami resettlement sites in 13 districts. Study was conducted in Southern province. Questionnaire surveys were carried out at 30 selected sites; sites were selected using pre-determined criteria. Per site 10 random recipients selected from different parts of the site were interviewed. Cerneas' theoretical model for involuntary resettlement that highlights the intrinsic risk that cause impoverishment through displacement, as well as the ways to mitigate these risks to make vulnerable populations to resilience was used for analysis.

Beneficiary participation for the planning with the satisfactory level of 1.13 and quality of the building, satisfactory level of 1.51 were identified as crucial factors for the satisfaction of resettlers. In addition, waste water management within the site, fire and other safety facilities, interior design, dwelling size, inconvenience to livelihood are identified as most critical factors that led to dissatisfaction of beneficiaries and which led to abandonment of houses.

Keywords: Involuntary resettlement, Level of satisfaction, Tsunami