



Technical Assistance Consultant's Report

Project Number: 44140
Date: March 2016

TA 7566-REG: Strengthening and Use of Country Safeguard Systems

Subproject: Training and Knowledge Sharing for
CSS Strengthening in the Pacific (Regional)

ACCESSING LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT: INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES AND COUNTRY SYSTEMS TRAINING PROJECT READING MATERIAL I

Prepared by ADB Consultant Team

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Asian Development Bank

Accessing Land for Development

International Best Practices and Country Systems Training Project

Land Acquisition & Involuntary Resettlement Safeguards and Development Projects (i)

Large-scale infrastructure development projects create LAR. Unless carefully designed mitigation strategies are in place, persons and communities displaced by land acquisition suffer severe economic, social, and environmental losses including loss of housing, productive lands, income sources, and livelihoods, generating hardship and impoverishment among APs and communities. Common resources, social networks and service supplies can also get disrupted. When people lose their means of subsistence and income are likely to exploit fragile ecosystems to survive generating environmental risks. At the same time, in rural areas, social tensions between different groups could arise diminishing their cultural identity and community willingness to provide mutual help. In urban areas, displaced persons' attempts to rebuild their lives on public land could create large squatter populations disrupting infrastructure facilities, distorting employment opportunities, and weakening social safety networks.

By applying social safeguards found in country safeguard systems and international best practices, project planners and implementing agencies could avoid or at least mitigate social risks associated with development interventions, and provide adequate strategies to implement and indicators to monitor resettlement performance. They could also introduce corrective measure when resettlement operations deviate from social safeguards or best practices.

The application of consistent and pragmatic best safeguard practices to land acquisition and resettlement help project agencies in maintaining the quality of projects and ensure that they do not generate significant adverse impacts for people who are affected by development interventions. If such adverse impacts are found during project implementation, safeguard best practices provide guidance to mitigate them.

Better understanding of land acquisition and resettlement best practices and their application as part of local regulatory framework will help development agencies in the Pacific Region to tackle difficult development challenges discussed earlier. Careful and committed application of safeguards with adequate understanding and knowledge contribute to sustainable development.

Close adherence to social safeguards built into project planning certainly help avoid delays, corruption, and resource wastage. It will also ensure that all deserving persons and communities receive fair compensation, resettlement assistance, and project benefits thereby avoiding impoverishment and social tensions.

A good understanding of land acquisition and resettlement safeguards would help APs to claim their entitlements and resettlement assistance from project authorities. The presence of a social safeguard plan or an LARP with carefully spelt out entitlements enable them to discuss with project authorities the adequacy, timeliness, and scope of compensation packages and resettlement assistance at a forum such as a grievance redress committee, district and national

level arbitration agency, and finally in courts. The application of a LARP which is also approved by donors would help them to take their grievances to international level through accountability mechanisms of such donor agencies.

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