UNIT 2 DEVELOPMENT AND DISPLACEMENT IN INDIA: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit provides you with a background to the thinking which leads to decisions made about development projects and the resultant displacement. After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

- become aware of the different approaches to development in India;
- describe colonial policies on displacement;
- discuss the existing loopholes with regard to development and resettlement of displaced people in independent India;
- get an overview of the resettlement processes and impacts;
- enhance sensitivity and commitment to those who are displaced, often against their will; and
- work towards resettlement activities that support the displaced to begin a new life and enables them to take first steps towards comprehensive rehabilitation.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

MRR-101 aims to provide an overview of displacement, the laws related to displacement and also the existing and draft policies on rehabilitation of those displaced. This is the first Unit of MRR-101, which introduces you to the concept of Development-Induced Displacement (DID) and the nature of this problem from the pre-independence era to the present time in India. In sub-section 2.4.1, you will gain knowledge of the prevalent paradigm of development, and how it has contributed towards the problem of displacement.

Sub-section 2.4.3 describes the types of displacement while sub-sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 bring forth statistics regarding the number of people affected and the extent of land acquired. Sub-section 2.5.3 brings out the pertinent fact how the socio-economically deprived namely – Dalits and tribals are in most cases of displacement, the worst sufferers. Sub-sections 2.5.4 and 2.5.5 discuss the fact that only a smaller percentage of displaced people have been resettled while the rest have been left to impoverish. Finally, section 2.6 throws light on the future trends in displacement.

Let us now begin the learning process by looking at the problem of development-induced displacement.
2.2 THE PROBLEM OF DEVELOPMENT - INDUCED DISPLACEMENT

Studies as well as field experiences point to the impoverishment of people of Displaced Persons (DPs) and Project Affected Persons (PAPs). As a consequence of the development project they poorer since a Project deprives them of their livelihood (Fernandes 2000). Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees to every Indian citizen the right to life with dignity. The development projects deprive those affected of this basic right by affecting their livelihoods and sources of sustenance. They have a right to begin a new life that protects their economic interests, culture and social system (Vaswani 1992). However, if proper care is not taken to properly resettle those affected, they are impoverished and deprived of this basic right in the name of national development.

An important factor for development-induced displacement has been attributed as the approach taken towards development. Unfortunately, since independence, over the years of planned development, the government has assumed a dominant role in the process of development leading to the impoverishment of a large section of the population. One of the major concerns with such development projects has been that very few amongst those displaced were resettled. Some projects formulated a Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) Package for the project affected persons, however in most cases the approaches adopted for resettlement have been found to be ineffective. Studies show that the strong (high caste, upper class families, especially men among them) become stronger while the weak and vulnerable (the poor, low castes, particularly women among them) get weaker and further marginalised in such process of development.

In view of the above facts, it becomes important to understand the development paradigm in the context of displacement. It is important to know the historical progression of displacement as well as its pattern so far and what role the development thinking has played in contributing to displacement.

2.3 DISPLACEMENT IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE INDIA

Some people object to the importance given to the rights of displaced people (DPs) for resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R) on the plea that development induced displacement is not a recent phenomenon. However, the fact that the phenomenon has existed for centuries without a systematic approach to R&R is no reason to ignore it. In many other areas of human society, consciousness about their consequences has grown only in recent years. For instance, though democracy is very recent and the Human Rights Charter too was formulated only in 1948, this in no way reduces its value.

The negative impact of displacement in pre-independence India was minimal since land was abundant and the population density was small. As a result, the DPs and PAPs could resettle themselves in a new place with limited problems. However, displacement in India assumed alarming proportions under the British rule and got further intensified after independence because of planned development (Mankodi 1989). Box 2.1 below identifies the ‘The Land Acquisition Act’ (LAA) of 1894 as the basis for displacing people from their habitat.

Box 2.1: The Land Acquisition Act

Basic to displacement is the Land Acquisition Act, 1894. The British Government needed to change the Indian economy to suit the needs of the British Industrial Revolution. It required raw materials like cotton and tea, and the money to fund it. So the colonialist had to turn India into a supplier of capital and raw materials for the industrialisation of Britain. In order to procure these raw materials, the British needed to acquire as much land as possible for schemes like coal mines, coffee plantations, tea estates, railways and roads. Efforts were made in the form of enactment of new land laws so as to transfer land to British mining and plantation companies. These efforts culminated in the form of the Land Acquisition Act (LAA), 1894. The changes in the land laws were integral to the British Government effort in maximising its gains from countries under their rule.

The process of enacting the LAA began with the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793, in an effort to ensure regular land tax collection without the British administration spending too much on it. British handed over large tracts of land to the Zamindars, who collected land tax on their behalf. Many farmers lost their land because of it. The effort to take control of land continued in the Assam Land Act, 1834 whose main purpose was to get as much land as possible at a very low price for tea estates. This was followed by the Calcutta Law of 1824, which was meant to acquire land for purposes such as salt pans. Three other laws followed till the time of the enactment of the LAA. LAA remains in force even today (Upadhyay and Raman 1998). Box 2.2. below explains the concept of ‘eminent domain’, which enables the state to acquire land and displace people.
Box 2.2: Eminent Domain

The law of ‘eminent domain’ established the principle of state monopoly over land and community resources like forests. In Australia this paradigm is called *terra nullius* (nobody’s land). When Europeans occupied native land in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA and other countries, they claimed that since the land was without an individual title and as such belonged to none therefore anyone could occupy it. However, in reality, this land belonged to the native people who had customary rights on it though they did not have a written document to prove their ownership of the same. In most cases, the whole community and not individuals owned it. In 1992, the Australian High Court declared *terra nullius* unconstitutional (Cockburn 1993; Brennan 1995 and Roy Burman 2000).

