

Topic 5: Social Issues and Stakeholder Consultation

The case of the Lower Sesan 2 dam



Our Study – the Lower Sesan 2 case

Relevance/limitations of study findings to RSAT

- Sesan case study was part of a broader study looking at community driven accountability
- Located within a single hydropower project (not basin wide)
- From perspective of the directly impacted people and local authorities
- Their perspective on what has happened/been implemented to date
- Identification of gaps in on-ground practice at the time of the research

Aim of Presentation

- To highlight key RSAT principles under Topic 5: Social Issues and Stakeholder Consultation
- Under each sub-topic principle to explain what our research findings showed us in terms of
 - What has been done or is in place
 - Where the gaps/concerns remain



5.1. Stakeholder Identification and Consultation

RSAT Principles

- Detailed stakeholder mapping

IN PLACE:

- EIA included social-economic report (May 2008) that outlined some demographics of affected populations

GAPS:

- Lack of clarity about number of people who will be displaced.
- Some villages are uncertain as to status regarding resettlement
- No consideration or mapping of upstream or downstream communities beyond those directly impacted
- No updated socio-economic information or baseline commissioned by project developers since 2008



5.1. Stakeholder Identification and Consultation

RSAT Principles

- Meaningful consultation processes – timely, two-way at all project stages, address communication approaches and needs of impacted groups.

IN PLACE:

- Vietnamese surveyors visited villages up to 3 times from September 2007 to May 2008
- Included showing resettlement options at that time
- Up to 3 consultation meetings were held during EIA process (Feb & May 2008)
- NGOs were given an opportunity to feedback on EIA at MoE (5 May 2009)
- Nov 2012 and Feb 2013 the ST Provincial Governor met with villagers to outline resettlement options
- Letter sent to local authorities to request agreement for logging of reservoir

5.1. Stakeholder Identification and Consultation

RSAT Principles

- Meaningful consultation processes – timely, two-way at all project stages, address communication approaches and needs of impacted groups.

GAPS:

- Villagers were not informed prior to the decision to plan for the dam – no visits from government officials
- The large majority of people interviewed heard about the dam via informal channels
- Despite 3 visits by Vietnamese surveyors, some villagers had no contact with them, some spoke informally, only a few attended meetings
- Most information on the dam has been received via NGOs
- Meetings with villagers have largely been about the resettlement and compensation options, and not about the project itself
- Communities have not been provided with opportunities to participate in the project design and development



5.1. Stakeholder Identification and Consultation

Meaningful consultation has been constrained by:

- Language – documents in English or Vietnamese, meetings in Khmer
- People feel they were “tricked” into thumb-printing
- Lack of complete information to enable informed decision making
- No information prior to meetings to allow people to prepare
- Only key people (authorities & some leading community reps) attending meetings
- Not enough time provided for consultation and to ensure people can attend meetings
- Lack of documentation of meetings; reliance on memory
- Meeting situations do not always encourage participation and discussion; villagers often just asked to raise hands to “agree” or “disagree”
- Unclear on their rights to participate in discussions on a national-level project
- Worried that if they oppose the project or raise concerns they will end up with nothing/be seen to oppose national “development”/ be dismissed as political opposition

5.1. Stakeholder Identification and Consultation

RSAT Principles

- Grievance mechanisms exist and are implemented

IN PLACE:

- No knowledge or evidence of specific grievance mechanisms in place
- Communities are expected to raise concerns through local authorities

GAPS:

- Commune/district authorities are unable or unwilling to raise issues up
- No clear responsibility or mechanism for doing so
- People rely on NGOs to raise their concerns

5.2. Assessment & Management of Basin Wide Social Impacts

RSAT Principles

- SIA studies & management plans are consultative, appropriately timed, publicly disclosed and informed by baseline data.

