

## **ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT FOR MORI GRANT RECEIVED**

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### **Preparation for Fieldwork**

Summer 2010 fieldwork started with finalizing the most appropriate site for the conduct of data collection methods and procedures, but before this happened, I took some information from people working in the government agencies, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and The National Power Corporation (NPC). Advices were also solicited from my government agency – The Department of Health, particularly at the Environmental and Occupational Health Office, and World Health Organization (WHO) in order to finalize the best site among these large-scale dam projects available for the fieldwork. Part of the advices was information gathered about resettlement sites, and relevant information and policies shared (in print) to me by the officers I talked and dealt with to suffice the information I need to justify the best dam site.

Some of the additional policies I got included maternal and child health, family planning, adolescent pregnancy, and the Philippine National Framework and Guidelines for Environmental Health Impact Assessment of the Department of Health. With regard to the documents, I gathered a list of Environmentally Critical Projects (ECPs) which are large-scale in nature and with a list of negative, environmental impacts being undermined because the issuance of the Environmental Compliance Certificate (being issued even if the DOH health

impact assessment is not yet done or finished) of the DENR still happened. One of these ECPs is the San Roque Multipurpose Project. After taking copies of some candidate sites' ECCs and related documents, I went to the NPC as suggested by the DENR as NPC was the main proponent of the SRMP during that time because even the documents they have were not enough to suffice what I was looking for. So, I went to the NPC people and inquired with the people in-charge of dams, reservoirs, etc. Finally, they suggested me to go to Pangasinan where the San Roque Power Corporation (SRPC) is located to be able to get all the necessary documents I need for my study. At the end, with the advice from the Program Manager in-charge of the health impact assessment of the dam projects named Engr. Gerry Mogol, Supervising Health Program Officer of the National Center for Disease Prevention and Control, that San Roque is the best choice. So, I then chose it as my only study dam site because it also has resettlement sites.

### **Fieldwork Introduction and Background**

It took me more than six hours to reach the SRPC by bus and very expensive tricycle ride. On that day, I happened to meet the Vice-President of the Corporate Social Responsibility, Mr. Tommy Valdez, the nephew of the former President of the Philippines, Fidel Valdez-Ramos. He did not introduce himself in this manner but based on the hearsays I have heard from one of the barangay/village councilors and staff of the Camanggaan Resettlement Site. During the meeting, I introduced myself well as an independent researcher. Initially, Mr. Valdez together with his community staff, Ms. Mina Evanoso, showed his reluctance of accepting my intentions of going to the sites to conduct my fieldwork. This reluctance resulted from the previous

researchers from Canada and from the Friends of the Earth – Japan (FOE). They were so allergic to these types of researchers. So, they frankly asked me if I am a member of any of the activist groups like the FOE, and Cordillera Alliances Groups. Finally, I was able to convince them by saying that everything I want to seek as part of my study is the truth and I should have a more information to have a more objective way at looking at the situation and experiences of the people. Of course, I even mentioned that every stakeholder in this dam project should be asked and get their sides to whatever problem I might see inside the resettlement sites created after the demolition of people living exactly where the dam was created. After these, I made courtesy calls and also got approval of fieldwork from both Barangay Captains of the two barangays/villages where Lagpan and Camanggaan Resettlement Sites are located and established due to this large-scale dam.

San Roque Multipurpose Project (SRMP) was the large-scale dam chosen for this study to determine the impact integrating the social and environmental aspects of it to the health of the people at the resettlement sites established. These people were called the dam-affected families as termed by National Power Corporation (NPC) and the San Roque Power Corporation (SRPC) in the four (4) resettlement sites (Camanggaan, Lagpan, Daynet, and Bantic) constructed by the NPC. San Roque Power Corporation (SRPC) financed and constructed the hydroelectric power production as thrust assigned to SRMP under a power purchase agreement (PPA) with the NPC on a build-operate-transfer (BOT) basis. This said corporation substantially completed the SRMP at midnight, February 14, 2003, at which time its peaking power, irrigation, flood control and enhanced water quality benefits became available to the surrounding regions. The primary features of the SRMP are its massive dated spillway and 200-meter-high, 1.2-kilometer-

