



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF KERALA; ITS ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

ABSTRACT

Each year, millions of persons are forcibly displaced by development projects, whether dams, roads, reservoirs or oil, gas and mining projects. While such projects can bring enormous benefits to society, they also impose costs, which are often borne by its poorest and most marginalized members. For millions of people around the world, development has cost them their homes, their livelihoods, their health, and even their very lives. Impoverishment and disempowerment often become their lot, with particularly harsh consequences for women and children.

Although internally displaced persons are often defined as those uprooted by conflict, human rights violations and natural or human-made disasters, they also include those displaced by development projects. Indeed, Robinson points out: "While victims of disaster, especially natural disaster generally are the focus of sympathetic attention and international aid (as are many of those displaced by conflict), the same cannot be said for victims of development-induced displacement, although the consequences may be comparably dire. In an effort to better understand the plight of those displaced by development projects and the relationship of this kind of displacement to international human rights and humanitarian frameworks for dealing with internally displaced persons, our Project asked the author to examine the nature and scope of development-induced displacement and to identify the international institutions and remedies that might prove effective in addressing this question. Researcher is most grateful to Court Robinson for the extensive research he has done and for his comprehensive report, which was reviewed at a meeting of international experts, held in Washington DC on December 5. The report's recommendations will contribute to the international response to this major public policy challenge. In particular, we would note that the report calls for a global consultation that would bring together the development as well as human rights and humanitarian communities to harmonize operational guidelines and policies applicable to development-induced displacement.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The number of people forcibly displaced each year is also increasing. During the last two decades of the 20th century, development uprooted more than 10 million people each year.⁵ By contrast, during the first decade of the 21st century, an estimated 15 million people were displaced by development each year.⁶ The vast majority of DIDR is *involuntary*, with government authorities, security forces, or private militias forcing people from their homes and lands. Displacement can be physical, economic, or both. Physical displacements refer to the actual relocation of individuals, families or communities from one place to another. Economic displacement occurs when people lose access to vital natural resources that they need to sustain their livelihoods such as forests, grazing lands, and fresh water. The impact of a project is rarely limited to people within the identified project area. The construction of a dam or a mine, for example, typically does not displace only those people and communities located on lands used for the project. People living downstream from a dam may suffer the loss of fisheries needed to sustain themselves. An entire community may suffer health impacts due to pollution from a mine. Both circumstances commonly force people to move, and both are examples of development-induced displacement. People forcibly uprooted by development are typically displaced within the borders of their own countries. This distinguishes them from refugees, who are legally defined as having fled across an international border to escape danger or a fear of persecution. This legal distinction is important, because internally displaced people, or "IDPs," are not protected by the instruments of international law that protect refugees. There is no international body specifically charged with protecting the rights of internally displaced people or addressing their needs. In fact, it is often much more difficult for outside assistance to reach people who are internally displaced.

Like becoming a refugee, being forcibly ousted from one's land and habitat by a dam, reservoir or highway is not only immediately disruptive and painful, it is also fraught with serious long-term risks of becoming poorer than before displacement, more vulnerable economically, and disintegrated socially. Most large forced dislocations of people do not occur in conditions of armed conflict or genocide but in routine, everyday evictions to make way for development projects. This "development cleansing" may well constitute ethnic cleansing in disguise, as the people dislocated so often turn out to be from minority ethnic and racial communities. While it may have as many meanings as people who invoke its name, development

generally has positive, though perhaps ambiguous, connotations. Uneven development is a bad thing and sustainable development is a good thing but, for the most part, underdeveloped countries and communities seek to become more developed, whether that is through improving health and livelihoods, expanding educational opportunities, or building infrastructure. But, as the citations above suggest, development does not benefit everyone equally and for some indeed, for millions of people around the world - development has cost them their homes, their livelihoods, their health, and even their very lives. The suffering of those displaced by development projects can be as severe, and the numbers as large, as those displaced either internally or internationally by conflict and violence. What follows is an examination of the often-overlooked phenomenon of development-induced displacement, its causes, consequences and challenges for the international community.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of present study are vividly classified into two. The fundamental objective this study is to find out environmental challenges faced by Kerala. Secondly, examining the effectiveness of environmental protection regulations in Kerala and suggest some measures to resolve the environmental problems in Kerala.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research methodology was used to analyze the present study. The research was conducted by using secondary source of information.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Rene Veron (2001) examined Kerala sustainable development model. The research revealed that community based sustainable development meet conducive social condition in Kerala. Further study point out that despite sincere efforts of state government to initiate community based sustainable development, government failed to execute it in macro level. The research suggests participatory strategy and intensive environmental awareness among general public in order to achieve sustainable development.

