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New people, new livelihoods after Tugwi Mukosi Dam construction: A case of Chingwizi area in Mwenezi District in Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe.

By Cephas Mandirahwe¹

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1.0 Abstract

Using the Cernea's Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction Model, the study examined the livelihoods of the Chingwizi residents of Mwenezi District in the aftermath of relocations from Masvingo District. According to this model, development induced relocations culminate into landlessness, joblessness, loneliness, property and social disarticulation. In recent years Zimbabwe has embarked on dam construction and other development projects which have displaced local populations. One such development was the construction of Tugwi Mukosi Dam which was perceived by the government to generate economic growth for the whole nation and Masvingo Province in particular. This is also an endogenous strategy by the government of Zimbabwe in pursuit of the right to development enshrined in the African Charter on Human and People's rights article 22. This also resonates well with the government's current thrust by Zimbabwe to attain an 'Upper Middle Income' economy by the year 2030. As a result of these relocations conflicts with affected communities have been inevitable. In cases where the government succeeded in relocating the affected communities new problems and new livelihoods have emerged in those new localities hence this study. Findings from the study indicate that relocated communities ended up in worse off situations in the new localities with women and children suffering most. The study also found that in the case of Chingwizi off farm livelihoods apart from agriculture have emerged. The study recommends the government to come up with a relocations policy which incorporates the interests of all stakeholders.

Key words: Dam construction, Tugwe Mukosi, Resettlement, Resettlement, livelihoods, gender

¹ Cephas Mandirahwe is a postgraduate student at Africa University. He holds MA and BA in Development Studies. He has passion and interest in issues cutting across the Right to Development. He has participated in international conferences on the Right to development in Zimbabwe and abroad.