

CABINET

Report of Ministerial Committee on Re-settlement of Persons Displaced from the Chagos Archipelago

MEMORANDUM BY THE MINISTER OF HOUSING, LANDS, AND TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING

At our meeting on the 24th December, 1971, my colleagues agreed that a Ministerial Committee under my chairmanship and with the Minister of Health, the Minister of Labour and Social Security, the Minister of Economic Planning & Development, and the Financial Secretary as members, should study the resettlement of persons displaced from Chagos Archipelago and report back to Cabinet.

2. The Committee met on three occasions. The Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, who had previously dealt with the matter, was co-opted as a member and the Principal Assistant Secretary of my Ministry was appointed Secretary. The Committee was assisted in its task by officials of various ministries and Dr. L. Junker, Social Development Economist, Ministry of Economic Planning & Development, who made useful suggestions and produced interesting papers containing alternative resettlement schemes.

3. As a preliminary exercise, a survey of the displaced persons was carried out. Of the 330 families (including single adults) reported to be in Mauritius, only 286 could be met and interviewed, the others having shifted to unknown addresses. A summary of the survey is given at Appendix A.

4. The Committee considers that the latest proposal made by the British Government, namely, to pay compensation in the form of severance allowance at the rate of Rs 3,000 for a single adult and Rs 4,000 for a married couple, was inadequate and should not be accepted as the actual problem was a more acute one, involving not only loss of job but the uprooting of families from their houses and their settlement.

5. After careful examination of the data made available by the survey and all the issues involved, and bearing in mind that the British Government has agreed to assume full responsibility for the resettlement of the workers affected in the Chagos Islands, the Committee makes the following recommendations under three heads: Housing Estates, Job Rehabilitation and Cash Compensation.

Housing Estates

6. The 330 families should be adequately housed and for that purpose the cost of a re-housing scheme in the form of two housing estates has been prepared, one at Roche Bois for 180 families and another at Cassis or Pointe aux Sables for 150 families. Rs 10,000-type houses and low density development (i.e., eight houses per acre) are suggested, the latter because it is considered more appropriate to enable each family to have enough space for a vegetable garden and for brooding. With the essential services such as water reticulation, internal access roads, school and sewerage works and amenities such as a play space and community centre on each estate standing on land to be acquired from private owners, the cost of the two housing estates has been estimated to be Rs 5,300,000.

7. Alternative schemes for the development of the housing estates on a low density basis (i.e., 10 houses per acre) or a high density basis (i.e., 15 houses per acre) have also been prepared, but these would leave very little land for gardening. Besides, two other types of houses costing Rs 7,500 and Rs 5,000 have been considered. Details of the costs involved in each of these alternative schemes are given in Appendix B.

8. The Committee feels that if the creation of the housing estates is agreed upon and implemented, the houses should not be given to the families, but let to them on a hire-purchase basis at a nominal rent to cover costs of repairs, insurance and management, it being understood that at the end of 25 years they would become the owners thereof.

9. Consideration was given to the rehousing of some of the displaced persons in about 50 empty C.H.A. houses at La Cure. However, certain points against this partial solution were brought out, namely, (i) the poor condition of the houses as compared with those proposed in the housing scheme in question, (ii) as the survey has shown, the Ilois tend to cluster together and would resist being split apart, (iii) the difficulties in practice in deciding which of the families should move to La Cure, and (iv) the C.H.A. houses, benefiting as they do from a grant element, should be left to Mauritians generally. For all these reasons the idea has been abandoned.

Job Rehabilitation

10. According to the survey, around 250 heads of household are either unemployed or only casually employed. This figure excludes those who are drawing Old Age Pension and therefore cannot be expected to do a lucrative job. The Committee recommends that job opportunities should be created for these 250 families and the best solution would be to start pig-breeding on a full-time cooperative basis. Assuming that all the families would be prepared to undertake such a work and can be given adequate training, the capital outlay would be Rs 484,750:-

	Rs
Piglets (15 per family) @ Rs 65	- 243,750
Pens (one of three compartments for each family)	- 125,000
5 acres of land	- 100,000
2 stores/offices	- 8,000
2 Supervisors	- 8,000
TOTAL	- 484,750
	=====
Say,	500,000

The Committee considers that this amount should be given as grant. Appendix C gives detailed information on the cost and expected yields of the project.

