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Social Integration and Population Displacement

The Contribution of Social Science

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Abstract

Social integration and population displacement: the contribution of social science

Michael M. Cernea

The discourse about social integration usually assumes that it is linked to development, and that 'more' development induces higher degrees of social integration and reduces social conflicts. Yet in reality, development has multi-directional effects, including integration, disintegration, and reintegration processes. This article analyses the class of processes usually labelled 'involuntary population displacement and resettlement' that are brought about worldwide by development, and how disintegrative effects can be mitigated and counteracted through policies and programmes enriched by knowledge from social sciences. The body of concepts and research findings on forced population displacements, generated through decades of empirical field studies by sociologists and anthropologists, had been left for a long time 'on the shelf', without being used in relevant policies and programmes. Only after this body of knowledge was translated by social scientists into the normative policy of a large scale organization – the World Bank – did it become influential in practice. In turn that organization and its policy became more effective in certain fields thanks to the absorption of the long-ignored knowledge.

The article discusses how the cognitive dissonance displayed by governments and development agencies *vis-à-vis* relevant research findings destroyed the 'normal' relationship between supply and demand of knowledge. It also analyses how the culture of a large bureaucratic organization, and its habits of absorbing or ignoring knowledge, can be changed. The key methodological and epistemological issues of translating theory and research findings into policy prescriptions and germane implementation procedures are discussed. The article also reports the main findings of a recent study, based on a sample of 1992 development projects financed by the World Bank in 39 countries, that analysed the processes of development-caused displacements and resettlements.

Social integration and population displacement: the contribution of social science

Michael M. Cernea*

Introduction

'Social integration' is a theme explicitly included in the substantive agenda of the World Summit on Social Development, even though at the time the decision was made to include it there was little clarity, let alone consensus, about what social integration is and how to define it. Since then, however, a number of social scientists have returned to explore the concept, its content and its coverage. The discussion of processes relevant to societal integration and disintegration has been expanding and will certainly continue to expand after the summit.

One general assumption in the discourse about social integration is that integration is linked to development, and that 'more' development would, and should, induce higher degrees of social integration and reduce social conflicts.[1] Such discourse in itself is challenging and prone to arouse controversy. It also suggests some areas for intellectual reflection and for reinterpreting pre-existing research, undertaken originally with different purposes, to clarify issues of social integration and disintegration.

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A worldwide process: involuntary population resettlement

During 1993–1994 one such worldwide process of social disintegration and reintegration was studied under World Bank auspices. The social science aspects of this study are discussed in the present article.

The study's subject was the forced displacement and resettlement caused by certain development projects.[2] Forced population displacement is an ubiquitous process in that it accompanies development in all countries, whether industrialized or developing, and to a large extent it is unavoidable. The uprooting of living communities, the imposed demise of functioning production systems, and the dismantling of informal social networks linking many people are a painful cost of some development projects, a cost paid in the currency of social disintegration of ongoing human activities and existing collectivities. Development is bound to have multi-directional, rather than uni-directional influence on the degrees and forms of integration and sociability. This requires multiple perspectives in exploring the conflicting processes relevant to social integration, and one such perspective is the uprooting and social reintegration of groups displaced by development.

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The present study has two objectives: first, to analyse a certain type of situation in which development processes have adverse effects on social integration; this class of social processes is usually (and is in this article) labelled 'involuntary population displacement and resettlement'; second, to analyse how such disintegrative effects can be mitigated and counteracted through policies enriched by knowledge from social science, aimed at reintegrating the displaced people. I will insist particularly on the second area of analysis, about which there is still little information in the social science community, and will give a shorter description of the first one, which I dealt with in more empirical detail in other studies (Cernea, 1988, 1991). The study mentioned at the outset, *Resettlement and Development*, is available publicly (World Bank, 1994) and it contains a wealth of factual material that supports and complements the argument contained in the present article.

Contrary to a widespread misperception, forced displacements are not rare and accidental occurrences, happening only in the cases of major dams and affecting limited numbers of people.[3] Limited statistical information has abetted this misperception. In fact, forced population displacements are a historical companion of development. Currently, they represent a process, and a social problem, of significant worldwide magnitude.

Estimates documented with recent data and worldwide projections (World Bank, 1994) indicate that every year a new cohort of at least 10 million people enter a cycle of administratively imposed displacement and relocation required by 'right of way' for infrastructural programmes. Indeed, each year an average of some 300 new hydropower and irrigation high dams enter the construction stage and entail an aggregate displacement of 4 million people. In parallel, urban development and transportation infrastructure projects started each year in the developing countries require the displacement of some 6 million people. These two sectors alone have accounted for some 80–90 million displaced people over the last decade. Additional involuntary displacement takes place in other sectors as well, which is more difficult to quantify globally. In most cases, the projects that exact this heavy displacement toll are indispensable for socioeconomic development, urbanization, food production, and poverty alleviation, and benefit large numbers of people and national economies in their entirety. Yet they inflict immediate losses and suffering on a significant fraction of the population.

Projections indicate that this process will continue. In developing countries, the magnitude of development-related population displacement is likely to grow in the next decades, due to accelerated provisions of infrastructure. Growing population densities in many countries compound the problem, as infrastructural projects of similar size tend to result in increasingly larger numbers of displaced people. This makes development-related involuntary displacement and resettlement a problem of worldwide proportions and relevance.

Social science and population displacement

The study of development-related displacements is of interest also from another viewpoint: namely as a class of development-related processes on which social sciences – especially sociology and anthropology[4] – have exercised unusually strong and fruitful influence, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s.

This article analyses how the body of social science concepts and research findings about population displacement and resettlement, generated through decades of field study, was left 'on the shelf' for a long time, without being used in relevant policies and programmes. Only after this body of knowledge was incorporated into the policy of a large scale organization – the World Bank – did it become influential politically and in the practice of development programmes. In turn, that organization, the World Bank, and its policies became more effective in a given field thanks to the absorption of long ignored knowledge.

Significant lessons can be extracted from this reversal, lessons about both successes and failures of development programmes. Such lessons give social scientists good grounds for being, simultaneously, confident and humble. The discussion below can also inform the ongoing debate about effective strategies for advancing other bodies of social knowledge in comparable policy domains. It is also relevant to the questions raised, and recommendations

offered by scholars concerned to codify the approaches apt to enhance the role and contributions of anthropology or sociology as 'policy sciences' (Weaver, 1985).

The first section of this paper discusses the relationship between social knowledge and social policy. The second section analyses the cognitive dissonance displayed by planners in governments and donor agencies *vis-à-vis* the negative effects of development-caused displacement; this cognitive dissonance destroyed the 'normal' relationship between supply and demand of knowledge. The third section briefly reconstructs the history, and synthesizes the content, of the World Bank's policy regarding involuntary population resettlement. Section four then highlights some of the methodological and epistemological lessons we derived about converting social theory and knowledge on development into policy, given the institutional transactions intrinsic to development bureaucracies. The final section reviews some of the actual effects of the new resettlement policy at two levels: policy replication and project planning and execution.

I. Evolving social policy from social knowledge

The concept of *induced development* defines development stimulated by a deliberate programme, typically initiated by governments, which uses public financial resources to create new infrastructure or other economic assets (Cernea, 1991). Government-sponsored sector or area programmes and plans aimed at inducing or accelerating development include numerous development projects – i.e. discrete investments such as dams, highways, or irrigation systems.

