



NAVIGATING GENDER-INCLUSIVE RESETTLEMENT

The Experience of the Song Bung 4
Hydropower Project in Viet Nam

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This case study report is based on findings from a special gender mission, which involved meeting people from villages in Viet Nam (Pa Dhi, Pa Pang, Pa Rum A, Pa Rum B, and Thon 2) affected by the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project (SB4). The mission was led by Samantha Hung, senior social development (gender) specialist, Regional and Sustainable Development Department with Monawar Sultana (former Asian Development Bank [ADB] staff and project consultant), accompanied by Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board (SB4HPMDB) staff Tran Ngoc Ha (vice manager, Environment and Resettlement Division) and Nguyen Ngoc Boi (staff, Environment and Resettlement Division). Thanks are due to the following ADB staff peer reviewers from various departments who provided valuable comments in finalizing the report: Shireen Lateef, Michiko Suga, Uzma Hoque, Scott Ferguson, and Ruwani Jayewardene.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
CDTA	-	capacity development technical assistance
DMS	-	detailed measurement survey
EVN	-	Viet Nam Electricity
GAP	-	gender action plan
JFPR	-	Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction
PoE	-	panel of experts
REMDP	-	Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan
RMIU	-	Resettlement Management Implementation Unit
SB4	-	Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project
SB4HPMB	-	Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board
SDP	-	site development plan
SMP	-	social management plan
VRDG	-	village resettlement development group

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of December 2013)

Currency Unit	-	dong (D)
D1.00	=	\$0.000047
\$1.00	=	D21,085.00



The location for construction of the Song Bung 4 dam.

I

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

A. Overview of the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project

The Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project (SB4)¹ was the first hydropower project in Viet Nam to receive financing from a multilateral financial institution.² The project aims to contribute toward meeting the rapidly growing demand for electricity by the population of Viet Nam, and to help reduce dependency on fossil fuels and reduce associated greenhouse gas emissions. The Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board (SB4HPMB) is implementing the project under the oversight of Viet Nam Electricity (EVN) as the executing agency. Project construction commenced in September 2010, followed by closure of the river and diversion of flows in January 2012, with impoundment and inundation of the reservoir scheduled for August 2014. In addition to power generation, SB4 will improve accessibility of the population to infrastructure facilities in this previously remote area. It is well recognized that projects of this nature can have

a negative impact on the well-being of project-affected people if not well managed in a proactive manner and with a long-term view. Therefore, significant environmental and social impacts have been carefully considered and are being managed in a socially inclusive and participatory manner.

SB4's comprehensive approach to resettlement can serve as a leading example for future hydropower and other large infrastructure projects in Viet Nam and the wider region in situations where resettlement is unavoidable. In particular, SB4 offers good practice and lessons learned from its approach to proactively advancing gender equality through implementation of a complex resettlement and livelihood restoration process for indigenous and ethnic minorities. In addition, SB4 brings emerging social benefits that include better communication, health, education, and livelihood opportunities to affected ethnic minorities, which to date have remained extremely isolated from economic and social development.

¹ ADB. 2008. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project*. Manila.

² The project was approved on 26 June 2008 for \$196 million and became effective on 16 January 2009. It consists of the construction of a 156-megawatt hydropower plant in the Vu Gia–Thu Bon river basin in Nam Giang District of Quang Nam Province in Central Viet Nam. It involves building a 110-meter (m) high concrete dam with a crest length of 367 m across the Song Bung River, so that the dam forms a reservoir with a surface area of 15.8 square kilometers at full supply level of 222.5 m above sea level. Water from the reservoir will be conveyed through a 3.2 kilometer (km) tunnel to a power station, and released along a canal to the Song Bung River 5 km downstream.

B. The Importance of Gender-Responsive Resettlement Approaches

Hydropower projects with large reservoirs, by their very nature, often involve significant resettlement impacts. If social risks are not managed, they can lead to impoverishment and loss of social and cultural identity. Evaluations of previous hydropower projects supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in its other developing member countries have identified challenges with project planning and implementation due to a range of factors, including weak public participation and lack of attention to rehabilitation and livelihood restoration, especially of women.³

In all situations of social change, project-affected persons are differentially impacted, and gender is an important factor in determining differential impact. The process of economic and social dislocation can often exacerbate existing gender inequalities. Traditionally, resettlement planning focuses on the household unit and hence may ignore intra-household power dynamics and societal biases that may preclude women from receiving equal entitlements to compensation and other assistance. For example, in many societies, women do not enjoy equal property rights, have lower education, experience more restricted mobility, and carry more responsibility for basic family needs, compared with men.

Viet Nam has strong government legislation and policies for enhancing gender equality at national and sectoral levels,⁴ which are intended to flow down to local government. Despite good policies, implementation and adherence to gender equality laws and policy frameworks remain weak. This is particularly evident in more remote areas, where the dynamics of gender relations intersect with traditional culture, beliefs, and practices, and gender inequality is exacerbated by prevailing high incidence of poverty.

At the time of SB4's project design, Viet Nam's resettlement policy and laws did not include any specific provision for women and did not direct specific attention to gender concerns, except for a requirement to include job creation, especially for women, in restoration programs.⁵ However, in recognition of the importance of gender-responsive resettlement approaches, during preparation of the project's mitigation plans, extensive consultations were undertaken and alternative mitigation options for women were explored with project-affected communities in the reservoir area, as well as upstream and downstream river areas and stretches. SB4 adopted gender mainstreaming as a key approach to resettlement and rehabilitation planning and implementation, in part guided by ADB's *Gender and Resettlement Checklist*.⁶

³ See, e.g., ADB. 2002. *Study of Large Dams and Recommended Practices*. Manila.

⁴ E.g., National Strategy for the Advancement of Women, Decision No. 19/2002/QĐ-TTg, January 2002; 2006 Law on Gender Equality, Law No. 73/2006/QH11, adopted by the National Assembly 29 November 2006; Gender Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development, approved 14 July 2005; National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011–2020, approved by Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung through Decision 2351/QĐ-TTg 24 December 2012.

⁵ Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Gender Action Plan. January 2007. para 1.2.1.5.

⁶ ADB. 2003. *Gender and Resettlement Checklist*. Manila.

C. Background: Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Affected People

Nam Giang District borders the Lao People's Democratic Republic and is inhabited by a majority (56%) of people belonging to the Co Tu ethnic minority, 70% of whom were below the national poverty line at the time of the pre-project poverty assessment. The project directly affects five communes:⁷ Ta Bhing, Ca Dy, Thanh My, Cha Val, and Zuoih in Nam Giang District, Quang Nam Province.

1. Reservoir-Inundated Villages

The SB4 reservoir will inundate four Co Tu villages⁸—Thon 2, Pa Dhi, Pa Rum A, and Pa Rum B—resulting in the relocation of 224 mainly Co Tu households (total population of approximately 1,200) in Zuoih Commune, one of the most remote and mountainous communes in Nam Giang District. Pa Pang will be a host village for Thon 2

and hence some Pa Pang households will also be compensated for land that needs to be acquired to accommodate incoming affected people from Thon 2. The reservoir will also flood the upland agricultural lands of 52 Co Tu households in two other villages in Ta Bhing Commune (Pa Toi and Vinh), who will lose more than 10% of their upland cropland and grazing land.

As shown in Table 1, a large proportion of the population (approximately 45%) in the four villages to be inundated is below 18 years, with a low education level. Common health problems are respiratory infections, as well as influenza, pneumonia, bronchitis, and diarrhea, and malaria in the rainy season. Co Tu people are largely dependent on subsistence farming, non-timber forest products, and river fishery. Food shortages are common, and a socioeconomic survey of the affected villages found that 60% of households in Pa Rum B and 40% in Pa Rum A did not have sufficient rice in the preceding year, and relied on a staple of rice and cassava.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Affected Persons

Affected Village	Total Population	Women	Men	No. of Households Headed by Women	No. of Girls under 18 Years of Age	No. of Boys under 18 Years of Age
Pa Dhi	274	149	125	6	72	49
Pa Pang (host village)	137	72	65	3	39	38
Pa Rum A	205	104	101	3	54	37
Pa Rum B	281	151	130	6	62	47
Thon 2	247	119	128	9	48	64
Total	1,144	595	549	27	275	235

Source: Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan; verified by Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board.

⁷ A commune is a third-level administrative subdivision of local government, under the province (first level) and the district (second level). Each commune comprises several wards, which is the lowest administrative structure.

⁸ Inundation of the reservoir is scheduled to take place in August 2014.

2. Project Lands

Land acquisition due to project construction (dam site and transmission line) is affecting people from 15 villages in three communes (Ta Bhing, Ca Dy, and Thanh My), with most of the land acquisition affecting nine villages. Both agricultural land and forest lands will be acquired. About 31 households will lose more than 10% of their productive assets due to acquisition of agricultural land in Ta Bhing Commune. Villages affected by transmission lines⁹ are located along Highway 14D and the Ho Chi Minh Trail, areas that are accessible year-round, meaning that the ethnic minority population already interacts with the majority Kinh people on a regular basis.

3. Downstream and Upstream Villages

An estimated additional 3,000 Kinh households in 11 communes in neighboring Dai Loc District will have their livelihoods affected by the expected reduction in fish supply in the Song Bung River, due to changes in water flow and aquatic ecology in the river. One village in Nam Giang District with 39 Co Tu households will similarly be affected. Several upstream Co Tu villages may be affected by the loss of migratory fish due to the barrier effect of the dam. The majority of these downstream households had already been impacted by several other hydropower project dams prior to SB4, but SB4 is the first project in the area to proactively address the needs of affected households downstream.

D. Prevailing Gender Issues and Situation of Co Tu Minority Women

The ethnic minority culture, customary legal system, and subsistence economy define the lives of Co Tu women, including their place, role, daily tasks, life options, and overall lower relative status compared to men. Co Tu culture is a patrilineal and patrilocal system. Villages are based on kinship along the male lineage and girls tend to marry within their home village or another nearby Co Tu village. As close kin marriages are common, most families in a village are somehow related to each other. Women and girls often marry young, between 12 and 20 years, compared to 15 years and above for men and boys.

In Co Tu affected villages, many girls traditionally marry early at the age of 15, which is technically illegal and places adolescent girls in a vulnerable position. Vietnamese law states that the minimum respective legal age for marriage is 18 years for women and 20 years for men.¹⁰ Mothers-in-law play an important role in guiding young wives in their married roles and in aiding at childbirth. Marriages are both arranged by parents and self-driven by couples. Premarital sex seems to be acceptable at some level, and if a young woman becomes pregnant out of wedlock, she is permitted to choose to marry the young man who impregnated her. If the young man refuses to marry her, his family is required to make a

⁹ The transmission line from SB4 to Thanh My substation is not financed by ADB (shouldered by EVN) but is still considered an associated facility and part of the project. Therefore, the Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan does not officially cover the transmission line, but SB4 still recently conducted due diligence of resettlement done along the transmission line.

¹⁰ The Marriage and Family Law, Law No. 22/2000/QH10, passed by the National Assembly on 9 June 2000.



ADB. Justin Mott.

Traditional dress and customs of Co Tu women.

payment to her family or take care of the child, but the young woman is free to remarry another man whenever she wants. Prior to SB4, most women in the area traditionally gave birth at home without any assistance from a trained birth attendant, largely due to the prohibitive distance of travel by foot to the nearest health facility. Gynecological problems are common, with Zuoih Commune Health Center reporting a 70% incidence among women.

According to Co Tu custom, the bride's family receives significant gifts from the groom's family such as wine jars, drums, gold, and watches. This "bride price" tradition—although illegal—makes it very difficult for a woman to separate from or divorce her husband, as there would be an expectation of repayment. Moreover, women have no traditional ownership of land, property, or other assets, which makes them financially dependent on their husbands or male relatives (if

widowed or divorced), particularly when divorced women have no standing among former husbands' relatives and must return to their birth families.

