Resettlement Risks in a Dynamic Perspective: A Case of Southern Transport Development Project in Sri Lanka

Akira Ozawa [a], So Morikawa [a]
[a] Department of Civil Engineering, The University of Tokyo, 7-3-1 Hongo Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo, Japan.
Corresponding author: morikawa@civil.t.u-tokyo.ac.jp

OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development, Ontario International Development Agency, Canada
ISSN 1923-6654 (print) ISSN 1923-6662 (online) www.oidaijsd.com
Also available at http://www.ssrn.com/link/OIDA-Intl-Journal-Sustainable-Dev.html

Abstract: Throughout the world, land acquisition and resettlement issues have been critical to infrastructure development projects. They not only lead to delays and additional costs in the development projects but also have negative impacts on many aspects of affected people's lives. Therefore, social safeguard policies in international development agencies and multilateral development banks have tried to cover a broad range of resettlement risks and their mitigation measures.

Scholars have proposed several models to understand the issues and to propose risk mitigation measures. Among them, Cernea's 'impoverishment risks and reconstruction model' (IRR) classified the negative effects of resettlement on local residents caused by development: landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, loss of access to common property resources, increased morbidity and community disarticulation (Cernea, 1997).

Meanwhile, IRR model has been criticized because the model fails to take account of the sequential and composite nature of risk (Dwivedi, 2002). Dwivedi points out that risk unfolds in a complex sequence of events and there is a need to analyze risk management issues in a process based framework [ibid]. He also claims that IRR model diagnoses the problems only from the viewpoint of the planner. It does not provide the scope for affected people to define their losses or to express their opinion on displacement.

This study aims to investigate the degree of each risk and its changes after displacement in Southern Transport Development Project (STDP), which was the first highway project in Sri Lanka. Morikawa tried to identify the risks the affected people faced in resettlers' perceptions in resettlement sites using Cernea's model (Morikawa, 2015). Conducting questionnaire surveys in the resettlement sites again in 2016 enabled us to see the difference from the time of his visit in 2010-11, the degree of each risk and its changes after resettlement.

Our survey results show that different livelihood elements follow different recovery process. Infrastructure such as electricity and house have fairly improved while water issues have not been solved in more than 30% of the households. Many respondents answered they had bought bigger and more comfortable house than before resettlement. This lead to high satisfaction of "house" element but it sometimes ended up in their exhausting compensation and failure in life reconstruction. On the other hand, other element of living improved little and especially recovery rates of income, food and relations with relatives are quite low, implying that there might be room for improvement on resettlement policies for these elements. Job training was conducted after resettlement but many respondents answered it was not very useful for their life reconstruction.

The observations from our survey call for continuous assessment of resettlement risks in infrastructure development projects, and we claim that stage-wise evaluation, management and preparation of resettlement risks are necessary.

Keywords: Impoverishment Risk; Infrastructure Development; Land Acquisition; Livelihood Reconstruction; Resettlement.

Introduction

Throughout the world, land acquisition and resettlement issues have been critical to infrastructure development projects. They not only lead to delays and additional costs in the development projects but also have negative impacts on many aspects of affected people's lives. Therefore, social safeguard policies in international development agencies and multilateral development banks have tried to cover a broad range of resettlement risks and their mitigation measures.

Scholars have proposed several models to understand the issues and to propose risk mitigation measures. Among them, Cernea's 'impoverishment risks and reconstruction model' (IRR) classified the negative effects of resettlement on local residents caused by development: landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, loss of access to common property resources, increased morbidity and community disarticulation (Cernea, 1997). IRR model has been criticized because the model fails to take account of the sequential and composite nature of risk (Dwivedi, 2002). Dwivedi points out that risk unfolds in a complex sequence of events and there is a need to analyze risk management issues in a process based framework (ibid.). He also claims that IRR model diagnoses the problems only from the viewpoint of the planner. It does not provide the scope for affected people to define their losses or to express their opinion on displacement.

