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International Conference on Development-Induced Displacement and Resettlement *Bridging Research and Practice, Filling the Knowledge Gaps.*

CONCLUDING SESSION:
Reflections on the Enduring Questions in Development-Induced Displacement and Resettlement
Chair: Susan Tamondong, author.
Panelists and Co-Authors: Inga-Lill Aronsson (Uppsala University, Sweden), Michael Cernea (Fellow, Brookings Institute, USA), Ted Downing (University of Arizona, USA), Patrick C. Giraud (African Development Bank (AfDB)), Anthony Oliver-Smith, (University of Florida), Thayer Scudder (CalTech), USA, Chris de Wet (Rhodes University, South Africa.

ABSTRACT
This paper summarizes the discussion during the Closing Plenary Panel of the DIDR Conference. It revolves around three main themes: (i) Experiences and Views about Resettlement, (ii) Reflections on the DIDR Conference, and (iii) Suggestions for Future Work and Collaboration. The author organized the Panel and facilitated the closing session. The Panelists (see Appendix A) considered to be “pioneers” in DIDR research and practice, shared their views on resettlement’s enduring questions, such as: What is adequate compensation? Can socio-cultural disruption be compensated? How do we deal with socio-cultural changes, damage and re-organization of communities? Can we compensate memories of life in the old community? Or, can a lost view of a community landscape and habitual prayer area by the mountain side be compensated? Do displaced people have the right to protest, or occupy a piece of public land? How do we deal with non-compensated public goods? In addition to these specific questions, the panel addressed the three themes (Themes 1, 2 and 3) of DIDR’s broader issues. Under these three themes, fifteen questions in total were divided and discussed by the panelists. Their views, including those from the audience are summarized in this paper, with some direct quotes from the speakers, as transcribed from video tapes, in addition to comments from the co-authors’ written accounts. Contributions from Panel members who could not physically attend were read during the session.

As a conclusion, DIDR is a broad and diverse social phenomenon that affects not only the lives and livelihoods of people, but also the global environment exacerbated by climate change. There are no clear answers to date, but an urgent need to address the enduring questions, and more inclusive fora involving all stakeholders
from affected peoples, civil society, to those causing and financing projects causing development displacement. DIDR needs more longitudinal studies to gain deeper understanding of displaced people, the role of social networks during reconstruction and the impact on their lives after displacement. These will provide academics and practitioners, not only insights whether human development also takes place, but also shape better ways of doing things, ideally without displacement and hopefully, to have answers to the enduring questions of resettlement.

BACKGROUND

Forced resettlement is a multi-dimensional, global process affecting tens of millions of people, often causing poverty and further impoverishment. People will tend to be involuntarily affected by large and small development projects, as long as the world continues to develop and where the use of land and water resources changes with time.

Although mitigation measures are prepared and safeguard policies are put in place in development projects, involuntary displacement continue to take place. Despite an enormous literature on displacement-caused impoverishment, many questions are left unanswered to date. Continuing problems experienced during recovery by displaced people amount to many “tugs of war” among government, private corporations, affected people and advocates. There is a compelling need to bridge the gap between praxis and theory; between reality and operational directives. A deeper understanding of contemporary issues and their case-specific problems need to be explored, to protect people from being hurt in projects they never asked for. Issues related to forced displacement are often interrelated with livelihood, health, culture and people’s general well-being. Thus, practical solutions bridging theory and practice need to be found.

Theme 1- Experiences and views about resettlement

1. What is resettlement in your perception? What makes it so complex?
2. Can you tell us about your worst resettlement experience? What made it your worst experience?
3. Can you tell us about your best resettlement experience? Where/when was it? What made it successful or best experience for you?
4. What is the most frequent and/or difficult challenge that you face in resettlement projects? How have you been solving these? Do you think it was solved? Why, why not?
5. Do you think the resettlement practices are generally improving or are they going backwards? Why?
Theme 2- Reflections on the DIDR Conference 2013

6. Given your years of experience and knowledge in the field, how would you address the conflicts between the Project proponents and the project-affected population? What do you think about affected people’s right to veto projects causing their displacement?

7. What do you think about the discussions on global and national governance systems for DIDR? What would be your suggestions for enhancing institutional capacities?

8. What are your thoughts on new trends of DIDR? Have you gained any insights from the presentations on diverse and different contexts of DIDR?

9. What new perspectives or findings did you come across at this Conference? What was the most interesting thing you heard in this conference? Did you agree, disagree, why not?

10. What are the other things that contributed to enhancing your knowledge?

Theme 3 - Suggestions for future works and collaboration

11. Toward which direction do you think the resettlement studies/works should go? What should the practitioners aim for? What are the things researchers should be researching on?

12. In the future, how should we, as resettlement specialists, continue to contribute to the field?

13. What should be the next step for DIDR? How can we increase awareness and improve the works on the ground?

14. How do you evaluate the conversations between various stakeholders so far? How do you think we should further collaborate amongst resettlement experts and other working in relevant fields?

15. Is it possible to bridge the gap between theory and practice in resettlement? What would you like to suggest for practitioners in the field? What are the research needs in the field and how would you like to address them to academics/researchers?

VIEWS FROM THE PANELISTS

The closing session opens with the introduction of the panelists present: Michael Cernea, Theodore Downing, Chris de Wet and Inga-Lill-Aronsson. Panelists in absentia were also introduced: Thayer Scudder, Patrick Giraud and Anthony Oliver-Smith. Their messages were read and summarized by Panel Chair, Susan D. Tamondong.

Q1. What is resettlement in your perception? What makes it so complex?