The colonial principle of *terra nullius* continues to be the basis of land laws in India, under its American version of eminent domain. Its first dimension is that land without an individual *patta/title* is State property. Its second dimension is that the State alone has the right to decide what is ‘public purpose’ and for that same can curtail people’s right to property by means of the process of land acquisition. However, it is pertinent to note that this ‘public purpose’ has not been defined till today in the LAA (Ramanathan 1999).

Box 2.3 contains examples of the impact of changes the colonial policies brought about during British rule in India.

Box 2.3: The Victims of the British Policies

Prease data regarding number of persons affected by the land related changes undertaken does not exist. A freedom fighter, Dadabhai Naoroji (1988) estimated that 35 million people were deprived of their livelihood as a result of the British policies. These changes turned a large number of landless agricultural labourers, mostly Dalits (Scheduled Castes) and other service groups, into cheap labour. They were deprived of their livelihood and consequently impoverished. At this stage, several lakhs of them were transported as indentured labour in slave-like conditions to plantations and mines in India and other British colonies (Sen, 1979: 8-12). One also knows that while some surrendered to the disruption of life and impoverishment, but others resisted it which led to many struggles particularly of the tribals and Dalits (Savyasaachi 1998). Some struggles against displacement also followed. The best known among them is the Mulshi-Peta struggle (near Pune) in the 1920s (Bhuskute 1997).

Check Your Progress 1

i) Describe briefly at least two instances of the negative consequences of displacement laws during the colonial period in India.

ii) Why did the problem of development-induced displacement get intensified in the colonial era?

iii) Give some of the consequences of displacement.

iv) Describe the process of enacting the Land Acquisition Act, 1894.

Let us now turn to the displacement caused by the post-Independence development paradigm that ensued in India.

2.4 POST-INDEPENDENCE DEVELOPMENT AND DISPLACEMENT

Since the Land Acquisition Act (LAA), 1894 enacted during the colonial period remains in place; displacement remains arbitrary even today. It allows the State to displace people without their consent and without specifying the nature of the public purpose for doing so. Thus, it has been argued by many that the post-1947 thinking on development is not very different from the motive of the colonialist. Most post-Independence documents refer to India as a welfare state, however, in practice; most projects give priority to economic efficiency and do not give much importance to well-being of the people affected by them.

2.4.1 The Paradigm of Development

Indian leaders, many of whom were educated abroad, had seen the progress made by technologically advanced and industrialised countries in the West. They attributed this progress to technology alone. Some, like Jawaharlal Nehru, knew that industries had exploited their workers to reach this level of development. A few leaders, Mahatma Gandhi (1938) among them, were able to see that the western colonising nations had become rich by exploiting their colonies. Mahatma Gandhi therefore cautioned independent India against following the western pattern of development. He did not oppose industrialisation but only industrialism, i.e.
development based on the types of technology and consumption patterns that were expected to be beyond the reach of the majority. As Mahatma Gandhi stated, a small country like England colonised and impoverished half the world in order to let its citizens have a rich life. If a big country like India were to follow this path, it would impoverish many more. Many of his followers feared that since India did not have colonies, its middle class would impoverish the country’s poor to ensure their own comforts (Vyasulu 1998).

Many leaders and national planners viewed development mainly as economic growth. This thinking was prevalent in the Bombay Plan, 1945, which was prepared by a group of Indian entrepreneurs (Vyasulu 1998). It recommended that since the Indian private sector lacked resources to invest in infrastructure like steel and power, which would yield profits only in the long run, the infrastructure should be built by the State with the taxpayer’s money. The profitable consumer sector should be left to the private investor. This recommendation was accepted in 1956 as mixed economy and is reflected in the Second Five Year Plan, 1956-57 to 1960-61 (Planning Commission, 1956: para 16).

Thus, two types of thinking went into the development plans. The first is the profit of the private sector. Jawaharlal Nehru and P. C. Mahalanobis (the person behind the mixed economy) were convinced that technology was the main solution and since India was far behind the West, it should do in a few decades what had taken the West a century to do. They believed that by taking control of the essential areas of the economy, the State could introduce a social component into it. They hoped this would ensure that modernisation based on capital and sophisticated technology created jobs and solved social problems of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment, and that their benefits reached every Indian. Box 2.4 below details the mixed economy approach.

