

Reducing Relocation Risks

Workshop Report

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FLACSO, Quito, Ecuador

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Submitted by

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About the Project

The project Reducing Resettlement & Relocation Risks in Urban Areas examines the various social and economic implications of climate-risk related resettlement and relocation policies in cities across three continents. It seeks to understand the political, economic and institutional contexts in which resettlement takes place; the costs and benefits of resettlement from both the government and individual's perspective; and how resettlement impacts people's well-being and resilience over different time frames. The research compares approaches and identify which policies and practices for climate-related resettlement deliver the most beneficial outcomes.

Research for the project was carried out in urban centres in Uganda, India, Colombia, Mexico and Peru by The Bartlett Development Planning Unit (DPU) at UCL, Makerere University, the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), and the Latin American Social Science Faculty (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO)).

Conceptual Background

Relocation & resettlement initiatives undertaken by governments and other actors are becoming more widespread as a disaster risk management strategy in urban areas. However, relocation and resettlement is highly contested as a result of variable social and economic outcomes for the people who are resettled or evicted. The current paradigm seems to lack recognition of the need to ground resettlement and relocation programmes within a wider agenda aimed at improving structural and systemic forms of disadvantage and vulnerability.

Objective of the Workshop

This event set out to challenge the view that relocation and resettlement, as frequently implemented, are effective methods of risk reduction. It aimed to examine the many ways in which risk is continued and/or new risk created through existing policies and practices of resettlement and relocation. It examined the measures needed to increase the effectiveness of policies and practices for risk reduction and within a development framework.

Agenda

Friday 14 October	
Timings	Sessions /Activities
8:30-9:00	Arrival and Tea/Coffee
9:00-9:40	Introduction: Allan Lavell (Secretary General's Office, FLACSO) Opening Addresses <ul style="list-style-type: none">Emily Wilkinson (Climate and Development Knowledge Network-CDKN)Juan Ponce (Director of FLACSO, Ecuador) Reducing Relocation Risk Programme overview: Cassidy Johnson (DPU-University College London)
9:40-9:55	Urbanism and urban change in Latin America: the context for Resettlement and Relocation: Fernando Carrion (FLACSO, Quito, Ecuador)

9:55-10:10	Contextualizing risk and resettlement - Allan Lavell
10.10 - 11.10	<p>Panel discussion 1: How current policy is influencing relocation and resettlement from risk areas</p> <p>Chair: Colin Marx (DPU-University College London)</p> <p>Discussant: Anthony Oliver-Smith (University of Florida, Gainesville)</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angel Chavez (FLACSO) (Latin America context) • Garima Jain (Indian Institute for Human Settlements-IIHS) (India context) • Shuaib Lwasa (Makerere University, Uganda) (Uganda and Africa context)
11:10-11:30	BREAK
11.30-12.30	<p>Panel discussion 2: Risk as opportunity: why people live or decide to continue living in areas exposed to hazards and disasters</p> <p>Chair: Garima Jain</p> <p>Discussant: Pedro Ferradas (Manager of Disaster Risk Management at Practical Action, Lima)</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Mansilla (FLACSO) • Teja Malladi (Indian Institute for Human Settlements- IIHS) • Colin Marx (DPU-University College London)
12.30-13.30	LUNCH
13:30-14:30	<p>Panel discussion 3: What can be done to avoid the need for resettlement? Preventative measures to address urban growth</p> <p>Chair: Allan Lavell</p> <p>Discussant: Anthony Oliver-Smith</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Pilar Perez (Secretary of Planning for Manizales City, Colombia) • Swastik Harish (Indian Institute for Human Settlements-IIHS) • Shuaib Lwasa
14.30-15:45	<p>Stakeholder Group Discussions</p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy frameworks and legalities, what is needed for resettlement and relocation • How to address underlying factors driving people to live and stay in risk areas • Avoiding the need for resettlement: preventative measures to address urban growth
15:45-16.15	BREAK
16.15-17.00	<p>Plenary: seeing resettlement and relocation within the larger context of managing urban risks and social vulnerability</p> <p>Chair: Elizabeth Mansilla</p>
17.30-	Cocktail party hosted at FLACSO