Inga–Lill Aronsson begins, to quote: “I looked out over the auditorium and thought, how did I end up here at the first place?... I was a young, doctoral student in
cultural anthropology at Uppsala University, and had discovered this dark side of development that we today call DIDR. At Uppsala there was no competence in resettlement, and when I turned outside for guidance, a professor found my study not only repulsing but also said: If you are not against it, you are part of the problem. I understood that my research interest in DIDR made me a bad person and I felt I had been sentence to death by the morally superior social science researchers. I was devastated. The rescue came with a Fulbright Scholarship to The University of Arizona where I met Professor Ted Downing, a leading expert on resettlement. At that time I was so insecure that I had stopped talking. But he waited patiently for three months until I slowly started to trust him intellectually. Ted saved me by explaining that I was not alone, that it was necessary to make one’s hands dirty and study this complex, difficult, multi-faceted industry of resettlement that harmed millions of people, and which will not stop because someone in an academic tower condemns it. He introduced me to the World Bank and the upcoming model project of Zimapán in central Mexico, a project that was meant to be a model project for successful resettlement. In 1992 I came to the valley of Ejido Vista Hermosa, carrying my 2-years baby son on my shoulders. Together with the local people, my son and I lived through the entire resettlement process of before, during and after the move. The result became the monograph *Negotiating Involuntary Resettlement. A Study of Local Bargaining during the Construction of the Zimapán Dam* (2002). The book is long out of print, but still in great demand. This summer (2013), supported with a grant from Magnus Bergwall Foundation, I will return to Zimapán to embark on a longitudinal study of the project. So what is my perception of resettlement? I have no idea. Maybe it is simply that *Resettlement is not the answer, but the question*.

**Michael Cernea** thinks that development induced displacement and resettlement (DIDR) generates the most conflicting and most difficult social issues in development. This is because in DIDR, he says, one has to deal with counter development. Rather than heading to somebody’s resources, human capabilities, training, and opportunities, development displacement takes away what the people already have, and the opportunities hidden under their land. When land is bought, the best price is the agricultural price of the land, but nothing is given to the opportunities under the land. Cernea asks, “how can the taking of the land be replaced and exceeded to put people back on their feet?” He also gives the example of universities and campuses known to have been built on places where people used to live, and they have no record of how people were displaced.

**Susan D. Tamondong** recognizes the multi-dimensional character of resettlement, with issues encompassing livelihood, health, gender and culture. She points out as an example, a discussion at the conference on the question of household definition, how it is defined in relation to compensation and entitlement. What if the household is actually the whole community, where members are not exactly living but sleeping

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1 This is a paraphrase of Thomas Aquinas supposedly made statement that "God is not the answer. God is the question".
there, or not really related to the household owner but contributes to its income and eats with the family? How can entitlement be treated in this case? She returns to other enduring questions, such as: Can socio-cultural disruption be compensated? How do we deal with socio-cultural changes, damage and re-organization of communities? Can we compensate memories of life in the old community? Or a lost view of a community landscape, a habitual prayer area by the mountain side? How do we deal with non-compensated public goods? She points out that there have been no clear answers, and thus, the challenge remains why the enduring questions have not been answered to date, and why there is a need to bridge theory and practice in DIDR.

Chris deWet considers resettlement as “the reorganization of space”, where people do all the time, as they reconstitute themselves. He thinks it is good in some ways, but there is something basically wrong. De Wet says resettlement has dysfunctional reorganization of space and time with economic consequences. The critical things he had seen that cause the problems are called pre-suppositions, which occur when displacement happens. Compensation, according to deWet, is a set of fallacies, based on the work by Carmen and Ted Downing (2009) identifying 5 fallacies. The “strict compliance” fallacy shows that if we follow the plans, things will happen in the end. It is almost like the Soviet system –a plan is made and everybody follows-boom! If “boom” did not work, that’s the way we wrote it. Then there is “blame the victims” fallacy - where if something goes wrong, it is the victims’ fault. They did not respond to what they were offered, thus they did not play it right. Another fallacy is “clock stops here” in project cycle, where when the socio-economic changes are all over, when the project funding stops and the last tranche is made, the people and everybody can do whatever they want to do. And finally, the “someone else should pay” fallacy where costs are responsibility of the government or somebody else.

Q.2, Can you tell us about your worst resettlement experience? What made it your worst experience?

Q.3 Can you tell us about your best resettlement experience? Where/when was it? What made it successful or best experience for you?

Michael Cernea thinks that it is difficult to give quantification to the most difficult social issue, but gives an example of a good resettlement experience quoted from his opening speech- of a private sector project by British Petroleum (BP) which makes it better than others. He cites four elements are present in its success: (i) political will – when the higher level management, in this case, the VP of the company, agreed to renegotiate the purchase of land at 5,000 USD, rather than obtain land through another entity without compensating the displacees; (ii) provision of

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financial resources - putting enough money with no limitation on compensation which is calculated according to the available budget; (iii) input of appropriate skills – to work with the displaced people, including high caliber engineers to design new villages; and (iv) listening to people – allowing the people to organize and put forward a collective demand.

Ted Downing relays a personal example of positive resettlement experience. On his assignment for the World Bank in Western Mexico, he stood on a cliff overlooking the soon-to-be flooded Santiago River canyon. Some Huichol Indians were to be displaced. Most lived across the canyon, which formed a formidable economic barrier. The Huichol were forced to drive their cattle far upstream in order to ford the river and get them to market in Tepic, on his side of the canyon. Emaciated from the long drive, the cattle lost value. He imagined a future 200' deep lake stretching to the other side of the canyon, and sketched out a flat bottom boat with dozens of stick cattle with horns standing inside it. He asked the Mexican government if they could construct flat bottom boats to transport cattle across the new lake and assign exclusive navigation rights to the displaced Huichol. A Mexican naval officer shared the vision and offered to train the Indians who didn't know how to swim nor use boats. And it worked! The Indians became net beneficiaries of the new reservoir. Thus the lesson here is: **to dream something beyond what anybody can dream, and try to make it happen.** When the community accepts the idea, get them involved, and then find the financing to do it.

Q.4 What is the most frequent and/or difficult challenge that you face in resettlement projects? How have you been solving these? Do you think it was solved? Why, why not?

Ted Downing believes that the biggest challenge for resettlement work is how to be an activist. He thinks it is easy to write about it, but practice is another story, and the critical thing is how to make things work. Resisting, according to Downing is only one form of activism. Other forms include teaching, organizing communities, forming coalitions, negotiating with authorities/policy-makers/practitioners, monitoring, taking legal actions, and gaining access to information (based on Dolores Koenig list). To this list, he wants to add, imagining creative ways to assure project-created resources may become benefits to project-affected-peoples.