Another famous model in displacement research is Scudder's four-stage framework (Scudder 2005). It classified dam-induced resettlement process into four stages: Planning and Recruitment, Adjustment and Coping, Community Formation and Economic Development, Handing Over and Incorporation. It explains why resettlers are the key resource for achieving a positive outcome, looking into changes in risk perceptions of affected people. However, Scudder does not verify whether such changes in people's attitudes actually take place.

This study investigates resettlement risks in a dynamic perspective based on a quantitative evaluation of data gathered from resettlement sites in Southern Transport Development Project (STDP) in Sri Lanka. Through field survey, we measured levels of risks that the affected people face and their changes. Our results show that different livelihood elements follow different recovery process, and call for continuous assessment of resettlement risks in infrastructure development projects.

Case and Method

STDP is the first controlled access highway construction project in Sri Lanka. A 126km-length highway was constructed and now is being operating from Kottawa, which is on the outskirt of the Colombo, to Matara in the Southern part of the island. The project Executing Agency was Road Development Authority (RDA) that organized under the Ministry of Highways, Ports and Shipping (at present the Ministry of Highways and Investment Promotion). The STDP had two primary objectives: (i) to spur economic development in the southern region of Sri Lanka, and (ii) to significantly reduce the high rate of road accidents. The STDP's secondary objective was poverty reduction. The primary objectives of the STDP were to act as a catalyst for the development of the economically deprived southern region, and improve road safety in Sri Lanka. The secondary objective was to reduce poverty by providing the poor with improved access to employment opportunities and to health, education, and other social services.

The STDP was financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Nordic Development Fund (NDF), the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), the Export and Import Bank of China (EXIM), and the government of Sril Lanak (the borrower). ADB approved the project in November 1999, and it was expected to be implemented from 2000 to 2005. The STDP original loan was declared effective on 30 October 2002 and closed on 31 December 2010. The STDP supplementary loan was declared effective on 13 June 2008 and closed on 5 July 2013. The ADB- and JICA-funded sections were substantially completed by November 2011. Overall, it took 13 years to complete the project compared to the originally expected implementation period of 6 years.

There were about 5,800 project affected households and 10,271 plots of land acquired by the project (ADB 2014). Although Sri Lanka had some experience in handling land acquisition and resettlement matters related to irrigation schemes in 1980s (Mahawali Development Project), resettlement issues related to transport sector, particularly in expressway was managed for the first time by RDA. Therefore, the significant delay of construction works was largely due to land acquisition and resettlement issues.

However, reflecting the difficulties in its resettlement process, donor agencies and RDA finally implemented Land Acquisition and Resettlement Committee (LARC). Since statutory compensation under Land Acquisition Act was

not enough to compensate replacement value, the committee provides an opportunity for resettlers to negotiate payment of ex-gratia payments. Some improvements were also suggested to expedite the activities of LARCs, such as assistance of a lawyer to clear the titles, payment of a daily allowance to the affected person, appointment of private surveyors for the perimeter survey approved by the Survey Department, and assistance from resettlement assistants from the RDA for obtaining deeds and other legal documents.

Under Land Acquisition and Resettlement Division head office in Colombo, each of the four regional resettlement unit offices-at Banadaragama and Dodangoda in the JICA funded section and Kurundugahahethekma and Pinnaduwa in the ADB section was staffed with one Resettlement Officer (RO) and 8-12 Resettlement Assistants (RAs). ROs and RAs work and help resettlers in negotiation of LARC, and together with LARC system, it is highly evaluated as a success by donor agencies and Sri Lankan government.

In 2010-11, Morikawa tried to identify the risks the affected people faced in resettlers' perceptions in resettlement sites using Cernea's model (Morikawa, 2015). Conducting questionnaire surveys in the resettlement sites again in 2016 enabled us to see the difference from the time of his visit, the degree of each risk and its changes after resettlement. To investigate the degree of each risk and its changes after displacement in STDP, we conducted a field survey to 76 households in resettlement sites in STDP (ADB Section) in August 2016 (August 4-12). Our survey consists of a questionnaire part on life recovery after the resettlement and a semi-structured interview part. In the questionnaire part, to measure life recovery after the resettlement, we adopted the strategy of Kimura et al. (2010), which measured the life recovery after two earthquakes in Japan by identifying several life elements and ask recovery on each elements to the respondents. Considering our context of resettlement, in our study we focused following 14 elements: income, job opportunity, education, easiness of borrowing money, participation in religious activities, health, access to roads, water, electricity, food, house, relations with relatives, exchange something with neighbors and security. We also asked overall life recovery after the resettlement.