Most Co Tu women have low levels of education, making them even more dependent on male family members. Nevertheless, divorce does sometimes take place and both parties are free to remarry. The rule of husbands having custodial rights to the children is not absolute, but rather is in part dependent on which party initiated the divorce. Traditional custom appears to give women more rights if her husband has been treating her in a way that is perceived badly by the community. However, traditional Co Tu leadership is entirely male-dominated and village elders are all male. Therefore, women have traditionally had minimal influence in community decision-making processes and no representation in customary judicial systems. This has disadvantaged women in cases of domestic violence where male-dominated village authorities have not intervened to protect them.

The most vulnerable women are those who are heads of households—either due to divorce, being widowed, or childless—and whom are especially exposed during resettlement. Households headed by women represent approximately 8% of households in the villages of Ta Bhing and Ca Dy, respectively, but a higher 13% in the town of Thanh My where the population is more diverse and mixed. The relatively high proportion of widows is often explained by women as being due to a high incidence of “stomach disease,” which can be interpreted as alcohol-induced morbidity and/or mortality among men.

Labor has traditionally been divided along clear gender lines. For example, men hunt and fish in rivers, clear trees, and construct houses; while women do most tasks related to agriculture and animal breeding, including field preparation, sowing, planting, weeding, collecting forest products and firewood, and taking care of livestock and fishponds. In addition, women are primarily

responsible for child care and domestic household tasks, rendering them very busy and with minimal spare time. Prior to SB4, some government extension training had been provided through the farmers' union, with participation from a handful of women's union representatives. However, very few Co Tu women have previously had the opportunity to participate in government-provided extension training, and no other development agencies have ever worked in reservoir-affected villages.

E. Project Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan

Information and insights gathered through in-depth consultations with people affected by SB4 during the preparatory phase were used to inform the design and development of a range of resettlement interventions that are detailed in various volumes of the project's Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan (REMDP). Comprehensive environmental and social impact assessments were undertaken to inform the design of culturally appropriate mitigation measures relating to restoration and improvement of livelihoods, provision of social infrastructure, and conservation offsets to compensate for adverse impacts on Song Thanh Nature Reserve. Given the predominance of Co Tu people affected by the project, resettlement was approached taking into account a strong interface with ethnic minority specific considerations. For example, all consultations were conducted in the Co Tu language—often using multiple translators—with use of illustrations and extensive oral explanations to overcome barriers in cases where members of the community, especially women, may have been illiterate. The project also made conscious efforts to adequately compensate the community for losses that were culturally significant such as the relocation of graves. These communal losses were collectively identified through in-depth community consultations.

At the time of project design, involuntary resettlement practices beyond basic compensation in Viet Nam were generally limited to livelihood assistance for provision of agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, and livestock, as well as rice and food allowances for a defined limited time period.¹¹ SB4, however, recognized that compensation alone, even if combined with short-term livelihood assistance, would be insufficient to restore pre-project living standards and productive incomes. Therefore, the project REMDP¹² went above and beyond standard national practice and legislative requirements from the outset. During implementation, updates of the REMDP were periodically negotiated to ensure consistency with any new decrees or decisions issued by local government, namely the Quang Nam Provincial People's Committee and Nam Giang District People's Committee. This practice, although not often common in other Vietnamese projects, helped ensure that any new decrees and/or decisions that effectively increased the entitlements of affected people would be applied, consistent with local government initiative and leadership.

The REMDP included the following categories of compensation, allowances, and investments, which are directly associated with the preparation of resettlement sites, and community facilities, compensation, and livelihood assistance:

- **Direct cash compensation for lost assets**, which includes compensation for temporarily or permanently affected agricultural land;

temporarily or permanently affected nonagricultural land (e.g., commercial); other structures (e.g., kitchens, toilets, animal sheds, fences, etc.); annual and perennial crops, fruit and timber trees, tree and/or plant fences; community and public resources; loss of non-land business and income sources (e.g., buildings, small shops, associated labor-based employment); and forest resources. The specific monetary allowances included in the entitlement matrix¹³ were considered to be minimum amounts to be adjusted at the time compensation was paid, to take into account inflation and actual impacts.

- **Preparation and design of new village resettlement sites** in the same commune, with improved village housing, infrastructure (e.g., access road), and community facilities (e.g., school, health center)
- **Relocation and transitional cash allowances** for use during the actual physical move
- **Repair allowances** due to dismantling of structures or damage by contractors in the process of relocation and **infrastructure development allowances** (e.g., for water supply, toilets, and access drainage)
- **Livelihood restoration** and production stabilization package support (e.g., community forestry and livestock-raising paraveterinary program)
- **Special assistance** for socially and economically vulnerable households (including households headed by women), war veterans, revolutionary martyrs, heroic

¹¹ There are now four extra government funds for affected persons beyond resettlement compensation: transition allowance, poverty program support and/or livelihood stabilization, job creation, and income restoration.

¹² The comprehensive REMDP captured the issues in four interlinked volumes covering all aspects and phases of the resettlement process (Figure 1)—Volume 1: Cross-Cutting Issues; Volume 2: Reservoir Resettlement and Development Plan; Volume 3: Project (Construction) Land Resettlement Plan; and Volume 4: Down/Upstream Mitigation and Resettlement Plan. Volumes 2 and 3 have been periodically updated as more information has become available, as further consultation revealed the need for additional features, and as required for consistency with national legislative or policy changes.

¹³ An entitlement matrix is a part of a resettlement plan that stipulates eligibility, entitlements, and payments owed to different displaced persons for all kinds of losses in a tabular form.

mothers, and labor heroes, consistent with government policy

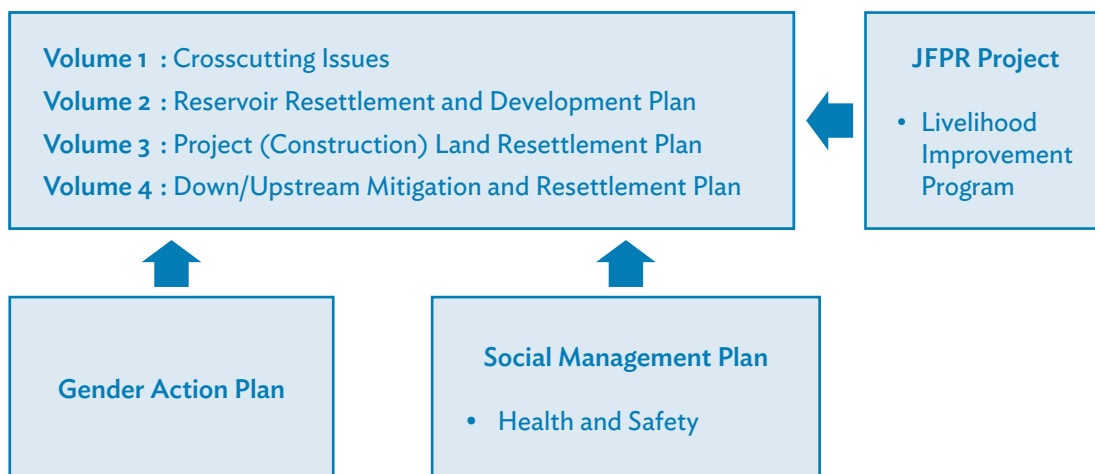
Considerable attention has been directed toward ensuring that the REMDP is gender-inclusive and gender-responsive in its design and implementation, through detailed gender analysis and thorough engagement of women's participation in all processes, recognition of equal entitlements between women and men, gender mainstreaming in all resettlement and livelihood restoration activities, and building of the gender capacity of the SB4HPMB and the Resettlement Management Implementation Unit (RMIU). A long-term consultant was contracted under an associated capacity development technical

assistance (CDTA) project to provide extensive hands-on technical guidance and support to the SB4HPMB and RMIU for REMDP implementation. In addition, SB4 has engaged an external social panel of experts (PoE) to monitor implementation of the REMDP, identify any shortcomings, and provide recommendations for corrective action. This additional investment is indicative of the project's commitment to striving for socially and gender-responsive approaches and outcomes.

The REMDP document structure and connection to the related gender action plan (GAP), social management plan (SMP), and the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) project is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Resettlement-Related Project Documents

REMDP Document Structure



JFPR = Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, REMDP = Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan.

Source: ADB.

F. Complementary Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction Grant

In addition to the main REMDP of the SB4, an associated grant-financed project¹⁴ was designed to improve living standards and reduce the prevalence of poverty among affected people, which also went beyond prevailing government practice for affected persons at the time of project design. JFPR financing was directed toward restoring and improving the livelihoods of people both directly affected upstream and indirectly affected downstream. This included training support, tools, and practical guidance for enhanced livelihoods through crop, livestock, and fisheries development, forestry management and development, and nonfarm income generation; community mobilization and capacity building to increase the voice of affected households in negotiation, planning, and implementation of their own resettlement process; and a livelihood restoration and development program for affected people in downstream areas, covering rice cultivation and irrigation, upland crops, fisheries, livestock, fruit tree cultivation, and alternative income generation.

G. Project Gender Action Plan

Although gender and ethnic minority issues were mainstreamed throughout the REMDP, a separate but related GAP was also prepared to address specific gendered vulnerability issues that play out during the whole resettlement process. Without it, there was a strong risk that social and cultural factors would exclude women from actively participating in planning, implementing, and executing resettlement activities. For example, resettlement planners may tend to liaise with community leaders who are often elite men who may not fully represent the interests of their communities in their entirety, especially those of women. Planners may also be guided to

communicate with affected persons through the head of the household, who is typically the husband or oldest male family member, and considered the spokesperson for his family. This inadvertently can perpetuate preexisting male biases in administrative, legal, and customary systems that undermine women's rights and disadvantage especially vulnerable women. The development of a project-specific GAP was a concrete acknowledgment that special efforts would be required in such a context to ensure women's inclusion. It was also intended as a tool in recognition of the reality that access to necessary information is key to women's effective participation. In order to assert and exercise their rights, affected women had to be fully informed about the process and their rights, and be given the space to voice opinions, preferences, and concerns.

Co Tu women were vulnerable during the resettlement process because:

- They had no preexisting rights to traditional ownership of land, houses, or other assets.
- Their knowledge of agriculture, livestock breeding, and aquaculture was low.
- They needed training in food production and income-generating activities.
- They had low levels of education, poor Vietnamese language skills, and virtually no networks outside of their own ethnic group and/or village.
- They had no representation in traditional leadership and decision making.
- There was no agenda or space for the needs and opinions of women to be heard.
- Temporary male construction workers potentially increased the risk of young Co Tu girls being sexually exploited in a context with poor knowledge about sexual health and sexually transmitted diseases.

¹⁴ ADB. 2008. *Grant Assistance Report: Proposed Grant Assistance. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam: Livelihood Improvement of Vulnerable Ethnic Minority Communities Affected by the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project (Financed by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction)*. Manila. This JFPR project was closed in February 2013.

The GAP was developed to facilitate women's equal rights to participate, influence, and access resettlement entitlements at every step of the process. The GAP was covenanted in the loan agreement to legally require its full implementation as part of the ADB project loan conditions and to ensure it would be monitored during implementation. Key gender design features contained in the GAP include:

- selection of resettlement sites and designing of village layout, social services, and housing in consultation with women representatives, with priority given to women's household subsistence work;
- issuance of land use rights for farming and forest production in the names of both husband and wife;
- inclusion of women, as well as men, in training on extension services and community-based forestry development and management;
- conducting separate workshops for women on design and implementation of livelihood activities;
- monitoring and reporting of indicators using data disaggregated by sex and ethnicity;
- sensitization training on gender and resettlement for project management staff, and members of district commune and village-level resettlement staff;
- ensured representation on district resettlement committees by district and commune-level representatives of the Viet Nam Women's Union, as well as affected women;
- inclusion of district resettlement committee members, women from project-affected villages, and women from downstream and upstream villages in all project training;
- establishment of grievance mechanisms to specifically address the grievances of women in resettlement sites;
- separate training for women to improve household food and economic productivity;
- compliance with core and gender-responsive labor standards during construction (i.e., equal pay for work of equal value, safe working conditions, and sanitation and child-care facilities for female workers);
- contracting of an experienced nongovernment organization to implement HIV/AIDS and human trafficking awareness raising; and
- addition of information, education, and communication materials on women's health in a culturally sensitive manner and involvement of women leaders from affected villages in the public health action plan.

