

Joint Statement
National Consultation Workshop on Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam- 400MW
31 May 2001

We, 68 representatives including 29 females, of indigenous people living along Sesan, Srepok and Sekong rivers, represent more than 500 families from Stung Treng province (6 communes and 18 villages) and from Ratanakiri province (6 districts, 21 communes and 74 villages), who have been seriously and negatively affected by the development of the Yali Falls Hydropower Dam in Vietnam. Given the fact that the construction of the 400 megawatt Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam on the Sesan River in Stung Treng province is to be started in the coming days, today, we, come together again to express our concerns and propose our requests to the Government of Cambodia, as well as to the private companies, for their consideration into their planning related to the development of Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam. The concerns and requests are as follows:

1. Review the quality of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (EIA) report related to the Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam. The report is not accepted by the directly and indirectly affected communities and the compensation is not appropriate:
 - Review the impact mitigation measures defined in the environmental and social impact report.
 - The company has not yet conducted any studies on the indirectly affected communities living downstream and upstream of the dam (Sesan and Srepok rivers) and no appropriate compensation has been introduced.
 - If the Lower Sesan 2 Dam is developed, the affected communities would face the following issues:
 - ✓ Boat travel will be blocked and lost;
 - ✓ Income made of fishing will be lost;
 - ✓ Flooding will occur;
 - ✓ Community property will be lost;
 - ✓ Biodiversity will be lost;
 - ✓ Natural vegetables along the rivers will be lost;
 - ✓ Conflicts will occur due to the grabbing of agricultural, farming and housing land areas;
 - ✓ Children's schooling will be affected;
 - ✓ Water quality will be destroyed and the use of the river water will affect human and animal health, especially the health of women and children (during the construction period and operation of the dam in the first 5 years);
 - ✓ Psychological effects on communities (the noisiness of the construction activities or fear that the dam may break)
 - ✓ Downstream of the rivers will dry and fish habitats will be destroyed and fish migration will be banned and some fish species, like the Pas-e-y and Pawa will be lost;
 - ✓ An earthquake could occur in the reservoir area and riverbanks may slide;
 - ✓ Compensation policy is not clearly defined (especially for farming land, homes and housing land, fruit trees, etc.)
 - ✓ Local and ancestral culture and traditions of indigenous communities will be lost.
 - For the people living in Srekor 1 and Srekor 2 villagers, only 10 to 15 hectares of the 1,2038 hectares of land provided to 300 families is suitable for farming.
 - The company has not organized any meetings with affected communities to discuss resettlement.

- The full EIA report does not clearly specify the sizes of land areas provided for agricultural farming, housing, spiritual areas, plantations, and forests as natural resources necessary for traditional daily living.
 - Local and ancestral culture and traditions of indigenous communities will be lost.
2. To mitigate the above mentioned impacts, we, propose the following requests:
- To the private companies:
 - Re-conduct the Environmental Impact Assessment to include indirectly affected communities living downstream and upstream of Sesan and Srepok rivers.
 - If the assessment finds that the communities are affected, the companies should take measures to solve the issues before the construction starts.
 - Water supplies, infrastructure, schools, health centers, roads, bridges and latrines must be provided.
 - Food must be adequately provided during the resettlement process.
 - The companies should provide life and property insurance certificates to the communities living downstream of the dam.
 - The companies should provide transportation services for the communities during the resettlement process, moving from the old places to the new resettlement areas.
 - The companies should open the dam's gates to allow natural water flows during fishery seasons.
 - The companies should provide electricity to the communities living along the rivers free of charge for 10 years.
 - The compensation cost must be at the market price and the compensation should be paid before construction of the dam starts.
 - **The Environmental Impact Assessment should be re-conducted and the report should be corrected as some villages are not mentioned in the current report (page 42: farming land areas are organized only in four villages namely Kbal Romeas, Sresronok, Chrob and Srekor.)**
 - The companies and the Ministry of Economy and Finance as well as relevant parties should disseminate the compensation policy to the public.
 - The companies should provide non-interest credit for livelihood rehabilitation to the communities.
 - To the Government:
 - The Government should reconsider the decision about the construction of the Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam as it will impact communities living upstream and downstream of the dam.
 - The Government should identify possible options not to develop hydropower dams along the rivers, but consider alternative hydro options along creeks, so that serious impacts on communities can be avoided.
 - Our communities need development which does not destroy the river's resources, as they are necessary for our lives and animals.
 - The Government should strengthen the enforcement of human rights laws, especially the rights of indigenous people.
 - The Government should consider learning from the experiences of other countries regarding the dam's impacts and adapt it to the Cambodian context.
 - The communities request to decide the selection of resettlement areas by themselves.
 - The Government should establish a community-based information network to disseminate information related to the opening of the dam.

- The Government should involve affected communities in all activities of the compensation committee.
 - The Government and donors should take the community requests into consideration for solving problems.
 - The Government should stop any development project which negatively affects the livelihoods of its citizens.
- To relevant stakeholders:
- Local authorities and relevant parties largely and widely disseminate the information about the negative and positive impacts caused by development projects to communities.
 - Relevant parties, before approving any development project, should conduct site visits of the communities that will be impacted.
 - Relevant parties shall cooperate with the communities before the construction of the hydropower dams is started
 - Relevant parties shall monitor the impacts and compensation process.
 - Relevant institutions and departments should provide agricultural, technical support and social services to the communities so that they will be able to rehabilitate their livelihoods.
 - A monitoring committee on compensation should be established.
 - A monitoring committee on the real livelihoods (infrastructure, careers, health, education, livelihood and difficulties) of citizens should be established and should conduct regular monitoring of the resettlement areas.

We, strongly request that all of our proposed concerns and requests listed above be taken into consideration by the Government, private companies, and relevant parties and that they be addressed favorably.

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