11. An additional Rs 750,000 would also be needed for the supply of feed to the members for a period of approximately seven months, after which date the first batch of pigs should be ready for marketing. This money should be given on loan and deducted at source by the co-operative societies in two equal instalments when the sale of the first and second batches has been effected. The average net profit per family is estimated at around Rs 2,000 a year.

12. On the land available around each house vegetable and herb cultivations could be encouraged as well as rabbit breeding. A member of the Extension Service of the Ministry of Agriculture & Natural Resources could be detailed for the necessary training. It has been reported to the Committee that there is an interesting export market in Europe and North America for herbs. This is a line of economic development which apparently does not require much land and which could be carried out by families as an

additional/

additional source of income. In so far as rabbit breeding is concerned the present local market seems to be choked, but this development by the Iles would provide additional protein in their diets and a source of income from sale of surplus rabbit flesh in the neighbourhood. The cost of 10 rabbits and a hutch would cost around Rs 100 and the total expenditure would be Rs 33,000.

13. From the foregoing the cost of resettlement would be:

(i) Housing Estates	Rs 5,300,000
(ii) Job Rehabilitation	
Pig breeding:	500,000
Rabbit " :	33,000
(iii) Refund of O.D.R., etc.:	225,000
	<hr/> 6,058,000

14. It has been reported that 130 additional families would be sent over to Mauritius from Chagos Archipelago. No information is available about these persons but assuming that they would have to be resettled in the same way as the other displaced persons, the additional cost would be approximately Rs 2.5 million, account being taken of the fact that all the heads of household in this new batch would be unemployed and job opportunities would have to be created for all of them, bringing the total cost of resettlement to Rs 8,560,000.

Cash Compensation

15. The calculations made in the two preceding paragraphs, except (iii) of paragraph 13, can be used as a guide in case it is decided that cash compensation would be the only alternative solution. In such an event the following recommendations are made:-

- (a) since the displaced persons would benefit from welfare services already made available by the Government free of charge, they should be given only a certain proportion of the compensation accruing to them;
- (b) payment should not be made as a lump sum, but on a monthly basis over a long period of time, to prevent squandering in the families' own interest.

16. I invite my colleagues to agree to the recommendations contained in this memorandum and to the figure of Rs 8,560,000 being used as a basis for negotiation with the British Government as the total cost of resettlement of the persons displaced from Chagos Archipelago.

A.R.K.

APPENDIX

Analysis of Survey of Persons displaced from Chagos Archipelago

The tables given below are in respect of 286 households who were interviewed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in their survey carried out in January 1972. 44 households could not be located.

Population Structure

Number of persons interviewed: 286

Number of persons in households covered by the interview:

Adults : 424
Children : 562
Total : 986

Ages of Children

<u>0-5</u>	<u>6-10</u>	<u>11-16</u>	<u>Over 16</u>
205	152	141	64

Thus about 150 children are of Primary School age now and a further 205 will become of school age in the period 1972-75.

Household Size

Size of Household	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
No. of Cases	79	47	38	34	22	14	17	12	14	0	2	2

Almost 50% of the households are small (one or two people) about 30% are of medium size (3 persons to 5 persons). 20% of the households are large (6 persons or more).

Employment Structure

Of the heads of households 43 had full time jobs, 134 casual jobs and 86 were unemployed. It should be noted that 29 of the casual jobs were in the docks and pay was generally good, conversely some of the permanent jobs were in domestic service and were very poorly paid. Of the 86 unemployed many were single women, however these women had to support themselves and in several cases children as well. Old aged persons have not been included in the number of unemployed.

Welfare

- (i) Family Allowance: 58 households receive family allowance, of these 15 receive, in addition, outdoor relief.
- (ii) Old Age Pension: 26 households receive old age pension, of these 5 receive, in addition, outdoor relief.
- (iii) Outdoor Relief: 22 households receive outdoor relief as a sole form of Government allowance.

Attitudes

Attitudes to Future Occupation

Three possibilities were mentioned in the questionnaire - pig breeding, mixed farming and fishing. The numbers interested in the various projects are as follows:-

<u>Pig Breeding</u>	<u>Mixed Farming</u>	<u>Fishing</u>
78	55	39

About 30% of people interviewed expressed interest in none of the project.

It should be noted that over half of the people who expressed interest in none of the projects were either old age pensioners or females.