Tracking progress and adherence to GAP implementation has been an integral part of broader project implementation monitoring.

An SMP was also prepared for SB4. Ethnic minority and social inclusion issues were mainstreamed across both the GAP and SMP. Specific considerations for ethnic minorities were particularly important to reconcile with gender aspects, given the overall lower status of women in traditional Co Tu society. For example, the project had to proactively work to strike an appropriate balance between the importance of involving traditional leaders and recognizing traditional social structures, while also at times challenging the status quo to ensure women's participation and voice. All project monitoring and reporting also duly followed the importance of collection, analysis, and use of indicators disaggregated both by sex and ethnicity.

H. Schedule of Physical Relocation and Resettlement

The timing of the physical relocation and resettlement of people affected by SB4 has been dependent on the schedule of construction, river diversion, and reservoir inundation. Diversion of the river took place in January 2012, resulting in initial relocation of affected persons from Thon 2. Relocation of the other three villages—Pa Dhi, Pa Rum A, and Pa Rum B—commenced at the end of the 2012–2013 wet season. As of September 2013, all affected villages were physically resettled in anticipation of the upcoming impoundment and

inundation of the reservoir scheduled to take place in August 2014. Although all affected persons have now been compensated and relocated, implementation of the REMDP is ongoing and the project is still working to ensure that benefits remain sustainable. As such, the scope and duration of the associated CDTA project have recently been extended to cover ongoing monitoring of the social and economic impacts (including gender), livelihood assistance, financial planning assistance, and annual PoE evaluations until 2016. This further underscores SB4's commitment to maximize prospects of ensuring the social sustainability of positive project benefits for affected persons.

Figure 2: Map of Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Area



Source: Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board.



Women villagers participate in the preparation of future fishpond sites.

ADB. Justin Mott.

II

GENDER-RESPONSIVE PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES

Field consultations were conducted for this study with separate groups of randomly selected affected women and men from the four villages —Pa Dhi, Pa Rum A, Pa Rum B, and Thon 2—that will be inundated by the SB4 reservoir. Large focus group discussions were held in all villages, except for Pa Dhi, where only two men were present because the visit clashed with an inaugural offering ceremony at a new resettlement site. Three resettlement sites—Pa Dhi, Pa Rum A, and Pa Pang—were also visited and observed. In practical terms, this meant that in the initial stages prior to construction of the access road, project preparation team members and consultants endured days of physically challenging hiking under difficult circumstances to comprehensively consult with all affected persons and survey the land area. This demonstrates a strong and unwavering commitment by the project team to ensure genuine consultation and participation.

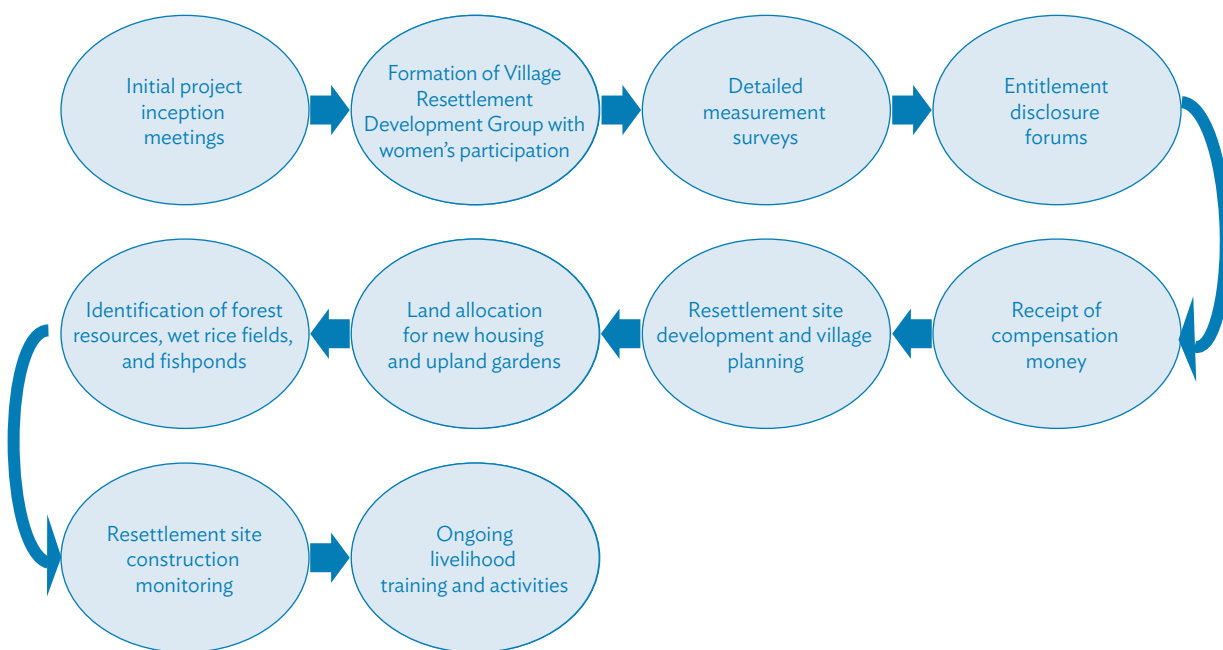
Despite different villages being at different stages of the resettlement process, there is no doubt that the women met in all the villages experienced and continue to experience a transformative empowerment process by being a part of this project. This empowerment process has been



M. Sultana

ADB staff hiking to project-affected villages for consultations.

enabled through implementation of gender-responsive participatory approaches, which ensured women's equal participation and explicit consent at every step of project implementation: from initial project inception meetings, formation of representative village resettlement groups,

Figure 3: Flow Diagram of Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Participatory Stages**Steps to empowering women through SB4***SB4 has ensured the equal participation of women at all stages:*

SB4 = Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project.

Source: ADB.

survey and entitlement disclosure, identification of natural resources, new land allocation, receipt of compensation, monitoring of construction and maintenance, and ongoing livelihood training. This thorough and inclusive consultation and agreement process is consistently verified by women and men affected by SB4.

Figure 3 chronologically illustrates the stages of resettlement implementation where women have equally participated. A more detailed analysis of these approaches follows.

A. Women's Voices Heard and Agreement Obtained in Resettlement Consultations

The REMDP clearly specifies the consultation strategy and methodology for SB4,¹⁵ including identification of issues for consultation, details of focus group meetings to be held, the importance of consultation with women, and significant features in Co Tu culture that have implications for consultation and housing. Consultations commenced as early as 2006, and affected people have since been extensively involved

¹⁵ REMDP Volume 1, Chapter 4 – Consultation, Participation, and Disclosure.

through numerous rounds of consultations and site visits.¹⁶ It followed that affected people were enabled to articulate their concerns in ways that would not have occurred without this extent of consultation, and concerns raised did not simply cover compensation payment or logistics involved with relocation, but extended to cover issues such as maintenance of their cultural identity, traditions, and practices.

Although women were originally very shy to speak out due to fear of the unfamiliar or reprimand from male relatives, project staff took time to gradually visit each household to convince women to attend meetings. And if women did not show up, project staff would delay the consultation process until they were physically present. In some instances, this required husbands to stay at home to care for children while women participated in project meetings and processes. Women experienced little backlash from men, possibly due to the thorough explanation of purpose project staff provided to husbands. Consultation meetings were often arranged separately for women in the Co Tu language, to discuss and clearly communicate information about project losses and compensation payments. During community meetings, project staff directed specific questions to women to solicit their views. In some instances, women and men were separated to allow women more space and time to speak without feeling pressure from their male relatives.

The importance of women's participation was formalized at the community level through the formation of women's groups in each village, and the creation of village resettlement development groups (VRDGs) composed of affected people, with a 50% women's representation requirement. A capacity building program for VRDGs and representatives from the local and village-level women's union was conducted to provide them with the necessary



ADB. Justin Mott.

Consultations and collaboration with women villagers gave them an active role in influencing the relocation process.

A village focus group in **Pa Rum A** explained how women had participated more than men in meetings, but this balances out at home when they share the information acquired with their husbands. In the beginning, women were reluctant to speak in public, but discussions from outside meetings and at home, combined with their new knowledge, built up their confidence. Women's confidence to speak up has since increased tremendously, to the extent that they are able to intervene and contradict each other and men if they disagree during public meetings.

understanding, knowledge, and practical skills for effective implementation of activities and compensation. All VRDG members received training on various aspects of the resettlement process such as resettlement entitlements, compensation

¹⁶ Initial consultations around resettlement planning, entitlements, and compensation were undertaken in 2006, followed by further consultations in 2008, 2009, and 2010.

payments, resettlement site development planning, implementation and monitoring of resettlement construction sites, opening of bank accounts, leadership, and agricultural extension. This enhanced the capacity of VRDG members to more meaningfully contribute to project planning and oversight on behalf of their respective communities. Monthly meetings of VRDGs were held to discuss resettlement issues and associated activities. District-level coordination meetings were also convened among men and women members of VRDGs and the project's district RMIU on a regular basis, to enable top-down and bottom-up information flows and dialogue between project management and representatives of affected people.

SB4 also ensured women's voices were heard during the detailed measurement surveys (DMSs)¹⁷ of inventory loss, initial project inception meetings, formal disclosure meetings, and all consultations on new site selection and site development planning. The DMS recorded traditional ownership of all assets by individual male or female family members, and were conducted in the presence of both husbands and wives and representatives of the commune, district, and SB4HPMB. All affected people were required to physically witness documentation in the field (e.g., of particular upland areas or plants growing there). Active participation of affected persons, especially women, was critical to ensure accurate, adequate, and fair compensation resulted from project DMS and loss of inventory processes. Women's involvement proved highly beneficial in producing accurate DMS results because they were more familiar with land and plants in upland areas since responsibility for use of upland areas was a female role.

Results of DMSs were then disclosed publicly at village meetings where they could be verified by both women and men, and corrective amendments

could be made if there were disagreements. Similarly, the entitlement matrix was translated into Co Tu language and discussed with both women and men. Draft compensation plans were posted publicly in villages for at least 20 days to solicit review and comments. They were also thoroughly explained to affected women and men before they were required to sign the plan. Elderly people were accompanied by their children (usually sons) or relatives to check compensation plans. The physical presence of a former ADB staff member as a consultant to participate and oversee this process helped maximize transparency and adherence to the specific approaches required by the REDMP. A Co Tu-speaking community mobilizer was also deeply engaged to ensure proper compensation plan preparation and explanation.

B. Women Selected and Planned Their Resettlement Sites

The process of selecting good resettlement sites was a combination of technical, social, and participatory investigations. Criteria for selection of new sites included close proximity to current village sites and being within existing commune boundaries (where possible), good potential for continuation of agricultural livelihoods,¹⁸ and adequate water sources. Socioeconomic surveys and collection of sex-disaggregated data were a crucial first step to informing SB4's gender-inclusive resettlement planning. The data enabled the project to give due consideration to gender issues, such as intra-household division of labor, access to and use of resources, and relative contribution of women and men to family income. The data also revealed differences that were used to identify particularly marginalized groups such as single mothers and elderly widows.

¹⁷ The DMS is a detailed inventory of losses disaggregated per affected person or household. It is completed after the marking of project boundaries on the ground.

¹⁸ The REDMP also explicitly indicated that permanent agriculture would not be introduced in the uplands allocated to affected persons, consistent with their traditional practice of slash-and-burn farming.

In terms of water and agricultural production, proposed sites were required to have good soil quality and adequate land of flat topography to enable the production of sufficient yields for affected communities. Experts in the project preparation team together with affected villagers collectively assessed and determined these factors during extensive field visits. It followed that women's participation in all meetings (more so than men in many instances) and relocation site visits—combined with sex-disaggregated data—resulted in the selection of resettlement sites that gave importance and priority to women's work in household production and subsistence. For example, affected households were allocated a minimum of 8 hectares of agroforestry land for the collection of nontimber products, as well as a vegetable garden plot adjacent to their new home, both of which related closely to women's roles.



M. Sultana

Village woman showing where the village boundary should be.

Site selection, location design, and suitability of the physical area are key concerns to women due to their agricultural, food production, and domestic responsibilities, as well as functional requirements of their home and domestic needs. Safety and distance from schools and health care centers are also key concerns for women in site selection.