Surender Kumar and Shunsuk Managi (2009) examined economic sustainable development in India. The research paper overviews that complexity and magnitude of environmental problems in India and also states that present environmental protection enforcement and monitoring are weak. Further study evaluates formal and informal kind of regulations in the area of external environmental externalities.

Kirti Parikh (2011) conducted a study on sustainable development and low car strategy for India.

The study viewed that for sustainable development in India it is critical to manage resource and environment. The research paper asserts that energy price would reflect its opportunity costs. The study suggests improving energy use efficiency and encouraging renewable sources of energy to prevent environmental problems.

Patrick Brandful, Michael Odei and Paul Amoateng (2014) examined sustainable development within the framework of poverty and urbanization in developing countries. The research paper observed that sustainable development in developing countries as a mean of understanding with key factors such as poverty, climate change, urbanization and food security. The study viewed that sound sustainable development through policy intervention could improve the living condition of poor. The study critically evaluated that sustainable development policy based on poverty and urbanization by leaders of developing countries. The study finally concludes by stating the role of interrelated factors such as poverty and urbanization for successful sustainable development in developing countries.

Ismayil (2015) analyzed sustainable development of Kerala. The study viewed that Kerala is desperately facing the problems of sustainable development as the state having limited resources. The study figure out that quality of water and various pollutions are the bigger challenges of state to establish sustainable development. The study suggests using of green building principles and focusing on alternative renewable and sustainable energy.

DEVELOPMENT-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT

Forced population displacement is always crisis-prone, even when necessary as part of broad and beneficial development programs. It is a profound socioeconomic and cultural disruption for those affected. Dislocation breaks up living patterns and social continuity. It dismantles existing modes of production, disrupts social networks, causes the impoverishment of many of those uprooted, threatens their cultural identity, and increases the risks of epidemics and health problems.

1. **Landlessness.** Expropriation of land removes the main foundation upon which people's productive systems, commercial activities, and livelihoods are constructed. This is the principal form of de-capitalization and pauperization of displaced people, as they lose both natural and human-made capital.
2. **Joblessness.** The risk of losing wage employment is very high both in urban and rural displacements for those employed in enterprises,

services, or agriculture. Yet, creating new jobs is difficult and requires substantial investment. Unemployment or underemployment among resettlers often endures long after physical relocation has been completed.

3. **Homelessness.** Loss of shelter tends to be only temporary for many resettlers; but, for some, homelessness or a worsening in their housing standards remains a lingering condition. In a broader cultural sense, loss of a family's individual home and the loss of a group's cultural space tend to result in alienation and status deprivation.
4. **Marginalization.** Marginalization occurs when families lose economic power and spiral on a "downward mobility" path. Many individuals cannot use their earlier acquired skills at the new location; human capital is lost or rendered inactive or obsolete. Economic marginalization is often accompanied by social and psychological marginalization, expressed in a drop in social status, in resettlers' loss of confidence in society and in themselves, a feeling of injustice, and deepened vulnerability.
5. **Food Insecurity.** Forced uprooting increases the risk that people will fall into temporary or chronic undernourishment, defined as calorie-protein intake levels below the minimum necessary for normal growth and work.
6. **Increased Morbidity and Mortality.** Massive population displacement threatens to cause serious decline in health levels. Displacement-induced social stress and psychological trauma are sometimes accompanied by the outbreak of relocation related illnesses, particularly parasitic and vector-borne diseases such as malaria and schistosomiasis. Unsafe water supply and improvised sewage systems increase vulnerability to epidemics and chronic diarrhea, dysentery, and so on. The weakest segments of the demographic spectrum—infants, children, and the elderly—are affected most strongly.
7. **Loss of Access to Common Property.** For poor people, loss of access to the common property assets that belonged to relocated communities (pastures, forest lands, water bodies, burial grounds, quarries, and so on) result in significant deterioration in income and livelihood levels.
8. **Social Disintegration.** The fundamental feature of forced displacement is that it causes a profound unraveling of existing patterns of social organization. This unraveling occurs at

many levels. When people are forcibly moved, production systems are dismantled. Long-established residential communities and settlements are disorganized, while kinship groups and family systems are often scattered. Life-sustaining informal social networks that provide mutual help are rendered non-functional. Trade linkages between producers and their customer base are interrupted, and local labor markets are disrupted. Formal and informal associations, and self-organized services, are wiped out by the sudden scattering of their membership. Traditional management systems tend to lose their leaders. The coerced abandonment of symbolic markers (such as ancestral shrines and graves) or of spatial contexts (such as mountains and rivers considered holy, or sacred trails) cuts off some of the physical and psychological linkages with the past and saps at the roots of the peoples' cultural identity. The cumulative effect is that the social fabric is torn apart.