Chris DeWet thinks that the difficulty of being in between positions, i.e., juggling with two sides (people’s side and the client’s side), and the dilemma of when to break one’s role, are two of the biggest challenges in resettlement consultancy work. When we have an understanding of both sides, how does one position oneself vis-a-vis the client (financing Bank or Government) and the people, or make decisions with relative implications on various constituencies? How does one deal with confidentiality and ethically (morally compelling) necessary disclosure of information to the people (such as the extent of possible negative impact on their livelihoods, properties and land)?
Michael Cernea shared three lessons in this regard: (i) act on power whether it is the state or a private agency which imposes displacement, (ii) look at the budget, in order to put people back on their economic feet, and (iii) involve the displaced people as participants, organizing them and promoting their self-organization to speak collectively to have a stronger force to act on their defense and resistance. He believes that big financial bodies and international organizations including NGOs are not the only ones capable of changing things, but so can collectively organized displaced groups who can be effective agents of change.

Inga-Lill Aronsson recalled her experience in Zimapán, Mexico, where she followed the entire process of the community’s resettlement from the beginning to the end. She learned that the most difficult thing was to understand what decision was made with local participation by local residents because some decisions were made badly in such a way to be economically unwise (impoverishing) or detrimental to community members if people accept these decisions. Thus, local participation is best a joint endeavor between the local people and the resettlement experts where both parties recognize their responsibilities and accountabilities. For both parties there are tensions built into the local participatory model, but for the resettlement expert there is a dilemma who on one hand, respects local participation, and on the other hand, would be in a difficult position to tell the people that their decisions are wrong.

Aronsson elaborates that from her experiences, the most difficult challenge in an informed participatory project is not only to understand, which per se demands deep ethnographic insights, but foremost to deal with people’s decisions if they go against what is regarded as “best practices” and “good outcome” with regard to compensation, social and cultural equality, equity and much more. She adds, “how do we deal with the “wrong” decisions in a participatory project?” Ponder the scenario that after months of negotiations, information, and knowledge exchange between the people and the experts, the people make a decision that is wrong from the experts’ point of view based on global experiences from hundreds of projects. Should the project management respect the decision with the possible outcome that the people (or selected groups) will become impoverished or hurt? Or, should the management disregard the people’s decision and be accused of being paternalistic, autocratic and not respecting people’s human rights? A “wrong” decision is also complicated by the uncertainty of the final outcomes. There is always the possibility that the experts are wrong and the people are right or vice versa. In such a scenario - Who is responsible? Who is accountable? The usual answer to this dilemma is that the implementer carries the entire responsibility. From Aronsson’s view, in an informed participatory project, there are responsibilities, obligations and rights that both parties have to carry and be aware of. It would be a mistake to ignore the dynamics in the relationship because it can shift during the negotiations making it difficult to discern the clear cut categories of the “victim” and the “power abuse”. Aronsson emphasizes the need to develop another kind of project model that can deal with the tensions built into the present participatory model.
Q.5 Do you think the resettlement practices are generally improving or are they going backwards? Why?

Patrick C. Giraud sent his views from the perspective of a multi-national development bank (MDB) manager. He says that it took nearly 25 years for all other international institutions and many countries to adopt the World Bank’s Resettlement Policy and/or to develop their own. But despite all the efforts, MDB’s are still, to this day, struggling to address effectively the negative impacts of DIDR. He thinks that this could be explained by a combination of various issues, among which are:

(i) **Approval culture**: MDBs are still very much influenced by "approval culture". Approval of projects within a given year or time frame is a strong pressure to staff. Although a wide and diverse range of key performance indicators (KPIs) are now used to evaluate MDB units, e.g. divisions, departments, offices, and to assess staff performance, it is actually the financing figures that dominate---taking the lead against other indicators that are more related to project quality. A task manager, according to him, has more chances to be promoted if he or she succeeds in bringing his or her project to the Board for approval before the end of the institution’s operating year during which the particular project was targeted. This approval culture applies as well to managers or directors for the annual financing targets of their individual units.

As a result, social issues faced by a project, and in particular on resettlement, are still too often considered a burden. During project preparation, it takes time and money for the project team to address resettlement issues, and to prepare thorough and reliable resettlement plans. Thus, even if resettlement plans are prepared by specialized consultants, the data collection and administrative issues, such as land titling and valuation, often cause problems at country level and take even more time. Task managers, according to him, are prone to be tempted to cut corners to avoid delaying the project and missing their annual targets. The perceptions of social development specialists by MDB’s project processing teams are oftentimes negative, and social scientists are considered as “trouble makers” when they try to push for the full application of MDB’s social safeguards to the project, as it could mean delaying the project.

(ii) **Resettlement cost financing** according to Giraud, is usually the responsibility of the project countries, typically being a local cost. However, countries often either do not prioritize such expenses in their annual budget and/or have lengthy processes to obtain all approvals on time for getting the needed resettlement budget. As a result, payment of full compensation to affected persons (APs), or at least provision of the needed funds on a special account, becomes a legal condition precedent to loan effectiveness or disbursement.

Giraud says that when a project implementation is delayed because of resettlement issues, the future expected benefits of the project for a wider population take
priority over that of APs and waivers are too often provided, with negative impact on the compensation of APs. Thus, oftentimes, APs see their concerns as taking the back seat. After project implementation, the government is usually in charge of monitoring the resettlement action plan (RAP) with very limited resources and therefore limited results. He says that in terms of budgeted amounts, when countries actually build resettlement cost in the total project budget, they tend to limit it to infrastructure costs only (replacement of housing and the like) without including other important compensation costs, such as loses of production/crops or restoration of livelihood.

(iii) **Increasing private sector lending** according to Giraud, is widely recognized that resources from governments and MDBs will not be enough to meet the huge demand for infrastructure financing worldwide. Therefore, MDBs play more and more a catalytic role to mobilize private sector financing for infrastructure development, and private sector operations (PSO) which have increased several folds in the recent years. In PSO, he says, it is not the MDB directly preparing or directly supervising resettlement with the Governments, but the private project sponsor. The sponsor usually hires consultants for preparing the RAP and directly compensates the governments for conducting resettlement, but often without proper monitoring. Thus, MDBs are only responsible for making sure that due process is followed by the private sponsor in respect to their resettlement policies, which are often defined in very broad term or not at all, compared to policies developed for public sector operations.

Giraud concludes that as a result, PSOs face the same issue as public sector operations in the past, way before the resettlement policies were implemented. It was when resettlement was not directly part of the preparation and monitoring of the project, and the issue of displaced people was left to the Government with its limited resources and other priorities. Thus, the related problems of resettlement are never addressed properly.