Results and Discussion

Overall life recovery is measured with the question "All things considered, do you feel your life has been recovered or improved?" Fig.1 shows the resettlers' answers for this question. About 75% of the respondents answered their lives had been (at least) recovered and 60% of the respondents answered their lives had been even improved. It can be said that this rate is not so different from the rate of ordinary people in Sri Lanka. Considering STDP was the first highway project in Sri Lanka, this result shows that the resettlement was conducted successfully.

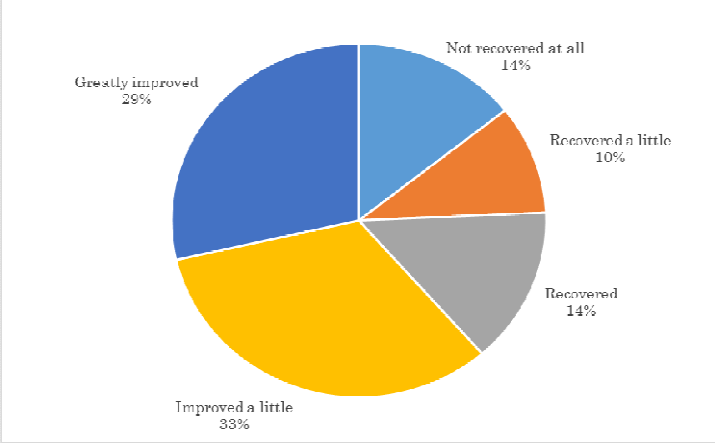


Figure 1: Overall Life Recovery among Resettlers in Resettlement Sites (ADB Section).

Fig.2 shows the results of recovery level of each livelihood element. The x axis indicates time from the occurrence of resettlement and the y axis indicates percentage of the respondents who recovered each element by a certain point of time. While in all livelihood elements respondents recognize improvement from just after the resettlement, different livelihood element shows different recovery process and degree of recovery at the time of the interviews. Fig.3 maps livelihoods elements by recent recovery level (x-axis) and improvement (difference between recovery

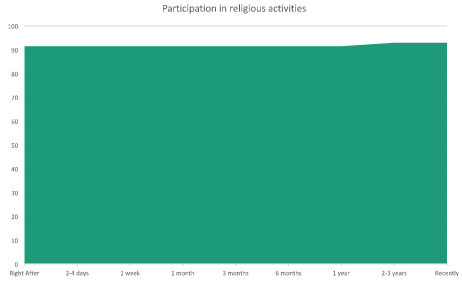
levels at “right after resettlement” and “recently”; y-axis). Infrastructure such as electricity and house have fairly improved while water issues have not been solved in more than 30% of the households. Many respondents answered they had bought bigger and more comfortable house than before resettlement. This lead to high satisfaction of “house” element but it sometimes ended up in their exhausting compensation and failure in life reconstruction. Among 32 respondents who answered how much they use compensation for building new houses, more than 80% spent at least half of their compensation on their new house, including 20% who spent all. Other elements of livelihood improved little and especially recovery levels of income, food and relations with relatives remain quite low, implying that there might be rooms for improvement on resettlement policies for these elements. Job training was conducted after resettlement but many respondents answered it was not very useful for their life reconstruction.

Conclusions

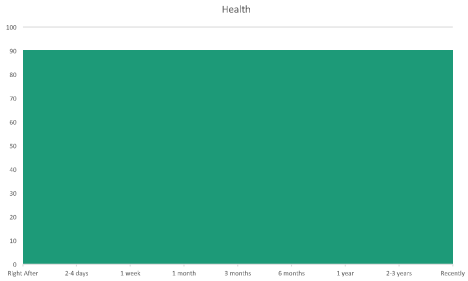
Our survey results show that different livelihood elements follow different recovery process. Infrastructure such as electricity and house have fairly improved while water issues have not been solved in more than 30% of the households. Many respondents answered they had bought bigger and more comfortable house than before resettlement. This lead to high satisfaction of “house” element but it sometimes ended up in their exhausting compensation and failure in life reconstruction. On the other hand, other element of living improved little and especially recovery rates of income, food and relations with relatives are quite low, implying that there might be room for improvement on resettlement policies for these elements. Job training was conducted after resettlement but many respondents answered it was not very useful for their life reconstruction.