Policy vacuums

Ex-post impact evaluation studies on such projects are often carried out by social scientists. It is, therefore, important to examine the actual influence of the knowledge generated through such evaluations: does the knowledge derived from impact assessments modify subsequent programmes for inducing development?[5]

My conviction, relying on experience inside a major development agency and in various developing countries, is that social research findings will become effective guidance for future practice only if they result in the formulation and adoption of new or improved policies. Explicit social policies must guide – and by 'guide' I mean both inspire and restrict – public sector programmes that aim to induce development. In practice, many activities and programmes are planned in a policy vacuum, because no explicit policy has yet been formulated to address and govern that specific area of activity. The implication is that social science analysis, tools and concepts, must be used not just to evaluate programme results but to craft policies. Only policies have compelling authority over planning.

The class of processes discussed in this paper shows that planning criteria, and planning routines as such, tend to resist new knowledge, and even tend to resist new policies. But if anything can break the back of such entrenched routine and narrow planning it is only a *shift in policy*, a 'policy commandment' to start planning differently, to pursue different goals with adequate means.

In those areas that can be characterized as suffering from a policy vacuum, development planning can be little more than an exercise in guided administration. At its best, planning is a technique for resource allocation and work sequencing. Neither the planners nor the planning requirement are bound to obey the recommendations of impact evaluation studies. What planners must adhere to, however, are the policies and legal frameworks which planning, as a tool for administering, is expected to translate into action. Therefore, *bringing sociological knowledge to bear upon the formulation of social policies* as frameworks for action is the most substantive way of compelling planning and planners.

How can such policy-relevant knowledge be generated? This flow of social knowledge must come from at least two major sources: knowledge from operational evaluation research must be paralleled by knowledge obtained through basic academic research. Ideally, if these two knowledge flows complement and reinforce each other, they can more effectively converge to influence policy.

Piecemeal studies do not substitute for policy

Many researchers who have carried out social impact assessments (SIAs) and environmental impact assessments (EIAs) have indisputably contributed to discovering the adverse effects of development projects on the environment or on certain population segments. The usual vehicles are case studies on individual projects. However, this type of contribution – the standard SIA or EIA case-report – has built-in limitations. These limitations have not been sufficiently recognized and counter-balanced.

Empirical case studies are a prerequisite for policy recommendations. But piecemeal studies do not necessarily yield recommendations for policy reform, and usually SIAs or EIAs tend to stop short of making recommendations that extend beyond the case at hand. Impact evaluators usually carry out studies whose goal is to mitigate the impacts of a particular project. They seldom formulate broader, forward-looking policies. This is often legitimate when only one individual's case research is reported. But piecemeal case assessments are insufficient, even when they are numerous, to achieve paradigmatic and direct influence over programmes for inducing development. Inside the World Bank, for instance, there have been many evaluation studies which have signalled, time and again, some fallacies of project concept or planning. Yet these studies did not significantly change subsequent Bank operations until the Bank's policies were re-articulated. Piecemeal evaluation studies have not been, and intrinsically cannot be, a substitute for policy reform.[6]

The need to fill the policy vacuum

Why is it that knowledge gained through earlier analyses does not become compelling 'do's' or 'don'ts' in subsequent planning exercises? What accounts for the recurrence of planning mistakes and biases identical to those revealed by prior evaluation studies? Why so often don't planners hear what research is saying?

To think that fault is rooted only in the deafness of planners and managers is naïve. This is not where the ultimate responsibility resides. There is something more than the assumed personal insensitivity of planners that permits the recurrence of poor social or environmental planning.

What guides planning is policy or strategy. Policies provide the overall definition of objectives that underlie planning. I am referring to a vast array of policies – national, sectoral, or even 'company policies' in the private sector. If policies remain oblivious to past errors, and do not change or adjust when failures are identified, then planners do not receive any new and compelling message. Hence, the perpetuation of routine planning. Hence the exasperating recurrence of (more or less) the same mistakes.

To formulate policies means to create frameworks for action which become compelling to the very bodies that issue such policies, and to related agencies and implementors.[7] Such bodies may be national governments, multinational development agencies such as the World Bank or other bilateral donor agencies (e.g. ODA – England, OECF – Japan, CFD – France, GTZ – Germany, USAID – United States, etc.).

Social research on a case-by-case basis is just not enough. Unless policy processes are opened up to research and evaluation, and unless social scientists and impact analysts *set their sights much higher* than piecemeal mitigation, evaluation studies will remain a game with rather marginal usefulness. Time and location-specific studies that do not look beyond their own 'nose', and which discuss only individual instances, can hardly trickle-up messages for broader purposes. Somebody needs to aggregate the case-by-case work in order to distil broader policy and strategy lessons, and introduce them into the normative frameworks of development institutions.

Policy reform must be initiated and carried out by the relevant governments or agencies. It must be recognized that some agencies or governments, on occasion, prefer to maintain a policy vacuum rather than issue binding normative guidelines and legal structures. Avoiding formal policy commitments leaves more operational flexibility in the short term, but often at the expense of higher long-term costs, externalized to others. Yet some government agencies are stubbornly reluctant to formulate or accept public sector guidelines for activities that they know are going to be problematic, difficult, or controversial.

The net result of such an anachronistic posture and mindset is that the interests of the displaced people, and of development in a broader sense, are negatively affected. Low level policy responses are an enduring cause of poor performance.

Let us consider a concrete example. During the 1960s and 1970s population displacement occurred in unsatisfactory ways in many countries even under World Bank-assisted development projects. Yet, despite the findings of various impact reports there was little improvement in subsequent projects in the manner in which resettlement was planned until the Bank – as we shall see further on – adopted a policy for resettlement operations in 1980.

A vacuum in public policy allows detrimental practices to happen without checks or penalties. In fact, such a policy vacuum amplifies the risks of adverse consequences since legal safeguards for preventing adverse consequences are not institutionalized. In a context that lacks policy and legally restraining norms, it cannot be assumed that individual planners or managers will consistently listen to the sporadic whispers of fragmented EIA and SIA reports.

II. Cognitive dissonance: knowledge supply and demand

The academic and applied research literature has long documented the adverse impact of population displacement on social welfare and social integration. Yet for years social science studies on forced displacement have remained largely ignored by policy-makers, planners, economists, and engineers. The record shows a major gap between practice and knowledge. On the one side is a long odyssey of disastrous displacement operations that recur as virtual carbon copies of one another; on the other side there is a growing, but largely uninfluential body of social science knowledge about resettlement, that demonstrates the mistaken assumptions and inadequate procedures used by displacement planners oblivious to lessons from previous disasters. Students of cognitive dissonance can hardly find a starker illustration for this syndrome than the case of forced population displacements. In fact, this specific case of cognitive dissonance is just a drop in which a whole ocean is reflected: indeed, the drop mirrors a sea of cognitive dissonance that engulfs many large scale development programmes informed by economic knowledge alone. The authors and managers of such programmes allow themselves to ignore the intrinsic social dimensions of development and the available knowledge about them.

Social disarticulation

Forced population displacement is always crisis-prone, even when necessary as part of broad and beneficial development programmes. 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 risk of epidemics and health problems (Cernea, 1990, 1993). State agencies initiating displacement programmes have most often failed to implement effective plans for counterbalancing such adverse impacts.