**Q.6 How you would address the conflict between the project proponents and the project affected population? What do you think about peoples’ right to protest?**

**Ted Downing** addressed the conflict between project proponents and project-affected population issue through negotiation and activism. He believes that people have the right to veto projects, and show resistance, when these are detrimental to their lives. Furthermore, it is an ethical obligation for resettlement professionals to provide basic, relevant, project information about risks to both project affected peoples and project proponents. He adds that our duty arises from enhanced awareness of risks and likely impoverishment consequences and potential human rights violations that may be avoided or mitigated. Affected peoples often do not know about the resettlement impact and are unaware of international policies and laws concerning how they should be treated. Thus, he emphasizes the need to give them the tools and information regarding livelihood challenges, stresses after
relocation and relevant policies, including the right to protest.

Q.7 What do you think about the discussions on global and national governance systems for DIDR? What would be your suggestions for enhancing institutional capacities?

Ted Downing says, “As a human rights activist, I am concerned about the millions of people being forcefully displaced who fall outside the basic involuntary resettlement policy frameworks that we in this conference are so familiar with—namely the World Bank’s Operational Policy OP4.12 and the International Finance Corporation’s Performance Standard PS 5. As a former lawmaker in the United States I became painfully aware that the discussions we are having in this conference on impoverishment risks, restoration of livelihoods, and the resettlement effect is not part of the dialogue concerning “takings”, as they are called, in the United States or most developed countries. In these settings, involuntary resettlement is part of eminent domain or compulsory acquisition, a narrowly defined economic exchange. Laws and policies focus on process and valuation, with little concern for non-land transaction issues. China and India are being exceptions in having a national dialogue on the rights of AP. Might international policymakers reluctance to extend the risk and reconstruction rights to people in the way of internationally financed development projects be their awareness that people in their own countries do not have such safeguards and rights?”

Ted Downing also noted that a large number of people are not part of the international policy, using an example of the United States, where policy in transportation is under an on-going dialogue, which is not, however, part of the on-going dialogue in France or elsewhere. Given that it took him two years to change one-fourth of law in the USA, it is important to understand the culture, where there is no international policy framework operating. He says, “it took me two years to change one small corner of eminent domain law in the US, when I tried to introduce the risk and reconstruction model into law. I might as well have tried to jump to the moon. Fellow lawmakers and agencies dismissed my efforts as self-interested, a consultant’s dream.”

Q.8 What are your thoughts on new trends of DIDR? Have you gained any insights from the presentations on diverse and different contexts of DIDR? (e.g. urban DIDR, DIDR related to the use of land and water resources, etc.)

Michael Cernea shared his thoughts on the trends of DIDR, and pointed out the need for more discussion on resettlement of groups, and how power is scattered and diminished after displacement. Cernea believes that resettlement policy can be improved by addressing the issue of group identity.

Ted Scudder sent his thoughts by email and shared two important points, to quote “

(1) I am concerned that there have been so few major theoretical advances in DIDR

...
and other involuntary resettlement studies over the past twenty years in spite of a major increase in the number of researchers, articles and books, and conferences dealing, especially, with development induced resettlement. Why is that? Though I can think of a number of reasons, I believe the major one is a lack of systematic long-term research dealing with the involuntary removal of communities over a period of at least two generations (say 40 years) due to development projects, catastrophes and, no doubt sooner than latter, climate change. Major theoretical advances will require a significant increase in such research which presents a major opportunity for the current and the next generation of researchers.

(2) In regard to increasing knowledge, most important from a policy point of view is the understanding that not only is both development and compensation essential for improving the livelihood of a majority of resettlers but that both are also necessary for achieving the less desirable outcome of recovery. Where DIDR is involved, mere recovery requires a major development effort for a variety of reasons. In the case of dam resettlement, one reason is that existing guidelines, including that of World Bank (which has influenced other guidelines around the world) only cover direct economic and social impacts. Excluded are a wide range of negative cultural effects reported in study after study that relate to loss of home, burial grounds, religious sites, and ideological and political control over a familiar habitat. Nor do they cover the public health implications of such psychological impacts which are especially serious for indigenous people, and for many ethnic minorities and peasant communities, with strong ties to the land and limited mobility. There is no way that the dominant use of cost-benefit analysis can accurately reflect the hardships involved.

A second reason relates to what is usually a long planning process for large development projects. During that time period living standards for the majority can be expected to drop. Governments, private sector entrepreneurs, NGOs and project affected people themselves are much less likely to make investments within a future reservoir basin. Hence by the time construction begins living standards of future resettlers will already be worse off than those of neighbors living outside the project area.

A third reason relates to what the World Bank refers to as pre-project "baseline studies" which are usually undertaken late in the planning process when resettler living standards already have been adversely affected. Current guidelines are also based on the inaccurate assumption that such studies accurately reflect pre-project income and living standards; hence constitute a basis against which restoration can be measured. Yet even where pre-resettlement surveys are undertaken -- and adequate ones are rare -- there is a general tendency to underestimate people’s incomes so that restoration targets remain too low. Underestimation of income includes failure to give value to the utilization of soon-to-be-lost common property natural resources for food and other purposes, fear of being taxed, and the unflattering or illegal nature of various income-generating activities.
A **fourth reason** is that project authorities following the "restorations option" usually emphasizes compensation at the expense of the necessary development opportunities. A **fifth reason** becomes salient immediately following removal when adjusting to new habitats, hosts, and government programs reduces time and energy for restoring previous living standards. During that time period, living standards for the majority can be expected to drop in the large majority of cases. Policies based on restoration do not take into consideration the existence let alone the extent of such a drop. Nor do they consider situations where living standards have been rising outside the project area because of non-project related national development activities.

Also post removal, a **sixth reason** relates to that majority of cases where farmland and access to common property resources are lost or reduced. Following removal household expenses are apt to be greater than before. Increased costs are especially a problem for resettlers who have to purchase food supplies that previously they were able to produce, or where less fertile soils require the purchase of such inputs as improved seed and fertilizers, or where new production techniques require loans that lead to indebtedness. Another reason why loss of arable land to a project is apt to leave households worse off, is that such land, unlike cash compensation and jobs, is a resource that usually is inherited from one generation to the next."

