

A New House or a New Life?

A Case Study of Involuntary Resettlement in the South-North Water Transfer Project in Henan China

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IV

Abstract

In the last decades involuntary resettlement has forced millions of people to leave their homes all over the world. There are in many cases a direct link between resettlement and impoverishment. China has in the last decades done a tremendous effort to improve their resettlement policies and lift the impoverished resettled population out of poverty.

The purpose of this paper is to research the experiences of resettlers who have been moved in the South-North Water Transfer Resettlement Project in Henan, China. The South-North Water Transfer is a water infrastructure project, which will, by constructing three canals, transfer water from the south to the north of China. In this project more than 300 000 people will be relocated. The research is based on qualitative data from observations and interviews in Xichuan County and Zhengzhou in Henan, China. Further, texts from government web pages have also been used.

Findings from interviews and observations show that the South-North Water Transfer resettlers in Henan, who are at an early stage in the resettlement, say that their lives have not been changed to any greater extent. The resettlers have been provided with new housings of a good quality. Most resettlers have lost land, which is a risk of impoverishment. This thesis also shows that there is a direct link between the distance relocated and whether or not the resettlers feel that their life has changed. This is the first empirical work to explore the resettlement process caused by the South-North Water Transfer in Henan.

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All mistakes and omissions in this thesis are mine.

Turi Lindalen

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Introduction

Involuntary Resettlement refers to two distinct but related processes. Displacement is a process by which development projects cause people to lose land or other assets, or access to resources. This may result in physical dislocation, loss of income, or other adverse impacts. Resettlement or rehabilitation is a process by which those adversely affected are assisted in their efforts to improve, or at least to restore, their incomes and living standards.¹

Development-induced involuntary resettlement is happening all over the world. The construction of dams, highways and urban areas and the extraction of natural resources are all projects that require land, and this is the reason why people are being moved. When someone lives on the land that is required for such projects they can become involuntary resettlers. Every year 15 million people around the world become impoverished due to public and private development projects. It is estimated that during the last two decades approximately 250-300 million people across the world have been relocated. India and China have by far the highest numbers of development-induced resettlement in the world. India has resettled more than 60 million people between 1950 and 2008, while China has resettled 70 million in the same time period.² Development-induced involuntary resettlement has been closely connected to impoverishment.

This thesis will analyse what impact the relocation process has had on resettlers in the Middle Route of the South-North Water Transfer Project (SNWT) in China, by using Michael Cernea's Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction Model and Thayer Scudder's model for Sociological Framework for the Analysis of New Land Settlements. In this thesis I attempt to answer the following questions; does relocation change the lives of the resettlers? If that is the case, in what way are the resettlers' lives affected? What is the situation for the resettlers in the Middle Route of the SNWT? I am also going to investigate whether or not the South-North Water Transfer Project differs from earlier relocation projects in China. I will do this by using the Danjiangkou Reservoir Resettlement and the Three Gorges Project Resettlement as examples of earlier relocation projects, and compare them to the South-North Water Transfer Project.

¹ (*Social Development Involuntary Resettlement FAQs*) <http://go.worldbank.org/0WWXTSXYO1> Last

² (Maldonado 2012) P 194

For over five decades, social scientists have investigated the destruction of lives and livelihoods inflicted on communities by development-caused forced displacement and resettlement. They have also analysed the underlying drivers that shape the current development paradigm that has a tunnel-vision focus on economic growth, views the world as an infinite resource and de-couples humans and the environment.³

In 2010, 50 researchers and practitioners from all over the world gathered at the International Resettlement Conference in the Hague, entitled: Economics, Social Justice and Ethics in Development-caused Involuntary Migration. This conference was special due to the fact that it was held 30 years after the first World Bank resettlement policy was adopted in 1980.⁴ Hired in 1974; Cernea was the first sociologist to work in the World Bank. After an unsuccessful resettlement project in a World Bank-financed dam project in Brazil in 1978, Cernea made the first guidelines for how to avoid resettlement-induced impoverishment in the future. These guidelines have become a significant tool for the World Bank policymakers and project planners, and have been revised in 1986, 1990 and 2000. It was also stated at the 2010 International Resettlement Conference that the policies need further revising and upgrading in order to prevent impoverishment of resettlers in future projects financed by the bank. The Asian Development Bank followed 15 years after with their resettlement policy, while the African Development Bank adopted their resettlement policies as late as 2003.⁵

