



## STATE DEVELOPMENT AND DISPLACEMENT: A STUDY OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS IN TELANGANA STATE

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### Abstract

Post Independence in India has created the need for development in various sectors and this phenomenon has created the scope for development resulting into displacement. Especially, the development of irrigation projects in India with special reference to Telangana State show the evidence that in most of the cases, the development has induced the displacement. In this paper, an attempt is made to conceptually understanding the development and displacement. Further, the study is aimed to analyse the irrigation projects in Telangana. An attempt is made to review the problems faced by the people in the project affected areas of Kaleshwaram Project in Telangana State. The study is descriptive in nature which is prepared from secondary sources of data.

**Key Words:** Displacement, Migration, PAP, Rehabilitation, Resettlement.

### 1. Introduction

Since India's independence in 1947, there has been a surge of economic development activities in the form of massive infrastructure development projects such as the construction of dams for power and irrigation, the building of roads, urbanization, mining, building of thermal power plants, etc. Proponents of large dams argue that only these types of massive projects can improve India's economy and the lives of millions of people. But the flip side of this sort of development is that it has displaced more than 42 million people in the country.

Dams for irrigation and hydropower are a major cause of such forced displacement. World over “approximately fifteen million people each year are forced to leave their homes following big development projects.” The poorest and most marginalized people are generally hit the hardest by displacement, most often without adequate compensation. Many displaced families have been displaced three or four times. “In India, 50 million people have been displaced in the last 50 years in the name of “national interest”.

### 2. Conceptual overview of Development induced Displacement

Development means making a better life for everyone. A better life for most people means, essentially, meeting basic needs. Development results in sufficient food to maintain good health, a safe healthy place to live and affordable services available to everyone and treated with dignity and respect. Development is a process that creates growth, progress, positive change in economic, environmental, social and demographic component without damaging the resources of the environment. According to Amartyasen, Nobel Laureate, “Development as a tool enabling people to reach the highest level of their ability, through granting freedom of action, i.e., freedom of economic, social and family actions, etc”. The term development has been used in quite different ways; first to differentiate two broad types of societies 1. The prosperous industrial society 2. All those societies which are predominantly rural agricultural and poor. Secondly, the term development is also used to describe the process of industrialization or modernization.



Development-induced displacement and resettlement (DIDR) occurs when people are forced to leave their homes in a development-driven form of forced migration. Historically, it has been associated with the construction of dams for hydroelectric power and irrigation, but it can also result from various development projects such as mining, agriculture, the creation of military installations, airports, industrial plants, weapon testing grounds, railways, road developments, urbanization, conservation projects, and forestry.

Development-induced displacement is a social problem affecting multiple levels of human organization, from tribal and village communities to well-developed urban areas. Development is widely viewed as an inevitable step towards modernization and economic growth in developing countries; however, for those who are displaced, the end result is most often loss of livelihood and impoverishment. Classification of development-induced displaced persons (DIDPs), refugees and internally displaced persons rests on fundamental differences in the type of assistance provided to each category.

Refugees and internally displaced persons typically need international protection and assistance as a result of fleeing violence and persecution. Development-induced displaced persons require the restoration of their capacity to generate income and protection from the state. While people displaced as a result of development have similar experiences to refugees (as defined by the UNHCR) in terms of economic and social loss, they are not protected by international law.

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 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 aluminium 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.

The meaning of displacement has come to be more or less taken for granted, particularly in most academic literature. It is very important to understand that displacement is a multidimensional phenomenon of which physical relocation is only one of the most significant outcomes. The movement can be either internal or international, and is often permanent, though some possibilities of return might exist in certain cases.

In this context, displacement refers not only to those who are forced to physically relocate in order to make way for the project and its related aspects, but also includes those who are displaced from their resource base and livelihoods. It is commonly experienced through the loss of land and the disruption of social and economic relationships (Bartolome et al 1999). By contrast, resettlement is a population movement planned directly by the government or private developers, where an area is chosen in order to resettle the population. The choice can be made after discussion with the affected populations, but can also be imposed upon them.



Resettlement can also involve the payment of some compensation for the affected populations. Displacement has become an outcome of modern developmental process worldwide. Displacement of people from their habitat occurs almost in all countries due to development projects. No precise data exists on the number of persons affected by development-induced displacement throughout the world. For an indication of magnitude, most scholars, policy-makers, and activists rely on the World Bank Environment Department's (WBED) Report.