Anthony Oliver-Smith also sent his message and made reference to his work with a disaster stricken community in the Peruvian Andes that tenaciously and successfully resisted resettlement. He realized that many of the problems experienced by this were shared with people who had been displaced by development projects, and many of whom also resisted displacement with equal tenacity. These similarities led him into his work on resistance to development forced displacement and resettlement and engagement that began in the early 80s and continues today. He says that although there are clear distinctions, particularly in the initial stages of displacement, between people who flee over international borders to escape persecution or death, and those displaced internally by disasters or development projects, over the past twenty-five years, the fields of development- forced displacement and resettlement, refugee studies and disaster research have revealed that displaced peoples share many similar challenges. He adds that over time, there is a greater degree of commonality in the challenges people face whether they are victims of conflict, development or disaster. For example, the survivors of Hurricane Katrina were faced with the same persisting issues as those of development survivors: homelessness, unemployment, marginalization, the loss of neighborhood and community, mental and physical health challenges and powerlessness.

According to him, it is only in the last decade that the problem of climate change induced displacement has been recognized and until recently, the focus in the climate change literature has been on the displacement process. He says that displacement was the problem and resettlement was the solution, with little mention (or it would appear, understanding) of the complexities, challenges and
costs of resettlement. He adds that there are many questions that remain to be answered. When, short of total destruction, as total as the inundation of the impoundment area of a dam in fact, does an environment become uninhabitable? When and who decides that risks cannot be mitigated?

Oliver-Smith argues that the issue is complicated by the wide range and lack of empirical basis for calculations of the numbers of people who will be affected by climate change, however, there is a growing awareness of the complexities of resettlement in the climate change community. He adds that in climate change induced uprooting some displacements will involve sudden rapid onset events that evoke at initial stages elements of emergency management strategies such as evacuation and temporary shelters. Other approaches to deal with major displacements may resemble the resettlement of political refugees with strategies to integrate displaced individuals and families into existing communities. Still other forms will be the result of planned mitigation projects and will draw on models from development-forced resettlement, community development and urban planning. He also says that some relocations over time may involve several of these forms of displacement and resettlement. Finally, he concludes that some relocations from climate change effects will constitute simply migrations, evoking very little formal institutional response. He continues that in some circumstances, because events and processes associated with displacement and resettlement involve different time/space scales (lasting longer, encompassing wider areas), crossing ecological, jurisdictional, and national boundaries, affecting heterogeneous populations, they will require multiple strategies and inter- and multi-national efforts and cooperation. At the same time, climate change associated displacement and resettlement may involve masses of people, but responses will need to address culturally and socially defined constituent population groups. The challenge of climate change displacement, according to him, will require inputs from many fields, ranging from emergency management to economic development and research from many social, scientific and management disciplines.

Q.9 What new perspectives or findings did you come across at this Conference? What was the most interesting thing you heard in this conference? Did you agree, disagree, why not?

Chris DeWet finds that the most interesting discussions in the conference center on risks. He believes that if agencies discuss the risks that resettlers are faced with, the issue of accountability, human rights and policy reform also arises. Thus, the direct link between policy reform and human rights is very valuable and he points out the importance of process, long-term process of DIDR. Secondly, he thinks that the discussion on public good was very useful and raised few important questions, such as, (i) How do we go about its deliberation, and assessment and what are the key issues? (ii) Is the deliberation the right way to arrive at public good? (iii) How do we go about public assessment process? (iv) What is the notion of public good, and can it be introduced to policy? Third, he asks how do we achieve resettlement
with development, if the compensation and restoration alone is not good enough? **Fourth**, he argues that if policy is not working and people are not following policy, then there is a problem in international policy. And if policy is too good in some way but there are too many loopholes, he thinks that we should ask ourselves why? Can a development agency or anyone be held responsible for project failures? Can we be responsible for human rights violations, and how do we make that stick?

**Q.10 What are the other things that contributed to enhancing your knowledge?**

**Anthony Oliver-Smith’s** concerns with climate change driven displacement and resettlement are focused around several issues. First, he says that despite the significant advances in research over the last six decades, deficiencies in planning, preparation, and implementation of involuntary resettlement projects have produced far more failures than successes. He thinks that this points to a number of issues. One is to close the knowledge-policy-practice gaps. A first step toward that goal might be the establishment for formal training programs for resettlement specialists. However, he also thinks that all the training in the world cannot overcome the resistance of local and national politics, if there are interests that seek to divert funding or values that disparage the displaced populations on ethnic, religious, or other social or cultural grounds. He agrees with Ted Scudder who is concerned that the revisions of the World Bank guidelines do not sufficiently frame resettlement as development and believes that something similar is happening in climate change.

**Q.11. Toward which direction do you think the resettlement studies/works should go? What should the practitioners aim for? What are the things researchers should be researching on?**

**Inga-Lill Aronsson** advises that researchers should continue to develop the understanding of what happens with people in participatory resettlement project from a socio-cultural perspective. Downing mentioned earlier that tools must be provided to displaced people. This is right, according to her, but the tools available at the present also seem to start an objectification process where people begin to question themselves, their culture, their neighbors and their lives. This, in combination with the destruction of their material world (houses, landscape, garden, paths) has a devastating effect on the individual and the social relations/networks. The society starts to “fall apart from within”, which is well documented and known in the resettlement literature as “the eroding of the social fabric.” Theoretically (ironically!) we seem to be back in functionalism with its view on society as an organic whole.

**Chris de Wet** would like to return to the participatory model and use it as an example of project complexity. He argued that we need a model that help us break with the tradition of trying to pin-point each single step in the project cycle, to help
us recognize the potential of unexpected solutions, and deal with unexpected (chaotic) events. He sees the importance of exploring the balance between blue-print implementation and the participatory space, a social field of interaction where power and economic muscles are flexed and estimated, a space where the struggle for Being is crafted.

deWet points out that in restoration/resettlement studies, the similarities and differences in the process are big issues. He advises us to see the on-going social processes and the issue of public good. When space is colonized, re-organized, re-arranged, he insists that we need to understand the ways wherein policy gets in its way- through the complexities and practicalities in the field, whereby the instruments of liberation become part of the problem. It is important, according to him, to know the contradiction around space and policy.

Q.12 In the future, how should we, as resettlement specialists, continue to contribute to the field?

