

Implementation of International Safeguard Standards in Involuntary Resettlement Schemes- Experience from Tanzania

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Key words: Land management; Standards; Valuation; Keyword 1; Keyword 2; Keyword 3

SUMMARY

There are several large land-based investments being carried out in most of the Sub-Saharan African countries that necessitate land acquisition and relocation of displaced persons. While it is mandatory for donor-funded projects to adhere to international safeguard Standards that require borrowing governments to address ‘certain environmental and social risks’, national standards are diverse and, in some respects, fall short in ensuring ensure the restoration of livelihood for the displaced persons. Several researchers and post-project implementation studies have consistently indicated that many of these projects have not been able to achieve their objectives on one hand, and on the other there has been a growing number of dissatisfaction and conflicts from host communities. Further, research on livelihood restoration in resettlement planning has often challenged the adequacy of the legal and regulatory frameworks in countries such as Tanzania in protecting affected persons, particularly vulnerable households.

This paper is based on experiences drawn from the authors’ direct participation in four large land acquisition projects funded by the World Bank and Multinational corporations for gas and oil pipelines, powerlines and urban development. The total number of persons physically displaced by the four projects was over 30,000 while the economically displaced were less than 5,000. Complemented by experiences of other practitioners and researchers through literature review, engagement and consultation meetings with practitioners and landowners, land acquiring agencies and government officials, the paper came out with four basic findings. There is a mismatch between what national laws and policies provide and their implementation. Secondly, the local practice is overly skeptical of the financial implication of adopting the international safeguard standards particularly the World Bank ESS5. There is also conceptual challenge in reconciling the much-heralded principle of equivalence in land acquisition and compensation in contrast with the contemporary sustainable livelihood restoration for the affected persons. Finally, there is

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incoherence and hesitancy to apply the standards partly due to relegation of the land acquisition component in the wider scope of infrastructure project feasibility studies.

The paper queries the sharing of the positive post-project impacts that are enjoyed by the non-affected persons and excluding the affected persons. It contends the society should balance off the impacts of land acquisition schemes by adapting world bank safeguards to the extent possible that are appropriate to the local conditions.

Keywords: Expropriation, Resettlement, Livelihood Restoration, Safeguards, Fair Deal

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