19:30	
Saturday 15 October	
Timings	Sessions/Activities
8.30-9.00	Arrivals and Tea/Coffee
9.00-10.30	<p>Panel Discussion 4: Assessing resettlement as an option for disaster risk management: methodologies and processes</p> <p>Chair: Cassidy Johnson Discussant: Alonso Brenes (FLACSO, Secretary General's Office) Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India - Amir Bazaz (Indian Institute for Human Settlements-IIHS) • Peru - Cesar Carrillo • Tanzania - Tim Ndezi (Center for Community Initiatives, Tanzania) • Tanzania - Mayor Abdallah Jafari Chaurembo • Ghana - Janet Adu (Ghana Federation of the Urban Poor) • Ghana - Abu Haruna (Ghana Federation of the Urban Poor) • Uganda - Colin Marx
10:30-11.00	BREAK
11.00-12:00	<p>Panel discussion 5: Contextualizing Relocation from Risk Areas within the New Urban Agenda</p> <p>Chair: Maria Pilar Perez Discussant: Shuaib Lwasa Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily Wilkinson • Colin Marx • Allan Lavell • Esteban Leon (UN-Habitat)
12.00-13.00	LUNCH
13.00-14.15	<p>Stakeholder Group Discussions</p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing minimum conditions for resettlement • Inter-sectoral collaboration and financing • Implementing The New Urban Agenda
14:15-15:00	<p>Plenary: enhancing cooperation, methodologies and processes of resettlement and relocation</p> <p>Chair: Cassidy Johnson</p>
15:00-15:30	BREAK
15:30-16:30	<p>Closing remarks: Learning and thoughts for the future</p> <p>Chair: Allan Lavell</p>

Session Summaries

The two days of the workshop were structured around a series of panel discussions, breakout groups and plenary sessions. Panels were translated in both English and Spanish and were attended by all participants, while parallel breakout groups for each topic were conducted in English and Spanish, enabling participants to choose the topic of most interest to them and to discuss ideas and issues raised in the panel presentations. Breakout sessions were followed on both days by a plenary feedback session with all participants, in which a rapporteur from each breakout group related their key discussion points to the whole group.

Opening addresses

The workshop was opened with presentations from four stakeholders in the project 'Reducing Relocation & Resettlement Risks in Urban Areas'. The first of these was Professor Allan Lavell, Coordinator of the Social Studies in Disasters Programme at the General Secretariat of FLACSO in Costa Rica and a co-investigator and lead on the Latin American region for the project, who outlined the background and overarching themes in the research including the need to integrate a development perspective into R&R. Next, Dr Emily Wilkinson from the Climate Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), the funding organisation for the project, spoke about the reasons CDKN found the research relevant and important at the present moment. Dr Juan Ponce, Director of FLACSO-Ecuador, described his reasons for supporting FLACSO's involvement in the project. Finally, Dr Cassidy Johnson, the Principle Investigator and lead on Uganda for the project, gave an overview of the workshop programme and intended outcomes.

Panels

Over the two days of the workshop, a series of panel discussions with project team members and external experts addressed key topics relating to risk and R&R. During each session, panellists individually presented their views on the topic, followed by a plenary discussion led by the panel's chair. Finally, a discussant synthesized the session and highlighted key points. Key themes emerging from each panel are listed below.

1. How current policy is influencing relocation and resettlement from risk areas: Existing policy and legal contexts in the countries and what this is bringing in terms of outcomes. What needs to be done and by whom.

Panellists raised the issue of a lack of embedded learning over time in policy relating to risk, and the need to go beyond guidelines and question assumptions to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach to R&R.

2. Risk as opportunity: why people live or decide to continue living in areas exposed to hazards and disasters

Panellists discussed the relationship between cost, risk and value, and the role of local authorities in mediating these values.

3. What can be done to avoid the need for resettlement? Preventative measures to address urban growth

Panellists explained how risk is embedded in urban growth, and how this both leads to and stems from fragmented governance and the degradation of cities over time.