SB4 encouraged and facilitated women's active participation in the design and layout of their new family housing, recognizing that issues of habitability and safety would disproportionately affect women since they spent more time at home and are primarily responsible for domestic duties and the care of children. Co Tu women who contribute significantly to household food security were primarily concerned about issues such as distance to rice and crop fields and access to nontimber forest products in their selection of new locations.

The resettlement plan was presented in the village consultation meetings, and the final plan was agreed in village meetings in April and December 2010.¹⁹ Resettlement sites were eventually selected relatively close to original village locations.²⁰ The Thon 2 resettlement site is 6 kilometers (km) from the original village, and much of the upland and agroforestry land that was traditionally used by the Thon 2 affected persons is still accessible to them after resettlement. The Pa Dhi resettlement site is adjacent to and borders the boundary of the original village. The Pa Rum A resettlement site is 1.5 km from (and still borders) the original village, while the Pa Rum B resettlement site is 6 km from its original village (but is actually on the physical site of the village prior to 1982).

Similarly, women were closely consulted in designing the village layout for social services and housing. New housing plots were allocated through a public and random lottery, followed by negotiation if requested by individuals (although this was rarely done). Minutes of housing plot allocation meetings were shared with the communities, and both women and men had to sign against their allocation to acknowledge awareness and consent. A similar approach was taken for the resettlement compensation plan to ensure full understanding and acknowledgment. This was not a barrier to participation where individuals were illiterate—and this disproportionately applied to Co Tu women—because a simple fingerprint was used in lieu of their signature.

¹⁹ This process followed that prescribed in REMDP Volume 1, Chapter 4 and Volume 2, Chapter 7.

²⁰ See Figure 2 for a map of the SB4 project area.



Village women and men discussing village layout.

Women's intimate involvement also led to very detailed site development plans (SDPs) for new resettlement sites based on intricate knowledge of local flora and fauna. The fact that it took over 1 year to finalize the SDPs is indicative of the extent of consultation. For example, draft maps were developed and revised after each site visit, then taken back to the community concerned for approval and endorsement. Further revisions were continually made to take into account their feedback, until all concerned parties were satisfied with the accuracy of the maps. These approaches were symbolic of the degree of genuine participation and ownership of affected women and men.

During the visit, women and men from **Pa Rum A** agreed on the location for a new health center and were about to meet to confirm this decision in the presence of Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board staff. Previously, it would take approximately 20 people to carry a sick person 2–3 days from Pa Rum A to the district health center and the seriously ill would often not survive, whereas now the health center is immediately accessible in their village.

Examples of different gender priorities that were incorporated into SDPs include women being more concerned about waste management in their village, whereas this was not a priority for men. In relation to the resettlement development plan, women's choice of location and type of infrastructure often directly correlated with their desire to save time and the need for privacy (e.g., separate male and female toilets in shared public areas). Selection of locations for water pumps and pipes were also largely driven by Co Tu women, since ease of access to water collection for household use was of primary concern to them. Most affected men and women met expressed satisfaction with the location of their respective new sites and how they have been designed.

C. Women Influenced Infrastructure Design, Monitored Site Construction, and Contributed to Infrastructure Maintenance

In order to be effective, it was important for the REMDP to be monitored at two levels: by project management and by the community through participation of affected persons, with proportionate representation of women. As affected Co Tu women were actively involved in relocation site planning, it naturally followed for them to also be closely involved in the monitoring of their own site construction so that they could check whether their own SDPs and preparation of housing plots (e.g., leveling of soil) were handled properly.

Women have played a key role in the selection of infrastructure design to meet their own needs and preferences. Subsequently, women monitored and played an oversight role in the installation of basic community infrastructure (e.g., water monitors, separate male and female toilets, etc.) to ensure appropriate design and proper installation. Once the facilities have been constructed, an ongoing

Alang Piem of Thon 2 village was trained in 2012 as a plumber under the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) training program. Although plumbing and maintenance are not typical jobs for women, the JFPR training course set aside two out of four slots for women. When Ms. Piem heard that the project was offering the training, she wanted to try it out, even though she knew it was not traditional. She and three other trained plumbers now regularly conduct maintenance of equipment and pipes from the village dam to the main water tank, ensuring that the village always gets a steady supply of clean water. In addition to looking after the community water system, plumbing is a source of extra income for her when households need their water system repaired.



ADB, Justin Mott.

Alang Piem, 29, at work maintaining a water source.

issue for relocated villages will be infrastructure maintenance, and sanitation and waste management. In response, eight women have been trained as plumbers in Thon 2 to maintain the new water supply system in the village. A water committee has been established (with women's representation); the community has created its own water usage rates and is digging a waste disposal pit. These homegrown initiatives, enabled through small amounts of investment in training, are very important to facilitate the identification of areas where ongoing community contributions will be required to ensure long-term success and sustainability of the resettlement and rehabilitation program. Where community ownership is nurtured and the added value of new facilities is welcomed, communities exhibit greater willingness to contribute their time, financial or in kind, to maintaining improved or new facilities.

D. Women's Participation Is Being Sustained beyond the Resettlement Process

The intrinsic value of women's participation for women themselves and communities is reflected in the fact that women are continuing to meet on a regular basis even after their villages have been fully relocated and handed over. In Thon 2 for example, the women met for this study described their ongoing active attendance and participation in all community meetings, whereas men have become disengaged. Motivations expressed by women in attending include that the meetings provide an accessible venue for ongoing access to information and social interaction. Some men, on the other hand, tended to claim little value in more community meetings now that they have received their compensation.

Alang Piem continues to be an active community facilitator in Thon 2 after relocation. Her husband was originally the community facilitator, but he dropped out. Now she has become more active.



New primary schools in relocation sites make it easier for children to access education.

ADB. Justin Mott.



GENDER-RELATED RESETTLEMENT BENEFITS

SB4 resettlement remains a work in progress and will continue to require careful monitoring going forward to ensure livelihood restoration and social changes are managed. Still, it was evident from all the villages visited that some positive gender-related resettlement benefits are emerging. Women living in new resettlement sites in particular appear to now have a better lifestyle, reduced workloads, greater autonomy, and access to services; and feel more empowered through having been part of the project resettlement process. Notable emerging gender-related resettlement benefits will be described in this section. As yet, the long-term impacts of resettlement remain unknown, especially the introduction of agricultural methods and livelihoods, combined with a large injection of cash into these communities.

A. Women Have Equal Entitlements to Compensation

SB4 defined entitlement and eligibility in a way that promotes equality, recognizes women's livelihood and other roles, and challenges and redresses existing cultural discrimination outside prevailing legal frameworks. Eligibility criteria for

land compensation²¹ were not restricted to formal ownership of land because much of the land was not privately titled; even if it had been, women would have likely been excluded despite being the principal users of upland resources. This approach was consistent with national government legislation and policy—which required a gradual rolling out of new joint land titles in both the husband's and wife's names—as well as international commitments to advancing gender equality. In traditional Co Tu culture, only men own and inherit property and women's position with respect to property is weak, especially in the case of separation or divorce.

SB4 adopted and applied gender equality principles to all resettlement entitlements, including land, as mandated in SB4's loan agreement. Gender issues were weaved through all resettlement-related documents. Hence, the project awarded joint titles and registration of land-use rights for farming, upland areas, use of forest products, and new housing land in the name of both husband and wife in their presence. The same individual rights have also been guaranteed for households headed by a single man or single woman. In this way, SB4 has enabled security of land tenure for both women

²¹ The compensation unit rate applied is based on market price as published by the Quang Nam Provincial People's Committee. The market price is updated annually and therefore implicitly reflects inflation.

and men in new resettlement sites, which is very important, especially for women who may become disenfranchised if widowed or divorced.

“Women tend to prioritize money for the home, children’s health, and education. Financial autonomy and control over bank accounts has made women feel valued and happy. Men generally support women having financial control too, as they trust their wives to manage it well for their longer-term use. Some men have chosen to put all the money in their wives’ name for safekeeping, and some unmarried daughters have guided their fathers on how to spend their compensation money.” – **Alang Alo, Pa Rum A**



M. Sultana

Women and men villagers listen attentively during a meeting on opening of bank accounts.

Global resettlement experience has shown that women and men use compensation money differently, that often the needs of women and

children are unmet if cash is paid solely to the male head of household, and that men do not necessarily use compensation money for rehabilitation and restoration of livelihoods. Hence, SB4 followed the good practice of paying cash compensation to both husbands and wives equally, transparently, and publicly. Monetary entitlements were divided between husbands and wives and deposited in joint and/or separate bank accounts, depending on the type of allowance and expressed preference of both parties involved. The Viet Nam Agribank Nam Giang District branch offered mobile services, which traveled to SB4 affected villages to facilitate and expedite opening of bank accounts by affected communities, particularly women who are more likely to experience restricted mobility. Project records clearly and comprehensively document that affected persons have been compensated in accordance with the updated REMDP entitlement matrix.

SB4 initially facilitated the opening of bank accounts in joint names to give both men and women equal access to saving and managing compensation money. Protection of women’s entitlement has also been strengthened during implementation, through a “learning by doing” approach. For example, joint bank accounts were initially opened for affected persons in Pa Pang, the first village to receive compensation. For Thon 2, the second village to receive compensation, monies were paid in four installments and joint accounts were initially opened. However, upon discovering that some men in Thon 2 were withdrawing money from their joint accounts without their wives’ knowledge or agreement,²² this was immediately rectified by amending project rules to require separate accounts for later installments of compensation monies. Therefore, for the third and fourth installments, payments were made into separate bank accounts for husbands and wives.

²² In Viet Nam, joint accounts do not require the signature of both account holders for transactions.

In other villages (Pa Dhi, Pa Rum A, and Pa Rum B) to whom compensation was paid subsequently, the revised project approach that was adopted was for the housing compensation portion to be paid into the joint account, while all other forms of compensation and allowances (e.g., compensation for land, transitional allowance, livelihood stabilization support, and poverty reduction allowances) were deposited solely into women's accounts for women to manage. This approach increased community trust in women's financial management skills. In Pa Rum A and Pa Rum B (which were compensated at a later stage), the majority of households went a step further and

chose to have even the housing compensation portion paid into the women's accounts, which project management did not expect.

Tables 2 and 3 show that overall, the large majority of SB4 compensation money has gone into the hands of affected women to manage. Out of a total of 739 bank accounts opened by persons affected by SB4, only 16% (115 accounts) are in the names of men alone, whereas 44% (327 accounts) are in women's names only, and the remaining 40% are joint accounts. As a result, affected women have been significantly empowered from an economic and financial perspective, given the large sums

Table 2: Joint Bank Accounts for Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Affected Persons

Village	Joint Accounts		
	Total Joint Account Books	Total Money (D)	\$ Equivalent
Pa Dhi	65	783,000,000	37,135.4
Pa Pang	48	10,560,000,000	500,830.0
Pa Rum A	47	493,000,000	23,381.6
Pa Rum B	62	691,000,000	32,772.1
Thon 2	98	10,689,000,000	506,948.1
TOTAL	297	23,216,000,000	1,101,067.2

D = dong.

Source: Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board.

Table 3: Separate Bank Accounts for Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Affected Persons

Village	Accounts in Women's Names			Accounts in Men's Names		
	Total Account Books	Total Money (D)	\$ Equivalent	Total Account Books	Total Money (D)	\$ Equivalent
Pa Dhi	57	15,559,000,000	737,918.0	47	13,485,000,000	639,554.2
Pa Pang	0	-	-	0	-	-
Pa Rum A	78	25,561,000,000	1,212,283.6	8	6,418,000,000	304,387.0
Pa Rum B	120	38,165,000,000	1,810,054.6	10	1,556,000,000	73,796.6
Thon 2	72	2,416,000,000	114,583.9	50	25,086,000,000	1,189,755.8
TOTAL	327	81,701,000,000	3,874,840.1	115	46,545,000,000	2,207,493.6

- = nil, D = dong.