long embankment dam on the Agno River spanning the municipalities of San Manuel and San Nicholas, Pangasinan, nearly 200-kilometer north of Metro Manila. Ownership of the dam and spillway transferred to NPC upon construction completion, as it contributed funds for the non-power components on behalf of several agencies. Of course, the ownership will take place after the dam operated for 25 years. SRPC will own and operate generating facilities for 25 years, after which their ownership transfers to NPC. Out of the four resettlement sites, two (2) sites (Camanggaan and Lagpan) were chosen where the researcher conducted a series of interviews. Daynet and Bantic are both located in Itogon, Benguet Province and characterized as mountainous and hard-to-reach areas (6 to 7 hours by bus from Manila and then almost an hour jeepney-ride then 5-hour walk to reach these sites or by boat which needs clearance and etc.). San Nicholas and San Manuel are two towns in Pangasinan Province, where the chosen sites are located over the difficult and very risky ones. Camanggaan (San Manuel) and Lagpan (San Nicholas) sites are surrounded by mountains with limited number of vehicles going up to Lagpan, compared to Camanggaan which is semi-mountainous and have better access to tricycles. However, both of them have very distant health facilities. San Manuel is a second class municipality in the eastern part of the province of Pangasinan politically divided in 14 barangays while San Nicholas is a third class municipality located in the northeastern part of Pangasinan and is politically subdivided into 33 barangays.

The two chosen resettlement sites were developed and built by the NPC with the specifications of the housing common to both sites. Each house has a floor area of 33 square kilometers constructed on a 200-square meter lot. The homes have two bedrooms, living room, and a kitchen, as well as comfort room (toilet) and shower.

Houses are equipped with electricity and served by a water supply system. Each site has a chapel and a multipurpose building that can be used for activities such as skills training, workshops/conferences, cultural/community events, homeowner association meetings or barangay administration. In addition, the sites are also provided with a large area of multipurpose pavement, usually used for basketball, but also available for community events such as fiestas and celebrations. Elevated 10,000 gallon steel storage tanks supply a network of distribution lines to the housing and other structures. Electricity is distributed via wood poles.

Concrete roadways are provided at the sites, and at Lagpan, a relocated barangay road connects with the roads to San Nicolas proper and to the Agno River Bridge to Barangay San Roque, San Manuel. The sites are also furnished with full perimeter fencing.

### **The Camanggaan Resettlement Site**

Camanggaan RS is located within the municipality of San Manuel, Pangasinan. One of the barangays of San Manuel is San Roque where the project was named after due to its location. The barangay comprises eight sitios (smaller units) which are located within the immediate watershed of the lower Agno River. San Roque has a combination of lowland areas along the Agno River and of rolling mountainous areas towards the north. The average household income is approximately P 10,000 and the common sources are farming, livestock-raising, skilled and unskilled labor works, gold panning and other forms of employment. Thus, primary and secondary schools are the only available within the municipality with a health facility very far (more than 5 kilometers) from the main site and so the public market. Small stores are located within and outside the resettlement sites.

This Camanggaan RS was completed first and 187 families began to relocate to the 7.5 hectare site in stages in mid-2000. The site was considered ideal because it is near both a main road and an elementary school, electricity is readily available, a barangay road is adjacent the site, and the terrain is relatively flat. However, families within this village have moved out due to some problems related to sustainability and living and now, around 121 families were left. After losing their farms, livestock, and mainly gold panning (mining) along the Agno River, their lives have started to change. In this village, one of the major livelihood programs being supported is the piggery project, which initially involved about 50 families. San Roque Power Corporation financed the construction of a communal pig pen while the NPC financed the project and dispersed the piglets. The project commenced in 2002 as a livelihood center established to employ as many relocates as possible. Despite the provisions of so many livelihood projects including bakery, barbershop, dressmaking, printing shop and the big piggery, it all failed after seeing them three months ago. Nothing was left from any of the said livelihood projects due to many other issues which will be discussed further in the results of the fieldwork. Furthermore, some of the families opted to go to mountains to make a living by making and selling charcoals they made. Due to some problems mentioned, some families had sold their houses and some of them have them rented for generating income while staying somewhere outside the RS or outside Pangasinan to find better options.