**Box 2.4: The Mixed Economy**

The Third Five Year Plan (April 1961 to March 1966) accepted this approach (Planning Commission 1961:10). As stated in its Approach paper No. 7 of the Third Plan (1961-62 to 1965-66), “India has an old traditional society rooted in thousands of years of history. Far reaching changes in social customs and institutions are necessary- and have been started- to build up a technically advanced society which offers more equal opportunities to all” (Planning Commission, 1961). In The Discovery of India, (1946:1964-65) Nehru wrote that he wanted a western type of industrialisation without the exploitation of workers and the dictatorship of the socialist countries. He added that to achieve it, India had to get rid of its superstitions and change its traditions in favour of modernisation. One can thus see that most freedom fighters had themselves internalised the values brought into the country by the colonial regime. The point of reference was the west. The effort was to catch up with the rich countries. Modernisation was a tool. But it was forgotten that India had an unequal society based on caste and gender differences. There are indications that modernisation, introduced without changing the unequal social system has benefited the middle and upper classes but poverty has increased and is growing further. The thinking behind national development (an approach which gives priority to economic growth and profit) remains more or less unchanged even today. Its main reason is that the focus of the private entrepreneurs was on profit. They wanted the public sector to provide power and raw material. Very few asked who pays and who gets the benefits.

Let us now probe further into the nature of displacement in the post-Independence period.

### 2.4.2 Features of Post-independence Displacement

Displacement has been further intensified since 1951, with the introduction of the first five year plan and since no official database exists, the number and types of DPs and PAPs is not known. India does not have a rehabilitation act or law therefore it is not possible to work out the exact nature of displacement in terms of numbers and types. We may however discuss in broad terms the following features of post-Independence displacement.

**i) Absence of a Reliable Database on the Number of DPs and PAPs and their Rehabilitation**

An unofficial study puts the number of DPs at a minimum of 21,300,000, between 1951 to 1990 (Fernandes 1998b: 231). Studies also show that most official figures are underestimates e.g. by official count, 100,000 people were displaced by the Hirakud dam while researchers put the figure at 180,000 (Pattanaik et al 1987). The estimates for Sriramsagar in Andhra Pradesh range from 200,000 to 240,000 DPs (Guggenheim 1990:14).

**ii) Very Low Percentage of Resettlement of DPs**

Less than a third of the DPs have been resettled (Fernandes 1998b: 231) partially. Three States, namely Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, have their own state laws and two i.e Orissa and Rajasthan have their own policies for the rehabilitation of water resource DPs. National Thermal Power Corporation
(NTPC) and Coal India promulgated their policies in the 1990s (Fernandes and Paranjpye 1997). The Central Government has been drafting one since 1985, and this process culminated in the Ministry of Rural Area and Employment preparing a draft national rehabilitation policy and the Land Acquisition (Amendments) Bill in 1998. The latter was meant to make land acquisition easier. Though there is no rehabilitation law till date the central government came out with a National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation for Project Affected Families in February 2004 and a draft policy in 2006. The acceptability of the national policy is highly debatable (see Unit 11 in Block 3).

iii) **Low or Negligible Awareness about the Problem of Displacement**
Despite the enormity of the problem, awareness about development induced displacement is low (refer to statistical and other data given in all the Units of Block 1 in MRR-101). The number of DPs and PAPs is estimated to be double the 15,000,000 figure, equivalent to which people exchanged borders between India and Pakistan in 1947. The fact that even while the sub-continent is yet to recover from the trauma of Partition refugees, double their number are losing their livelihood due to national development projects. This has not entered India’s consciousness (Mankodi 1989).

iv) **Backward Social Composition of DPs and PAPs**
Most DPs and PAPs are without any assets and consist of poor rural people like landless labourers and small or marginal farmers. Tribals, who are 8.2 per cent of the population, are estimated to be more than 40 per cent of the DPs and PAPs (refer particularly to the Units in Block 5). Another 16.2 per cent are Dalits and an unknown but large proportion of the rest belongs to other rural poor classes. The fact that most are powerless partially explains the absence of a policy or law (Fernandes 1998a: 251).

v) **Lack of Long-term Planning resulting in Multiple Displacements**
Many Rihand dam oustees of the early 1960s in the border area of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have been displaced several times in 30 years (see Jain 1995). The Soliga tribal DPs of the 1970s for the Kabini dam in Karnataka are threatened with displacement again because of the Rajiv Gandhi National Park. Many fishing families displaced by the New Mangalore Port in the 1960s and resettled as agriculturists were displaced again by the Konkan Railway in the 1980s after they had adapted themselves to farming. The main cause of multiple displacements is lack of regional planning (Ganguly Thukral 1992).

vi) **Non-quantifiability of Displacement-induced Suffering**
It is difficult to quantify the suffering caused by deprivation. Some PAPs from the economically better off groups, living in “advanced” districts, may improve their livelihood by getting a somewhat high price for their not very fertile and productive land. However, most tribals and Dalits experience financial, social and cultural deterioration. In every group, especially the marginalised, women pay the highest price following displacement (see Unit 21 in Block 6).

A conclusion emerging from the processes to date is that decision-makers plan financial and technical aspects of development projects meticulously. However, little or no effort is put in getting a clear idea of the living patterns and multiple needs of people affected in planning their resettlement. When resettlement is planned, the specificity of the problems faced by the marginalised groups, women and children is ignored. Planners do not collect information on the DPs and PAPs, crucial for minimising displacement, planning rehabilitation and for an accurate cost-benefit analysis.

There are indications that the introduction of modernisation processes in India, without a change in the unequal social system, has primarily benefited middle and upper classes while poverty has increased and is growing further with globalisation. For a discussion on this aspect see Unit 1. The thinking behind national development remains more or less unchanged even today. The main reason is the focus of the private entrepreneurs and policy makers on profit. As mentioned earlier, they wanted public sector infrastructure to provide power and raw material, and there was little thinking about the social components, especially for who pays for what and who gets the benefits.