Oliver-Smith says that attention to climate change should be made. According to him, in climate change the problem is framed as displacement and the solution is framed as resettlement, with little reference to the complexities that process represents, particularly regarding the development necessity and potential of the resettlement project. He adds that many approaches to the problems of people impacted by climate change are also being approached from the perspective of compensation for losses and damages. The findings of development displacement research consistently point to the need to approach resettlement as a development process and project. He says it holds true for people displaced by climate change or disasters for that matter. The compensation and other approaches now being discussed in climate change forums are framed by an emphasis on compensation and restoration rather than development. He believes that this would result in the mass warehousing of the displaced in long term camps because they do not frame resettlement in development terms.

Inga-Lill Aronsson believes that the practitioners must aim for to get rid of the corruption on all levels. But she points out that is easier said than done, as people get killed in these kinds of projects. In particular, the traditional leaders who are put in charge of the negotiations are in danger of corruption, or accusation of corruption. Often there are tragic personal consequences, which nevertheless do not excuse the practice. From a research perspective, she says, this is well documented, but still worth looking into.

Aronsson’s advice is to get rid of the prestige which is constantly present in these high-profile projects. The experts (national and international) and the locals must learn to learn from each other’s knowledge. In the negotiations, knowledge is produced and we need to be better to discern and use that knowledge without getting stuck with whose knowledge it is. She advises us to try to see it as a joint knowledge. The attitude must be – best solution for a specific problem. This is not,
according to her, the same as to romanticize the local knowledge which unfortunately sometimes happen in a “cultural sensitive participatory project”. This has led to a point where the locals end up being the escape goats if things go wrong. Likewise, the experts must recognize that they may not have the best solution to a certain problem. The principle must be that all knowledge must be scrutinized, evaluated and tested before a solution is decided and final contracts are signed. In practice, this means that much more time must be allocated to the resettlement component.

Q.13 What should be the next step for DIDR? How can we increase awareness and improve the works on the ground?

Ted Downing responds, “After years of theoretical, multiple iterations of involuntary resettlement policies, academic research, and practical work, why are millions of people still being impoverished and their human rights violated in development-induced displacements? Since members of this panel and I participated in the first Oxford conference on DIDR in 1995, all international financial intermediaries and many private sector lenders have adopted involuntary resettlement safeguard policies. Mountains of resettlement action plans (RAP) have been written – many of which now available on www.displacement.net database. Unfortunately, the case studies sampled in this conference show that, on the ground, for most project-affected-people (AP) not much has changed in thirteen years. Forced displacement continues to create new poverty. What is wrong? Why are those responsible for executing, regulating or financing development-induced displacement reluctant to accept our findings?”

While serving in the United States legislature, Downing attempted to fold the risk and reconstruction model into law, requiring that factors in addition to property value and transaction costs be taken into consideration when property is taken by eminent domain. This experience gave him a healthy perspective on what might be the answer to these questions. He argues that we - the specialists, policy and human rights advocates, the researchers - have not convinced those responsible to change things. By “those responsible”, he refers to project owners, financiers, international policy-makers and, above all national and local policy makers who define the legal, policy and organizational frameworks for most forced displacements. Those responsible are not convinced that displacement is anything more than a forced, economic exchange – a project acquires land in exchange for compensation for the benefit of the many. Most believe he says, that eggs must, unfortunately be broken, to make an omelet. Risks we have identified are still seen as external, indirect and irrelevant to the transaction.

Downing says that the Resettlement Action Plans (RAPS) both define and limit responsibility for what might go wrong. Financiers and project owners may claim that what went wrong was not their fault – they avoided, mitigated and planned, and spent their budgets and still bad things happened. “Would it be better to secure more flexible, long-term PAP controlled financing to deal with the uncertainties that
are known to happen, often, after the project financing and construction phase?"
Downing fears that we have allowed the compensation equation to cloud our theoretical perspective on what is happening in a forced-displacement. He adds that the theoretical foundation of resettlement is weak. Carmen Garcia-Downing and he offered a prolation of such a theory in their notion of a shift from routine and dissonant culture and the re-establishment of new routine cultures. They ask, “what will a new theory of development-induced displacement look like?” Downing believes that it will be more of a spatial-temporal theory with economic outcomes than an economic theory with social consequences. If this turns out to be the case, he adds, then" the policy problem morphs from rebuilding shattered livelihoods to rebuilding meaningful lives.”

Q.14 How do you evaluate the conversations between various stakeholders so far? How do you think we should further collaborate amongst resettlement experts and other working in relevant fields?

Inga-Lill Aronsson addressed the question on how to balance rights and obligations not only for the people to be resettled but to the implementors. The practitioner’s aim, to her mind, is to balance participation and accountability. She is fully aware of the asymmetrical relationship that is dealt with in resettlement, but to have a true local participation and fully informed population, she emphasized respect in people’s decisions. However, she said relocates have to take responsibility in the process as well. She is not in favor of fragmentation, as in the case of fragmented groups who claim human rights for a lot of things, but she is interested to develop a model that can deal with chaos and unexpected things in a project cycle. She does not think things can be done to pinpoint the blame, but we need to understand the unexpected. Knowledge, according to her, comes out of negotiation. She observes a paradox in local participation, wherein we give people tools, but this is part of the destruction of social networks. Aronsson thinks that the local participation model is actually destroying something when we give the tools to people to justify themselves.

Q.15 Is it possible to bridge the gap between theory and practice in resettlement? (For academics) What would you like to suggest for practitioners in the field? (For practitioners) What are the research needs in the field and how would you like to address them to academics/researchers?

Inga-Lill Aronsson says we need to produce more comparative studies. She says that there is a frustration that academics do not move forward theoretically, but unfortunately, she adds, two decades of good ethnographers were lost due to the post-modern era with its stress on a fragmented world that consists of isolated, subjective narratives that cannot be compared. Aronsson argues that things can be compared, which certainly does not mean ending up in a Leachian world of “butterfly collections”. There is a saying that apples and pears cannot be compared.
But she says they can only need to do it in the right way and learn how to identify the field. But she is optimistic when she sees all the young researchers attending this conference, eager to contribute to resettlement practice and also theoretically.