The observations from our survey call for continuous assessment of resettlement risks in infrastructure development projects, and we claim that stage-wise evaluation, management and preparation of resettlement risks are necessary.

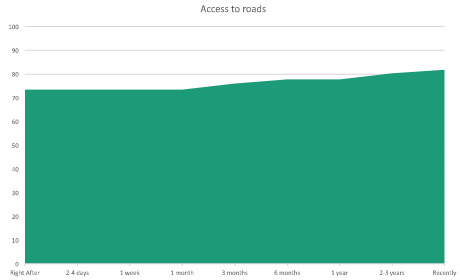
Participation in religious activities



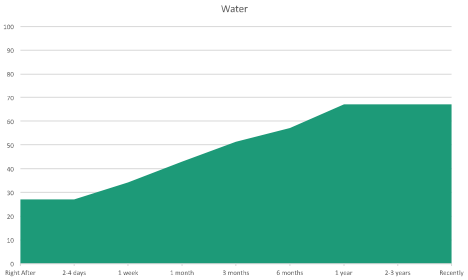
Health



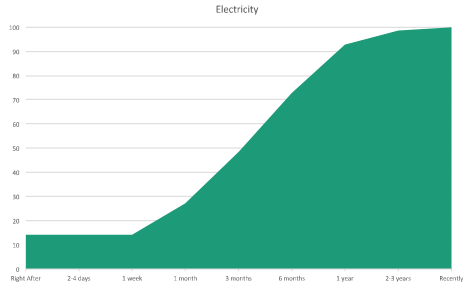
Access to roads



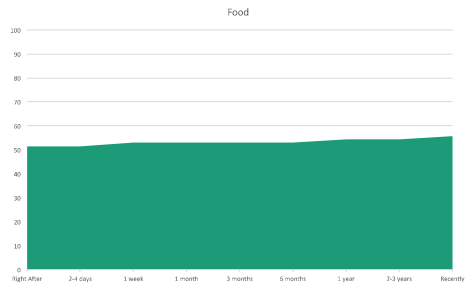
Water



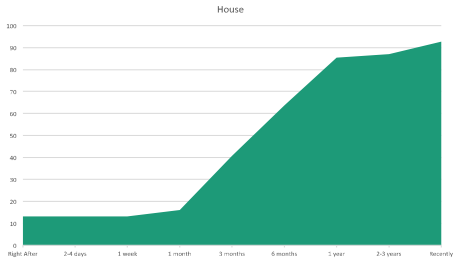
Electricity



Food



House



Relations with relatives

Figure 2: Recovery Dynamics in Each Livelihood Element.