**Check Your Progress 2**

i) Point out the key difference between Gandhi and Nehru in their approaches to development in India.

ii) Briefly list the six features of post-Independence Displacement.

After gaining information about the general patterns of development advocated by various prominent leaders, let us now look at the various projects into which the concept of development has been channelised.
2.4.3 Types of Projects Resulting from the Paradigm

The thinking about the pattern of development, as it developed in India during the latter half of the twentieth century, resulted in industrial projects based on sophisticated technology. Priority was given to massive dams like Hirakud in Orissa, Nagarjuna Sagar and Tungabhadra in Andhra Pradesh, Bhakra Nangal in Himachal Pradesh and Damodar Valley in Jharkhand. Others included steel plants, heavy electricals, machine tools etc. Given the thinking behind them, Nehru declared at the inauguration of Hirakud dam that such projects were “the temples of modern India”. Map 2.1 shows India’s major river valley projects.

Map 2.1: The Indian Subcontinent, Important River Valley Projects

Infrastructure was undoubtedly needed to give shape to gigantic projects. Western colonising nations could afford extensive use of these resources because much of their raw material was brought from colonies. India, a thickly populated country, does not have much land to spare, and since the focus of development activities is on economic growth, the social sector continues to be neglected. As a result, little attention has been paid to the consequences of economic growth-oriented development activities, which are causing large scale displacement of peoples, particularly of those living in rural and tribal areas. Let us now look at the broad patterns of displacement.

2.4.4 Types of Displacement

There are in evidence, the following forms of displacement caused by various factors:

i) People, who migrate away from their home voluntarily in search of employment or better prospects, are called voluntary migrants.

ii) People, who are forced to move out of their habitat by wars and civil unrest, are known as refugees. For example, around 15 million persons migrated from India to Pakistan or from Pakistan to India during the partition of the South Asian sub-continent into India and Pakistan in 1947. They can be termed as refugees.
iii) Natural or human made disasters force many to leave their land like those who left Bhopal because of the gas disaster in the Union Carbide factory. People also had to move out of their region because of the Latur and Gujarat earthquake, the Orissa super-cyclone and floods or droughts elsewhere. This group is known as disaster refugees.

iv) Many people leave their land when they lose their livelihood due to changes introduced in the economy in their areas. Those deprived of their livelihood by British economic policies have already been mentioned. In recent decades, lakhs of traditional fishing families were affected when trawlers were allowed in shallow waters with no limits. Millions of tribals have lost their livelihood to deforestation. Dalit shoe-makers have been rendered jobless by the introduction of rubber slippers and shoes. These are known as process displaced persons.

v) Persons deprived of their livelihood when their lands and other assets are acquired for development projects are known as displaced persons (referred to as DPs) and project affected people (referred to as PAPs). DPs are those who are displaced due to land displacement, and PAPs are people whose livelihood is alienated from them though they may remain where they are.

vi) Of late the definition of displacement has been broadened and now apart from above mentioned categories; the forced displacement also include: (i) Restricted access to certain protected areas and (ii) Beyond geographical relocation, it also dislocation of people (Cernea, 2000) includes occupational and economic.

To narrow down the scope of our concerns, this Programme deals only with displaced persons (DPs) and project affected people (PAPs), brought to their present state by development projects. Voluntary or involuntary migrants, war and disaster refugees and process-induced DPs are excluded from the scope of the Programme of Study on Participatory Management of Development, Resettlement and Rehabilitation. This is not to say that rehabilitation strategies followed in the case of development-induced displaced persons do not or cannot apply in the case of other types of displacement. Certainly, some of these strategies may also be useful for rehabilitating natural disaster affected displaced populations. The displacing projects are planned, and therefore it is possible for project officials to prevent its negative impacts on the DPs and PAPs while in other cases of displacement, there is little scope for planning in advance. All the same in practice, little attention is paid to the processes of resettlement and rehabilitation even in the cases of planned projects because the projects focus on economic efficiency and not on those people who are paying the price. As those who are sacrificing a substantial part of their assets, they need to be recognised as stakeholders in development projects. Let us see who are these people? (How to identify DPs and PAPs, read Unit 25 in MRR-103).

2.4.5 Who are the Displaced Persons (DPs) and Project Affected Persons (PAPs)?

i) The displaced persons or DPs are those who are forced to move out of their land when the development projects require acquisition of their homesteads.

ii) The project affected persons or PAPs are those who lose their livelihood and/or assets fully or partially without being displaced. In some cases, their individual land is acquired and in others, the common property resources (CPRs) like forests, fishing grounds etc., which are their livelihoods are acquired.

iii) In other cases disposal of waste affects land fertility, health etc. Some of the most common examples include the ash ponds of thermal plants, red mud ponds to store contaminated water produced by aluminum plants, waste from cement plants etc. which lay the land around them waste. This often deprives the dependants on such land of their livelihood and forces them to move out. These people are indirect DPs (Ganguly Thukral 1999).

Check Your Progress 3

i) List the five types of displacement of people. Which type of displacement are we referring to in this Programme?

ii) What do you understand by the terms PAPs and DPs?