**Aronsson** sees the need to incorporate more statistics in resettlement studies, but cautions to be aware of the social science statistical package systems available on the market that need to be understood, not only used. There is a danger she warns, that in the reports/articles/books, there is a lack of understanding of what the statistical program “does” with the data which has led to some questionable results. She advises that universities must take on this educational task to bring in statistics in the social sciences. In resettlement, there is a need for the combination of interpretative, qualitative researchers with statistical operative knowledge. Primary qualitative date and quantitative data are needed from the field to produce comparative studies. She adds that trained ethnographers are needed who are culturally sensitive. The knowledge from the field, she adds, consists of so much more than a cognitive, intellectual understanding, and the problem is to make use of this tacit knowledge and incorporate it in project reports.

**Aronsson** refers Arturo Escobar’s article in 1980 that dealt with development, and that *Development stinks – literally*. It was a controversial and angry article about everything that was wrong with development. But no solution was presented. More than 25 years later, in 2009, Arturo Escobar held a public lecture and a seminar series at the University of Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia which she attended. His main conclusion was that we all would like to have a “good life”. Yes, everybody wants a good life, but the problem is when one good life is clashing with another good life. Aronsson concludes that resettlement is very much part of this clash and therefore, there is a need to involve other academic disciplines in our attempts to come to terms with the complex issues of resettlement.

**Michael Cernea** feels that there are two faces of the same coin -one can not act only by the heart if you do not have the goal, to be more just, or to prevent injustice: the first being more powerful than the second. He would like to see more ethical displacement, but raised the question, “how do we instill the ethics of resettlement that we write about?”

According to him, the actors have to absorb these, and the actors are those in positions of power. He suggests to focus on reconstruction and to find good practices to write about, as to give positive influence not only to criticize development displacement. **Cernea** emphasizes the organization of resettlers, to make them more pro-active. He says that if resettlers are organized, through NGOs for example, they can influence national policies and decisions affecting them.

**Patrick C. Giraud** proposes solutions for practitioners and managers facing resettlement issues where some remedies have already been applied by MDBs, but some others still have to be developed.
(i) **On approval culture:** Although MDBs have given new emphasis and developed more KPIs on the quality of their project portfolio, which includes projects already approved, projects waiting effectiveness or projects being implemented, these efforts still do not have the expected impact, due to the time lag and the transition-change of staff between project approval and identification of resettlement problems. Task managers do not hold responsibility long enough for the implementation of their projects after approval. Because of the increased scarcity of experienced task managers, the responsibility for supervision of project implementation is given to junior staff who oftentimes did not participate in the project processing, and are therefore, not aware of shortcuts that may have been taken during project preparation. And because of their inexperience, they are not aware of recurrent issues.

It usually takes 5 to 10 years between the approval of an infrastructure project and the time major resettlement problems are identified, at the time of completion or evaluation. During this time, the task manager and the director may have already moved up in the bureaucratic hierarchy or may have left the institution, and thus, they cannot be held responsible, demoted nor sued because of their project failure.

MDBs could decrease the pressure on time of approval, and reduce the importance of annual lending level in the KPIs, increase the focus on quality KPIs, thus potentially accepting to lend less but with better quality and better development outcomes.

(ii) **On resettlement cost financing:** Recognizing the issue of limited country resources and conflicting priorities to finance resettlement, MDBs have adjusted or applied their policies differentially to allow full or partial financing of resettlement costs under MDB loans. Giraud says that this arrangement may contribute to reducing the implementation delays but it does not address the monitoring of the plan by the countries after project implementation. During project implementation, he adds, monitoring can be done with assistance from the supervision consultants financed by the MDB loan. However, after project completion, further monitoring is left to the countries alone. Governments usually do not want to borrow more to do this monitoring and leave the responsibility to local governments, who are often confronted with limited budgets.

**Giraud** proposes the introduction of grant technical assistance to assist and supervise monitoring after project completion, and MDBs to continue policy dialogue with the countries and provide capacity building to ensure better country monitoring.

(iii) **On increasing private sector lending:** One possibility he also proposes is to increase the fees paid by the private sponsors to the MDB for their intervention and transaction, by including the cost of more thorough RAP preparation and monitoring under the joint responsibility of the country and the MDB. Giraud says that application of such process to private sector operations could turn out to be
more successful than for public operations, as it would combine the use of expertise from the MDB and the resources of the private sponsors, which are missing for public operations.

**Conclusion**

As the Panel discussion demonstrated, DIDR is a social issue as broad as the sea, touching upon directly on people’s lives and physical environment, and increasingly being affected by the growing climactic changes of the planet. The intangible impacts of involuntary resettlement which includes the psycho-social effects on displaced people are still unrecognized and uncompensated. A suggestion from the audience that perhaps there is a need to reconfigure compensation, as in a supermarket, where displaced people can shop for various items of compensation relative to cost of their displacement, e.g. price for land, properties, and other socio-cultural damages. The notion of corporate social responsibility promoting economic and development sustainability may very well subscribe to this idea.

The discussion shared by the audience also brought up the issue of risk and opportunity - wherein DIDR poses risks to displaced people but on the other hand, opens up new opportunities for better life. Yet, a fundamental question was raised, “Is development displacement really unavoidable and can we not think of other ways to develop without displacement?” Corollary to this is the issue of human rights perspective, which was also discussed in the other sessions of the conference. How can international law provide protection to the displaced when they are not properly implemented?

DIDR needs more longitudinal studies to gain deeper understanding of displaced people, the role of social networks during reconstruction and the impact on their lives after displacement. These will provide academics and practitioners, not only insights whether human development also takes place when projects are done for development, but also help shape better ways of doing things, ideally without displacement and hopefully, to have answers to the enduring questions of resettlement.

**Appendix A**

**PANEL OF PIONEERS**

The Panel is composed of respected figures representing rich and varied experiences in the areas of resettlement research, policy and legislation, resettlement practice, management of projects from financial institutions, academia
and NGOs. They are considered “pioneers” in resettlement studies and were major players at the First International Conference on Resettlement in Europe (Uppsala University, Sweden in 1994 and University of Oxford in 1995).