The disintegration of social support networks that exist in communities subject to displacement has far-reaching consequences. It compounds individual losses with a loss of social capital: dismantled patterns of social organization, able to mobilize people for actions of common interests and for meeting immediate family needs are difficult to rebuild. Such loss is higher in projects that relocate people in a dispersed manner rather than in groups and social units. Field studies have documented that such 'elusive' disarticulation processes undermine livelihoods in ways uncounted and unrecognized by planners, and are part of the complex causes of impoverishment.[8] In the Rengali dam project in India, not Bank-financed, a sociological study found various manifestations of social disarticulation, such as growing alienation and anomie, the loosening of kinship bonds, the weakening of control on interpersonal behaviour, and lower cohesion in family structures. Marriages were deferred because dowries, feasts, and gifts became unaffordable. Resettlers' obligations towards and relationships with non-displaced kinsmen were eroded and interaction between individual

A family of Tatars, displaced decades earlier, on return to Crimea. Stefano de Luigi/Editing

families was reduced. As a result, participation in group action decreased; leaders became conspicuously absent from settlements; post-harvest communal feasts and pilgrimages were discontinued; daily informal social interaction was severely curtailed; and common burial grounds became shapeless and disordered (Nayak, 1986).

The difficulties of displacing long settled social groups are then compounded by the intricate difficulties of relocating them on new sites, often among reluctant host populations. Social reintegration of those displaced is not purposively pursued by most initiators of such programmes. What makes things worse is that people who suffer the pains of dislocation rarely share in the gains generated by such development programmes. In sum, the worldwide history of forced displacements is a record of social disruption and of little effort to mitigate the easily predictable risks of impoverishment and social disorganization.

Is it enough to supply knowledge?

As development programmes causing displacement multiplied in both industrialized and developing countries, social scientists began to show interest in researching such forced population resettlements.

Some of the studies on resettlement published in the 1960s and 1970s have become classic works of social science literature. In the United States, Herbert Gans (1959, 1968) and other sociologists and urbanists (Dentler, 1969; Anderson, 1965; Hartman, 1964, 1979; Heller, 1982) initiated pioneering work in the late 1950s and the 1960s on urban displacement as part of planned urban renewal (see also Finsterbush, 1980; Burdge, 1981, 1989). In India, in the 1960s, Roy Burman (1961) carried out a major study on the displacement effects of building the Rourkela industrial complex, setting a research model that was later followed by other Indian anthropologists and sociologists on

displacement caused by dams, strip mining, road construction, etc. (Varma, 1985; Fernandes and Thukral, 1989; Mankodi, 1989; Thukral, 1992; see also MARG, 1987). The book on the Akosombo reservoir displacement in Ghana by Chambers, Butcher and associates (1970), and Colson's monograph on the displacement of the Gwembe Tonga from the Kariba Reservoir (1971) were in-depth analyses of the cultural, economic, and psychological effects of forced relocation in developing countries. Thayer Scudder, an anthropologist who has devoted most of his research to resettlement studies, has analysed cross-cultural commonalities in people's response to forced displacement in several river basins in Africa and Asia and compared them with voluntary settlement (1973, 1985; Brokensha and Scudder, 1968). In turn, social geographers (Ackerman, White and Associates, 1973; Adams, 1985) have made a valuable contribution to resettlement research from their disciplinary perspective. Some particularly large displacement processes have generated an entire literature, such as the Aswan High Dam (Fahim, 1981, 1983; Fernea, 1973; Geiser, 1986), while Sorbo (1977) and Salem-Murdock (1989) have focused on the adaptation of the Aswan resettlers at their new sites. Research and evaluation studies on displacement and resettlement have gradually expanded in many other countries, both developed and developing (Rew and Driver, 1986; Suarez and associates, 1984; Billson, 1990). This brief literature review is far from exhaustive.[9]

However, despite this gradual accumulation of research knowledge, most government programmes causing displacement have long remained oblivious to the new findings. The 'enlightenment model' of social science influence on society (Janowitz, 1970) which contended that simply exposing social ills would lead to their correction, proved to be little more than a well-intentioned illusion in the case of forced displacement. The real influence exercised in the United States by the body of sociological research on urban relocation upon legal regulations regarding expropriation and compensatory payments (United States, 1970, 1987) was a rare case of substantive impact on practice by resettlement researchers. In most cases, the growing body of sociological/anthropological knowledge on relocation failed to gain influence over planning processes. If there was any awareness among planners and decision-makers that such research knowledge existed, it quietly succumbed to the peaceful yet guilty tranquility of cognitive dissonance. The knowledge-on-the shelf about forced resettlement remained largely unused for practical endeavours.

With hindsight, we should question whether at least part of the problem was not with the social scientists themselves or with the kind of 'platter' on which they offered knowledge to practitioners. The 'research monograph' was designed as a vehicle for conveying knowledge, but was not intended or used as a vehicle for translating knowledge into operational or normative policy recommendations. There were few attempts by social scientists to convert the resettlement research findings into systematic proposals of new ends and new operational means to achieve them, such as could have been used by willing decision-makers. Part of the explanation for this cognitive dissonance was the fact that development-oriented social scientists were rather few and they were not located within development agencies in institutionalized positions propitious for translating research findings into policy. As outsiders to development agencies, academic and applied researchers do not have an institutional voice and remain more or less unable to go to battle for promoting their ideas within a decision-making forum.

In sum, the mere supply of social science knowledge-on-the-shelf was not sufficient to trigger 'supply driven' policy reform.

Failure to demand knowledge

The reverse question inescapably arises: why was there no explicit 'demand' for knowledge on resettlement despite the fact that many governments and donors had to deal with displacement under the programmes they financed?

For decades, neither policy-makers and decision-makers, nor planners or project managers, had explicitly demanded such social expertise. The theoretical paradigms to which development intervention have listened were silent about the basic sociocultural variables of change. Some major adverse effects of government programmes were fallaciously belittled as

tolerable side-effects. The population groups affected by displacement were politically too weak to make their voice heard and force the adoption of better policies. At the legal level, the governments of most developing countries did not institute explicit and rigorous norms about how to carry out involuntary displacement and relocation. Infrastructure projects that were flawed by lack of social planning continued to be financed by the UN, multilateral, or bilateral donor agencies in a business-as-usual manner. Engineering consulting firms, responsible for the technical design of many major infrastructure projects worldwide, routinely displayed a stubborn obliviousness to the adverse social implications of their proposed designs. Government agencies in charge of projects causing displacement tended to belittle the estimates of dislocation losses and relocation costs. They passed down the organizational burden of executing relocation to unequipped and understaffed low-level bureaucracies, thus compounding, through poor execution, the losses and pains inflicted on those displaced.

Theoretical assumptions about social change usually underpin existing policies promoting development, implicitly or explicitly. But such policies do not exist in most developing countries. However, it can be said that the *absence* of policy is a policy by default. The fact that a number of governments in developing countries have not adopted strict guidelines for displacement reflects the assumption that either: (a) there is no need for such a policy, or (b) involuntary resettlement should not be done differently from in the past. This betrays either a limited level of knowledge about the perverse effects of such processes, or a political bias against the poorest and most vulnerable people.

Reactions to this state of affairs, however, have gradually increased in both frequency and sharpness. Protest and opposition to forced resettlement by the affected populations have been gradually growing in many countries, reaching increasingly sharp political intensity (Oliver-Smith, 1990). Untiring criticism by environmental groups and NGOs about the disastrous outcomes of development-caused displacement, initially sporadic, has become better documented. NGOs' criticism also is effective in mobilizing public opinion. Social science researchers kept generating empirical studies, thereby compounding the evidence. Thus, various endogenous and exogenous premises for change have been gradually accumulating and converging.