As estimated by the World Bank, on an average 300 large dams that enter into construction every year displace 4 million people. The Urban development and transportation program that starts each year in developing countries is estimated to displace an additional 6 million people (World Bank, 1994). The overall global level of physical displacement could range from 40 to 80 million people worldwide. In India indigenous peoples have disproportionately been the victims of development and conflicts. While by 2001 they constituted 8.2% of the total population, they comprised 55.1% of the 8.54 million persons displaced in India by development projects and conflicts between 1950 and 1990.

### 3. Overview of Telangana State

Telangana is the 29th state of India, formed on the 2nd of June 2014. The state has an area of 1,12,077 Sq. Km. and has a population of 3,52,86,757. The Telangana region was part of the Hyderabad state from Sept 17th 1948 to Nov 1st 1956, until it was merged with Andhra state to form the Andhra Pradesh state. After decades of movement for a separate State, Telangana was created by passing the AP State Reorganization Bill in both houses of Parliament. Telangana is surrounded by Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh in the North, Karnataka in the West and Andhra Pradesh in the South and East directions. Major cities of the state include Hyderabad, Warangal, Nizamabad and Karimnagar.

At current prices, Telangana's gross state domestic product (GSDP) was estimated at Rs. 13.04 trillion (US\$ 167.82 billion) in 2022-23BE. The state's GSDP increased at a CAGR of 12.33% between 2015-16 and 2022-23BE. Tertiary sector has been the largest sector, growing at a CAGR of 11.70% (in rupee terms) between 2011-12 and 2020-21, accounting for 59.31% share of the overall GSDP.

### 4. Objectives

The paper critically focuses on the following objectives.

- 1 To study the status of Irrigation projects in Telangana State.
- 2 To analyse the problems and prospects in Kaleshwaram project from the perspectives of Project affected people.

The study further presents the key observations in the form of conclusions of the study.

### 5. Methodology of the Study

The study is based on Descriptive Research Design. The perception of the people from project affected areas are restricted to secondary sources of data. The required data is collected from the reports of Ministry of Irrigation & CAD, Government of Telangana, WIRE Report, journals, articles and web references.

### 6. Irrigation Projects in Telangana State

Telangana region has a rich heritage of cultivation and irrigation dating back to several centuries. In the past, rulers paid a good deal of attention to the development of irrigation in their kingdoms for the



benefit of their subjects. Big lakes like Ramappa, Pakhal, Laknavaram and many other irrigation works of Kakatiya period have become names to remember.

The Mir Alam Tank is the finest example for arched dams. Hussain Sagar, Ghanapur Anicut across the Manjira with two canals called Fathenahar and Mahaboobnagar Projects, Pocharam lake, Osmansagar, Himayatsagar, Nizamsagar Project, Mannair Project, Dindi Project, Palair Project, Wyra Project and Sarlasagar Projects are some of the magnificent contributions of the eminent Engineers of Hyderabad State under Nawab Ali Nawaz Jung Bahadur during the Nizam's kingdom in the Telangana Region.

**Table-1: Classification of Irrigation Projects in Telangna**

<b>Major Project</b>	:	Ayacut above 25000 Acres (10,000 ha.)
<b>Medium Project</b>	:	Ayacut above 5000 Acres (2000 ha) & upto 25000 Acres ( 10000 ha.)
<b>Minor Project</b>	:	Ayacut upto 5000 Acres (2000 ha)

Source: Reports of Ministry of Irrigation projects, Government of Telangana

The Government of Telangana has focused much on development of irrigation projects. The following are list of projects which are completed and ongoing stage in the state of Telangana.

**Table-2: Status of Major Projects in Telangana State**

Sl.No.	Major Projects (Completed)	Major Projects (ongoing)
1.	Kadam Narayana Reddy Project	Dr BR Ambedkar Pranahitha Project
2.	M. Baga Reddy Singur Project	Indiramma Flood Flow Canal
3.	Musi Project	Kaleshwaram Project
4.	NagarjunaSagar Project	Lower Penganga
5.	NizamSagar Project	P.V.Narasimha Rao Kanthanapally Sujala Sravanthi
6.	Priyadarshini Jurala Project	SripadaSagar (Yellampally) LIS
7.	Rajolibanda Diversion Scheme	SriramSagar Project Stage – II
8.	Sri Ram Sagar Project Stage – I	

Source: Reports of Ministry of Irrigation projects, Government of Telangana

Table-2 presents the status of major projects of Telangana Stage. As per the data, a total of 8 major projects have been completed and 7 projects under major project category are in developing stage.

The status of medium irrigation projects is presented in table-3.