Cernea's work both within and outside the World Bank has been a great contribution to the field of involuntary resettlement. He is the founder of the Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction model, which is the foundation behind the World Bank policies and is also part of the Asian Development Bank's guidelines.⁶ The IRR model has also become a useful tool in studying resettlement. At the International Resettlement Conference researchers such as Latha Ravindran and Biresh Sadoo presented their research where the IRR model had been used to do research on displacement in India. Filip Alexandreu also used the IRR model to portray his studies on resettlement in Romania.⁷

Two other important scientists who have studied and constructed a model for analysing resettlement are Thayer Scudder and Elisabeth Colson. Their four-stage model for regular

³ (Maldonado 2012) P 194

⁴ (Maldonado 2012) P 194-195

⁵ (Maldonado 2012) P 194-197

⁶ (Maldonado 2012) P195 (Cernea 2007)

⁷ (Maldonado 2012) P 205

land resettlement was first published in 1982, and Scudder also published a version of it in 1991.⁸ I will base my research on the 1991 version of the model throughout my thesis. Even though these two models are more than two decades old they are still useful in resettlement research. Julie Maldonado describes these two models as a “living framework” that have been adjusted over the years, and that are still being used.⁹

China’s economic growth has been remarkable over the last three decades, with an average growth rate of 10% each year. The economic growth has led to a greater demand for water, both in food production, industries, and in households.¹⁰ The growing population is also a contributing factor to increased water demand. China has a population that is expected to peak at 1.6 billion people in 2030, with an anticipated water demand of between 700 and 800 billion m³ of water.¹¹ The water resources in North China are, however, not capable of meeting the growing demands of water. Rivers are drying up and the groundwater is decreasing.¹² One solution to the water crisis in North-China is the South-North Water Transfer Project (南水北调工程) where three routes will lead water from the south to the north and northwest regions of China. When all three canals are finished in 2050, they are estimated to transfer 45 million m³ water yearly. The whole project has an estimated cost of US\$ 60 billion.¹³ The amount of water being transferred and the large amount of investments made by the Chinese government indicate exactly how important this project is.

Projects such as the Three Gorges and the Sanmen Dams have made development-induced relocation in China a hot topic. Since the 1950s over 10 million people have been relocated due to government water projects. Several scientific studies have been conducted to determine how the situation of involuntary resettlers has changed since the early years of the Peoples Republic, especially after the Three Gorges Project.¹⁴ Spokesmen from the Chinese government, Chinese and international academics have expressed criticism of how involuntary resettlement has been carried out in the past. Yet China has also achieved international recognition for their new resettlement policies that were implemented for the

⁸ (Scudder 1991; Scudder and Colson 1982)

⁹ (Maldonado 2012) P 204

¹⁰ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 350 (Gu, Shao, and Jiang 2012) P 3480 (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P339

¹¹ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 350-351

¹² (Zheng et al. 2010) P 352

¹³ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 354

¹⁴ (Jing 2000; Li, Waley, and Rees 2001; McDonald 2006; McDonald-Wilmsen 2009; Topping et al. 1997)

first time in the Three Gorges Project.¹⁵ The South-North Water Transfer (SNWT) is one of the biggest water relocation projects in China following the Three Gorges relocation project. The size and importance of the project makes it an interesting topic for studies.

The middle route of this project goes from the Danjiangkou reservoir in Henan to Beijing via Tianjin. During the construction of the middle route 330 000 people have been relocated. I have, by using interviews and observation as methods, researched how relocation has afflicted the resettlers. The interview objects in this thesis are all from Xichuan County in Henan, which is where the Danjiangkou Dam is situated and the starting point of the Middle Route. I will attempt to show how relocation in the SNWT project has led to fewer problems for the resettlers than previous projects.

Doing fieldwork at an early stage in the relocation process is highly relevant in order to document the resettlers' reactions. At this stage in the project it is too early to conclude precisely how the resettlers have been afflicted by the project in terms of long-term effects. The resettlers have not become used to their new situation yet. Despite the fact that they are still at an early stage in the relocation process, it is still possible to analyse and assess the current situation. Furthermore, my thesis will be able to predict different outcomes that might take place, based on earlier relocation research.