III. Brief history: the emergence of a resettlement policy

A significant turning point occurred during 1979–1980 when, for the first time, a major development agency, the World Bank, decided to adopt an explicit policy regarding the social issues involved in involuntary relocation. That decision was the product of two sets of circumstances: first, the slow but steady progress made in-house in using social science knowledge in Bank-assisted projects; and second, the troublesome feedback from some forced relocation processes, particularly in the Bank's Sobradinho Dam project in Brazil, which occurred soon after similar problems exploded in the proposed Chico River dams in the Philippines.

The history of this policy's enactment and evolution over the last 15 years reflects both (a) the increased use of social science knowledge, and (b) the increased political recognition given to the adverse impacts of development.

In its first formulation, the content of the World Bank's resettlement policy was grounded in social science knowledge generated by pre-existent research.[10] During the years following its enactment in 1980, the policy went through several rounds of improvements based on both feedback from operational projects and findings from basic social research. In each round, improving and rewriting this policy was the work domain of the Bank's sociologists and anthropologists. In turn, each new formulation maintained the policy's fundamental goal, enriched its content, and strengthened its implementation tools.

The important milestones in the history of this policy were the following:

1. *February 1980*: The World Bank issues its initial resettlement policy, prepared in 1979, entitled *Social Issues Associated with Involuntary Resettlement in Bank-Financed Projects* (World Bank, 1980, OMS 2.33).

2. *1985–1986*: An in-house policy and operational study of how the new resettlement guidelines were applied makes additional recommendations, adopted by Bank management and issued formally as a new Operations Policy Note in October 1986 (World Bank, 1986, OPN 10.08). This second policy statement represented a strengthening of the 1980 policy guidelines, by emphasizing that every project causing displacement must develop a new productive basis for resettlers.
3. *1988*: Both policy documents (1980 OMS 2.33 and 1986 OPN 10.08) are integrated into one detailed policy-cum-technical Bank paper entitled *Involuntary Resettlement in Development Policy. Policy Guidelines in World Bank-Financed Projects*. For the first time, the Bank went public with its resettlement policy (Cernea, 1988b).
4. *1990*: Following internal Bank reorganization, the resettlement policy was revised and reissued as Operational Directive 4.30 on *Involuntary Resettlement* (World Bank, 1990).
5. *1993/94*: A comprehensive study of all ongoing Bank-financed projects causing displacement examined the consistency of actual operations with policy, analysed performance and weaknesses of resettlement operations on the ground, experience with resettlement inside and outside Bank activities, and led to the Bank's adoption of important new measures to strengthen the implementation of the Bank's resettlement policy.

The initial 1980 policy guidelines

The institutionalization of policy norms for resettlement operations did not occur as a sudden edict-from-the-top, in a one-step act. It was the outcome of in-house analytical work, knowledge dissemination and advocacy processes which created important cultural premises inside the organization for adoption of a new approach to resettlement.

There were several factors which contributed to this in-house discussion. The feedback from projects was essential, and criticism from organizations outside the Bank reinforced the internal sense that change was necessary. Most important in this feedback was the disastrous displacement and relocation in the Brazil-Sobradinho project. Concomitantly, the in-house sociological analysis and advocacy consisted of sociological seminars on resettlement, analysis of other projects, comparative reviews of performance in resettlement in various regions, discussions in the Bank's Sociological Group[11] (Kardam, 1993) and an ongoing philosophical argument about the Bank's goals and means. The process involved repeated consultations (sometimes confrontational) and 'bargaining' – facts and past project evaluations in hand – with a large number of Bank managers and staff from many departments about project objectives and operational approaches. The explicit consultations with various operational or policy-making units in the Bank were carried out over one year. In this context, the social guidelines for resettlement, prepared in-house at the initiative of the Bank's senior sociologist, were eventually approved and instituted by management as a Bank Operational Manual Statement (OMS), equivalent to an internal policy document, under the title 'Social Issues Associated with Involuntary Resettlement in Bank-Financed Projects' (World Bank, 1980). The OMS spelled out principles and rules that were binding on Bank staff, as well as requirements that Bank borrowers were expected to meet, in operations involving displacement.

A systematic effort to implement the new approach, recruit knowledgeable social science consultants able to advise staff and borrowers, and prepare and appraise resettlements differently from in the past, was initiated following the issuance of the 1980 guidelines. The emphasis of the in-house sociological work shifted to policy implementation, monitoring resettlement performance critically, and codifying the lessons from the application of the new policy. In-house, the new guidelines were not met by all with identical reactions. There was good institutional support, but there was also inertia, as well as resistance among some staff and mid-level managers who remained unconvinced that the Bank should become too concerned about these so-called 'side-effects'. There was insufficient knowledge among project managers about how to shift gears to alternative operational approaches, and the Bank itself was not adequately staffed with social skills. Most important, the guidelines were not only innovative but also shocking to many borrowing agencies, which turned out often to be not only

unprepared, but also unwilling to change their routine handling of expropriation practices and forced displacement procedures.

1986: Analysing policy effectiveness

To ascertain the effects of the new policy and the consistency of operations with guidelines, a broad-based policy analysis study of resettlement in World Bank-financed projects was carried out by the present author during 1984–1985. The study covered Bank-financed agriculture and hydropower projects approved between 1979 and 1985, and found forced resettlement in at least some 40 projects in 27 countries. The overall conclusion was that the introduction of the Bank's resettlement policy had led to substantial improvement in the treatment of resettlement components of projects.

At the same time, the study found that the Bank staff had not always applied the policy and its related operational procedures with adequate rigour in all projects and sectors. During the first five years, the 'consistency curve' between projects and policy zigzagged. Consistency was higher in projects appraised in 1980 to 1982 than, by and large, in projects appraised in 1983 and 1984, years for which the consistency curve declined. It appeared that some erosion of policy influence and weakening of operational compliance gradually set in. A well corroborated finding was that inadequate legal frameworks and practices of various borrowing countries were frequently at the root of many difficulties encountered by Bank staff in applying the guidelines and failures in resettlement implementation.

The study's findings pointed to the main weaknesses in resettlement performance and to areas in which the policy guidelines and project processing procedures needed further strengthening. The findings were as follows: first, the quality of borrowers' preparation and detailed planning of resettlement components was found to need radical improvement; second, viable economic and social options for rebuilding the productive capacity of displaced populations were insufficiently specified and financed in project preparation and appraisal reports; third, the Bank's supervision of resettlement implementation was insufficient, requiring an increase in the use of professional social skills, and a need to be firmer and insist on borrowers' adherence to policy and legal loan agreements signed at project negotiation. Furthermore, the study concluded that the impact of resettlement on the host population and on the physical environment in receiving areas must be factored explicitly into the projects (Cernea, 1988a).

In February 1986, the Bank's senior management discussed and adopted the study's policy, operational, and staffing recommendations. These recommendations were included in a new 'Operations Policy Note' (No. 10.08) written by the author of this paper and issued formally in October 1986 (World Bank, 1986). The formal statement not only reaffirmed and strengthened the initial 1980 policy, it also supplemented it with additional policy elements and operational requirements to reduce the risk of impoverishment. The new policy note prescribed that projects should create a sound socioeconomic productive basis for those relocated, and explicitly affirmed the concept that those displaced should share in the benefits made possible through the programme which caused their eviction. The policy also demanded more attention to the host population at the relocation site. Procedurally, it instituted more demanding project planning and processing provisions regarding resettlement, both in-house and for Bank borrowers. Another immediate follow-up to the 1985 study was the launching of a Bank-wide 'corrective actions' effort. Centrally monitored, these corrective actions attempted to modify ongoing projects found by the study to be inconsistent with the policy guidelines and likely to result in resettlement failure.