**Table-3: Status of Medium Projects in Telangana State**

Sl.No.	Medium Projects (Completed)	Medium Projects (Ongoing)
1.	Asif Nahar Project	Lendi Project
2.	Bayyaram Tank	Modikuntavagu project
3.	Boggulavagu Project	Nilwai Project
4.	Chelmlavagu Project	Palemvagu project
5.	Dindi Project	Peddavagu near Jehannathapur
6.	GaddenaSuddavagu Project	Sri KomaramBheem Project
7.	GhanapurAnicut	
8.	Gollavagu Project	
9.	Kinnerasani Project	
10.	Koilsagar Project	
11.	Kotpally Project	
12.	KoulasNala Project	
13.	Lakhnaram Lake	
14.	Lankasagar Project	
15.	Mallurvagu Project	
16.	Mathadivagu Project	
17.	Nallavagu Project	
18.	Pakhal Lake	
19.	Peddavagu project	
20.	Pocharam Project	
21.	PP Rao Project (Yerravagu)	
22.	Ralivagu project	
23.	Ramadugu project	
24.	Ramappa Lake	
25.	Sathnala Project	
26.	Shanigaram Project	
27.	Swarna Project	
28.	Talipru project	
29.	Upper Manairproject	
30.	Vattivagu project	
31.	Wyra project	

Source: Reports of Ministry of Irrigation projects, Government of Telangana.

Under medium irrigation projects category, it is noticed that, a total of 31 projects were completed and another 6 projects are in developing stage. Under minor irrigation projects category, a total of 46,531 projects are functioning in the state of Telangana. Among these more than 50 percent of projects were already in operational stage. Overall, a total of 46,588 projects are situated in the state of Telangana. The majority of the irrigation projects are in Minor irrigation project category and each of these projects are serving about 2000 hectares/up to 5000 acres.





## **7. Issues of Displacement - A Case Study of Kaleshwaram Project**

The Wire Report, 2021 which was published on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 is considered for the evaluation of problems faced from the perspectives of people affected by projects in select locations of Kaleshwaram project. The Kaleshwaram project is a network of reservoirs, canals and pump houses that will pump water from the Godavari river uphill into Telangana. The reservoirs will submerge 14,567 hectares of land, 85% of which are farmlands and homes owned by individuals. In such cases, the government has to acquire land under the LARR. The LARR, which came into force on January 1, 2014, mandates that the government carry out social impact assessments (SIA) to understand the extent of the displacement that will be caused by a project, pay landowners at least two times the market price for their land and ensure the rehabilitation and resettlement of everyone who was displaced.

In July 2015, the state government issued Government Order (GO) 123, which enabled the government to carry out what it called “voluntary acquisition” of land from “willing” landowners. It would purchase the land directly from landowners at a negotiated price but without following any of the compensation and rehabilitation requirements under the LARR. It began purchasing land across the state for the KLIS under GO 123 instead of the LARR. The move ran into opposition from villagers affected by projects like the Annapurna reservoir, which will submerge three villages in the Siddipet district. In 2016, the district administration published notifications in local newspapers saying that it had received consent from landowners in the area.

However, in a petition filed before the Telangana high court, the people claimed they were approached by the government after the notification had been published. They were told that since their lands would be submerged under the reservoir, they had “no choice but to surrender their lands” at a fixed rate of Rs 6 lakh per acre, according to their submission recorded by the high court. The government then imposed a curfew and “forced” landowners to sign sale deeds written in English, which they did not understand. In its counter-affidavits, the state government did not deny these allegations.

In January 2017, the high court struck down GO 123 following a petition by people affected by the Kondapochamma reservoir of the KLIS, but the state government had amended the LARR in 2016. The amended act received the President of India assent on May 12, 2017. The amended law says that compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement entitlements can be negotiated with landowners.

## **8. Conclusion**

The survey results show that, rehabilitation and resettlement of project affected families has turned out to be the most vital and sensitive issue for the development projects. The study on existing literature pertaining to Development and Displacement status in India particular showed the evidence that, in most of the cases development has induced displacement. The study on Telangana State reveals that, ever since, the state is formed, the Government of Telangana has given highest priority to irrigation projects. The agricultural productivity has improved since the region is divided from erstwhile Andhra Pradesh state. Further, the study on Kaleshwaram project and the problems of people affected by projects clearly show that, the forced acquisition of lands and lack of better rehabilitation have created the problems and the people have no other option except to go for agitations. Especially the incidents of Kondapochampally reservoir and Annapurna reservoir show that evidence that people’s rights were been violated and the district administration have forcefully employed displacement. Which is creating the problems to the people from project affected areas in Telangana State.



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