The village or barangay hall is located outside the RS as the RS is just part of San Roque aside from the other barangays. A number of local officials such as the councilors, administrator, secretary and the Chairwoman herself Mrs. Corazon Lopez are found working in the hall and also aware of the needs and problems their people have like need for vehicles or settling

conflicts. However, only one vehicle is available to cater to all barangays and not all of them are present everyday to serve.

With regard to the health system, health facility and access to it seemed very difficult among people living in RS due to its distance of more than 10 kilometers in order to reach it as it is located at the town proper of San Manuel. One of the midwives assigned to Camanggaan stays once a week in the barangay hall to provide health services to all people in all the barangays nearby the hall. There is an obvious absence of “Sangguniang Kabataan” or Youth Council due to its limited funding and its projects are only focused on sports activities and not much aware of the problems I saw in the areas.

### **The Lagpan Resettlement Site**

Lagpan RS is located within the municipality of San Nicolas, Pangasinan. This municipality is a 3<sup>rd</sup> class municipality with the latest population census of 33,419 people in 6,533 households and is located in northeastern part of Pangasinan. Thus, it is politically subdivided into 33 barangays and it is in San Felipe East where Lagpan RS is exactly located. This site is surrounded by mountains and comprised only of small number of families. The barangay where Lagpan is, is headed Chairman Efren Marzan with its councilors. Part of their function is to provide vehicle services to all the other 33 barangays in the form of helping for emergency cases and for providing supplies and the like. However, they only have two units available to cater to areas despite its unpaved roads and mountainous features.

Lagpan RS was readied for occupancy since June 2001. It was endorsed between two choices provided by the NPC by the affected residents of Sitio Bulangit, a community located within the reservoir, and considered as an appropriate area for resettlement. The site also has a

school building with two classrooms, faculty room and two restrooms. Thirty-nine families resettled which then reduced to 37 then to 31 families during my latest visit, were all resettled into the site in September 2001. In addition, tertiary school is located outside the municipality.

A Piggery Project had been organized for the relocatees in Lagpan with identified beneficiaries totaling to 33 families. The construction of the communal pigpens began in November 2004 after the completion of the necessary water supply through the financial support and technical assistance of SRPC. Meanwhile, the start-up livelihood projects being supported by SRPC and NPC for the project affected families and communities in San Nicolas include the following: jewelry making, involving 5 women (now only two), garment craft involving 20 women relocatees (non-existent), backyard poultry raising, backyard gardening, and turkey production. All of these livelihood projects are already gone for some reasons to be discussed. Despite the failures, some people remains to plant, secure one or two pigs on their own, go to the mountains to survive by selling charcoals as they've already lost gold panning as their main source of living from the Agno River which was contained for the large-scale dam project – the SRMP.

### **Preliminary Findings**

What follows after the pictures of the selected sites are the major findings seen after a series of interviews to 62 households and 27 teenage couples in Camanggaan, and 27 households and 15 teenage couples in Lagpan. Other interviews were conducted among the Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator in San Manuel and inquiries made with the San Nicholas, Barangay Councilors and Chairmen, Municipal Physician and her staff (San Manuel) and Municipal Health Officer (San Nicholas) San Roque Power Corporation-CSR Group



and other people within the Resettlement Sites. In between these interviews, of course, observations and some group story telling sessions from within the communities were also taken into consideration to cover the whole story of the lives of these people in the resettlement sites mentioned and chosen above.

Here are the **preliminary findings** of the Summer Fieldwork 2010 pertinent to the said study:

Based on the socio-demographic profiles of the two sites, it is very obvious that majority of the people living in both the resettlement sites were only able to attain the secondary level of education which is high school. Most of them worked hard in gold panning as their main source of living through the Agno River now turned into a dam, and through their farms where they get their daily needs for food and others. Affected communities who decided to get a unit in the resettlement sites were given allowances and disturbance fees while staying outside while the construction of the resettlement sites were still ongoing. The money given to them seemed to be not more than enough and people had the difficulty of shifting from a more sustainable living to a cash economy where everything was not free such as water, food, and housing. In other words, the money they received from the government was only meant for their survival during the interim period of waiting for relocation. Sweet words and promises without “black and white agreement” had “convinced” these affected communities to evacuate their original place meant for implementing the construction and operation of dam.

