IM4DC

Action Research Report

SUMMARY

Researcher:
Mai Vo – PhD candidate

School/Centre:
Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining

University/Institutions:
Sustainable Mineral Institute
The University of Queensland

Key themes:
Governance and Regulation
Community and Environmental Sustainability

Key countries:
Vietnam

Completion:
March 2014

Research aims:
The overarching aim of this project was to improve the implementation and governance processes of resettlement due to mining, through enhancing knowledge, practice and policy development in Vietnam. This was achieved through field visits to conduct:

- Semi-structured interviews
- Focus group discussions
- Workshops

For further information on this action research:
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Paper:
Vo, M. and Brereton, D. (2014). Involuntary Resettlement in the Extractive Industries: Some Lessons from Vietnam. *In:* Governance of Extractive Industries in Southeast Asia: Any Regional Framework for ASEAN. ASEAN Study Centre for the University of Indonesia and the Institute of Essential Services Reform

Improving Outcomes for Government-managed Resettlement in Vietnam

This PhD research identified the institutional challenges and limitations of government-managed resettlement in Vietnam, based on the results of fieldwork carried out in a mine-induced resettlement project underway in Central Vietnam, the Thach Khe Iron Ore mine. The key findings were reviewed and examined through intensive engagement with multiple stakeholder groups, with the aim of proposing practical recommendations for improving the outcomes of government-managed resettlement in Vietnam. A total of 55 stakeholders participated in the research, through interviews, focus group discussions and three workshops; one with government officials at province and district level, one with representatives from local authorities, the mining company and representatives of affected people, and a community forum.

The key findings were:

- Unclear and confusing responsibilities
- An inadequate representative structure
- A lack of collaboration between government agencies
- A lack of capacity and resources in government, particularly at the local level where responsibility for implementation sits
- Marginalisation of the company and a general lack of capacity
- Failure to ensure, prior to project approval, that funds were available to cover the costs of resettlement
- Poor communication processes
- An absence of external monitoring and oversight

Recommendations for improving the outcomes of government-managed resettlement:

- *Process standardisation:* The Vietnamese government should develop a National Resettlement Policy and framework, taking into account the follow aspects:
  - The design of development projects to minimise involuntary resettlement
  - The enhancement, or at least protection, of livelihoods of affected people
  - The minimisation and full compensation of economic and asset losses
  - The economic and social assistance provided to affected people
  - Compulsory resettlement planning to be an integral part of the project design
  - Involvement of key actors in all stages of the project cycle of resettlement
  - Public participation and consultation process to be integral part of resettlement
  - All civil works should start only after compensation payments completed
- *Organisational Human Resources:* Agencies responsible for resettlement activities should be clearly defined and assigned at both national and local levels
- *Public participation in the resettlement process:* Affected people and communities should be actively involved and consulted during the resettlement process and proper approaches for public participation should be clearly stated in the regulatory policy and framework in Vietnam

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