

Engaging communities in planning

As outlined in Module 4, it is important that all the project stakeholders participate in the identification of impacts and mitigation measures. Livelihood restoration where packages are not designed with local people have proven to fail after a short period of time.

Lessons and recommendations

- The development of livelihood restoration plans should include engagement with men, women and youth on their development priorities so that they have ownership of the process.
- Planning livelihood restoration requires a partnership between the project, communities, government and civil society who all contribute to the well-being of each household.
- The livelihood restoration plan should integrate resettlement communities and reach agreement on access to resources and any improved services prior to resettlement.
- The resettlement site selection process should balance different interests. For example some may prefer to be near urban centres and close to the project for employment, market and services while others may wish to be located where more traditional livelihoods can be practised. It is important to seek the views of the less powerful groups.
- Ultimately, it is a question of providing options and ensuring a free and informed negotiations process that is not dominated by any one interest group.

Finding replacement land for livelihoods

While physical resettlement is concerned with the provision of land for replacement housing, the key to livelihood restoration is to provide replacement land and a range of livelihood support options to impacted households. Failure to provide replacement land or the provision of poor quality replacement land can lead to the impoverishment of the impacted communities.

Challenges

- On many projects resettlement site location is not properly planned, leaving resettlers without access to replacement land for farming or unable to access the economic opportunities offered by the company.
- Many mining projects require considerable areas for land acquisition, which puts pressure on the remaining land resources. It is often impossible to find enough replacement land to replace agricultural livelihoods.
- Many companies fail to consider the loss of access to common property such as pasture, forests and water bodies at resettlement sites resulting in disproportionate impacts on the livelihoods of poorer and marginalised groups, including Indigenous Peoples.
- There is often conflict post-resettlement over resources where assumptions were made on shared use of natural resources, such as forests and water resources, without negotiating a firm agreement.
- Acquiring replacement land can be very expensive in many countries as pressure on land increases and prices escalate.

Lessons and recommendations

- Strive to integrate resettlement communities, and reach agreement on access to resources and any improved services prior to resettlement.
- Companies should invest resources to find replacement land. This can involve incentivising the impacted households to find replacement land themselves.
- Companies should consider locating resettlement sites where the resettlers have continued access to common resources, particularly in the case of herders, hunter-gatherers and fishermen. Livelihood restoration requires the project