2.5 THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF DPs AND PAPs

The freedom fighters used the Mulshi-Peta Struggle to oppose the colonialist. Nevertheless, as the discussion on the development paradigm shows, they had themselves internalised the colonial value system including eminent domain. Therefore, when the freedom fighters of yesteryears became decision-makers, they continued to use the colonial law to displace people in the name of national development. Hence, there has been greater
displacement and many more struggles after 1947 than before it. Let us now try to get a clearer picture of the magnitude of displacement, which has occurred in terms of land and the people affected.

2.5.1 An Estimate of Land Acquired

Studies in progress point towards acquisition of around 5.0 per cent of land for development works in States. By this count, more than 1,50,000 sq. km of land may have been taken over for development projects between 1951-1995. More than half of this is estimated to be private, and the rest being forests and other CPRs, which are the sustenance of the poor. Studies indicate that during 1951-1995 in Orissa, about 1,000,000 hectares of land was acquired (Fernandes and Asif 1997) and in Andhra Pradesh a little over that (Fernandes et al 2001). This is more than 5 per cent of each of these State’s landmass. In Goa, about 3.5 per cent of its land was acquired during 1965-1995. This is in addition to the more than 11 per cent of Goa’s landmass, which has been under mining leases before its integration with India in 1961(Fernandes and Naik 1999). In Kerala, the total land acquired during 1951-1995 is a little over 3.0 per cent of the State’s land mass (Muricken et al 2003). During the period 2003-04 alone a total land mass of 984 acres of land was acquired by the Development authority in the city of Bangalore for the development of residential schemes and as well as infrastructural schemes. Box 2.5 below shows that more land than required is acquired for development projects.

Box 2.5: Is so much acquisition required?

In many cases, more land than required is acquired. For example, Burla town near Sambalpur is built on excess land acquired for the Hirakud dam. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) in the Medak district of Andhra Pradesh handed over some of its excess land to the massive research institute, ICRISAT. About two-thirds of the land acquired for the MIG-HAL Plant at Sunabeda, Koraput district of Orissa in 1966, is lying unused. The 468 displaced families, mostly tribal, have not been resettled nor has the land been afforested. According to a report, some of it is being sold to a private party at a high profit.

(Source: Fernandes et al 2001)

2.5.2 An Estimate of the Number of People Affected

Land acquisition has deprived several lakhs of families of their livelihoods. However, there is no reliable database on the displaced in India. Table 2.1, which has been compiled from secondary data, gives an estimate of displaced persons as 21,300,000 during 1951-1990, 16,500,000 of them by water resource schemes alone. At present, the overall numbers of displaced probably exceeds 30,000,000 overall (this number refers to all categories of projects i.e. water resources, mines, industries, transport, wildlife sanctuaries etc.).

Table 2.1: A Conservative Estimate of DPs and PAPs, 1951-1990 (in lakhs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Dams</th>
<th>Mines</th>
<th>Industries</th>
<th>Wildlife</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total in Lakhs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All DPs in Lakhs</td>
<td>164.00</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>06.00</td>
<td>05.00</td>
<td>213.00</td>
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<td>77.00</td>
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<td>05.90</td>
<td>02.80</td>
<td>02.30</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resettled</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>06.30</td>
<td>03.75</td>
<td>01.25</td>
<td>01.50</td>
<td>53.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of DPs</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>24.70</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>20.80</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back log in Lakhs</td>
<td>123.00</td>
<td>19.20</td>
<td>08.75</td>
<td>04.75</td>
<td>03.50</td>
<td>159.20</td>
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<td>% of DPs</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>75.30</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>79.20</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal DPs in Lakhs</td>
<td>63.21</td>
<td>13.30</td>
<td>03.13</td>
<td>04.50</td>
<td>01.25</td>
<td>85.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of All DPs</td>
<td>38.50</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resettled</td>
<td>15.81</td>
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<td>00.80</td>
<td>01.00</td>
<td>00.25</td>
<td>21.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Tribal DPs</td>
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<td>25.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back log</td>
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<td>10.00</td>
<td>02.33</td>
<td>03.50</td>
<td>01.00</td>
<td>64.23</td>
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<td>% of DPs</td>
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<td>75.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>78.00</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Fernandes 1994: 24 and 32)
The studies completed until now show that the figures in Table 2.1 are underestimates. For example, the figure of 600,000 DPs and PAPs from park and sanctuary projects all over India is deceptive because studies have shown that while very few people are displaced, many are deprived of their livelihoods. According to Ashish Kothari (1999), DPs from parks and sanctuaries cannot have crossed a figure of 100,000, but the PAPs may exceed 300,000. In Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, studies (Kothari 1999) indicate that there are more than 100,000 PAPs for each of the parks and sanctuaries. The figure of 1,250,000 DPs and PAPs from industrial projects till 1990 can be compared with the findings that indicate that Orissa had more than 158,000 DPs and PAPs between 1951-1995, while Andhra Pradesh had over 500,000. Studies (Kothari 1999) indicate that the all-India estimate of 500,000 for the “others” category is also grossly underestimated. There were at least 35,000 people in Goa, 100,000 in Orissa and 192,000 in Andhra Pradesh, who were deprived by projects like transport, educational institutions and government offices, which are included in the “others” category.