9. **Loss of Access to Community Services.** This could include anything from health clinics to educational facilities, but especially costly both in the short and long term are lost or delayed opportunities for the education of children.

10. **Violation of Human Rights.** Displacement from one's habitual residence and the loss of property without fair compensation can, in itself, constitute a violation of human rights. In addition to violating economic and social rights, listed above, arbitrary displacement can also lead to violations of civil and political rights, including: arbitrary arrest, degrading treatment or punishment, temporary or permanent disenfranchisement and the loss of one's political voice. Finally, displacement carries not only the risk of human rights violations at the hands of state authorities and security forces but also the risk of communal violence when new settlers move in amongst existing populations.

The impoverishment risk and reconstruction model already has been used to analyze several situations of internal displacement. Lakshman Mahapatra applied the model to India, where he estimates that as many as 25 million people have been displaced by development projects from 1947-1997.⁴⁹ Among his findings,

◆ Compensation for land in the form of cash payments (rather than land-for-land) has increased landlessness among tribal peoples and other largely illiterate, vulnerable groups.

- ◆ In the Vindhyachal Super Thermal Power Project, 2,330 families were displaced, of whom only 1,298 could be traced after the end of the first phase. Of those traced, only 272 families or 21 percent were rehabilitated with a job or self-employment.
- ◆ A comprehensive study of people displaced by eight different development projects against a control group of 110,000 non-displaced families found that the prevalence of acute illnesses was higher in seven resettlement groups and of chronic diseases in five resettlement groups.
- ◆ Children of tribal groups displaced by the Salandi Major Irrigation Project in Orissa were set back in education when schools were not provided in government resettlement colonies until nearly 10 years after relocation.
- ◆ Cernea's impoverishment risk and reconstruction model offers a valuable tool for the assessment of the many risks inherent in development-induced displacement. Balakrishnan Rajagopal of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has noted five "human rights challenges" that arise in relation to development-induced displacement

RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-DETERMINATION

In 1986, the UN General Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Right to Development, which states that "every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized." The Declaration, moreover, asserts the right of peoples to self-determination and "their inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources."⁵¹ In Rajagopal's interpretation, such language makes it "clear that local communities and individuals, not states, have the right to development."

RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION

If self-determination is the right to say whether development is needed or not, participation rights begin to be relevant when development begins. The right to participation is based on various articles of the International Bill of Human Rights, which consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).⁵³ More specifically, the 1991 International Labor Organization Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries

(ILO Convention 169) stipulates (Article 7) that indigenous and tribal peoples shall participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national and regional development plans that affect them.

RIGHT TO LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD

When security forces take action to move people forcibly or to quell civil dissent against development projects, this may constitute a direct threat to the right to life, which is protected in the UDHR (Article 3) and the ICCPR (Article 6). The right to livelihood is threatened by the loss of home and the means to make a living—whether farming, fishing, hunting, and trading or the like—when people are displaced from habitual residences and traditional homelands. The right to own property and not to be arbitrarily deprived of this property as well as the right to work is spelled out in the UDHR (Articles 17 and 23, respectively) as well as in Article 6 of the ICESCR. Article 11 of the ICESCR, moreover, affirms that “States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.” Included in the right to life is the right to environment, which, as Rajagopal puts it, “makes life worth living, materially and culturally.”⁵⁵ This concept has also been phrased as “intergenerational equity” or the right of future generations to inherit a planet, or a particular piece of it, that is capable of sustaining life. The 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, for example, asserts that state signatories are “determined to conserve and sustainably use biological diversity for the benefit of present and future generations.”

RIGHTS OF VULNERABLE GROUPS.