4. Assessing resettlement as an option for disaster risk management: methodologies and processes

Panellists described how disaster risk management is a structural problem, emphasised the centrality of livelihoods and the quality of jobs in R&R initiatives, and referenced critical levers for escaping the poverty trap.

5. Contextualising relocation from risk areas within the New Urban Agenda. How are concerns for resettlement reflected, or not, in the new urban agenda and what this means for practice in cities

Panellists discussed the role of UN Habitat in creating the Habitat III agenda, and explained the importance of focusing on equity and poverty in addressing risk in the longer term.

Stakeholder group discussions

The stakeholder breakout sessions were self-selecting groups on a series of themes with associated focus questions, each of which was conducted separately in Spanish and in English. There were three sessions (in each language) on each day. Each session had a chair leading the discussion and a rapporteur taking notes and reporting back to the whole group during the plenary session that followed. Each group contained between 6 and 10 participants. Questions posed as well as talking points synthesised from each rapporteur's presentation during the relevant plenary session are listed below.

Plenary: seeing resettlement and relocation within the larger context of managing urban risks and social vulnerability

Group 1 - Policy frameworks and legalities, what is needed for resettlement and relocation

Main question:

- What did the discussion bring up in relation to policies and frameworks?
- What did the presentations miss?

Follow-up questions:

- When are policy frameworks and legalities needed?
 - What should policies and legalities look like?
 - Who best to do it?
1. The way policies are implemented, rather than the policies themselves, needs further consideration. Who are the right actors? What is the role of coordination mechanisms? Who should be accountable for undertaking the risk as well as carrying out actions?
 2. It should not be a disciplinary or sectoral approach; relocation needs to be formulated as a development issue. It should consider people's wellbeing and not be limited just to a housing or disaster risk management issue. Focus should be on development planning and civil protection.

3. Underlying factors such as poverty need to be considered in order to improve the conditions of people at risk.
4. There are structural conventional factors that condition the types of growth seen in urban settings. Social participation is a determining factor. However, the types of social participation seen today are more a simulation than a reality; people may consider that they have social participation but new ways of doing social inclusion and favouring poor groups are necessary.
5. There is need for intermediate alternative solutions.
6. More transparency is needed in R&R processes, especially regarding land use.

Group 2 - How to address the underlying factors driving people to live and stay in risk areas

Main question:

- What did the presentations bring up in relation to how to address the underlying factors that are driving people to live and stay in risk areas? What are the keys issues for you and what was missed?

Follow-up questions:

- What are the essential conditions for resettlement and relocation from risk areas?
1. Underlying factors feeding into decisions: social characteristics; length of time in a community. Choice is really an illusion. What is framed as choice might be more complicated; there are many social factors which may be invisible or un-recognised that affect community and individual decision-making e.g. family or marriage pressure, addiction etc.
 2. Economic factors: concentration of resources in particular cities affects growth trajectory and limits equal. Also within settlements, range of access to resources (not all slum dwellers are poor).
 3. Growth and how inequality can be better addressed. Recognise the formality 'spectrum', the processes of formalization and 'informalization', and the role of these processes in governance and decision-making.
 4. Language and communication have important outcomes for decision-making and policy.
 5. What can stakeholders do to adjust inequality? Is it a process of valuing that goes into decision-making processes?

Group 3 - Avoiding the need for resettlement: preventative measures to address to urban growth

Main question:

- What did the presentations bring up in relation to how to avoid the need for resettlement? What are the keys issues for you and what was missed?

Follow up question

- What kinds of alternative measures are possible?
1. Resettlement must begin with comprehensive planning for risks. Planning and decision-making frameworks must be understood in order to prevent future risk situations from recurring. There is a need for greater risk assessment and strategizing to improve R&R programmes. Populations that are already at risk need improvements to the risk conditions that are there.
 2. National legislations are very important; territorial planning should have a good assessment and a good study.

3. How to move populations must be taken into account in risk assessments and planning.
4. Consideration must be given as to the different alternatives available if resettlement is not an option. Information and empowerment can help the people to contribute alternatives and participate in government decision-making.
5. More affordable land is an important solution for preventing future need for R&R.
6. People need to be involved in the earliest stages of R&R projects. The case of Iquitos, Peru showed that without involvement of the people, results will not be beneficial. However, this case should be viewed not as a failure, but as a result with flexibility.