Thesis outline

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. In Chapter 2 I will give an introduction to the methodology applied for this thesis. I am going to explain how the fieldwork was conducted and how I conducted interviews and observations. I will also explain what parts of the fieldwork I found difficult as a first timer in *the Chinese field*. The third chapter will introduce the theoretical framework for this thesis; the *Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction Model* by Cernea and Scudder's sociological framework for settlement. The fourth chapter is an overview of relocation caused by water projects in rural China and also includes an introduction to the South North Water Transfer. The fifth chapter introduces results from observation and interviews in light of Cernea's and Scudder's theories. Lastly, the sixth chapter gives a comparison of the SNWT relocation and the Danjiangkou Dam resettlement. This chapter also includes a comparison of the Three Gorges Project and the

¹⁵ (McDonald, Webber, and Duan 2008) P 86

SNWT. I have chosen to include two comparisons because they shed light on different aspects; the first is a comparison of two projects in the same geographical area, but in a different political climate, while the second is a comparison to a different place, but that has the same political climate. The last chapter is the conclusion where I am going to discuss how the SNWT relocation is different from other earlier projects and point out some of the most important findings from my fieldwork. These findings are related to land loss, resettlers who do not view relocation as a life-changing event, and distance as a complicating part in relocation. I will argue that resettlers in the Middle Route of the SNWT *at this point in time* are mostly pleased with their new housings and do not complain about their life post relocation.

1 Research Methodology

The methods applied in this thesis are qualitative research methods. Methods used are observation and interviews conducted during fieldwork in China, and analysis of texts and documents. I have used all of these methods in order to answer my research questions; does relocation change the lives of the people being moved, and if it does change their lives, how then does this change come about. I have chosen to do fieldwork in China because there are few academic field reports from this project at present. As late as in March 2012 the relocation process was still underway, and it would be difficult to obtain an understanding of the situation without going there to see for myself. In this chapter I am going to give an introduction to the specific methods of qualitative research that I used, and explain why I chose to use these methods in my thesis. I am also going to say something about how I found my interview objects and under what circumstances I conducted most of my interviews. I also want to introduce some of the difficulties I experienced with conducting my fieldwork. At the end of the chapter I am going to write about some of the limitations in this thesis. The aim of the method chapter is to make my research methods as clear and transparent as possible. By describing my research methods I hope to ensure the reliability of my thesis.

Qualitative Research

According to Bruce L. Berg, qualitative research refers to “the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions of things”¹⁶, and can be used to provide depth to our understanding of a topic.¹⁷ Qualitative research has been criticized for not being as easy to control and verify as quantitative research. One of the reasons why this is like that is that qualitative methods are more difficult to repeat by other researchers.¹⁸ There are, however, measures for controlling research; one can use terms such as *validity* and *reliability*. I am going to give a short description of these terms in the following section.

Martyn Hammersley writes, “By validity, I mean ... the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers”¹⁹. The question then is, does

¹⁶ (Berg 2009) P 3

¹⁷ (Berg 2009) P 2

¹⁸ (Silverman 2006) P 35 (Fangen 2010) P 195

¹⁹ (Hammersley 1990) P 57

my research relate to my research question, and can one generalize and say something about a certain phenomena in a bigger context based on the results of my research? One way of aiming for validity is to use several methods to investigate the same question; this is referred to as *triangulation*.²⁰ I have chosen to use three different methods for my research; these methods are further described in the Research Design. The aim of doing this is that by looking at a case from different standpoints I hope to gain a better understanding of the field I have been researching.

The term reliability, also known as external validity, is used to define the question of whether or not another independent observer would see and hear the same events and reach the same conclusion as oneself.²¹ One way of making sure that others will be able to make the same observations and possibly reach the same conclusion is to describe the method one has used as clear as possible. Katrine Fangen writes, the more detailed the descriptions of ones observations, methods, theory and concepts are, the more easily one can evaluate the reliability of the research.²² The next section will therefore be used on explaining my methods.

Research Design

Observation

Observation can be a useful tool both in quantitative and qualitative research. David Silverman writes that in quantitative research observation can be “useful in preliminary work to frame a questionnaire”, while it is “fundamental to understanding another culture” in qualitative research.²³ Observation can therefore be an important part of different research methods, but there are differences in where in the research process observation is used. Quantitative researchers have criticized observation as a method, one reason for this is that different observers might have different observations; this questions the reliability of the data collected. Observation does, however, hold an important role in qualitative research because it is a good method to understanding another culture.²⁴