With Camanggaan being the largest in population among all the other families affected by dam construction, many other families affected by the construction did take the bait of not

getting paid but instead own a resettlement unit. The rest of the affected families sold their lands at a government price, and left the place as common to both sites. There were also common practices within the sites where resettlement units are sold or rented to others because they (owners or sellers) did not find the place suitable for better living.

Upon entrance to both sites, basketball court and few structures were seen. Some of the houses were remodeled and renovated due to outsiders who had just bought the unit. And some of them had extra money from the amount they received from selling a vast area of lands they owned before being resettled. I have also seen some livelihood facility structures that were discontinued due manpower migration, lack of capability of people to manage, and environmental reasons. On the contrary, most of them had taken off for more than three months with piggery for both sites as the longest. For Camanggaan, for four years while for Lagpan it was more than a year. Trainings were also conducted to offer possible jobs to affected families by the National Power Corporation and the San Roque Power Corporation. Unluckily, most of the affected families did not get the job only less than 5% of the population from all the sites, got menial jobs and security guard works.

One more aspect I looked at during my fieldwork was the participation of people in the public hearing before the development of dam. This was not properly solicited as majority of them only got information on the benefits of this dam project. They seemed to be not properly represented in public hearings and consultations during those days as majority of them denied any participation or consultative talks where they were part of.

There is also an obvious difficulty in sustainable livelihood both in the two resettlement sites to majority of them aside from no participation before and during the construction of the project. Losing their gold panning, livelihood projects such as piggery, etc. without provision of work or regular employment among the dam-affected families made them perceived themselves as poor. According to them, compared to their lives before with abundant supplies of food through their farms, livestock and lands, and most of all through the income they get from doing gold panning, their lives became very hard. They could not rely on Agno river anymore to get small bits of gold as the river was too deep already due to dam construction and strong implementation of restricting them to go. With the impossibility of working again as gold panners and getting back their lands, their lives were obviously disrupted and threatened in a way they could not imagine. They have to face the reality and have to find ways of making their lives good enough to survive and live a life without better choices after so many years of living in the resettlement sites.

As I observed around, I saw people (adult) and youth playing around and gambling in the middle of the afternoon due to lack of employment and livelihood which had failed almost more than a year ago for both. Almost all of them were complaining of what NPC and SRPC had done on them. People wanted to get angry and find better ways of leading their lives. However, they have no other choice but to stay and find jobs on their own despite the promises they heard from NPC and SRPC that all of them are the priority for employment. The Vice-President of SRPC for Corporate Social Responsibility mentioned that 80% of them were hired. On the contrary, people remain craving for jobs and livelihood projects where they can make themselves useful and productive everyday of their lives. With the fact that the livelihood

projects were not sustained, and no alternative livelihood was provided, people's complaints were justifiable and remained "unheard" by the project proponents and government agencies.

There were also unresolved issues regarding their resettlement such as issues on free water, free electricity, and prioritizing them for employment, and payment for gold panning as promised to them by the Nat'l Power Corp. and San Roque Power Corp. They actually got advices from other concerned organizations that they should have "black and white" agreements. However, because SRMP is a BOT (build-to-operate-transfer) after 25 years-old some of the promises and the needs of the affected communities had to be fulfilled a longer period of time or not to be fulfilled at all. Aside from the gold panning, they have been doing for so many years in their lives before they got resettled, people, despite their problems have to prepare a certain amount of money in order to pay for their monthly bills (electricity and water). During their abundant days in the mountains living along the Agno riverside said before people were resettled, they have nothing to worry about in terms of paying bills because everything there in their original places were free. Thus, the need for having money in order to buy food and pay for bills became part of their daily lives now. Obviously, any disruptions in their daily lives before resettlement served as true human insecurity issues that they have to face whether they have good options or good alternatives in order to survive and sustain their lives. With these things that happened and continue to happen in their lives, sustainability is becoming more and more a problem as it goes farther from reaching it. People begin to see their lives differently and think of how to survive from abundance to survival state of living and a lot of them associated their better lives in gold panning.