The 1988 policy-cum-technical synthesis

In 1988, the two prior policy statements issued internally – the 1980 OMS 2.33 and the 1986 OPN 10.08 – were integrated into one single Bank paper for policy and technical guidance to resettlement operations (Cernea, 1988b). This was the first time the Bank published its internal resettlement policy.

The 1988 paper advanced the policy formulation process in two important ways. The first was by combining the provisions of the earlier statements on each one of the key points (e.g. objectives of relocation, compensation, etc.)

and by clarifying some important issues such as the definition of re-establishment criteria based on 'with-and-without' project calculations. The second was by more specifically spelling out operational procedures germane to the policy than in any prior Bank document. The paper also introduced three new analytical tools for improving: (a) resettlement preparation; (b) resettlement economic and financial analysis; and (c) resettlement monitoring and evaluation (see Annexes 1, 2, 3 to the 1988 paper). Furthermore, wide distribution, and translation into Spanish, French, Chinese and Bahasa Indonesian[12] helped to disseminate the improved approach to these difficult operations and increased the accountability of both the Bank and borrowing governments in this domain.

The 1990 Operational Directives

Following the Bank's reorganization, all previous internal policy and operational guidelines were updated and reissued as a set of new documents called Operational Directives. In this process, the resettlement policy was revised and reissued as 'The Bank's Operational Directive on Involuntary Resettlement' (OD No. 4.30) in June 1990 (World Bank, 1990). The preparation of the 'Operational Directive' again prompted a wide discussion inside the World Bank on the principles, concepts, institutional procedures and outcomes of resettlement.

The 1993/94 study

The review of resettlement performance under Bank-assisted projects active during 1986–1993 covered 192 projects, of which 146 were still ongoing during 1993. Significant improvements were identified every time the policy prescriptions had been applied consistently; yet many problems persist and performance has often been below expectations (see World Bank 1994).

The 1993/94 study led, in turn, to new and important decisions. These contain new strategic orientations and immediate operational measures in ongoing projects that demand corrective actions. Among the strategy measures are: making agreement on policy with borrowing governments explicit and requiring the adoption of national policy and legal frameworks for projects with large-scale resettlement operations; increasing local capacities for carrying out resettlement operations adequately; improving project design by reducing displacement and incorporating production-based relocation strategies; providing increased allocation of financial resources; and promoting greater consultation and participation of affected people in designing and implementing resettlement.

The content of the Bank's resettlement policy

After this five-stage policy history, how can the core content of the Bank's resettlement policy be summarized? Which conclusions stemming from the prior decades of resettlement research have been explicitly absorbed into the content of policy?

The progression of this formulation and analysis process has produced a policy core that can hardly be compressed here in a manner that will do it justice. A detailed description of this policy is available elsewhere (Cernea, 1988, 1991; World Bank, 1990). The policy's key points can be summarized as follows:

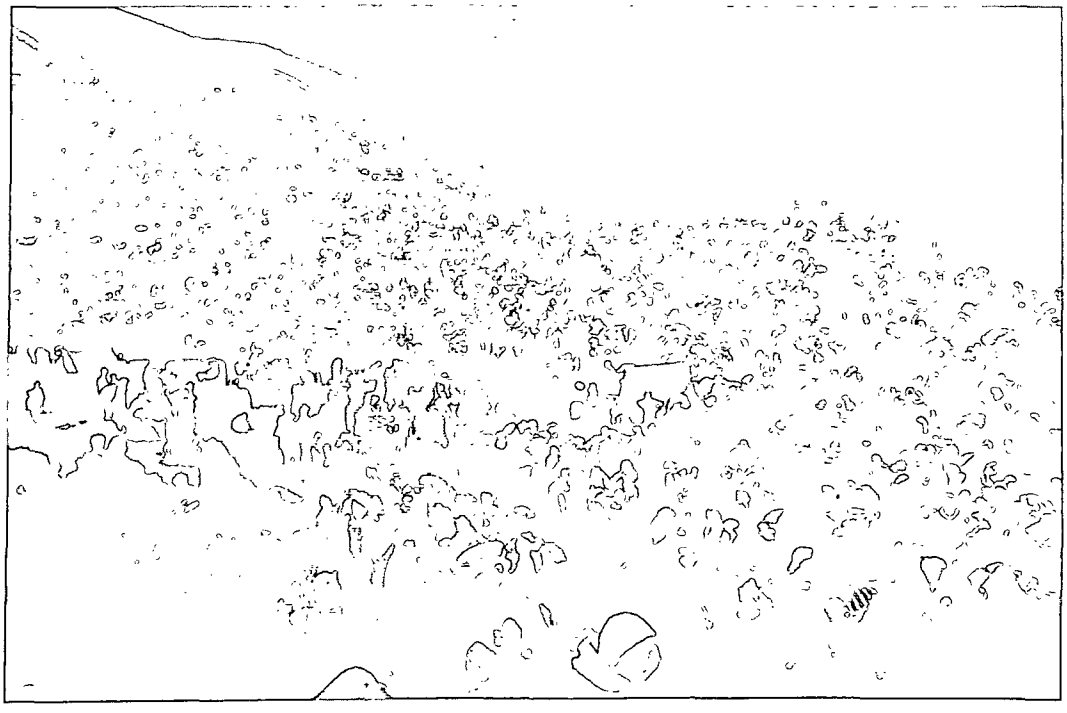
— Involuntary displacement should be avoided or minimized whenever feasible, because of its disruptive and impoverishing effects.

— Where displacement is unavoidable, the *objective* of Bank policy is to assist displaced persons in their efforts to improve, or at least restore, former living standards and earning capacity. The *means* of achieving this objective consist of the preparation and execution by the borrower of resettlement plans as development programmes. These resettlement plans are integral components of project designs.

— Displaced persons should be: (a) compensated for their losses at replacement cost, (b) given opportunities to share in project benefits, and (c) assisted in the transfer and throughout the transition period at the relocation site.

— Moving people in groups can cushion disruptions. Minimizing the distance between departure and relocation sites can facilitate the resettlers' adaptation to the new socio-cultural and natural environments. The tradeoffs between distance and economic opportunities must be balanced carefully.

— Resettlers' and hosts' participation in planning and implementing resettlement should be



Kurds fleeing northern Iraq, near the Turkish border, April 1991. Boyle/Select/REA

promoted. The existing social institutions of resettlers and their hosts should be relied upon in conducting the transfer and re-establishment process. Providing information to, and consultation of, those to be displaced about their entitlements, options, moving schedules, etc., should be ensured throughout the preparation and relocation process.

— New communities of resettlers should be designed as viable settlement systems equipped with infrastructure and services, able to integrate into the regional socio-economic context.

— Host communities that receive resettlers should be assisted to overcome possible adverse social and environmental effects from increased population density.

— Indigenous people, ethnic minorities, pastoralists, and other groups that may have informal customary rights to the land or other resources taken for the project, must be provided with adequate land, infrastructure, and other compensation. The absence of legal title to land should not be grounds for denying such groups compensation and rehabilitation.