Therefore, the actual number of DPs and PAPs is much higher than above estimates based on secondary data. Till date, the estimated numbers of DPs and PAPs has reached a figure of more than 3,200,000 in Andhra Pradesh, 1,500,000 in Orissa and 60,000 in Goa. This is 4 per cent higher than the DPs and PAPs population in 1991. To put the situation in a different perspective, the biggest numbers were displaced before 1970 and hence the DPs and PAPs in those decades would have been a much bigger proportion of the overall population.

It is also important to know about the social composition of the DPs and PAPs, which is discussed next.

### 2.5.3 Preponderance of Dalits and Tribals among the DPs and PAPs

Studies confirm that Dalits and tribals have suffered the most. In Table 2.1, the estimate for tribals among the DPs and PAPs has been calculated at 40 per cent. In Andhra Pradesh, while tribals comprise a little over 6 per cent of the State’s population, they are 27 per cent of the total number of DPs and PAPs. In Orissa, the tribals are 22 per cent of the population while they comprise 42 per cent of the DPs and PAPs. Even in Kerala, where tribals comprise a little over 1 per cent of the population, they are a majority amongst the DPs and PAPs for large projects like the Idukky Hydel dam. Similar is the case for the Kabini dam in Karnataka. Thus, whether the overall tribal population of a State is small or large, their proportion amongst the DPs and PAPs is very high.

Dalits are around 16 per cent of the Indian population but 20 per cent of the DPs and PAPs. It is not easy to get the number of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) since until recently they were put in the general category. However, the scanty data available indicate that they may be 30 per cent of the DPs and PAPs, mostly from the weakest categories like the fishing community. That, for example, is the case of the Sriharikota rocket launching range and the Simhadri thermal plant in Andhra Pradesh (Fernandes et al 2001). See in Box 2.6 the implications of preponderance of Dalits and tribals among the DPs and PAPs.

### Box 2.6: Special Implications for Dalits and Tribals

The tribal and Dalit DPs and PAPs are underestimated, and are often robbed of their identity. The LAA recognises only patta holders. The official documents give only their number. A very large number of tribals, for example those deprived by the Dalli Rajhara mines in the Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh, have traditionally had forests and other CPRs as their sustenance. Most Dalits are landless labourers, who live by rendering services to the village as a community. Being without a patta, neither group is counted among the DPs and PAPs. The big difference between the official and research figures for Hirakud seems to be because the latter counted also the landless (Fernandes and Asif 1997). When their figures are available, one sees that big proportions of the DPs of private land are Dalits or tribals. For example, Dalits are 43 per cent of the DPs of the Nedumbassery airport in Thiruvananthapuram (Muricken et al, 2003). Therefore, it may be safely concluded that the real proportion of Dalits among the DPs and PAPs is probably around 30 per cent.

### 2.5.4 The Numbers Resettled

Though the numbers deprived of their livelihood in the name of national development are enormous, very few have been resettled. In Andhra Pradesh, a little over 26 per cent of the DPs have been resettled partially, in Orissa around 33 per cent and in Goa about 40 per cent. In Kerala, fewer than twenty projects had a rehabilitation policy. The assumption in Kerala is that the compensation paid, which is higher than elsewhere, should be considered rehabilitation. Hence one can conclude that not more than 30 per cent of the DPs have been resettled till now.
Studies and experience show that the quality of resettlement is poor and that it does not lead to rehabilitation of the DPs and PAPs. Some, like NTPC and Coal India, give some jobs to their DPs. Semi-skilled and skilled jobs are given to those who already possess skills. However, the projects which displace people, do not prepare them for the new jobs or occupations. Persons from the dominant groups usually possess the skills required for the projects. Those without access to education are left out. NTPC gives priority to patta holders for jobs in the Project. The landless have to be satisfied with self-employment schemes. Some coal subsidiaries stipulate that those who lose three acres of land shall be given a job per family. In some parts of Jharkhand, it has been reduced to two acres if the person is a matriculate. These clauses go against the vulnerable people. Usually, only boys from the dominant classes reach the matriculation level in rural areas of the coal regions. Consequently, Dalits, tribals and women, even from the dominant classes, are excluded (BJA and NBJK 1993).

Besides the disadvantages already mentioned, a majority of DPs who are poor have little or less contact with the formal sector than most other citizens, are pushed into a new economy without much preparation. For example, a large number of DPs employed by the Rourkela Steel Plant were dismissed for indiscipline, drunken behavior or lack of punctuality. These people were earlier living in an informal agricultural economy with a totally different understanding of time. Displacement pushed them into a new economy without any preparation and they were unable to cope with the new changes. Drunkenness is often a mode of coping with the trauma linked to forced displacement and to the inability to cope with the new economy. It is therefore well known that if care is not taken, the resettlement and rehabilitation packages of development projects become nominal relief, and are not steps towards rehabilitation (Fernandes and Raj 1992).

2.5.5 What Happens to the Rest?

More than two thirds of the DPs are not resettled at all. Their situation is worse than that of those who get such nominal facilities. For example, the Supreme Court appointed Ombudsmen (including the Unit writer) found that out of around 150,000 labourers constructing the stadium and other facilities for the Asiad Village in New Delhi in 1982, 30 to 40 thousand were slave labourers, lured to Delhi by labour contractors with promises of sending them to Baghdad. It is believed that once the labourers were in Delhi, they lived in slave-like conditions without much hope of returning to their families. When asked why they followed the labour contractors, the labourers told the Ombudsmen that they had lost their livelihood to deforestation by industry or due to displacement. Thus impoverished, they fell in the labour contractors’ trap.

