

8 November 2008

Dear Mr Ahmed,

Many thanks to you and your team for inviting me to the upcoming safeguards policy consultation in Manilla. (I had prepared and planned to attend these but have also changed the organisation I was working for. I am now a full time employee of Oxfam GB Pakistan Programme. This ,as Ms Maria Laurito, points out does not entitle me for support (travel and accomodation) to attend the consultation.) I shall not be able to join after all.

However, I as part of the civil society in Pakistan, a member of the Women's Action Forum, Islamabad and HRD Network- all which are non governmental forums and networks working for women and development, I would like to point out some issues which should be brought up in the consultations:

1. In line with the ADB gender policy, please allow more focus on gender / power relations and equity issues in the safeguards.
2. Gender analysis and strategies for changing unequal gender relations and women's access to resources should be promoted. For instance, if compensations for involuntary displacement are registered as joint assets ( where a family is being displaced), it would reduce the chances of women / wives being abandoned by husbands who have recently come into 'new assets'. This would be extremely important since Pakistan is moving ahead with some major infrastructure projects in the future such as the Bhasha Dam in the north. My suggestion is based on civil society experiences in Pakistan relating to the resettlement at Ghazi Barotha where women substantially gained in terms of decision making as well as position within the community and family once they were able to control new assets along with thier husbands.
3. The issue of free and fair 'consent' should be promoted along with consultation.
4. M&E is crucial from the onset to the end of the project, particularly for assessing the impact of displacement *on women and the vulnerable*.
5. Civil society organisations should be made part of the process of planning, monitoring and consultations for any displacement. resettlement related work.

Many thanks agains for the support provided.

Regards

Ayesha