²⁰ (Silverman 2006) P 291, (Berg 2009) P 5

²¹ (Fangen 2010) P 209

²² (Fangen 2010) P 209

²³ (Silverman 2006) P 19

²⁴ (Silverman 2006) P 19

Silverman also points out that it is important to observe the surroundings under observation²⁵, this became an important part of my observation because I had never visited the area I conducted my research in before, and was therefore unfamiliar with the surroundings and the way of living in this particular area. It was important to observe how people lived, what their concerns were and course of daily life in order to understand how, or if, moving could be life-changing. In my case, my observation would not fit the term participant observation, participant observation can be defined as when a researcher both observe and participate in certain actions²⁶. The observations I did were not while participating and would rather fit the term non-participatory observation. It would be different if I were to live with people who had been relocated, and preliminary, this was also what I wanted to do, but the task of finding a family to stay with and whom had been moved turned out to be too difficult. To learn the “ways of life” in this specific area was important to understand the background for my fieldwork, but it was just as much important to observe new housings for resettlers in terms of what they looked like, where they were located, and what facilities they had. I altogether visited six different new villages built for the South-North Water Transfer resettlers.

The role of the researcher in non-participatory observation can according to Fangen be defined as one who only observes, without involving in interaction. Often when it comes to non-participatory observation the question arises of how to limit and measure the researcher’s impact on the people she observes. It is a difficult task to observe without anyone noticing that you observe.²⁷ In my case the observations I did was not so much of how people interacted, but rather of how they lived and the surroundings they lived in. For me, with my Nordic appearance, it would be an impossible task to try to “blend in” in a society in the Chinese countryside where I obviously do not fit in. It is, however, not always better to be a native when doing fieldwork. Elin Sæther writes that because she was an outsider when doing fieldwork, people would be patient and explain self-evident questions to her without being annoyed.²⁸ In this sense being foreign was helpful for me too because no one expected me to know anything about local conditions, and I found that when I asked questions people, and especially my guide tried very hard to help me understand.

²⁵ (Silverman 2006) P 86

²⁶ (Fangen 2010) P 29

²⁷ (Fangen 2010) P 106

²⁸ (Sæther 2006) P 51

Sometimes I also found that people wanted to talk to me just because they had never talked to a foreigner before. Therefore, my observations were made before, during, and after interviews, where I observed the housings people lived in, both in terms of quality of the building structure and facilities inside the houses. I also travelled around in the area to try to get a picture of whether or not most relocated villages looked the same in a certain district, and visited construction sites to be able to fully grasp the size and magnitude of the project. During my research, it also became important to observe how people who *have not* been moved reacted when they saw new housing for people who *had* been relocated. I will come back to this when I present the results of my fieldwork.

Since the observations I made were primarily observations of physical settings such as housings, facilities inside houses and changes in landscape, and not of peoples actions, one might say that observation in the manner I used it as a method are more similar to how quantitative researchers use it. Meaning to form a background and to frame questions, which are different than how most qualitative researchers use it to understand how people behave in a certain context. I did not get to observe how people lived their lives in new housings and I would probably have learned a lot more about their attitude towards relocation projects and their own life-situation if I had been given the chance to do more observations *inside the families*. This is a weakness in my fieldwork, and if I were to do fieldwork in China again I would try to use participant observation as a method. That being said, the observations of housings and facilities I did have been of great importance to my understanding of resettlement.

Interviews

Tove Thagaard writes that the purposes of interviews are to access extensive information about other people's life situation and point of view, thoughts and ideas. The situations and experiences that are told are retellings of events and are therefore biased of the informants understanding of what she has experienced.²⁹ The reason why I chose interviews as a method was that I found it difficult to understand how people dealt with relocation from reading and observing, I wanted to go in and talk to people for myself, to try to understand what the resettlers felt about their own situation.

²⁹ (Thagaard 2009) P 87

I altogether conducted 21 interviews where 20 were interviews with one or two interview objects and one was a group interview with five interview objects. All interviews were conducted in Chinese and were later translated into English by myself. The interviews I performed can be categorized as semistandardized interviews. Berg writes “semistandardized interviews can be located somewhere between the extremes of the completely standardized and the completely unstandardized interviewing structures”³⁰. The aim of having semistandardized interviews was to be able to control the direction in the interviews, yet keep the questions as open as possible in order to not miss out on any information. I did not know very much about the relocation situation in that specific area, I still had to bear in mind that the interviews could in some cases go in another direction than I had planned. When that happened I would have to adjust my questions accordingly.

