

## **Resettlement at the Bhadra Tiger Reserve**

### Positive impacts of Bhadra resettlement

- (1) elimination of livestock depredation and crop damage
- (2) good quality agricultural land with good irrigation facilities; opportunities for crop diversification
- (3) good standard of education and healthcare
- (4) access to markets

### Apprehensions of resettled families

- (1) stronger money economy
- (2) limited access to firewood
- (3) limited grazing areas and fodder, leading to sale of livestock
- (4) cultural adjustments
- (5) limited plot size
- (6) Non-access to NTFP (how significant was the collection & sale of NTFPs in terms of contribution to household incomes?)

Overall, the picture looks rosy; long-term assessment required to judge extent of success or otherwise.

- land tenure security & livelihood guarantee are the two main areas of concern for most families who are to be resettled (in this respect, this resettlement process recognized those with legal land rights as well as those officially “landless”)
- negotiations between the Forest Department and villages who are to be resettled need to be carried out within an atmosphere of cordiality, given the hostility that has come to exist between the FD and most communities within PAs. Trust-building measures were undertaken by the FD prior to the resettlement process, to repair previous schisms.
- Resettlement needs multiple agencies to monitor and coordinate the entire process- the Forest Department, the Revenue Department, voluntary organizations, Project Tiger authorities and the communities involved
- Involvement of voluntary agencies especially important, bodies which can act as independent mediators and represent concerns of communities as well as resolve tensions which may arise during the course of the process.
- Agencies involved in the relocation exercise must be sympathetic to the needs of communities and not look at it merely as a legal process which can be resolved in monetary terms. Voluntary, consensus-driven relocation has a better chance of being successful.
- Transition of livelihood – in Bhadra’s case, pre and post relocation – primarily agrarian , but within contexts where the shift is more drastic, adequate groundwork needs to be done.
- Time lag between notification and implementation needs to be reduced, as this is often the period of uncertainty which exacerbates conflict between

- enforcers and communities, given the ambiguity over resource usage and the denial of developmental facilities to notified areas.
- The relocation process does not end simply by transferring people to a new location. Agencies must work in tandem with communities post-relocation; need careful monitoring to sustain the quality of life effected by relocation. What is the follow-up action at Bhadra resettlement colonies to ensure this?
  - Even though the Bhadra resettlement was imaginative compared to some of the other resettlement exercises carried out or proposed to be carried out, the costs were much higher than stipulated norms. (The TTF puts conservative estimates at 4.02 lakh (excluding land costs) / 8.3 lakh(including land acquisition costs) per family as against the stipulated 1 lakh(exclusive of land allocation) / more money has been spent in relocating 439 families in Bhadra than total 2904 families relocated from all the PAs in the country so far) This calls for an increase in fund allocation. Already the costs are high (Govt estimates for relocating all people from all PAs stand at Rs 11000 crore). This raises questions about the viability of relocating 'all' people. Perhaps discretion needs to be shown – only those in core areas, critical tiger habitats and places of conservation importance (TTF recommendations)
  - Need to weigh the financial viability of relocation against conservation benefits.
  - Conservation benefits in Bhadra? Monitoring? Results? (given that the ecological influence of all these families comprised 11% of the total area of the Sanctuary)

(Resettlement areas

M C Halli (close to Bhadravati and Tarikeri)

Kelaguru (close to Mudigere and Chikmagalur) (Shimoga-Bangalore Highway)