Source: Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board.

of compensation money involved.²³ In effect, project-affected women have a combined total of over D81.7 billion (over \$3.8 million) in deposits in their own names, while men only have sole access to a combined total of over D46.5 billion (over \$2.2 million). Both women and men also have access to an additional combined amount of over D23.2 billion (over \$1.1 million) in joint accounts. Overall, the project requirement for women to receive equal compensation entitlement can be regarded as a major step forward for women's empowerment, compared to the past when Co Tu men traditionally were in control of all family financial assets.

B. Women Have Direct Channels to Redress Compensation Grievances

Complicated grievance redress mechanisms often work against women with low levels of education and low status in the community. SB4 adopted a locally constituted approach for dispute resolution relating to resettlement benefits, whereby the vast majority of concerns could be clarified and addressed at the village level in a culturally appropriate and accessible manner, and at no cost to affected persons. This was enabled by providing affected persons with sufficient training to understand the process and facilitating genuine and widespread community participation at every stage. The SB4 Grievance Committee instituted a mechanism to specifically address grievances made by Co Tu women in their resettlement sites, as did the Project Lands Resettlement Committee. Capacity building for effective implementation of the REMDP, GAP, and SDP all included content on awareness of appropriate grievance procedures. VRDGs, in particular, were trained to facilitate meetings and resolve grievances within villages, or to pass on any concerns to the SB4HPMB in biweekly meetings. It was reported that this is how, for example, the SB4HPMB agreed to provide

compensation for unflooded land in Pa Rum B as requested by the affected persons in the village.

The project's thorough consultation and agreement process with women and men at every step of the way meant that any concerns were usually resolved at a sufficiently early stage to avoid the need to pursue a more formal grievance process. The fact that affected persons expressed a view that there has been little need for Co Tu women to use formal project grievance procedures and mechanisms is testimony to the genuine participatory process. It also suggests that women generally feel a degree of ownership of decisions made and confidence that their interests are being served. The participatory process has also made women very aware of their rights and financial allocations in their interests, so they are in a better position to hold SB4 management accountable.

C. Safeguarding Women's Finances

Resettlement experience elsewhere shows that affected persons can spend their cash compensation too quickly and become impoverished if not provided with sufficient financial management skills and guidance. Therefore, besides ensuring equal entitlements for women, SB4 has taken additional proactive steps to safeguard women's finances after receiving cash compensation. Agribank has demonstrated a strong social consciousness by establishing "unwritten" protocols for dealing with the new influx of affected person clientele. The Nam Giang District branch (where affected persons' bank accounts are held) has developed a close working relationship with the project office. In instances where women are being bullied by their husbands (or mothers by their sons) to unwillingly withdraw funds, bank staff err on the side of caution and intervene. In such situations, bank tellers are generally expected to make phone calls to SB4 project staff to verify suspicious or large withdrawal amounts.

²³ Many affected persons received substantial compensation amounts, with the highest being over \$200,000. This is largely a result of Decree 69/2009/ND-CP, which throughout Viet Nam saw compensation payments increase from between 1.5 and 5 times (by a factor of 2 in the case of SB4) the previous replacement cost for land compulsorily acquired for infrastructure purposes.

Tongol Puonh from Pa Dhi was abandoned by her husband and left with their three children. Her husband then tried to withdraw a large amount of money from their joint account. Due to suspicions of bank staff, the bank had previously safeguarded two of her husband's attempts to steal her money this way. Ms. Puonh's estranged husband since confiscated her bank passbook, so she had no access to funds. In response, the bank management guided her on how to complete a form to get a new passbook in 30 days and committed to protect her money against any future actions from her husband. Bank staff advised her to be cautious with her new bank passbook and hide it from him.

There have also been instances where women have been tricked by salespeople to withdraw and pay large amounts for fake jewelry. When affected persons propose to withdraw large amounts, bank staff typically counsel them to discourage the withdrawal and/or contact SB4HPMB staff to verify. Bank staff members also sometimes provide financial counseling to affected persons who want to withdraw large sums of money to purchase large items such as motorcycles. While this oversteps the usual role of bank counter staff, it has proven to be a proactive approach to socially responsible banking that has protected the rights of their vulnerable clientele. This has helped deter and prevent rare instances in which a husband attempts to withdraw his wife's money without her consent or in which a woman is withdrawing money under duress from her husband.

Agribank has also offered some on-site financial counseling to affected persons through their mobile banking outreach services. However, there is room for the project to extend more support to help affected women and men manage, use, and invest their compensation money wisely. This will be provided through a financial advisor to be engaged under the extended technical assistance, who will work with affected households on enhancing their financial literacy to develop savings plans and diversify their investments beyond reliance on interest from bank accounts. Special consideration will be given to gender issues in the development of financial literacy and household budgeting skills for affected persons.

Agribank District Branch Director Phan Van Hong and Deputy Director Nguyen Ba Diep spoke about the importance of building mechanisms to protect women's rights to money and maintenance of their bank accounts. The Nam Giang District Agribank branch has set up specific procedures to deal with the majority of their ethnic minority and/or illiterate clients, who they consider to be "special" customers. For example, if a husband is of majority Kinh ethnicity and the wife is of Co Tu ethnicity but they share a joint account, the bank will always require both their signatures for withdrawal.

The bank manager and counter staff have witnessed firsthand the fear in some women's eyes and mannerisms when they come with their husbands to withdraw money under duress. For example, there was a case of a husband and wife who had D6 million in their joint account, where the husband wanted to withdraw funds to purchase a car. The wife did not agree, but her husband forced her into the bank branch. Bank staff were suspicious and intervened to convince him otherwise and resolved the dispute. In another case, a middleman asked a couple to buy land in Danang City and accompanied them to withdraw the money to pay for the land, but bank staff intervened to prevent them from falling victim to a scam.

During a visit to the bank, bank staff reported that they had just received information about a case of a Kinh husband fighting with his Co Tu wife that morning, and that the husband was on his way to the bank to withdraw money. This same man had previously tried to convert the joint account into his name, but was intersected by Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board (SB4HPMB) staff.

In some cases, the bank has followed a cautious practice even when a woman has come to withdraw a large amount on her own and red flags were raised regarding the need for such a large amount of cash. In such cases, bank staff will typically take on a facilitation role to help provide financial management guidance and resolve disputes between husbands and wives. Whenever there is doubt, the bank calls SB4HPMB staff to verify the legitimacy of the withdrawal and check if the family situation is peaceful before issuing the funds. Bank staff are of the view that Agribank should formalize this good practice of ad hoc counseling to establish protocols of always telephoning SB4HPMB staff to verify large withdrawals.

D. Women Enjoy Improved Mobility, Access to Services, and Better Living Conditions

Increased mobility and access to basic services resulting from the new SB4 access road and improved social infrastructure has brought benefits to women's health and well-being. The village of Pa Pang comprising several interrelated families was previously separated from other communities. The new access road has improved the community's mobility, and they can now easily access the kindergarten, primary school, and commune health center, as well as services provided in the district town. Most households have purchased their own motorcycle and some households have two motorcycles as an accessible and quick form of transport. Village residents now also have good houses that are connected to electricity supply and running water.



This finished road leads to the Thon 2 resettlement village.



Alang Bat adores her healthy infant.

1. Health Centers

Prior to the project, women in Pa Pang typically gave birth at home with a traditional healer, as it took 2–3 days to walk to the nearest health center. This meant that emergency cases of premature birth or hemorrhaging received no care or on-time treatment. With the new road, women are now able to access the new resettlement site's subhealth center and commune health center for regular antenatal checks. Alternatively, they can choose to travel an hour or so to give birth at the district hospital for complicated cases or to access a wider range of medical facilities. These options would have previously been prohibitive. Initial data show good uptake of antenatal checks at new health centers since they became operational in August 2012 (Table 4). The majority of pregnant women are now opting to deliver their babies at the larger district health center.

Table 4: Antenatal Checks and Birth Deliveries at Medical Facilities

	No. of Pregnant Women	No. of Antenatal Checks	Delivery at New Health Center	Delivery at District Health Center or Hospital
Pa Pang–Thon 2 Resettlement Site	49	58	8	41
Zuoih Commune	51	68	15	36

Source: Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board project data.

In addition, the district health center is now able to conduct monthly outreach activities by sending medical staff to the resettlement area subcenter such as for antenatal checks and children's vaccinations. For example, the district health center conducts a monthly outreach at Pa Pang with ultrasound equipment and vaccines. The JFPR grant has financed a gynecological bed, stretcher, oxygen machine, and blood pressure equipment. Pa Pang Village Health Center has had an on-site qualified nurse located there, who sees 8–10 patients per day, often for common respiratory problems.

ADB. Justin Mott.



Access to health services has always been difficult in these remote areas. Before, one had to endure long walks to receive medical care.

“The new access road has increased child vaccination and health checks. We now also have maps to the district center.” – Pa Dhi village focus group

Coor Voi, a village elderly from Thon 2, talked about the new and better conditions. She now has a very good house, electricity, water, access to health care, a good road, and a motorbike. Ms. Voi used her “good” compensation to invest in her grandson’s education at police school and as daily cash to buy food. Her family has significantly improved their agricultural production in their upland garden (compared with their previous slash-and-burn technique), drawing from and applying the practical knowledge gained under the project.

ADB. Justin Mott.



Dr. Phan Thanh Nhat, trained sonographer and interpreter, conducts an ultrasound scan of Arat Thi Thin, at the new Pa Pang–Thon 2 Commune Health Center.

Arat Thi Thin, 28 years old and 8 months pregnant with her second child, resting at the health center said that she had monthly antenatal checks and planned to deliver her baby at the district hospital now that she has access and more information. The situation has improved significantly compared to her first pregnancy when she had no medical checks and delivered her child at home with only the assistance of the village midwife.

2. Improved Schools Closer to Communities

In the past, children in SB4 affected villages could only attend a community primary school, which was in very poor condition with no proper roofing, walls, and furniture; no provision of teacher housing; and had difficult road access during the rainy season. Pursuit of continuing education at the secondary school level required traveling into a larger town and often opting for a semi-boarding school to alleviate the travel. New and improved school facilities have been built within the relocation sites to bring access to education closer to the homes of SB4 affected people.²⁴ This has directly impacted upon Co Tu children's likelihood to attend and remain at school, and hence their likely educational outcomes and educational aspirations. Education data for the resettlement sites (provided in Appendix 2) show almost equal enrollment for girls and boys in the new schools, which most likely mirrors village population demographics. Although data limitations make it difficult to definitively determine changes in school enrollment and attendance between old and new village-based sites, affected persons met clearly expressed a perception that the quality of schools has improved significantly for their children. Parents are also more motivated and in a better position to pay attention to and be involved in their children's study, as well as invest in school clothing and educational supplies.

Alang Alo of Pa Rum A explained that the new school will motivate higher enrollment and education levels. Previously, lower secondary and high school education was only available to students from their village in the town semi-boarding school in Thanh My District. Ms. Alo is happy that her children have more opportunities. Her two daughters are studying in high school and she has high hopes for their future.



ADB, Justin Mott.

New primary schools in relocation sites make it easier for children to access education.

3. Better Quality Housing, Modern Appliances, and More Time

Relocated families now reside in good-quality homes that were self-designed and built. Initially, the government had proposed to build concrete houses for everyone. However, this was changed following community consultations when villagers clearly expressed a preference for traditional wooden houses and wanted each household to design their individual layouts. Every household also has its own treated water source, modern toilet, and individual 24-hour electricity connection, for which women helped to select location and specifications. SB4 has, therefore, also facilitated an environment to reduce the risk of incidence of illness associated with poorer hygiene and sanitation for affected persons.

Provision of household electricity connections and piped water has reduced the domestic demands on women in the relocated village, as they no longer need to walk far to collect fuelwood

²⁴ A new school commenced operation in the Thon 2 and Pa Pang resettlement site in the 2012–2013 school year; this was followed by new schools in the Pa Dhi, Pa Rum A, and Pa Rum B resettlement sites in the 2013–2014 school year.

and water. All households have purchased electric rice cookers, which women use daily instead of manually cooking over a fire stove, saving time and reducing negative health impacts from open fire smoke inhalation. Many affected persons have also purchased refrigerators. Previously, women had to walk long distances to access land for growing vegetables for household consumption, but now they are able to grow them in their new vegetable gardens adjacent to their homes. Women explained how these improvements have significantly reduced their daily domestic workload and resulted in them having more time for themselves and community engagement, and for considering the pursuit of other income-generating activities.