This is but one of many such cases. The Heavy Electrical Corporation (HEC) at Hatia, near Ranchi, has consumed its capital because of recurring losses, and is now a strain on the national exchequer. It is also known that HEC has not yet resettled its DPs, who are mostly tribal. Some of these DPs are now cycle-rickshaw-pullers in Ranchi, Hatia and elsewhere. A large number of brick kilns in Bihar, UP and elsewhere depend on their work. Many end up as bonded labourers. Because of their powerlessness, many of them also lose all hope of improving themselves and of attaining freedom from this state. Thus, the weak become totally powerless.

2.6 FUTURE TRENDS IN DISPLACEMENT

This situation of development projects resulting in DPs and PAPs should be understood in the context of liberalisation. The process of liberalisation involves having the profit seeking private sector in control of the economy. At the same time, the private sector expects the State to acquire land and hand it over to private enterprises. Therefore, the State takes it for granted that more land will be acquired as an integral part of liberalisation. Hence, displacement should be taken for granted. For example, the 1994 draft policy of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, begins by stating,

With the advent of the New Economic Policy, it is expected that there will be large scale investments, both on account of internal generation of capital and increased inflow of foreign investments, thereby creating an enhanced demand for land to be provided within a shorter time-span in an increasingly competitive market ruled economic structure. Majorities of India’s mineral resources are located in the remote and backward areas mostly inhabited by tribals (MRD 1994:1.1-2 as given in Fernandes and Paranjpye 1997).

The above statement is taken seriously as confirmed when under instructions from the Committee of Secretaries, the Ministry of Rural Area and Employment, which had formulated the National policy for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons (NPRR, 1998), also drafted the Land Acquisition Bill (LAB, 1998) to make acquisition easier than in the past. The LAB contradicts most principles enunciated in the draft of NPRR, 1998. While the draft policy recognised the need to rehabilitate people, the Land Acquisition Bill (LAB, 1998) only puts rehabilitation in the statute book by saying that where a law exists, those entitled to rehabilitation, should stake their claim to it. The District Collector will decide on its nature
and deduct its cost from the compensation. The draft policy of NPRR, 1998, includes among the DPs and PAPs only those who own assets three years before the notification under section 4.1 of LAA but extends it to all the direct and indirect dependants of the land acquired. The Bill includes those who own assets on the day of the notification and restricts it to *patta* owners. Taking the date of the notification facilitates spread of gossip by exploiters who hear about the project in advance and motivate the people to sell their land at a low price by instilling fear in them. The policy wants replacement value for compensation. The Bill limits it to market value. One can summarise LAB 1998 by saying that it takes away the few rights the DPs and PAPs have under the LAA (Fernandes 1998 b). See Box 2.7 to find out why implication of LAB 1998 are quite serious and worrying for DPs and PAPs.

**Box 2.7: Land Acquisition and Liberalisation Policy**

The trend of acquiring land as an integral part of liberalisation policy is visible in many States. For example, Orissa acquired about 40,000 hectares for industry between 1951-1995. The future development trends point towards about 100,000 hectares being acquired in the next 10 or 15 years (Fernandes and Asif 1997: 103-105). During the next decade, Andhra Pradesh will acquire for industry, almost the same area of land as acquired during 1951-1995 (Fernandes et al. 2001). The situation is worse in Goa where about 7 per cent of the State’s landmass is expected to be acquired during the next decade.  

(Source: Fernandes and Naik 1999)

Recently, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, through its Department of Land Resources has formulated a National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation for Project Affected Families (2004) which has been discussed in detail in Unit 11.

**Check Your Progress 4**

i) Mention at least four aspects of inadequate resettlement practices of DPs and PAPs of independent India.

ii) What would be the estimate of the total number of DPs/PAPs till the end of the 1990s?

iii) What are the major implications of displacement due to development projects for the Dalits and tribal, especially women?

iv) What are some of the implications of liberalisation from the point of view of land acquisition and displacement?

### 2.7 LET US SUM UP

We have learnt in this Unit about the background of development-induced displacement and related deprival of livelihood. The problems began before independence but were intensified because of planned development. In addition, the nature of displacement has changed from process induced to direct loss of livelihood. Although displacement is massive, consciousness about it is low. Rehabilitation has been neglected in most projects. Only about a third of the DPs have been resettled even partially.

The main reason for it is the pattern of development chosen. It is based on technology and capital intensive model to which the exploitation of colonies was basic. Neither India has such sources of raw materials nor does it plan for sustainable development projects. Therefore, modernisation has resulted in the resources of the poor being transferred to middle and upper classes, and in greater poverty of the powerless. Liberalisation demands more land than in the past, so greater displacement is likely to result as its impact. Without a social thrust it will mean greater poverty than in the past.