Growing evidence shows that, while development projects may create vulnerability through impoverishment, they disproportionately affect groups that are vulnerable to begin with, particularly indigenous groups and women. Human rights of vulnerable groups are protected generically in the International Bill of Human Rights. The ILO Convention 169 spells out protections for indigenous groups. For women, as Sarah Aird notes in a study of dam-related displacement but whose observations could apply more generally: some governments still recognize only male heads of household as legitimate landowners, denying women compensation for submerged lands and exacerbating pre-existing gender inequalities. In tribal communities where women enjoy user rights over land but not ownership rights, governments do not provide these women with any compensation. In addition to suffering greater negative effects due to dams, women

also generally do not enjoy the same benefits men do, such as enhanced employment opportunities.

RIGHT TO REMEDY

“Often, due to the nature of the development process, the project-affected peoples come to know about actions that have been taken without their knowledge or consent. Therefore, they need a quick and efficacious remedy that can halt on-going violations and prevent future ones. The right to remedy is therefore crucial...to all development projects.”⁵⁸ Put more broadly, “A right without a remedy is no right at all.

IMPACTS & INJUSTICES

New poverty and loss of community resources:-

The people who bear the brunt of the personal, social, and environmental costs of projects involving DIDR rarely share in the benefits. On the contrary, DIDR commonly leads to the impoverishment of those who are forced to move, creating new poverty in project-affected areas. A multi-year study of development-induced displacement concluded that impoverishment and disempowerment “have been the rule rather than the exception with respect to resettled people around the world.” One of the world’s foremost experts on DIDR identifies eight impoverishment risks posed by DIDR. These are: landlessness; homelessness; joblessness; significant deterioration in incomes and livelihoods; food insecurity, undernourishment and hunger; serious declines in health, Increases in morbidity, stress and psychological trauma; a spiral of downward mobility leading to economic marginalization often accompanied by social and cultural marginalization; and profound social disintegration. People displaced by development are known to be at increased risk of suffering life-threatening diseases, epidemics, and loss of physical and mental health, yet they commonly have less access to hospitals and health clinics. Families often lose access to educational facilities as well, resulting in lost or delayed educational opportunities for children. Existing patterns of leadership, social organization, and subsistence are dismantled. Kinship ties and other informal networks that provide mutual support are dispersed or unraveled precisely when the need for them is the greatest.

Disproportionate impacts on the most vulnerable:-

It is the poorest and most vulnerable members of a community who typically bear the heaviest costs of DIDR. Women, children, the elderly, and indigenous groups are particularly vulnerable to impoverishment and disempowerment when forcibly displaced. For those

indigenous peoples who value land as the core of their identity and way of life, the impacts of DIDR are particularly devastating. Documented effects included hunger, debt-bondage, and cultural disintegration.¹³ The forced displacement of indigenous people violates Principle 9 of the UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which stipulates that: "States are under a particular obligation to protect against the displacement of indigenous peoples, minorities, peasants, pastoralists, and other groups with a special dependency on and attachment to the land."¹⁴ Despite formal protection afforded by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, tribal groups and ethnic minorities have been disproportionately affected by DIDR. India, the country thought to have the largest number of people affected by DIDR in the world, serves well as an example: it is estimated that 40 percent of all the people displaced by development projects during the first 40 years of India's independence were tribal people. This is despite the fact that tribal people comprise only 8 percent of the country's population.¹⁵

Human rights violations:-

"The international community is beginning to recognize misguided 'development projects' which displace millions of people and destroy their livelihoods for what they really are: violations of human rights."¹⁶ DIDR frequently comes hand-in-hand with coercion, threats or violence and egregious corruption. IFIs and governments alike routinely fail to uphold their obligations to fairly compensate, resettle, and restore people's livelihoods. Far too often, people attempting to claim their rights risk intimidation, degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary arrest or detainment, violence and even torture from private or state security forces. Following relocation, people often face the risk of communal violence in resettlement areas where tensions between members of existing communities and new settlers are common.

Loss of traditional environmental knowledge:-

The Convention on Biological Diversity—a legally binding international treaty established by the United Nations and ratified by 190 states and the European Union—recognizes that conservation of our planet's biodiversity and ecosystems is only possible if we conserve rapidly-disappearing traditional knowledge about how to care for and sustainably use our natural resources and ecosystems. When indigenous and farming communities are forced to uproot and vacate their traditional lands to make way for development projects, their entire way of life is lost—along with their practices for sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems.