ADB, Justin Mott.

The villagers prefer traditional wooden houses. Each household was able to design the layout of its own house.

Alang Piem, 29, previously lived in a bare house without electricity, water, or a toilet. Earlier this year, she moved into her new home at the resettlement site with 52 other families that were relocated. In her opinion, women's lives have changed a lot for the better and life at the resettlement site has improved tenfold. They can now go by motorbike to the uplands to bring back wood for fire and return home to available running water, electrical appliances (e.g., a rice cooker), and a gas stove. They now have free time to work on the land and garden. Her new home is modern but built in Co Tu style. The village now also has a better school, health center, and toilets. The new health center has provided the community with useful information and raised nutritional awareness such as the benefits of exclusive breast-feeding. Some women are able to open a small retail business for the first time and spouses help each other. Access to motorbikes means that women have taught themselves how to drive and can take children to school. Ms. Piem also joked that women can use motorbikes to follow their husbands into town and bring them home.



ADB, Justin Mott.

Alang Piem, 29, in her new kitchen.

E. Women's Skills and Capacity Developed

SB4 has made a conscious effort to maximize opportunities to develop the skills and capacity of affected women. From the project inception stage, separate workshops and capacity building training sessions were held to inform affected women about relocation logistics, selection of appropriate sites, entitlement and compensation procedures, management of compensation money and benefits, grievance procedures, compensation leadership, negotiation skills, etc. This capacity building leveled the playing field to enable women to participate effectively and meaningfully in the resettlement process alongside their male relatives.

In each village, the project facilitated the appointment of one male and one female, respectively, as a community facilitator, village extension worker on livestock agriculture and fishery, and village health worker. This strict requirement of one male and one female for each community leadership role was critical to ensure that women had equal access to information that could be channeled through these individuals, particularly for reaching Co Tu women who may otherwise be sidelined by male facilitators. It also had a symbolic effect in terms of raising these individual women's status, positively influencing community perceptions about women's capacity, not to mention a tremendous empowering impact of building these individual women's confidence and self-worth.



Poloong Nhin goes to work as a trained village health worker in Pa Dhi Village.

Women's skills and capacities were also built through the pilot livelihood restoration programs that focused on upgrading traditional farming practices through skills training in wet rice field development (mostly women); bean and corn cultivation, and vegetable gardening (mostly women); and livestock and fishery (men and women). Activities related to community-based forest development have also relied on close consultation with and involvement of Co Tu women, including selection of trees to plant, natural forest protection, use of green manure, weeding, and home gardening. In addition, literacy classes have been implemented in the affected villages with majority women participants. The emphasis on targeting women in extension training and use of community-based female extension workers was built on Co Tu women's traditionally important role in agricultural farming and food production. The new skills and agriculture information has helped lessen the drudgery of work in the field. For example, a new bean and corn cultivation pilot technique follows terrain contour lines to improve ease of access by women to their crops on steep slopes and reduce soil erosion in their plots. Similarly, women have been taught how to use green manure and other techniques to increase vegetable production in home gardens in Pa Rum A, Pa Rum B, Thon 2, and Pa Pang, as well as Pa Rum A uplands. Sex-disaggregated details of participants in the various agriculture-related training that SB4 has offered to affected persons since June 2010 is provided in Appendix 3.

Women are now starting to put this new knowledge into use by deciding how to invest their money on a daily basis such as whether to apply new agricultural techniques; invest in pigs, chicken, cows, or ducks; open a small business; or purchase a new vehicle. In doing so, they are utilizing their newly acquired financial literacy as well as livelihood restoration knowledge. It was also encouraging to hear that 2012 brought good yields of corn and beans, which suggests that the new cultivation techniques are being effectively applied.



M. Sultana

Village women receive training and practice new agricultural techniques.

A women's focus group in **Pa Rum B** explained that because agriculture relates more to women's roles, they have understood and benefited more from the livestock, agriculture, and fisheries extension practical training, compared with men. In their view, men are stronger trainees where the content is more theoretical such as paraveterinary training, but women thrive with practical training. The women in the group described how they were initially shy and tended to communicate at training through their husbands, but have come out of their shell over time. About 90% of men are supportive of women attending training. According to the women's focus group, those men who are not supportive are less educated and prefer to waste compensation money on alcohol.

A few women were also trained in nontraditional areas that challenge gender roles in Co Tu culture, for example, in areas such as plumbing,²⁵ waste management, and drain maintenance to maintain

new site infrastructure, or as paravets²⁶ and health workers.²⁷ This has significantly boosted their status in the communities as well as their own self-esteem, and no doubt pushed prevailing gender boundaries.

²⁵ Two women and two men each were trained as plumbers in Thon 2 and Pa Pang (total of eight trainees) in May 2012.

²⁶ One woman and one man have been trained as paravets in each village since 2010.

²⁷ Two women and two men have been trained as health workers in each village since 2010.

F. Women's Solidarity, Leadership, and Networking Strengthened

“Men have been busy leveling the land for home construction based on agreed site development plans, so us women have spent a lot of time together and bonded during project activities.”

– Women's focus group discussion, Pa Rum B

The participatory process nurtured the potential of some natural women leaders, which demonstrates how women who are provided with opportunities to expand their horizons can rise to the challenge and shine. Women met often spoke about a feeling of enhanced solidarity among them in the community, which was enabled through the space provided by the project to collectively voice their views, network, discuss common issues, and plan their new villages together. Even in Pa Rum B, which had received compensation but not yet

relocated at the time of the study visit, women spoke about their collective unity built through consecutive project consultations, joint visits to the new site, and common understanding about project processes and how to become more involved. Similarly, women from Pa Dhi spoke of how their participation in all project activities had brought women closer through project activities, teamwork, and networking—especially during site inspection and planning.

G. Women Acquire Higher Status and Command More Respect

All affected women met verified their in-depth involvement and were able to give quite intricate descriptions of the resettlement process, reflecting an internalized understanding of their entitlements. SB4 affected women residing in relocation sites now play a more prominent role in their families and communities, whether it be in water facility maintenance or community leadership, or by driving motorbikes into town, planning their own home kitchen and bathroom infrastructure, or managing family finances.

First Female Village Leader

Along Alo, 38, is the new village leader and the first female leader of Pa Rum A. She said that the change in women's roles came from the efforts of the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project to support women. When the project needed to pay compensation for lost land or livelihoods, it helped husbands and wives to set up separate bank accounts to make sure both men and women had a stake in the decision making. Women became very active in the resettlement process and most of the participants at the village resettlement meetings were women. Ms. Alo leads the Village Resettlement Committee and works closely with project staff, meeting with the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board to discuss project progress and to make sure their voices are heard in decisions on the construction of the resettlement site. She explained how, based on women's requests, the project changed the layout of the village. She feels that women's opinions are taken into consideration, and if there are problems, they solve them with the project team.

“A simple example about how my life has changed is in the clothes that I now wear and the way I interact with my family and neighbors due to my new knowledge and confidence.”
 – Alang Piem, trained plumber, Thon 2

Involvement in the SB4 resettlement process has facilitated an enabling environment for affected women to play a larger role in village and family life. Providing women with the opportunity to participate in village-related matters through their representation in VRDGs, for example, has given them exposure to leadership roles and a form of political empowerment that traditionally did not

exist in Co Tu communities and would otherwise not have been possible. Women have emerged as confident leaders as a result of project training and participation, displaying a stronger sense of confidence, self-esteem, and higher aspirations for their daughters.

“I expect my daughters’ lives to be much different from mine, as they will be fluent in Vietnamese, be much better educated and exposed to modern life, and have more freedom of choice in all aspects of life, including whom to marry.”
 – Alang Alo, Pa Rum A

Bo Nuoch Chieng is a community facilitator in Thon 2 and has been closely involved in all activities. She explained how it was difficult to mobilize women to join meetings in the beginning, so she helped explain detailed measurement survey processes to families “until they could understand like me.” During Village Resettlement Development Group meetings, they would receive many documents—and she would read them carefully and explain them again to others. Following relocation, Ms. Chieng now continues to raise awareness about issues such as water usage, financial management, bank accounts, and interest rates. She feels that the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project has helped her grow and develop tremendously, and that all aspects of her life have improved compared to before the project. She has new knowledge in many areas and is much more confident as a person. Her main motivation was to gain knowledge, but as her community peers started to believe and trust in her, she was more motivated to help others. She claims to never lose motivation because she knows her future vision. She does not care if others criticize her, as she knows some are “sleeping” and will gradually wake up and recognize her contribution in the future. Her husband and children (two daughters and one son) are very happy with her role, and her relationship with her husband has strengthened because he is very proud of her ability and status in the community. Sometimes he returns home early from work at the commune to help her.

ADB: Justin Mott.



ADB staff consultant Monawar Sultana and Bo Nuoch Chieng, Thon 2 Village Community Facilitator.



A woman handles her new crop yield.

ADB. Justin Mott.

IV

MITIGATING EMERGING SOCIAL RISKS AND MANAGING NEGATIVE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Despite the adoption and implementation of a careful gender-responsive approach, there will always be social risks that need to be simultaneously mitigated, managed, and monitored, given the very nature of a large-scale infrastructure investment in a previously untouched geographical region. SB4 has taken a proactive approach to addressing and managing social risks, and continues to respond as new social risks emerge.

A. Labor Rights and Associated Social Risks

Co Tu women living in the SB4 area previously had poor knowledge of their legal rights concerning labor and/or wages due to their limited engagement with the formal labor market. Therefore, the SMP included wide dissemination of information to local communities about national labor and wage regulations. This was aimed at preventing their potential exploitation as a cheap labor force for construction or related employment that was introduced to the area through project investment. The project design provided that local labor be recruited for any employment generated from the project, wherever possible. However, in reality, it appears that construction contractors brought in their own laborers from outside the project area. This may be a lost opportunity to provide affected persons

with readily available employment and access to cash income.

The large influx of mostly male workers into the area present a potential risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking of local women, and spread of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, and other communicable diseases during the project construction period. As a precaution, a series of gender and culturally sensitive HIV/AIDS and human trafficking awareness programs were conducted early in the project implementation. Women were specifically targeted to raise their awareness of HIV and trafficking issues, as well as to mitigate their exposure to being hired for massage services or as entertainment workers at karaoke and beer bars for migrant male construction workers. Information, education, and communication messages and materials were designed to be communicated simply to enhance ease of understanding even for low-educated Co Tu women with limited knowledge of the Vietnamese language. Although no cases of exploitation or trafficking have been detected or reported to date, an important need remains for ongoing awareness-raising, capacity building, and strengthening of local communities to reduce risks. This could be pursued, for example, through Co Tu language posters, radio, or television programs; further training of health workers to increase awareness and understanding of mother-to-child

HIV transmission; and developing the skills of younger Co Tu women to negotiate condom use and of Co Tu men to understand the consequences and risks associated with sex.

B. Maintaining Social Cohesion

The dramatic change in lifestyle for SB4 affected people, combined with access to large amounts of cash and new exposure to outside influences, has led to the emergence of some new social risks. Previously, these were subsistence-based communities with limited access to and familiarity with cash. In some instances, it has also led to the erosion of social cohesion, which the project needs to address. Alongside the benefits and opportunities from increased wealth come challenges that are associated with sudden access to large amounts of cash and additional spending power. For example, some women observed that men's beer consumption has increased significantly in their villages, which has in some cases created antisocial and violent behavior when men are intoxicated, particularly among younger men.

"I am disappointed with the behavior of some men who are drinking more, jealous and arguing with their wives over compensation entitlement."