My guide was also present during the interviews, but unless he had to help to translate from the local Henan dialect to Mandarin he did not have an active role in the interview. The goal with my interviews was to find out if people thought that being relocated had changed their life in any way. When I was preparing for my interviews I read what questions other researchers have been asking when researching relocation questions. I used Cernea’s IRR model as a basis for the questions. This was a good way of both finding out what had been researched before and finding a platform to create questions from. The works of Cernea, Gørild Heggelund and Brooke McDonald-Wilmsen was important in this process.³¹

The questions I asked can be divided into two sections. The first section of questions were specific questions concerning when people were moved, how far away from the old house had they been moved, how many people were living together, if they had lost land, and if yes, how much. I found that people found these questions easy to answer because they were concrete and one could answer them in only one sentence. It was also a good start for me because I knew what answers to expect and that made it easier to understand what people were saying.

The second section of questions was more difficult both to ask and to answer. I asked if people felt that moving had changed their lives in any way? I would ask about their lives and what they felt about relocation in general. At the beginning of my fieldwork I was struggling

³⁰ (Berg 2009) P 107

³¹ (McDonald-Wilmsen 2009; Heggelund 2002; Cernea 2007)

a bit with this part of my interview, due to translation problems. Even though I had a Chinese friend of mine proofread my questions, I found that people struggled to understand the meaning of my questions and I had to rephrase some of them. Then I also found that people did not know how to answer these questions, not necessarily because they did not have an opinion, but sometimes because they were looking for “the right way” of answering me. They would sometimes ask me “how do you want me to answer this?” It was not until I said that they could answer in any way they wanted that they started to talk. I found it a bit strange that they were struggling so much with this part, though perhaps it was because I asked the questions in a strange way, or that they were not used to answer this type of questions. Sometimes, if I felt that the interviews were going too slow in this section I could use information from the first section to get people going. If someone had told me in the first section that they had lost land, I could then ask if the loss of land had changed their life in any way, and thus the interview objects still had something concrete to relate to when answering a more abstract question. I would always finish the interview by asking if the interview objects felt they had anything else to tell me, and then I would thank people for letting me spend time with them, and leave my contact information in case they wanted to contact me later.

Before I started out on my fieldwork I wanted to ask people about protests in rural China, and then especially if they had experienced social unrest caused by this relocation project, but I was afraid that these questions were too sensitive. I did not feel comfortable asking about this topic, and ended up leaving these questions at home. I only went as far as asking if the interview objects had anything to say in the process of moving, or if they only got assigned new housings from the government. In retrospect, it would probably not have given me problems to ask about rural unrest, but as a first timer in the field I lacked the courage to ask questions I was afraid would be too sensitive. This means that I did not get any knowledge about these questions; if I were to do fieldwork again I hope I would be more courageous when it comes to asking the difficult questions.

Text Analysis

Analysing texts have an important part in qualitative analysis. It is not uncommon to combine fieldwork with written sources such as news articles, public data or personal writings. The

use of written documents can vary from using it for descriptions to a deeper analysis.³² Silverman writes that texts are often used in qualitative research to be a resource for the analysis of interviews, and he further writes that “the model is: the documents claim X, but we can *show* that Y is the case”³³. He also points out that the problem with this method is that it does not analyse the documents in and of themselves, they only mean something in light of other data that have been gathered.³⁴ I have used text from signboards, news articles and Chinese government’s official web pages in this thesis. The signboards was found during my fieldtrip to Henan, while the official web pages and the news articles was accessed from Norway.

Ethics, Informed Consent and Confidentiality

Informed consent and confidentiality are two important terms when it comes to ethics in research. Informed consent means that the researcher informs informants about the purpose of the research, and in some cases the possible benefits and disadvantages of the project.³⁵ Confidentiality means that the researcher is responsible for not publishing information that could reveal the identity of the persons one writes about.³⁶ It was important for me to make sure that my informants understood what I was doing and why I was doing it. I therefore started every interview by informing about my project, and introducing myself, who I was and where I come from. Furthermore I also assured my informants that I would not publish information that could reveal their identity. This is also the reason why I chose not to reveal names or locations where I have been doing fieldwork, this is an important measure to ensure the privacy of my informants. Also, I always ensured my interviewees that any recordings from interviews would not be shared and would be deleted when the thesis was done.

Sometimes people did not agree to be interviewed by me after I had presented myself and made sure that I would not reveal their identity, there might be several reasons for this. Some people said that they did not feel they had anything relevant to say about the topic I was researching. Others said they did not want to take part in a research project. It also happened on occasion that the people I wanted to interview insisted on seeing the questions I was going

³² (Fangen 2010) P 149

³³ (Silverman 2006) P 154

³⁴ (Silverman 2006) P 154

³⁵ (Fangen 2010) P 155

³⁶ (Fangen 2010) P 159

to ask before they agreed to participate. If they asked about this I let them see the questions before we started. My guide suggested that the reason why they asked about this could be that they wanted to make sure in advance that my questions would not be too sensitive.