Plenary: enhancing cooperation, methodologies and processes of resettlement and relocation

Group 4 - Establishing minimum conditions for resettlement

Main questions:

- What did the presentations bring up in relation to ways of assessing whether resettlement is an option for disaster risk management? What are the key issues for you and what was missed?
 - What are the minimum conditions for resettlement?
1. Set up guidelines for arriving at the decision. These need to be explored by the government and the community.
 2. Stakeholders and relevant actors need to be mapped and roles identified. There must be an empowered representative team for both moving and host communities.
 3. Enable access to information and public participation.
 4. Access to justice.
 5. Evaluate the pros and cons of each model. There should be an information portal available to allow people to arrive at an informed decision. Information needs to be reasonable and understandable.
 6. There should be a project period and a continuous process until the communities feel empowered.
 7. An acceptable level of social and cultural values must be included.
 8. Political agendas complicate resettlement conditions; there must be training for the political sector.

Group 5 - Inter-sectoral collaboration and financing

Main question:

- What kinds of inter-sectoral collaboration is needed? Are there elements of inter-sectoral collaboration that have not yet been raised here?
 - What is needed in terms of financing resettlement and relocation?
1. There is a need for scientific studies taking into account the values of the people subject to R&R. Studies need to cover the participatory process, final conditions of the resettlement, and must include proposals for guaranteeing standards of living conditions in R&R sites.
 2. R&R sites need to have conflict resolution built in during planning. Again, this must be participatory and include both those being resettled and those already located in/near the resettlement site.
 3. Sufficient financial resources must be guaranteed and must be available immediately. These can include private initiatives and soft credits from the people that will use the new settlement.

Group 6 - Implementing the new urban agenda

Main question:

- What are the key issues for you raised in the discussion about how concerns for resettlement are reflected in the new urban agenda? What was missing?
1. There is a problem of using studies or analysis that do not exist.
 2. There is a need for greater public control and a system to hold authorities accountable for their actions. Political decisions must be made visible so the public can understand what is being addressed and achieved.
 3. In many countries high risks already exist, therefore improvement of urban planning and concrete ideas of how to advance with that agenda are needed. Cultural exchanges could be a way to benefit from others' experiences.
 4. There needs to be a network of governance, to enable decision-makers to find solutions through inter-institutional processes. Sometimes the lines are blurred between the problems of urban planning and the solutions.
 5. The New Urban Agenda is facing a communication challenge. Lots of follow-up meetings planned after this week, we have to have a plan to influence what needs to happen.
 6. National governments need to be more specific in their actions about how to handle evictions.

Closing remarks: learning and thoughts for the future

To close the workshop, selected invitees reflected on the learning from the workshop and put forward suggestions for future directions for relocation risk research and policy. Speakers included representatives from NGOs including the Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI) in Tanzania and Slum and Shack Dwellers International (SDI) Ghana, government representatives associated with the Belen Project in Peru and a representative from CDKN.

Follow-up interviews with Janet Adu and Abu Haruna, members of the SDI Ghana Federation of the Urban Poor indicated the need for community upgrading in slums and informal settlements by supporting systems already established for business, education and childrearing. They indicated that the community, government and NGOs should work together to achieve this, based on a system of community mapping and profiling to indicate priorities for community development. According to the interviewees, the value of the Reducing Relocation Risks workshop was to offer them a platform to articulate issues relating to eviction and to provide opportunities for contact with those working on issues facing the urban poor.

Relocation should thus be seen as a last option: even in the limited cases where relocation has been judged a success, the measures have often not included the perspectives of those subject to the relocations. Slum dwellers subject to relocations may therefore see the process as a land grab tool that increases urban poverty, trapping its subjects in a cycle of poverty and dislocation and preventing achievement of secure tenure.

"It is important for us to have inclusive processes where everyone can contribute to the discussion and to be part of the conversation around the New Urban Agenda."

Abu Haruna, Ghana Federation of the Urban Poor