– Alang Alo, Pa Rum A

Increased mobility from family ownership of motorbikes has also increased some women's distrust of their husband's fidelity, as some women claim that their husbands increasingly go into Thanh My for leisure activities. Women have been addressing these emerging family challenges in their own ways (e.g., by following husbands into town on their own motorbikes to spy on what they are doing). There is evidence of weakening traditional social sanctioning mechanisms. There seems to be a generational difference, with older

men still respecting and positively encouraging their wives and daughters, while some younger men are displaying negative habits with increased alcohol consumption and controlling and abusive behavior toward their wives. A health worker said that in her personal view, 50% of young couples are in an abusive relationship in private even though they may appear normal in public, and that this is exacerbated by alcohol. Hence, there is a clear need to rebuild the social fabric and community cohesiveness of these previously isolated SB4 villages. Counseling and mentoring on financial management and healthy interpersonal relationships are required as the reality of the dramatic change in lifestyle and financial circumstances is starting to hit home within the community.

C. Sustainability and Maintenance of Infrastructure

How to ensure the long-term sustainability and maintenance of new community infrastructure in relocated villages remains somewhat unclear, especially for those that are still in the resettlement process. In the relocated village of Thon 2, although most expressed satisfaction with the quality of infrastructure, some women have already been complaining about water leakage and wastage problems. Similarly, while all households in Pa Pang can now access electricity and water, three households have yet to install a water meter and households are slow to build their own toilets. There is still a need for more awareness raising and motivation for individual households and the community at large to contribute toward and maximize the benefits of their own village infrastructure. This implies an important need for building community ownership, establishing a monitoring mechanism, and ongoing close monitoring, including field monitoring. The SB4HPMB is working with village groups to facilitate a sustainable operation and maintenance regime for the newly installed domestic water supply system, which includes mobilizing a modest

ADB, Justin Mott.



Bo Nuoch Chieng, 35, conducts maintenance work. She was trained by the project to become a village plumber.

monthly financial contribution for users. This financial levy can then be used to provide the necessary tools, maintenance materials, and small reimbursement to village plumbers for maintenance and emergency repairs. Due attention to these concerns and innovative approaches to solve problems will be required during the remaining life of the project and beyond.

D. Maintaining Motivation for Livelihood Restoration and Financial Management

Although the SB4 villages have received a wide range of training on new agricultural extension knowledge, techniques, and crops, some community members (such as in Thon 2 village) have complained about the unflooded land being harder to physically access and that crops are not growing as well on this new land. In other cases, despite the provision of training, households have not applied new techniques due to a lack of work effort or unwillingness to invest in livestock (e.g., some households have refused to build a fence or purchase piglets). This reflects the challenges of behavioral change away from entrenched traditional agricultural practices and reluctance of some segments of the community to embrace new knowledge and follow new techniques that have been imparted to them. It is also an indication of the perception of households, especially men, that such agriculture and livestock training has limited relevance since they have now received their compensation and have access to large sums of money.

ADB, Justin Mott.



New farming techniques are showing promising results.



“I used to let my wife participate during the resettlement process, but now that we have received compensation, I don’t want her to attend any more meetings as there is no benefit.” – Bo Nuoch Achop, Thon 2 Village Leader

As affected people settle into their relocated villages, SB4 management will need to ensure that appropriate support is extended to equip women and men with adequate basic financial management and budgeting skills to manage their compensation money, especially given that they have minimal prior experience with handling cash and little understanding of the value of money. Given women’s key role in household budgeting and greater tendency to prioritize investments in family welfare, it will be critical for such interventions to target women trainees. At the same time,

interventions will be required to motivate livelihood restoration activities irrespective of the perceived lack of need for additional income, particularly among men. For example, affected women and men could benefit from increased awareness on how to raise their income through improved upland agricultural production, better management of forest resources, more investment in livestock, and improved livestock-rearing practices.

E. Protecting the Most Vulnerable

SB4’s REMDP is an excellent example of a mitigation plan that aims at managing social risks and protecting the interests of vulnerable members of the community. Nevertheless, there are always some marginalized people that may be inadvertently overlooked and excluded from fair treatment. To date, SB4 management has taken a commendable approach to intervene in response to such cases that are brought to their attention,



S. Hung

Polong Riep holding her war veteran portrait with members of the mission team.

Polong Riep, an elderly lady from Pa Pang, is a war veteran widow. She recalls how she was considered a hero for shooting down a United States helicopter and is proud of her medals and “war mother’s pension.” However, Ms. Riep has hardly benefited from compensation from the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project because she lives with her son and has no separate entitlement. Her son mistreats her and gives her nothing but food (even though she has been giving his family her pension income). She has been banished from the main house and lives in the smoky external kitchen where she cooks. She is embarrassed by her son’s drunken behavior, but claims to like the kitchen because it keeps her warm. Project staff are trying to convince her not to give her pension to her son anymore, but to use the money to invest in herself and buy some new clothes, for example.

and will continue to do so with the view to gradually educate the community.

F. Addressing Road Safety

The increasing number of motorbikes and unlicensed motorbike drivers in and around SB4 project villages and the town of Thanh My District poses significant road safety hazards for riders, passengers, and the wider community. This is exacerbated by the fact that SB4 affected people previously had minimal experience with the use of sealed roads and/or exposure to road traffic. In Pa Dhi, for example, 50 households (out of 60–70) already own a motorbike, but nobody in the village has a driver's license. So far, there have been 10 “small” crashes, mostly

outside Pa Dhi involving youth, including a handful of cases involving drunk driving. Similarly, in Pa Rum A, many families now have a motorbike, and already 20 cases of relatively minor motorbike crashes have been reported. Although most motorbike drivers are men, increasing numbers of women are starting to drive (7 women in Pa Dhi and 20 women in Pa Rum A said they could drive). These women said that they appreciate and enjoy the freedom and independence. Limited traffic safety training has been provided to SB4 affected communities. There is an urgent need to roll out road safety awareness in collaboration with district traffic police, as well as stricter enforcement of driver training and licensing. Women can potentially play a key role as advocates for road safety and monitoring of road safety behavior.



A village health worker trained by the project.

ADB. Justin Mott.

V

CAPACITY BUILDING OF EXECUTING AND IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

A. Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board

The executing agency EVN delegated project implementation responsibility to the SB4HPMB, which has 47 employees,²⁸ including dedicated resettlement specialists with some social development expertise. An RMIU was established, consisting of SB4HPMB staff and representatives of the Nam Giang District People's Committee. Institutional capacity to effectively implement gender and socially inclusive resettlement measures and livelihood support in a manner consistent with SB4's design and intent was recognized as a risk factor early on in the project's life.

There was clearly an identified need to provide gender-sensitization support for the SB4HPMB and RMIU, as well as province-, district-, and commune-level resettlement committees and commune leaders. This was largely pursued via a hands-on, step-by-step on-the-job training and mentoring approach for key staff in the SB4HPMB over time by a long-term in-country ADB technical assistance consultant. For example, specific hands-on training was given on how to fully reflect

women's and men's rights in the entitlement matrix. Training on collection, reporting, and use of sex- and ethnicity-disaggregated indicators for project management information systems at commune and project management levels was also provided to establish sufficiently rigorous data systems.

Initially, it took some time and convincing to build ownership of the GAP with project management, and to provide an evidence base for the value added of gender-specific interventions. For example, when it was found that the DMS was not carried out in sufficient detail in one village and women had not participated or signed, project staff were required to revisit the village and reach out to households individually until all signatures were duly obtained. This demonstrates that project management appreciated the level of detailed and intrinsic knowledge that women had to offer about the area. SB4HPMB staff were able to observe firsthand how genuinely participatory processes with women at the forefront revealed much local knowledge, which was in turn incorporated into extremely detailed and effective plans. This convinced project management of the tremendous value of women's participation and the opportunity cost of women's nonparticipation. It followed that the SB4HPMB started to institutionalize the requirement that

²⁸ Figure as of the end of 2012.

all DMS field visits and processes ensure equal participation of women alongside men, and the requirement that both women and men had to sign and give their agreement, adding to the accuracy and ease of the DMS process.

The SB4HPMB has come a long way in strengthening its institutional capacity to implement gender-responsive approaches under the REMDP since the commencement of SB4. This has no doubt required a more time-intensive approach and strong commitment to complete the full process of participation for women. It has been aided by the presence of a long-term social development consultant in the field, which has proved to have added significant value to the capacity development of the SB4HPMB. However, cost implications were relatively minimal and only required minor template changes to allow for dual signatures and sex-disaggregated recording of information. The leadership and commitment of the project director has been critical in enabling the ongoing investment of

staff resources and associated longer time frames for implementing the resettlement process and ensuring that women's genuine participation has and continues to be achieved. This has been aided by the overwhelmingly positive responses from local communities to the participatory and gender-responsive approach of the project, which was sufficiently convincing to mitigate any initial skepticism by project management.

The project design for SB4 also included gender-balanced staffing targets for the SB4HPMB, with a minimum of 20% (but preferably 50%) of all positions at all levels to be occupied by women. This is one area that has proven more challenging to achieve. As illustrated in Table 5, women constituted only 19% of total SB4HPMB staff (nine out of 47), and the proportion is lower at more senior levels. Some work units remain completely male dominated, such as Senior Management and the Technical Department. Even the Environment and Resettlement Department only has one woman (8%) out of 13 staff members. It has also proved an

Tran Ngoc Ha, vice manager of the Environment Resettlement Department, Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board has been the main person overseeing the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project (SB4) resettlement process since its inception. Mr. Ha has always worked in resettlement, but SB4 is the first time he has dealt with gender in such a comprehensive way. He said that gender has been a central dimension across all project documents as well as the project gender action plan (GAP), and that he was increasingly persuaded of its importance over time. The project management unit staff had no formal gender training per se, but rather learned about gender sensitivity and translated the GAP into reality while on the job. They were convinced of its importance through every step of establishing practical gender protocols and directly observing the benefits that flowed through them. Mr. Ha observed that this is because of women's low status in Co Tu tradition and that he has seen firsthand how women have been empowered through project processes. In his view, the most valuable lesson from SB4 is the need to understand gender dynamics in the complexities of the local culture, indigenous peoples, and involuntary resettlement contexts before designing project interventions. He also highlighted the need for the project implementation consultant to be responsible for providing the necessary guidance to project staff on how to operationalize the GAP. Another important lesson is related to the need to protect women's financial interests. These are features that Mr. Ha plans to replicate in other future projects, irrespective of involvement by the Asian Development Bank. In his view, SB4 has significantly improved women's status and position—and their participation has exceeded his original expectations of what was possible. There is still an ongoing need to provide women with more training for longer-term sustainability and to keep women villagers motivated.

Table 5: Sex-Disaggregated Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Staffing Statistics

SB4 Project Management Board Staffing			
Department	Male	Female	Total
Senior Management	3	0	3
Administration	9	5	14
Planning	4	1	5
Technical	7	0	7
Finance	3	2	5
Environment and Resettlement	12	1	13
Total	38 (80%)	9 (19%)	47

SB4 = Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project.

Source: Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board.

ongoing challenge to recruit project staff who can communicate with affected persons in the Co Tu language during field consultations. The need for more proactive steps to recruit and appoint women staff members into suitable project positions, including Co Tu-speaking female staff for village engagement with affected Co Tu women, has been a lesson learned during SB4 implementation.

B. Agribank Nam Giang District Branch

Prior to involvement in SB4, the Agribank Nam Giang District branch dealt with some ethnic minority female clients, but in reality these were only a few that resided near the main road. Given the requirement for all affected persons to open bank accounts for the deposit of resettlement compensation entitlements, this bank branch experienced a dramatic increase in its ethnic minority clientele. This has had a tremendous impact on branch culture as bank staff members have been required to change their approach to customer relations and assume a much more proactive, mentoring, and quasi-counseling role. As a result of the project, the Agribank Nam Giang District branch has developed outreach banking

services through a form of mobile banking whereby bank staff visit relocated villages on a monthly basis.

Bank branch staff have since been trained to advise affected people to only withdraw and live off the interest earned from their compensation money, and to save the rest. They are also given sufficient autonomy to use their common sense and instinct to question why clients may be requesting to withdraw large amounts and to question their intended use of the money, as well as to proactively check in with SB4HPMB staff if large sums are involved. The branch has also recruited one Co Tu staff member (out of 12) and four female staff members, which helps enable the bank to liaise effectively with project-affected clients, especially when conducting community outreach and awareness in relation to management of compensation funds received. In some ways, therefore, Agribank's involvement with the project has meant a natural evolution toward enhanced client-responsiveness and closer resemblance to a "social bank." At the same time, there are realistic limits as to what Agribank can do to ensure affected persons are able to manage their compensation monies on an ongoing basis; hence, it is important for the project to help equip affected persons with the necessary financial management skills in the longer term.