Climate change:-

DIDR is inextricably linked to climate change through a vicious cycle. Large, carbon-intensive energy-sector projects such as oil extraction, coal mining, and bio-fuel plantations forcibly displace millions of people every year. These projects then generate greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming, with impacts that include desertification and rising sea levels. Impacts of climate change are disproportionately severe for impoverished countries or regions with insufficient resources to effectively mitigate longer droughts, increased flooding, and the loss of agricultural land and crops—all of which can trigger further forced migration.

THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT BENEFITS ALL

IFIs and policymakers must ensure that DIDR is minimized:-

When unavoidable, projects that impose displacement must be designed to improve affected people's standard of living and restore their livelihoods. To achieve this, the following key reforms are needed:

1) Demand new rules governing DIDR and accountability systems that protect rights:-

We need to continue targeted advocacy efforts aimed at creating rights-respecting, responsible policies on displacement and resettlement that promote the principles of avoiding displacement, accountability for decision-making and project outcomes, participation by all segments of affected populations in all phases of project design and implementation, and transparency. We also need to ensure that these policies are accompanied by strong systems and mechanisms for enforcement. Development policy-makers and IFIs should be held accountable for their role in funding projects that forcibly displace people and must uphold their obligation to restore the livelihoods of project affected people and communities, improve their standards of living, and support their visions and priorities for local development.

2) Include the risks and financial responsibilities related to displacement and resettlement up front in project costs:-

Development policy-makers and IFIs should recognize the full impacts and costs of DIDR, including the fact that forced displacement

creates the very poverty that development purportedly seeks to eliminate and disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable members of affected communities. One way to effectively mandate this would be to require that all resettlement and rehabilitation work be fully carried out and financed **before** the project that will cause the anticipated displacement can be built. In addition, the project framework should be structured to ensure that there is an ongoing revenue stream from the project to the people who are threatened with displacement.

3) **Know your rights:-**

It is critical that people have the tools and resources they need to effectively demand development practices that do not violate their rights. We should draw on the media to ensure that the full impacts and costs of DIDR are visible to people worldwide and work to educate ourselves and others about what rights people and communities threatened by DIDR have and how to ensure their rights are upheld.

4) **Promote a development model that does not unduly displace:-**

A development model based upon excessive and brutal displacement is profoundly unsustainable, and is resisted by the people and communities it threatens and affects. However, the converse can also be true: often projects that are better for people are also better for the planet. This becomes clear if we honor existing resources and assets that have been undervalued in prevailing development models, including cultivation and grazing lands, forests, ecosystem services, waterways, community, and traditional knowledge on how to cultivate the earth's resources in a sustainable manner. We need to work toward a world in which human connection to land, vibrant communities, healthy ecosystems, and democratic decision-making are not bulldozed as 'obstacles' to development, but rather are defended as the foundation for human health, justice, and sustainability.

5. CONCLUSION

The paper is an attempt of a brief appraisal based on available literatures of the impact of development projects on the internally displaced populations in Kerala. It cannot be denied that development induced displacement has been an ancient phenomenon. Development projects are mostly targeted towards river

systems, mines, forests etc. Moreover, the segment of population which is widely affected is the tribal population which is already a deprived segment in the Indian society. However, displacement became plight of the people and came under notice in post-independence era especially after first dam was constructed under Narmada Valley Development Project. The consequences of displacement are wide and varied. The displacement causes profound economic hardships. Compensation which is assured for the internally displaced population is meager and hardly suffices to the need of those displaced. There is no infrastructure so to say; there is hardly any opportunity towards income generation. By their high frequency, cumulative magnitude, and destructive socioeconomic and cultural effects, forced displacements have come to be recognized as a severe pathology of development, of growing concern and visibility on international and national agendas.

In Kerala, development projects will continue in the years to come. Hence, Indian government should frame a strategy so as to reduce if not eradicate the hardships of those displaced as a result of development projects. There is hardly any nation-wide framework on the issue of internal displacement. The government's response to IDP due to development projects is largely vague, and the displaced are therefore often left unnoticed. Hence there is an urgent need for the government undertakes surveys in affected areas in order to document the magnitude of the problem and to develop a policy for a consistent nation-wide approach for assistance and protection of internally displaced populations. The Government should also strengthen its institutional capacity to assist IDPs. Affected populations should benefit directly and sustainably from the project forcing them off their land. The displaced population should be actively involved while framing the rehabilitation packages. Provision of new land should be the cornerstone of the rehabilitation policy.

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