Choice of Resettlement Area

The choice of resettlement area was as follows:-

<u>Roche Bois</u>	<u>Cassis</u>	<u>P/Sables</u>	<u>Peros Diego</u>	<u>Elsewhere</u>
145	90	17	6	17

It should be noted that of the people who chose Roche Bois the vast majority already live there, similarly with those who chose Cassis and Pointe aux Sables. It is clear that these people do not wish to move any great distance, it may be that they do not want to move at all, i.e. they have misunderstood the meaning of resettlement. One point which may have had considerable bearing in some of the persons opting to stay where they presently are is the type of employment they are engaged in, e.g. dockwork or maidservant.

1. Includes 2 acres for school, 1 acre for shopping and community centre, 1 acre for playing field.

2. This is a school which could also take children from surrounding areas.

At Rs 10,000 per house	At Rs 7,500 per house	At Rs 5,000 per house
2,470,000	2,095,000	1,720,000
2,390,000	2,015,000	1,640,000
2,290,000	1,915,000	1,540,000
<u>Density 10/acre</u>	<u>Density 15/acre</u>	<u>Density 15/acre</u>
Low	Medium	High

If higher densities and cheaper houses were used the costs would be as follows:

Alternative Costs

Land - 25 acres (assuming Rs 20,000 per acre)	460,000
Dwellings	1,500,000
Play Space	25,000
Community Centre	35,000
Water Retention	15,000
Internal Access Roads	35,000
School	250,000
Beverage Disposal Works	150,000
Total	2,470,000

Speedman breakdown of cost of average cost of house Rs 10,000 and density of 8 houses per acre.

Scheme A - 150 dwellings in the Gassie/Pointe aux Sables Area

From the data contained in the socio-economic survey it would appear there is a need for two housing estates, one in the region of Roche-Bots and one in the region of Gassie or Pointe aux Sables. The calculations cost made below are very approximate since no particular site has yet been chosen. In calculating cost of school, water retention, community centre and internal roads the estimates of the C.H.A. for the villages have been used as a guide; these may need to be modified for an urban estate.

The schemes are based on a total of 350 dwellings, 150 in the Gassie Pointe aux Sables area and 180 in the Roche Bots area. 350 dwellings would allow each household at present listed as separate to occupy one separate dwelling.

Cost of Housing Scheme
Resettlement of the Ilois

Net profit second stage

On the assumption that 16 piglets are marketed on reaching the age of 6 to 7 months, gross revenue would be $300 \times 16 = \text{Rs } 4,800$

Net profit = Rs 4,800 - feeding cost of Rs 3,740 = Rs 1,060

Thus total net profit in the first 2 stages would be Rs 1,960 if pig feed is subsidised - there is actually a world food programme of the F.A.O. project towards that end - profits would be higher.

Recurrent Income

It has been estimated that once the project was fully established the average annual net profit per family would be Rs 2,000.

It should be pointed out that a careful breeder may easily increase his stock by increasing the number of sows for reproduction. But since it is a matter for consideration by the breeder himself in regard to the best way he should manage his farm, it is considered that it should be left to him to decide whether he should increase his number of pens and require extra land at his own expense. However, the breeder would need to be advised by the Extension Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Scheme B - 180 dwellings in the Roche Bois Area

Specimen breakdown of cost if average cost of house is Rs 10,000 and density is 8 houses per acre.

	Rs
*3 Land - 26 acres (assuming Rs 20,000 per acre)	520,000
Dwellings	1,800,000
Play Space	25,000
Community Centre	35,000
Water Reticulation	18,000
Internal Access Roads	40,000
*4 School	250,000
Sewerage Disposal Works	150,000
	<u>2,838,000</u>

Alternative Costs

	<u>Low</u> <u>Density</u> <u>8/acre</u>	<u>Medium</u> <u>Density</u> <u>10/acre</u>	<u>High</u> <u>Density</u> <u>15/acre</u>
At avg. Rs 10,000 per house	2,838,000	2,758,000	2,538,000
At avg. Rs 7,500 per house	2,388,000	2,308,000	2,088,000
At avg. Rs 5,000 per house	1,938,000	1,858,000	1,638,000

*3 Includes some land as Scheme A for amenities.

*4 This school could take in children from surrounding area.

Total Resettlement Cost:	Highest	Rs 5,300,000
	Medium	Rs 4,300,000
	Lowest	Rs 3,178,000

Cost per household:	Highest approx.	Rs 16,000
	Medium	Rs 13,000
	Lowest	Rs 10,000