Families in relocated villages have brighter hopes for future generations.

ADB. Justin Mott.

VI

CONCLUSION

SB4 is a living demonstration that solid gender analysis, a detailed GAP, and close attention to gender in the entitlement matrix can help manage and mitigate social risks of large-scale infrastructure projects. This, however, needs to be combined with on-the-ground presence and a social development specialist to guide and track gender-inclusive interventions at all stages of implementation, as well as leadership and commitment of the wider project management team. Positive gender interventions have included facilitating extensive participation of women right from the outset, ensuring fair representation of women in project activities and making conscious efforts to hear women's voices, mandating equal compensation and entitlements for women and men, and facilitating access to wide-ranging livelihood restoration training opportunities for both women and men.

SB4 is also an example of a holistic approach to resettlement that covers a range of social dimensions, provision of social services, and livelihood restoration training, combined with a genuine commitment to community participation. The SB4 experience therefore offers some lessons

learned for comparable large-scale hydropower or other infrastructure projects that involve large-scale resettlement.

Going forward, project support will continue to be provided for more diversified livelihood assistance, community mobilization, social and gender impact assessments, corrective action plans, provision of financial planning advice for affected persons, and annual PoE evaluations.²⁹ More efforts can also be directed to target affected women who may be particularly vulnerable, safeguard women's financial and property interests, and facilitate women's access to project-related employment, including through recruitment of female and Co Tu-speaking project staff.

SB4 has made a significant effort to assist affected people. The journey of learning by doing is ongoing, however, and the project will continue to work intensively with affected persons until inundation of the reservoir in late 2014 and through to 2016, so as to ensure that benefits for affected persons can be sustained in the longer term after their critical transitional relocation period.

²⁹ S-CDTA on Implementation and Monitoring of Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan, extended until end of 2016.



Bling Nhlen, 29, head of the women's union for Pa Rum A, poses with her child.

ADB. Justin Mott.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PERSONS MET

Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project Management Board Staff

Full Name	Department	Position	Male	Female
1. Truong Thiet Hung		Director	X	
2. Nguyen Minh Chien		Vice Director	X	
3. Trần Ngọc Hà	Environment and Resettlement	Vice Manager	X	
4. Nguyễn Ngọc Bôi	Environment and Resettlement	Staff	X	
5. Phan Thi Cẩm Tu	Environment and Resettlement	Staff	X	

Thon 2 Village

Full Name	Position	Male	Female
1. Bo Nuoch Chieng	Community facilitator/plumber		X
2. Coor Voi	Village elderly		X
3. Alang Bat	Village paravet		X
4. Alang Bot	Village agriculture extension worker		X
5. Zo Ram Huong	Village health worker		X
6. Zo Ram Hom			X
7. Alang Que			X
8. Alang Bieng			X
9. Alang Piem	Plumber		X
10. Po Loong Lua			X
11. Po Loong Dooch	Secretary of the Village Communist Party	X	
12. Bo Nuoch Achop	Village leader	X	
13. Hoih Dieng		X	
14. Bo Nuoch Cho		X	
15. Alang Pah		X	
16. Briu Da		X	
17. Alang Nhop		X	

Pa Pang Village

Full Name	Position	Male	Female
1. Hoih Nep	Village health worker/village paravet		X
2. Arat leh			X
3. Doan Bay			X
4. Po Loong Riep			X
5. Hoih Ām	Village elderly		X
6. Bo Nuoch Boonh	Women's union member		X

Pa Dhi Village

Full Name	Position	Male	Female
1. Bling Thi Met	Village elderly		X
2. Tongol Dinh			X
3. Coor Diep			X
4. Tongol Bro			X
5. Tongol Doonh	Village Resettlement Development Group member		X
6. Coor Dal			X
7. Tongol Mui	Head of Village Women's Union		X
8. Bnuot Thiet			X
9. Co Lau Ho			X
10. Bling Lah			X
11. Tongol Á			X
12. Poloong Nhin	Village health worker		X
13. Tongol Cruong			X
14. Alang Dooch			X
15. Bnuoc Gruong	Village agriculture extension worker	X	
16. Coor Gleu		X	

Pa Rum B

Full Name	Position	Male	Female
1. Aviet Co	Village leader	X	
2. Bnuoc Te	Commune officer	X	
3. Zo Ram Nang		X	
4. Bnuoc Toi		X	
5. Bling De		X	
6. Alang Ghenh	Community facilitator	X	
7. Bling Goi		X	
8. Zo Ram Xang		X	
9. Bnuo A Bua			X
10. Tongol Anh			X
11. Alang Aua	Village fishery extension worker		X

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Table continued

Full Name	Position	Male	Female
12. Alang Chim	Head of Village Production Group		X
13. Alang Aon	Village paravet		X
14. Tongol Thiet	Village agriculture extension worker/head of women's union		X
15. Bling Ep			X

Pa Rum A

Full Name	Position	Male	Female
1. Alang Aeo	Village leader		X
2. Alang Dot			X
3. Bling Nhien	Head of Village Women's Union		X
4. Zo Ram Nhai	Village secretary		X
5. Poloong Nhuong	Village agriculture extension worker	X	
6. Bling Aboac	Village paravet	X	
7. Alang Tanh	Head of Village Youth Union	X	
8. Ploong Nhieu	Community facilitator	X	

Management of Agribank, Nam Giang District Branch

Full Name	Position	Male	Female
1. Phan Van Hong	Branch manager	X	
2. Nguyen Ba Diep	Manager – Business Department	X	

APPENDIX 2

EDUCATION DATA BY RESETTLEMENT SITE

Pa Pang Resettlement Site

Grade	Total		School Year 2012–2013						School Year 2013–2014					
			Thon 2		Pa Pang		%		Thon 2		Pa Pang		%	
	2012–2013	2013–2014	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
Kindergarten	22	25	7	4	3	8	45	55	7	7	3	8	40	60
1	8	8	–	2	3	3	38	63	6	2	–	–	75	25
2	12	8	4	4	3	1	58	42	–	2	3	3	38	63
3	13	12	4	4	3	2	54	46	4	4	3	1	58	42
4	–	13	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	4	3	2	54	46
Total	55	66	15	14	12	14	49	51	21	19	12	14	50	50

– = nil.

Old Pa Dhi Village (Before Relocation)

Grade	School Year 2012–2013				
	Total	Pa Dhi		%	
		No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
Kindergarten	7	5	2	71	29
1	7	5	2	71	29
2	6	4	2	67	33
Total	20	14	6	70	30

Pa Dhi Resettlement Site (After Relocation)

Grade	Total	School Year 2013–2014			
		Pa Dhi		%	
		No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
Kindergarten	19	9	10	47	53
1	7	5	2	71	29
2	7	5	2	71	29
Total	33	19	14	58	42

Old Pa Rum A Village

Grade	Total	School Year 2012–2013			
		Pa Dhi		%	
		No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
Kindergarten	7	5	2	71	29
1	3	2	1	67	33
2	1	1	0	100	0
Total	11	8	3	72	28

Pa Rum A Resettlement Site

Grade	Total	School Year 2013–2014			
		Pa Dhi		%	
		No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
Kindergarten	22	8	14	36	64
1	3	2	1	67	33
2	4	4	0	100	0
Total	29	14	15	48	52

Pa Rum B Resettlement Site

Grade	Total	School Year 2013–2014			
		Pa Dhi		%	
		No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
Kindergarten	20	8	12	40	60
1	8	5	3	63	38
Total	28	13	15	46	54

Old Zuoih Commune Primary School in Old Pa Rum B Village

School Year 2012–2013											
Grade	Total	Pa Dhi		Pa Rum A		Pa Rum B		Cong Don		%	
		No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
1	13	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	6	54	46
2	7	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	6	14	86
3	34	4	3	6	2	5	2	5	7	59	41
4	22	3	5	1	1	3	3	2	4	41	59
5	33	6	1	7	0	6	1	9	3	85	15
Total	109	13	9	14	3	14	6	24	26	60	40

– = nil.

New Zuoih Administration Center

School Year 2013–2014											
Grade	Total	Pa Dhi		Pa Rum A		Pa Rum B		Cong Don		%	
		No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Girls	% of Boys
1	11	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	7	36	64
2	13	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	6	54	46
3	23	4	2	1	0	7	1	4	4	70	30
4	34	4	3	6	2	5	2	5	7	59	41
5	22	3	5	1	1	3	3	2	4	41	59
Total	103	11	10	8	3	15	6	22	28	54	46

– = nil.

APPENDIX 3

SEX-DISAGGREGATED LIVELIHOOD TRAINING DATA

Type of Training	Pa Pang Host Village		Resettlement Villages								Time
	W	M	Thon 2		Pa Rum A		Pa Rum B		Pa Dhi		
			W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	
Soil test and micro land planning for village extension workers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	June 2010
Model intensive bean cultivation	9	9	–	–	5	5	–	–	8	8	Nov–Dec 2011
Intensive wet rice pilot demonstration	11	11	–	–	5	5	–	–	–	–	Nov–Dec 2012
Chicken shelter making and raising	4	4	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	Oct 2010
Identification of potential areas for developing fishponds	13	12	10	8	8	7	6	8	8	10	Aug 2010
Continued intensive wet rice pilot demonstration	6	6	–	–	5	5	–	–	–	–	Jan–Jun 2011
Model pig breeding	5	5	5	5	5	5	10	10	10	10	Jan–Jun 2011
Model cow breeding	6	6	12	12	6	6	6	6	6	6	Jun 2011
Fish raising	13	10	–	–	19	15	14	18	17	14	Jun–Jul 2011
Feed processing for cows and pigs	15	8	35	16	22	16	31	16	31	20	Apr–May 2011
Planting animal fodder	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Jun–Jul 2011
Integration of sticky corn and upland rice cultivation	23	23	48	48	45	45	36	36	43	43	Jun–Sep 2011
Vegetable home gardens	5	5	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	Dec 2011
Continued vegetable home gardens	9	9	12	12	–	–	18	18	7	7	Jan–Feb 2012

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Table continued

Type of Training	Pa Pang Host Village		Resettlement Villages								Time
	W	M	Thon 2		Pa Rum A		Pa Rum B		Pa Dhi		
			W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	
Green manure and double crop wet rice	23	23	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Jan 2012
Extension support to traditional bean cultivation	–	–	–	–	48	48	64	64	64	64	Jan–Feb 2012
Cultivation of sticky corn	–	–	40	40	–	–	–	–	–	–	May 2012
Duck rearing and provision of breeding ducks	11	11	17	17	–	–	–	–	–	–	Jul 2012
Continued pig raising and breeding	10	10	6	6	5	5	5	5	10	10	Oct 2012
Continued cow raising and breeding	–	–	4	3	–	–	4	4	–	–	Dec 2012
Agroforestry seedlings	–	–	53	53	49	49	–	–	–	–	Dec 2012
Upland cultivation techniques (soil erosion control and bean and vegetable planting techniques) for village extension workers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Nov–Dec 2010
Continued cow raising and breeding	–	–	–	–	25	25	19	19	26	26	Feb 2013
Duck rearing and provision of breeding ducks	–	–	–	–	20	20	20	20	26	26	Feb 2013
Advanced paravet at Tien Phong breeding center in Dien Tho Commune, Dien Ban District	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Mar 2012

– = nil, M = men, W = women.

NAVIGATING GENDER-INCLUSIVE RESETTLEMENT

The Experience of the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project in Viet Nam

This case study report describes the comprehensive approach to gender inclusiveness resettlement in the Song Bung 4 Hydropower Project in a remote mountainous region of Quang Nam Province, Viet Nam. Based on discussions with people in affected villages, the report illustrates how the project is promoting women's empowerment through participatory approaches and is bringing emerging gender benefits to ethnic minority communities that were previously isolated from economic and social development. In so doing, it offers good practice and lessons learned for other large infrastructure projects in Viet Nam and the wider region where resettlement is unavoidable.

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