IN PLACE:

- EIA included a socio-economic study
- Public consultations were held in February & May
- NGOs given small opportunity to feed back on EIA
- The “best EIA to date” as was done before the dam was actually built

GAPS:

- No focus on villages that will be indirectly impacted by dam
- No mitigation strategies
- No updated studies since 2008
- No baseline data with exception of NGO Forum baseline study
- Disclosure for communities appears to have been limited to that conducted by NGOs

5.2. Assessment & Management of Basin Wide Social Impacts

RSAT Principles

- SIA address social risks, including economic displacement in both the inundated and downstream areas and allocate responsibility for implementation and monitoring
- We have no information to say that social risks have been analyzed or addressed
- Responsibility for implementation and monitoring of management plans for resettlement appear to have been given to a provincial working group which will also include commune (and village?) authorities.

5.2. Assessment & Management of Basin Wide Social Impacts

RSAT Principles

- Plans to address social impacts, including resettlement plans are adequately funded and implemented in an equitable manner

IN PLACE:

- The Payment Warranty allocated USD 38.71 million for settlement of impacts
- Main provision of information to people has been about resettlement
- Villagers have been allowed to chose alternative land for resettlement with assistance from NGOs

GAPS:

- No new resettlement/compensation plan has been publicly disseminated
- Villagers have incomplete information about the resettlement process and compensation
- Villagers have little information about other impacts – e.g. fisheries
- Information and discussion is not happening in a consistent way
- No information on when they will move. In November 2012 they were told they would move in 2013

5.3. Food security and poverty alleviation

RSAT Principles

- SIA studies assess the impact & benefits of hydropower on poverty, nutrition, public health, education and food security status of women, men and children upstream and downstream of projects.

IN PLACE:

- Letter from Hun Sen (28 July 2011) and Draft Law on Financing (10 Jan 2013) state some of the plans in terms of housing, agricultural land, public infrastructure, training in new occupations, establishing irrigation, providing electricity, rice & money provision for 12 months
- “To ensure that these affected people have better livelihoods than that in their old locations.”

GAPS:

- Appears to be a lack of analysis in socio-economic study
 - No gender/age disaggregation
 - No mitigation strategies
- No information on how management plan will address risks
- No information on how indigenous culture and livelihoods of people are being considered
- No information on how monitoring will take place or by whom

5.3. Food security and poverty alleviation

People's concerns:

- Concrete houses v wooden houses
- Lack of water for animals, particularly buffalo and cows
- Land surrounded by company concessions
- Fruit trees, transportation costs, costs to cover needs before harvest
- Field houses
- Possibility of increase in illness and disease
- Reservation land for newly married families
- Access to Stung Treng (if located north of river)
- Lack of information means people have not moved on with their livelihood plans
- Already villagers experiencing impacts on livelihoods from erratic water flows, loss of fish stocks and aquatic vegetation due to upstream dams

5.4. Indigenous people & ethnic minorities

RSAT Principles

- Culturally appropriate, good faith consultation with opportunities for people to raise issues and receive feedback.
- Not clear what consideration of ethnicity or indigenous culture and livelihoods there are in resettlement plans
- No recognition so far as we know as to the indigeneity of the affected people
- No consent other than being asked if they agree to fair compensation
- No evidence of adherence to principles of FPIC
- People are unaware of their rights as indigenous people & ethnic minorities regarding FPIC and participation in consultation and decision making

5.4. Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities

People's concerns:

- Concern about loss of ancestral burial sites
- Concern about available money to do the necessary sacrifices in the old & new villages
- Concern about loss of their belief systems
- Have already lost spirit forests, collection forests to concessions

Risks

- Continued lack of information and opportunities for meaningful participation will lead to further alienation and resistance
- Needs of the people will not be adequately met and poverty will increase, including in villages upstream and downstream
- Inability to adequately measure the social impacts, both positive and negative
- LS2 becomes an example of poor dam development in Cambodia with regards to rights of affected people

Opportunities

- Change in companies offers opportunity to address gaps and improve
- Some mechanisms/processes are in place that can be built on and improved (e.g. the socio-economic study, resettlement committee at provincial level)
- Communities are becoming more organized which can allow for better communication
- NGOs who work with communities can assist in facilitating dialogue, information sharing, data collection etc.