Tied to these policy provisions are procedural requirements. The most important of these is that the Bank will not appraise and improve financing for a project that will cause displacement unless it has received and accepted a resettlement plan that shows how the borrower will meet the policy's objectives, the plan's cost, and timetable.

If building policy on social science research clarified the objectives of resettlement and the manner in which it should be carried out, linking the policy to project processing provided the teeth for its enforcement because it instituted mechanisms for assessing compliance.

The policy guidelines, which have been strengthened over the years, have created a new framework for planning displacement and resettlement operations, for allocating resources, and for assisting those displaced to re-establish themselves. The most fundamental

demand of this policy framework, indeed its *raison d'être*, is to counteract the poverty risks involved in forced displacement, prevent the impoverishment of those displaced, and ensure that their income and livelihood are restored through adequate resettlement (Cernea, 1990). This framework cannot be compared to any previous one since formal rules simply did not previously exist. But if the 'practical policy' is considered, in other words if the previous routine practice in resettlement is taken as a reference point, the difference is enormous. In fact, unregulated 'routine practice' continues to be the current dominant and ruinous pattern found in forced resettlement in many projects occurring outside World Bank assistance.

IV. A learning process in applying social science

Beyond its 'physics', applied social science work has its own 'metaphysics'. Any impression that the policy formulation progression described was a smooth and linear process would be totally false and misleading. On the contrary, it was fraught with difficulties, some theoretical, some methodological, some institutional, some practical. It entailed intellectual clashes with proponents of other approaches, less sensitive to people and culture. It revealed gaps and grey areas in the knowledge of social scientists themselves, who believed they had a 'lock' on the resettlement theory.

The translation of conceptualized knowledge into policy and planning approaches was a theoretical and operational battle waged both in the office and in the field, in the project implementation 'trenches'. Using social science knowledge turned out to be a major learning process for the social scientists who promoted its application.

Dealing with the mixed collection of issues and processes which I call the 'metaphysics' of converting social theory into policy, is not an oft beaten path. It is important to reflect on some of the lessons acquired during this process.

Knowledge-testing in the field

Translating social science knowledge into prescriptive policy is not just a desk-bound intellectual exercise. It demands involvement in field operations. To carry weight, prescriptions must be anchored in operational experience and analysis.

The five identifiable 'milestones' in the history of the current resettlement policy described in the prior section do not provide the full picture. These landmark moments were part of a wider scenario, whose dominant feature was field work on actual resettlement projects – to prepare, plan, implement, monitor, or evaluate. In hundreds of operational field assignments, Bank staff and consultant social scientists, as well as local sociologists assigned by developing countries' agencies to those projects, applied and tested their knowledge against real life resettlement approaches, constraints, and actual project performance. Thus, the gradual refinement of the new policy has benefitted from the joint effort of a much larger group of social scientists than the handful involved in actually writing it. Other specialists (such as agronomists, economists, lawyers, engineers, etc.) also co-operated in this effort. The policy could not have survived and be enriched without the ongoing field work, which confirmed or falsified one or another premise, and provided empirical substantiation for its legitimacy and refinement.

Pushing the frontier of social science

Extracting policy from pre-existing research and concepts was not a one-way street. It also uncovered gaps in theoretical knowledge that were not grasped by research, gaps that invited new thinking. Thus, the translation of social science knowledge into policy, and particularly its practical application, has also triggered gains for social science itself. Such gains included: considerable new research in quasi-experimental situations; a vast body of empirical knowledge on displacement and relocation, conducive to new conceptualizations; the identification of new issues previously unperceived, or unstudied; a much deeper understanding of the economics of the post-displacement re-establishment process; an appreciation of practical tradeoffs, when alternative options become

available; the crafting of new data-collection tools and analytical procedures tailored to the pecularities of resettlement; and the development of new solutions for resettlement arrangements, which broadened the practical inventory of applied social scientists.

However, only part of the prior conceptualizations generated by anthropological research could be used as theoretical 'building blocks' for formulating the operational resettlement policy. Other such pre-existing concepts or theoretical constructs could not be used because they were not validated by the 'test' of operational circumstances. For instance, it became evident that the pre-existing Scudder-Colson anthropological model of resettlement processes, which focused on the concept of *stress*, was directing the researcher's (or practitioner's) attention to a derived psychological consequence – social and individual stress – rather than centering on what is basic and primary: the breakdown of the socioeconomic sustenance systems of those displaced. Though helpful for many ethnographers as a descriptive tool, the Scudder-Colson (1982) model of resettlement, consisting of a four-stage temporal matrix of resettlement processes, could not be used for planning purposes and proved insufficient as an explanatory tool (Partridge, 1990).

Another circumstance that did not help our work at all is the lack of communication among the researchers studying various types of displaced populations. A dichotomy persists in the research literature itself between the social science studies of disaster-caused refugee flows and the studies of development-caused displacements. These two literatures virtually do not 'speak to each other' and their findings are not compared and corroborated (for a detailed discussion of this dichotomy, see Cernea, 1993a). This unfortunate circumstance is counter-productive not only for research, but also for the operational work with displaced populations.

Generally, we can conclude that *the frontiers of social science knowledge on population displacement and project-related resettlement have been pushed significantly forward* during both the policy development process and the operational work that accompanied and followed it. Only part of this knowledge has been distilled and systematized in the studies published to date as a reflexive outcome of this development-oriented operational work, and certainly more is to be expected. Nevertheless, the sociology and anthropology of resettlement *have become richer, stronger in their explanatory powers, and better suited to making informed and judicious prescriptions*. They have become more sophisticated and are informed by the need to address, or react to, countless nuts and bolts (social, economic, financial, legal, administrative, institutional, technical) questions. The span of theoretical challenges and practical queries raised and answered by operational necessity has widened enormously, incorporating a variety of new issues, from compensation to mutual help; from subverted grievance procedures to overall legal frameworks; from valuation of land and assets issues to consultation on relocation options; from entitlements of 'major sons' and those of other subgroups and categories of people, to coping strategies for the reorganization of displacees' lives, and on and on. The new body of knowledge has been creatively developed by the numerous social scientists who have participated, in various capacities, in resettlement activities related to over 100 Bank-financed projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America. A codification and synthesis of the new state-of-the-art has certainly become a challenging and timely task now.

Methodological dilemmas

Important lessons refer to the methodological difficulties that surface when one tries to convert abstract theory or case material into prescriptive policy.

The first difficulty emerges when knowledge exists in the form of site-specific or case-specific research findings. Then conversion has to move from the particular or individual nature of field research findings to the tenure of generally recommended prescriptions. The transition is from the descriptive to the prescriptive, and from problem analysis to problem solving. For this, the policy architect must balance the sense of expertise with humility, daring with prudence. Ethical restrictions are always important; but they loom even larger when the social scientist is not just an adviser to a policy maker or to a manager, but when he or she is the one

to develop policy, or to make an operational decision loaded with consequences for many people.

Hard tradeoffs between desirable but sometimes competing principles must also be confronted under the pressure of immediate practical needs. For instance, the principle of minimizing the physical and cultural distance of relocation, and the principle of maximizing the economic development potential offered to the people relocated at the arrival sites are both, in theory, equally respectable and desirable principles. It is indeed satisfying when propitious circumstances allow for meeting both these principles simultaneously. But what is to be recommended when reducing the physical distance entails selecting sites with considerably less long-term development potential than sites located two or three times further away?