It is also evident for both two sites, that affected families have attained very low educational levels such as high school level, high school graduates and college levels. Only few (less than 5%) of them finished college. Their household incomes are also very low and living their lives tend to be even more difficulty as they depend more on their livelihoods and lands, and gold panning before they were displaced. Thus, a significant number of the families I interviewed married at a very early age – teenage pregnancy leading to teenage parents among these affected families popped up. Furthermore, there seems to be high potential threats and health risks of maternal and neonatal health problems due to poor and insufficient emergency response to children and pregnant women within the place. Most of the teenage mothers I interviewed had their birth deliveries done at home. In this regard, it can be justified due to very limited number of barangay vehicles and very long distance away from the rural health unit or hospital. On the contrary, responding to many barangays and sitios it has for each could be more and more difficult with the potential growth of the population as many young couples emerged and have their own families. One of the good things I saw also was that majority of these teenage mothers use family planning methods and the teenage fathers agreed on it. Thus, most of them breastfed their babies and children up to 3 years-old for reasons like doctor's advice, nutritious to children, and the dominant reason among them was because they could not buy milk formula due to lack of money and poverty, in general. The great thing about this breastfeeding is that they can feed their children with the free and nutritious breastmilk without spending and because there is nothing to spend. Other health issues seen were lack of enough information and visitation of health workers. Thus, there were cases of cesarian section (type of delivery) which is difficult and very risky to do if done only at home. A single

death of a baby was also seen in the Lagpan site due to stomach pain. There were also cases of blindness (an old man) due to eyes being exposed to heat, and a Down Syndrome (a girl) both in Lagpan with no traces of contamination from anything according to the mother. The existing health system in both sites may be something that might be of help to them or something that may trigger more and more health problems if it remains as it is.

Teenage fathers among these couples even go to mountains for lack of job or regular employment. They go to the mountains to be able to feed their families by cutting some of the trees' branches and sometimes, even the trees, in order to have something like charcoals to sell and have money. They have to stay in the forest for a day or two just to make more charcoals to sell at the town proper as one of their ways of surviving and feeding their families. In Camangaan it has 10% of all families present there, and almost 100% of the 31 families in Lagpan do this charcoal thing where teenage couples' families were even involved. Despite the prohibitions of cutting these trees and replacing these trees, these families never thought of replacing these trees over feeding their children and families' stomach. Thus, it resorts to making more and more charcoals everyday for their everyday needs as part of their normal way of life. Prohibitions on cutting trees came from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and from the municipality mayor's office in order to warn the people of the potential threat of global warming and climate change in the future. However, prohibitions without further actions or alternatives to offer to these people remained futile until now.

There is a lack of non-government organization present in both sites to support them. San Roque Power Corporation through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been trying

its best to provide different types of support for employment, health, medical missions, goods and school supplies, and other kinds of assistance as part of their yearly CSR plan. However, for vehicle support, they only allow the use of their vehicles for those families of their employees. Unfortunately, only very few (less than 2%) of the affected families were hired from among the families due to jobs they secured like menial or utility jobs (utility worker, security guard, receptionist, and drivers). The CSR of SRPC also helped in providing classroom constructions nearby the Camanggaan and Lagpan sites, aside from what NPC had already provided them. On the contrary, the church in Lagpan was not completely finished until now which is supposed to be the responsibility of the NPC.

### **Final Fieldwork Results: Second Trip to Fieldwork Sites in Philippines, February 6 to April 4,**

#### **2011**

After the presentation of the preliminary results in Japan, last semester 2010 to 2011 (Fall Semester), there are interesting findings during my second and last fieldwork in the final study sites in Pangasinan, Philippines.

With my study focusing more on the resettlement and teenage pregnancy as the most obvious findings, there are other findings very interesting enough connected to the issues on health and issues caused by the resettlement. Poverty is one of the major reasons for some of the most interesting findings I gathered.