(1) **THAYER SCUDDER**, a theorist of relocation, who together with Elizabeth Colson, pioneered a classic anthropological long-term study among Gwembe Tongas of Zambia in the late 50s, and analyzed the psychological impact of relocation to this community. Scudder and Colson’s 4-stage model of the resettlement process has informed research practice in resettlement for 30 years. His work on socioeconomic issues and infrastructure development in river-basins, forced relocation and refugee re-integration made him a world leader in this field. His book, *The Future of Large Dams* (2005) is a landmark comprehensive study of dams and resettlement. As a social anthropologist, Thayer Scudder has done research and consulting over a 55 year period in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and North America working on socioeconomic issues surrounding poverty, large-scale development projects, and forced community relocation. He joined the Caltech faculty in 1964 after studying the initial impact of resettlement on 57,000 Gwembe Tonga due to dam construction on the Zambezi River. This study continues today and has been expanded to include effects of Zambia’s independence and development policies. Following a two-year appointment to the World Commission on Dams, he wrote *The Future of Large Dams: Dealing with Social, Environmental, Institutional, and Political Costs*. His most recent book, *Global Threats, Global Futures: Living with Declining Living Standards*, focuses on his increasing concern with the inability of national and international institutions to deal with current threats.

(2) **MICHAEL CERNEA**, author of the original Resettlement Policy (O.D. 4.30) of the World Bank in mid 1980s which he single handedly crafted. This policy changed the way the financial institution operates setting the stage in the development arena, shifting approach among multinational development banks to a more humane treatment of the displaced population. For his social science contributions to public sector policies, he was awarded the Solon T. Kimball Award from the American Anthropological Association, and the Bronislaw Malinowski Prize from The Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA). Among his numerous books, include *Putting People First, Economics of Involuntary Resettlement* (1999), *Risks and Reconstruction: Experiences of Resettlers and Refugees* (2000, edited with C.McDowell) and *Can Compensation Prevent Impoverishment?* (2008, edited with H.M.Mathur), where Cernea cites solutions to pauperization caused by development displacement. He also conceptualized the impoverishment risks and reconstruction (IRR) model as an analytical tool for resettlement. After retiring from the World Bank, he continues to teach at GWU School of Anthropology and International Affairs and is currently a Fellow at Brookings Institute in Washington DC.

(3) **THEODORE DOWNING** is the President of International Network of Displacement and Resettlement (www.displacement.net), Professor of Social Development at the University of Arizona, and past-president of The Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA). Elected to two terms in the Arizona legislature, Ted
served on the House Judiciary Committee. He was awarded the national Anti-Corruption Award (2011) for his work on empowering peoples through reforms in the US electoral process. Ted has extensive, on the ground experience as a consultant to international development banks and NGOs on development-induced forced resettlements in Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, Nigeria, Uganda, and Kosovo. He was contracted by leading environmental groups and major mining companies to prepare the White Paper on avoiding impoverishment in mining-induced for displacement for the Rio +10 conference. Ted and his wife Carmen Garcia-Downing wrote Routine and Dissonant Culture: a Theory about psycho, social and cultural disruptions of displacement and ways to mitigate them without inflicting more damage. His writings and work are available at www.TedDowning.com

(4) **ANTHONY OLIVER-SMITH** is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of Florida. Among his publications on resettlement are Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems of Dislocated People (1982, edited with Art Hansen), Development and Dispossession: The Crisis of Displacement Forced Resettlement (2009), Defying Displacement: Grass Roots Resistance and the Critique of Development (2010). His work on disasters and displacement, he has focused on the impacts of displacement, place attachment, resistance movements, and resettlement project analysis. His work focuses on post-disaster social organization, including class, race, ethnicity and gender-based patterns of differential aid distribution, social consensus, conflict, grief and mourning issues.

(5) **CHRIS deWET** teaches at Rhodes University in South Africa and is involve in debates around policy and ethics in resettlement. He is currently writing a monograph seeking to situate the impacts of resettlement within the longer-term political and economic processes within which it occurs and plays itself out. He is author of Moving Together, Drifting Apart, a study of resettlement arising out of villagisation, and the editor of Development-Induced Displacement: Problems, Policies and People. Chris is writing on cumulative socio-economic effect of development projects over 150 years on a rural settlement in Eastern Cape.

(6) **PATRICK CLAUDE GIRAUD**, a former Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in charge of South East Asian countries and currently Lead Economist/Lead Adviser at the African Development Bank’s Infrastructure, Private Sector and Regional Integration Vice-Presidency. He designed, managed and supervised infrastructure projects for three decades in Asia and Africa and advised their governments on infrastructure development. He also consulted with United Nations Agencies for several years. A champion of social issues including proper resettlement, he was awarded the Best Director by the ADB’s Staff Association in 2004. He is the first director in ADB who suspended disbursement of a project due to unresolved issues concerning the displaced people in the host country.

(7) **INGA LILL-ARONSSON** is a senior lecturer at Uppsala University, Sweden and former Director of NOHA (Network on Humanitarian Action). Her current research
interests include heritage, memory, conflict and reconciliation. She is also exploring how to use GIS (Geographical Information System) in development and humanitarian action studies. She published “Negotiating Involuntary Resettlement: A Study of Local Bargaining during the construction of Zimapan Dam in Mexico (2002) (2010 as talking book) and “The Paradox with Local Participation in Development-Caused Forced Displacement and Resettlement”, in Romanian Journal of Sociology. XX, Nr. 1-2/2009. She organized the first International Resettlement Conference in Europe in 1994 in Uppsala University, in collaboration with Ted Downing.

(8) SUSAN D. TAMONDONG is a resettlement specialist international consultant and Vice-President of IDEAS (www.ideas-global.org). Her work experience spans 20 years worldwide. She was resettlement specialist at the World Bank, and worked with ADB and other international organizations, including the United Nations. She was the first graduate student in Oxford (World Bank scholar at St. Antony’s College) who took the issue of development induced resettlement in the early 90s as a research topic under the supervision of Prof. Barbara Harrell-Bond, founder of the Refugee Studies Program, Queen Elizabeth House. Susan was instrumental in organizing Oxford’s First International Conference on Development Displacement hosted by RSP in January 1995. From this conference came the book edited by Chris McDowell, Understanding Impoverishment: The Consequences of Development-Induced Displacement.”(Berghahn Books, 1996), where she wrote, based on her research in Philippines, Chapter 10, “State Power as a Medium of Impoverishment.” She returned to Oxford as QEH Visiting Fellow in 2006-2009 and published, “Can Improved Resettlement Reduce Poverty?” as a concluding chapter in M.Cernea, and M.H Mathur, eds., Can Compensation Prevent Impoverishment, OUP 2008.