### 2.8 CUES TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Check Your Progress 1**

i) Due to displacement, the landless agricultural labourers were impoverished and turned into cheap labour. Another consequence was their transportation abroad as indentured labourers.

ii) This problem got intensified in the colonial age because the British turned India into a supplier of raw material and capital to support the industrial revolution in Britain and made India a captive market for its finished products. This policy required more and more land to grow raw materials, their transport etc.

iii) Many new laws were passed to make land acquisition easy. The manufacturing industries were forced to close down and this process impoverished a large number of Indians. According to Dadabhai Naoroji, 35 million persons lost their livelihood as a result of the changes introduced by the British colonial rulers and the Indians were transported abroad as indentured labour, in slave like conditions.

iv) The process of enacting the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 began with the Permanent Settlement, 1793, meant to get the zamindars to collect land tax on behalf of the British. Then came the Assam Land Act,
1834, aimed at getting land at a very low price for the tea estates in that State. The Calcutta law of 1824 and a few other laws were aimed at making land acquisition easy for purposes like salt pans and mines. These laws culminated into the Land Acquisition Act, 1894.

Check Your Progress 2
i) Nehru greatly stressed on technology and industrialism while Gandhi cautioned against an excess of industrialisation.

ii) The six features are namely,
   a) the lack of a comprehensive database of the displaced and rehabilitated people,
   b) much lesser number of resettled DPs,
   c) widespread ignorance about the problem of displacement,
   d) wide range of social strata to which the DPs and PAPs belong to,
   e) multiple displacement arising from the absence of long term planning, and finally
   f) the near impossibility of measuring the pain and distress of the displacement affected people.

Check Your Progress 3
i) One can discuss the following types of displaced persons.
   a) Those who move out of their home voluntarily are migrants,
   b) Wars and civil unrest force some to leave their home they are called refugees,
   c) Others are forced out of their home by natural or human made disasters like the gas tragedy of Bhopal, the Gujarat earthquake and the Orissa super-cyclone. They are disaster refugees,
   d) Economic changes like introduction of new technology force some others to abandon their homes. That is process-induced displacement,
   e) Some are displaced or deprived of their livelihood by planned development. We are concerned with this category while studying the courses of PGCMRR,
   f) displaced denied access to protected areas, and
   g) economically and occupationally displaced persons.

ii) The PAPs are those who lose their livelihood fully or partially without being displaced. DPs are those who are forced to move out of their land and homes due to development projects being set up on the land.

Check Your Progress 4
i) The first aspect is that resettlement often does not provide the affected people with new jobs thus rendering them with no means of earning their livelihood. Secondly, the jobs demand certain skills, which are usually possessed by the dominant and educated groups only. Thirdly, sometimes, jobs are provided in relation to the extent of land lost and thus dalits, tribals and women even from the dominant social sections get sidelined. Fourthly, often displacement pushes the DPs into a new economy, which they are unable to cope with, leading to trauma, drunkeness etc.

ii) Studies put the number of DPs/ PAPs at more than 32 lakhs in AP, 15 lakhs in Orissa and similar figures else where. Based on these and other studies one can make an estimate of at least 400 lakh DPs/ PAPs Dalits and tribal people being displaced during the period, 1991-1995.

iii) Very few of the displaced Dalits and tribals own land. So often they are not counted among the DPs/ PAPs and are not entitled even to compensation. The proportion of persons resettled is lower among them than the other categories of displaced persons. Being less in contact with the world outside than the others do, they are unable to begin a new life if they are not rehabilitated. So impoverishment is greater among them than among the others.

iv) It is assumed that for liberalisation to be successful, more land than in the past, will have to be acquired. So liberalisation policy takes greater displacement than in the past for granted. The Land Acquisition Act, 1894, is being amended to make acquisition easier as per proposed Land Acquisition Bill of 1998. The National Rehabilitation Policy adopted in 2004, which does not spell out any mechanism to improve the standard of living of the displaced, gives little hope whatsoever regarding the minimisation of displacement. So liberalisation likely to result in more displacement and greater poverty.

2.9 GLOSSARY

CPRs: Common property resources like forests, pastures and other assets on which many rural communities sustain themselves without having a patta.
Dalits: Those whom Mahatma Gandhi called Harijans are commonly referred to as Scheduled Castes. However, they prefer to call themselves Dalits. The term stands for those who are suppressed and subjugated but have a sense of dignity and want to free themselves from the oppression they experience in their life.

DPs: Persons who are forced to leave their habitat when their homestead is acquired for development projects.

Indirect DPs: Persons forced to move out of their home because of new diseases or loss of land fertility caused by environmental degradation or waste disposal caused by the project.

Mulshi-Peta Struggle: This was the first known instance of organised protest against displacement. The Tata Group of industries planned to construct a series of dams, which would have led to the submergence of fifty-two villages of Mulshi Mahal in Pune district. The affected peasants belonging to the Malva community launched the Mulshi Satyagraha (1918-1922) to protest against this project. This struggle failed to achieve its goal.

PAPs: Persons who lose their land or other livelihood, for example, the possibility of fishing in the sea when the resource on which they live, is taken over by the project, but their homestead is not acquired. Therefore, they are not physically relocated.

Process Displaced: Livelihood. For example, a fishing net factory in Kanyakumari district has forced 10,000 traditional net weaving women out of their job. Many of them are forced into new unfamiliar areas and occupations.

Refugees: Persons who are forced to move out of their home by wars, communal conflicts, civil unrest or by natural or human made disasters.

### 2.10 REFERENCES


Upadhyaya, Sanjay and Bhavani Raman 1998. *Land Acquisition and Public Purpose*. The Other Media: New Delhi