Due to the loss of livelihood, increased unemployment and lack of livelihood alternatives or government support in providing the people ways of earning and sustaining their lives, the issue on poverty keeps on worsening. People from both Lagpan and Camanggaan Resettlement Sites remain to go up the mountains and cut trees in order to sustain their lives. More especially in Lagpan where people have to almost go up everyday in order to sustain their families especially those really poor and those new families from the teenage couples. Teenage couples have to find ways of living and majority of them seem to be the major charcoal makers and basically who cut trees and who go up to the mountains. With the mountainous characteristics of both the sites, more especially in Lagpan, the people have no other choice. Thus, people from both sites, are located very far from the municipality town and very far from commercial areas and even from where access to employment and health services have been affected. Of course, there are additional new teenage couples and the main reason they got into their situation was poverty and lack of education and opportunities to find work. There are microfinancing opportunities provided by private companies but these have higher interests and despite the obvious difficult situations of the people, interests of these financing scheme remains to be high. According to the interviews I conducted with the National Power Corporation (government agency in-charge of resettlement), the people's financial status remains unstable. Despite this fact, they let the San Roque Power Corporation (SRPC) to implement their microfinancing scheme. Aside from this financing from SRPC, no other sources of microfinancing and no other organizations (non-government) supporting these people. There are lack of choices in order to improve their lives and learn from how can they sustain their lives through the support of the government and through themselves alone.



## **Final Analyses, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The lives of the people living in the resettlement sites as affected due to the implementation of dam project is becoming more and more of a survival. After losing their previous way of living (sustainable living) with all their lands which were bought using a cheap, government rate; livelihoods, live animals, plans and farms, and most of all their gold panning activity, their lives started to change its direction. Despite the many supports the government had provided them since the start of the project, supporting the people in order to survive from their current situation seemed to be not part of the national agenda of the government and of the private corporation like the San Roque Power Corporation. On the contrary, the NPC and the SRPC made a lot of efforts to help them through different types of assistance like financial support (disturbance fees and allowances), people's actual participation in designing a better place seemed to be overlooked and the whole process of developing a dam was monopolized. Moreover, the potential threats these changes could give these people were taken for granted by the project proponents in partnership including at the municipal level where even they were not consulted rather were used to be part of the blame. Livelihood, for example, was provided, but it failed for reasons like mismanagement, and other political reasons that had something to do with fund and human resources management. Do these livelihood projects really represent what the people had been wanting for so long now? It remains questionable up to now. Request for job, as part of my fieldwork, was the request of the majority of the people living in the chosen resettlement sites every time I go there. Their lives were disrupted turning them to cash economy from sustainable living make their lives even more difficult such as in paying for their water and electricity bills, even a very small amount was really very difficult for

them to secure. They have no money and no alternatives provided to them up to now that led some of them go up to the mountains around them and cut trees despite restrictions and potential threats of global warming, soil, erosion and climate change. Their lives seemed to be more of great danger due to environmental threats aside from the health implications of their current situation. They have to feed their children. Aside from this, the way they access health services, the way their respective barangays respond to emergency cases especially with regard to pregnant women and children, absence of stronger social networks from within and outside these resettlement sites were not even reliable but their weaknesses. So, there is a big constraint for them to survive and develop their capabilities and for them to empower themselves. These dam-affected families were left with no better choices but to survive on their own ways of living regardless of disruptions, threats and insecurities they experience as no one else they could actually rely. Their lives were not made easy and they have to do their best to survive and to feed their families. They perceived their lives poor and not abundant like before as what majority of them said and dreamed of going back to their “old” ways.

The lives of people in the resettlement sites mentioned above have been turned into a survival and tend to disregard the importance of the environmental preservation. Of course failures of the state to respond to their concerns are clearly obvious.

Seeing people how they live their lives was a very huge opportunity for me to pursue this study. Of course, the role of the Mori Grant was indeed a big help in order to see their situations in a human security perspective.

Thank you very much to Taikichiro Mori for providing me this great opportunity.