Formulating ideal policy is always soul-satisfying; but it also involves a high risk of becoming a futile exercise if the new policy ends up with an overload of ideal desiderata that prove impractical or unenforceable. When the applied social scientist, much more than his academic peers, is confronted with the task of formulating a strategy and charting a course of action, he or she is forced – and must learn – to balance the desirable with the possible.

The metaphysics of applied work implies judgement calls on the opportunity, acceptability and feasibility of various practical solutions, judgements that must be informed by knowledge about the political and cultural contexts within which projects are implemented, by the ability to predict, and by skills at building in safeguards. Policy prescriptions should be justified and made acceptable to a large number of countries with different traditional, legal, financial and administrative norms. Policy prescriptions must be ahead of current practice, yet connect with it and lift future performance above the current entrenched routine.

Institutional clashes and change

As mentioned earlier, the formulation and progression of the Bank's resettlement policy was not free of in-house disputes between those who supported tighter or looser policy norms. Social scientists had to fight econocentric or engineering biases. For instance, repeated rounds of debates were devoted to the adequacy of compensating the victims of displacement with cash. Proponents of hard-nosed market approaches argued that the Bank should care only about 'setting the prices right' for expropriated assets but not get otherwise involved in the re-establishment of those displaced, while the anthropologists produced waves of empirical data proving that specific cultural, political and economic circumstances are certain to transform cash compensation into a recipe for quick impoverishment and counter development. Other far-reaching controversies were ignited by issues such as the entitlements of displaced landowners *vis-à-vis* the status and rights of groups deemed by government agencies to be 'illegal squatters'. Many other examples of practical social dilemmas and uncharted territories can be cited.

The reason for such conceptual controversies resided in the fact that promoting a resettlement policy implied, *ipso facto*, a change of some theoretical premises that underlie the model and goals of infrastructural development projects. In this case, the change meant broadening the goal definition of infrastructural projects. It also means broadening the population groups to be taken into account in project design and financing. For example, in building irrigation dams the mandated goal became not the only downstream farmers' welfare, but included the protection of the upstream populations (previously ignored and victimized).

The modified vocabulary

Reflecting the change in premise and policy, modifications appeared in the Bank's in-house vocabulary and public discourse about resettlement. Gradually, resettlement issues started to be defined largely in anthropological/sociological concepts. The new vocabulary in which the policy itself was framed was about 'moving in groups', 'cultural identity' and 'settler-host interaction'; 'social networks', and 'kin-groups', 'social integration', 'social uprooting' and 'social cohesion'; 'settler dependency', and 'social apathy' and 'traditional authority systems'; about 'community structure', 'lack of power' and 'alienation'; the cultural meaning of 'leaving behind lands, deities and ancestors', and so on. The use of such terminology is not customary within agencies seeking economic returns and

engineering precision. Yet the new in-house and public discourse arose precisely because additional (social) variables began to claim operational consideration. In turn, this new vernacular prodded the staff to *think in new terms* about what they were doing and to 'see' dimensions of 'their' projects which they had previously overlooked.

Formulating organizational procedures

Last but not least, I would like to emphasize that formulating new policy means not only setting resettlement principles, however important these are. The social scientist engaged in development work is well advised to go a step further, and also propose *institutional and administrative procedures* for implementing the general policy principles. This is not an unworthy and trivial exercise, as ivory tower dwellers may tend to assume from afar. It is another key part of the metaphysics – and realpolitik – of converting social knowledge into institutional policy. Without new procedures a policy remains a simple statement of principles. Without new procedures *germane to the policy's content* there is bound to be entropy in policy application. Without congruence between policy and procedures there also is no way to uniformly monitor policy execution.

In our case, formulating institutional procedures meant designing the sequence of practical steps, and inserting them within the in-house work processes, for addressing resettlement issues during each stage of the project cycle – project identification, preparation, appraisal and supervision. Additional complexities arose from the fact that the procedures had to prescribe both what staff in the Bank must do, and what must be done by borrowing agencies in their own countries.

It would be a mistake for applied social scientists to leave this translation task only to others because of its 'technical' or mundane character. Of course it is 'technical', and more often than not it is indeed mundane. Yet it is too important to be left to others alone. The procedures themselves (not only the policy principles) ought to be sociologically informed, which means designed with sensitivity to the nature of the given social process. They must be germane to the policy which they facilitate. For the social scientists involved in redesigning institutional procedures, that means a good deal of administrative and organizational work, perhaps not 'sociological' in a purist's view, but definitely part and parcel of the applied sociologist's trade correctly understood.

Obtaining the formal enactment of such procedures within a large-scale organization is as important as consensus building around high policy principles. Only if principles and procedures are substantively congruent, and are blended together normatively, is a policy able to become compelling and infuse discipline into the activities of agents and clients.

Alliances and interdisciplinarity

To round up this analysis, I must point out the interdisciplinary nature of this policy-crafting intellectual endeavour, beyond its core social character. Economists, lawyers, engineers and other specialists also contributed to policy development. The social scientists developed informal 'alliances' within the institution with exponents of other scientific disciplines or professions. The sociological and anthropological focus on resettlement issues stimulated, in turn, other kinds of intellectual work inside the Bank in related fields, whose contribution was indispensable for elaborating policy and operational positions, but which probably would not have happened without 'demand' from the sociological side of the issues. For instance, innovative legal analysis and writing was contributed by the Bank's General Counsel regarding national legal frameworks for resettlement, the protection of the human rights of resettlers, and the relationships between expropriation laws and development goals (Shihata, 1988, 1991); these are pioneering contributions to legal thinking. Similarly, economic writings contributed to clarifying such issues as displacement costs and re-establishment benefits (Schuh, 1988). It would be fair to say that more contributions to the economic and financial analysis of displacement and resettlement would probably have improved the policy's effectiveness.

V. Policy diffusion

The effects of the Bank's resettlement policy over the last 12–14 years have been important

and widespread. Policy implementation has not been easy, however; resistance to the policy has also been substantial in various quarters, as could be expected, reducing the policy's beneficial impacts. It is not the objective of the present paper to analyse these effects in detail; the interested reader will find such a detailed analysis in the study mentioned at the beginning, which discusses the implementation of the resettlement policy and its results over an eight-year period (see World Bank, 1994). A few comments, however, are in order regarding policy diffusion.

The resettlement policy adopted by the Bank some 15 years ago influenced other development agencies and international donors to also adopt the basic tenets of the Bank's guidelines as their own policy (see IDB, 1990; Deruyterre, 1992). In 1991 the development ministers of all 23 OECD countries sanctioned and enacted uniform resettlement guidelines for their countries' aid agencies (OECD, 1992).

Policy vacuums in developing countries, as pointed out earlier in this paper, have allowed for unregulated displacement practices, abusive and directly ruinous to the people affected. The Bank has advocated changes in the very policies and legal provisions regulating population displacement and relocation in many of its borrowing countries. As the Bank's General Counsel has concluded,

> lessons derived from the Bank-assisted projects involving resettlement [show] that in many countries the national legal framework of resettlement operations is incomplete . . . Resettlement legal issues [are treated] as a subset of property and expropriation law. For various reasons, these national laws do not provide a fully adequate framework for development-oriented resettlement . . . New legislation often must be introduced, or existing laws must be modified, in order to plan and carry out involuntary resettlement adequately (Shihata, 1993).