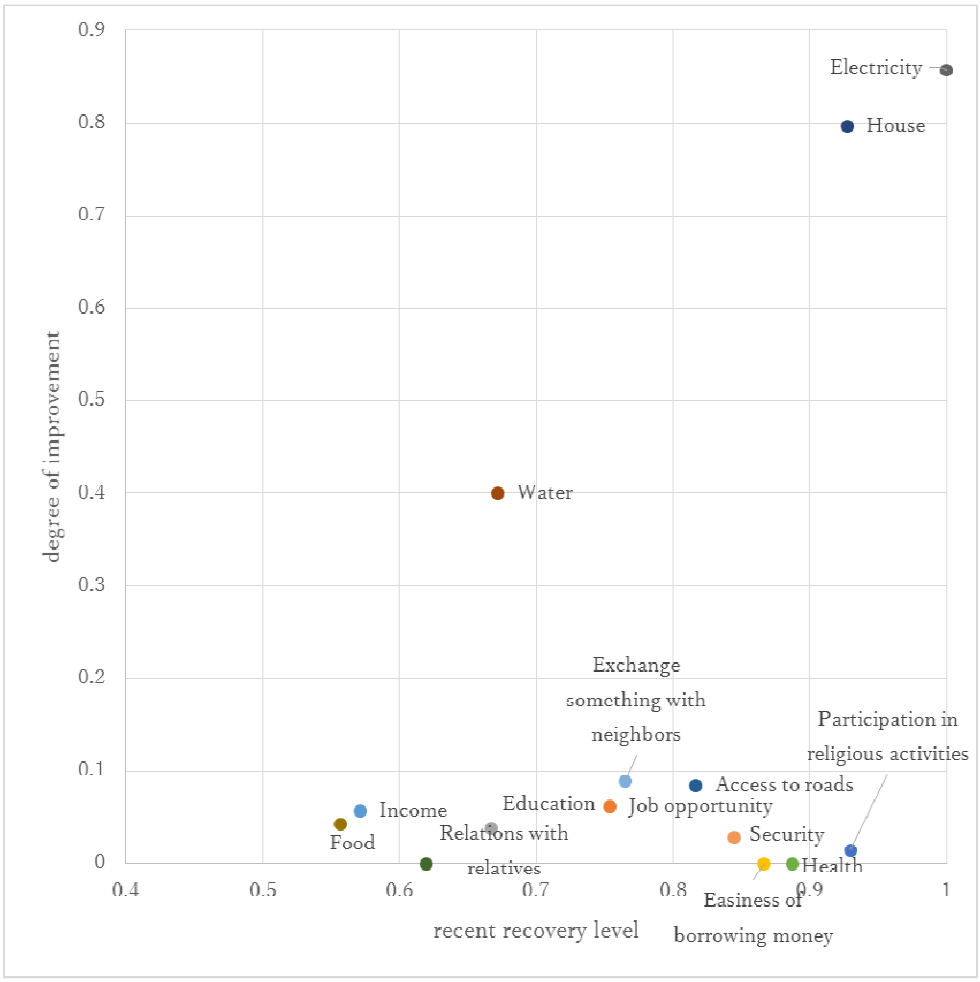


Figure 3: Livelihoods Elements by Recent Recovery Level and Improvement.

Acknowledgement

This study was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Numbers 13J07950, 26885017, 16K17046. Our field study was supported by Professor Karunathilake Kankanige, Department of Sociology, University of Kelaniya.

References

[1] Asian Development Bank. (2014). *Completion Report: Sri Lanka Southern Transport Development Project*, Asian Development Bank, Manila.
[2] Cernea, M. (1997). The risks and reconstruction model for resettling displaced populations. *World Development*, 25(10), 1569-1587.
[3] Dwivedi, R. (2002). Models and methods in development–induced displacement. *Development and Change*, 33(4), 709-732.
[4] Kimura, R., Tamura, K., Inoguchi, M., Hayashi, H., and Urata, Y. (2010). Generalization of victim's behavior and life reconstruction process –Socio-economic recovery from three earthquake disasters occurred in Hyogo Prefecture in 1995, Niigata Prefecture in 2004 and 2007-. *Journal of Social Safety Science*, 13, 175-185.
[5] Morikawa, S. (2015). Land acquisition, resettlement and resettlers' perception: The case of Southern Transport Development Project in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Japan Society of Civil Engineers, Ser. F4 (Construction and Management)*, 71(4), I_119-I_129. (in Japanese)
[6] Scudder, T. (2005). *The Future of Large Dams: Dealing with Social. Environmental, Institutional and Political Costs*, Earthscan, London.

About the authors

Name: Akira Ozawa
Master Student, Department of Civil Engineering, The University of Tokyo.
Mailing address: 7-3-1 Hongo Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Tel: 03-5841-6092
Fax: 03-5841-7496
e-mail: akiraozawa0119@gmail.com

Name: So Morikawa
Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, The University of Tokyo.
Mailing address: 7-3-1 Hongo Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Tel: 03-5841-6092
Fax: 03-5841-7496
e-mail: morikawa@civil.t.u-tokyo.ac.jp