Consequently, internal factors in those countries, particularly demands from NGOs, and the opposition by the affected people themselves to inadequate resettlement, have reinforced the demand for better policies and laws. Indeed, significant changes have been achieved in the policies of several developing countries, for instance, in the resettlement policies of China, Brazil and Mexico, and in several states in India (see Fernandes and Thukral, 1989; Partridge, 1990; Huang, 1984; World Bank, 1994). Social scientists or government officials have often emphasized that the Bank's policy has positively and significantly influenced national, state, or sectoral policy frameworks in various countries (see Nayak, 1989; Mougeot, 1988), while, on the other hand, in India and other countries social activists have deplored the fact that their states have 'no law on rehabilitation . . . (and) for every project, compensation, awards and rehabilitation plans are made piecemeal' (Dhagamwar, 1989).

A rather sophisticated policy framework for resettlement has been developed by Colombia's electricity sector; it focuses on restoring the economic and social basis of the displaced population and it covers not only projects financed by outside aid agencies, but all the domestically financed programmes in the entire sector. Developed by an interagency working group of social scientists, planners, and company managers, Colombia's 1990 resettlement policy is a major improvement over previous local approaches to resettlement (Guggenheim, 1993).

It is to be expected that a social policy which deliberately sets standards considerably above current practice will be exposed to countervailing factors, resistance, obstruction, attempts to bypass it and other forms of opposition, and will have to contend for a while with instances of low and sub-standard performance. But this is how the gap is being gradually narrowed. By adopting new standards, the policy sets in motion many resources able to support it. These are not only financial and economic resources, but political ones as well. It also considerably empowers the affected people themselves to participate in the resolution of relocation problems, to defend their needs and interests, to negotiate more effectively. The involvement of NGOs in resettlement programmes finds support now in the current policy. The growing resistance in many developing countries to the losses and social disintegration caused by involuntary displacement results in an increasingly politicization of development programmes entailing resettlement.

Even under a carefully applied policy, involuntary resettlement is, and will always remain, a traumatic process in the life of the affected groups. Since such social disruptions will continue to accompany future technical and

economic change, both urban and rural, further improvements in relocation policies and legal frameworks, in implementation, in sociological research and in knowledge utilization, remain imperative.

Notes

* The views, findings, and interpretation contained in this study are those of the author and should not necessarily be attributed to the institutions with which he is associated.

1. See, for instance, the UNRISD paper prepared by Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantara (1994) which explores several meanings of the term 'social integration' and the 'hidden assumptions' in furthering the goal of social integration.

2. *Resettlement and Development.* The World Bank, Environment Department, Washington, DC, 1994. This study was prepared by a special World Bank Task Force, led by the author of the present article. The study analyses worldwide experiences with involuntary resettlement – primarily in projects receiving World Bank financial assistance, and in domestically financed projects as well. A very detailed analytic summary of this study is available in French and Spanish translations.

3. Development-caused displacements occur under many programmes of different types. Installation of urban infrastructure, hydropower dams and reservoirs, highway construction, the establishment of industrial estates, building ports, open pit mining, the creation of national parks and biodiversity reserves, and many other projects – first occurring massively in countries of the North but recently expanding in developing countries – have generated gigantic developmental benefits. However, these projects also entail major economic and cultural losses, particularly due to population dislocation.

4. In this article I refer primarily to sociology and social anthropology; the terms will be used interchangeably to refer to both disciplines. For the purpose of this article, social science research on involuntary population displacement and relocation refers also to the research carried out on this topic by social geographers.

5. In fact, a similar question was asked publicly at the 1991 meeting of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) by a keynote speaker. The speaker questioned the audience: 'How are we doing in integrating impact assessment and planning?', and gave a negative, disappointed answer. She said: 'Regrettably, I have to say that I cannot recommend a passing grade . . . (After) two decades of international experience with environmental impact assessment . . . it is difficult not to feel more disappointment than satisfaction with the way in which the field has developed . . . Progress has been excruciatingly slow' (Armour 1991).

Despite the critical bent of this answer, neither the explanation nor the remedy offered was convincing. In Armour's explanation, the cause of this slow progress resided in an over-preoccupation of researchers with assessment *procedures* rather than with including the knowledge from evaluation into 'planning' requirements. As a remedy, Armour proposed to shift the emphasis from 'assessment requirements' to 'planning requirements'. In my view, this remedy won't cure the ill. Directing 'requirements' to planners would not achieve a substantive change of actual programmes, if programme goals remain the same; it would only pin hopes on another non-winning strategy. A few years later this 'remedy', examined in hindsight, will again fail to obtain a 'passing grade'. Programme goals are defined by policy-makers; therefore, knowledge, as well as requirements for programme changes, must be directed primarily to policy-makers.

6. Similarly, incorporating social knowledge into the design of individual projects, while definitely improving those projects, is not a substitute for incorporating such knowledge in the formulation of overall development policies and strategies: both are necessary, but it is the latter that makes room for the former.

7. Of course, confidence in the value of policy as an instrument for change should be tempered by the realistic caveat that firm commitment to implementation and policy enforcement is as essential as the policy's content itself.

8. The informal networks of mutual help among households are essential in the daily economic life

of the poor, but are barely visible to the outsider's eye. During resettlement such networks are dismantled and dispersed, a net loss to their members, but of course such loss is never counted and compensated. For instance, household networks help cope with poverty through informal loans; exchanges of food, clothing and durable goods; mutual help with farming, building houses, and caring for children. 'Household networks pass around large amounts of money, goods, and services, and may substitute for public subsidies . . . But recognition of the importance of private transfers for economic policy is relatively recent' (Cox and Jimenez, 1990). Such transfers flow from better-off to poorer households and help equalize the distribution of income. Two economists, measuring and quantifying the contribution of such informal social networks, have documented what anthropologists and sociologists have long described in qualitative terms. Their research has found that in developing countries 19 to 47 per cent of people report recurrent transfers, representing as much as 20 per cent of household incomes, compared to only 5 per cent in the United States. The support can reach high levels. In the Philippines, private transfers among households in the lowest quintile boost their income by more than 75 per cent. In Peru, the pre-transfer income of households that are net givers of transfers is 60 per cent higher than the income of recipient households. Such private transfers also function as informal credit arrangements and as mutual insurance mechanisms. Simulation analysis shows that in Colombia such transfers contribute up to 40 per cent to stabilizing incomes in households experiencing unemployment (Cox and Jimenez, 1990).

The dismantling of such multifunctional, yet virtually 'invisible', social networks through displacement acts as one of the 'hidden' but real causes of impoverishment through displacement. This is a loss of social capital. It is difficult, and it takes time, to reconstitute similar social structures and networks among resettlers and their hosts, capable of exercising similar support functions at the new relocation sites.

9. A recently published volume contains the largest published collection of field social research, reported with ethnographic detail, that documents the adverse effects of forced resettlement (see M. Cernea and S. Guggenheim, 1993).

10. The resettlement policy document was written by the author of this paper, with assistance from David Butcher; Debra Rubin and Lois Gram provided assistance with social research on Bank project experiences with resettlement.

11. An independent study of the internal impact of the Bank's informal sociological group on Bank activities was carried out by an outside researcher. It found that the sociological group exercised considerable influence in gradually increasing the in-house receptivity to social concerns and social analysis (see Kardam 1993).

12. The translation and reprinting in Indonesia was done at the initiative of a local NGO, while in China it was at the initiative of a governmental organization.

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