Door Openers and the Chinese Field.

Silverman distinguishes two different settings to do research in; private and public. When it comes to private settings such as organizations and deviant groups one often needs a gatekeeper to help with gaining access. Public settings are possible to access without having a gatekeeper, even though it might be difficult.³⁷ In the private setting a gatekeeper is often someone inside the system who is in a position to help the researcher gain access to information, one can also have a guide in public settings to help with introductions and to reassure the group that the researcher is harmless to the group.³⁸

During the planning stage of my fieldtrip and research it soon became clear to me the importance of having someone to act as a door opener for me in the field. There are several reasons for this; first of all, I would not know where to go and who to talk to without anyone helping me. Secondly, it is my impression that it is very difficult to do fieldwork in rural China as a foreigner without having someone to introduce you. At least in the area I visited foreign guests are very rare and several people approached me and told me I was the first foreigner they ever saw. I also experienced a difference in how people treated me when a local member of the community introduced me and when I introduced myself. I found that people often were more sceptical when I was on my own. Of course, this can also have something to do with me being more insecure on my own. In most of the interviews I was introduced to the people I interviewed by a local guide. Luckily when deciding on doing fieldwork in China I could use my Chinese network to find a guide who could assist me in my fieldwork.

I also want to include a more detailed narrative about the settings I conducted my interviews in. The reason for dwelling on this matter is simply that I was not aware of how it would be to conduct interviews before I tried for myself. I learned a lot from this experience and believe this is valuable information for other young researchers as well. I conducted most of

³⁷ (Silverman 2006) P 81

³⁸ (Berg 2009) P 206

my fieldwork in Henan County, for a period of four weeks in March 2012. The reason for choosing this area was that I was aware that there were people being relocated there because of the South-North Water Transfer Project. I have contacts living in an area in Henan with several new villages and I went there to do observation and conduct interviews, which both have been important parts of my research.

More often than not, when we arrived at a location, my guide found someone he knew and that were expecting us, then we all sat down and drank tea and the men exchanged cigarettes. Then we talked about casual things for a while, before my guide would introduce me briefly. I usually took this as my key to introduce myself, my project, and assure the confidentiality of the participants. Only after this whole process could I start to ask my questions. Most of the time I was able to ask questions myself, but sometimes when interviewing older people my guide had to translate from the local dialect to mandarin. I always asked if I could record the interviews; sometimes I was allowed to record and sometimes I was not. People had different reasons for not letting me record, some people said they did not like the idea of recorders, others told me that I did not need to record when I could just write down their answers. Of course I regret not having all interviews recorded, but this was not something I could control.

After I had finished the interview I would ask if the people I had interviewed could introduce me to some of their neighbours so that I could interview them as well. After the interviews the participants often invited me to join them for more tea or sometimes even to stay for dinner. Sometimes I found it to hard to refuse, because I did not want to be impolite. However, this was very time consuming and after I had conducted several interviews I learned to politely refuse these offers and rather try to get more interviews. The whole process of conducting an interview turned out to be more time consuming than I expected.

During my first couple of interviews I asked the participants if we could do the interviews one on one, without my guide. I wanted to do it that way because I was afraid that people might feel uncomfortable talking to me with another member of the local community present. My suggestion led to some unexpected problems; the interview objects got nervous when I proposed that the guide could leave. As far as I could tell, there were two reasons for this nervousness. First of all, people would then ask me what questions I was going to ask, since the guide had to leave, was I going to ask critical and difficult questions? Sometimes they

even refused to be interviewed/participate in an interview at all after I suggested that the guide could leave. Secondly, people started to worry about communication, which is understandable. At this point my comprehension of the local *henanhua* (the local spoken dialect) was fairly poor, and the interview objects that had observed me talk to my guide, who spoke a very clear and understandable mandarin, preferred to have him there in case I did not understand what they said. These problems led to my guide also sitting in when I conducted interviews.

Having a guide with me was of course a type of insurance, because I knew that if something came up in the interview that I did not understand I could discuss it with him later. I still thought it was problematic to have him there because I was worried that I would not be fulfilling the promise of confidentiality by bringing other people with me. I tried to solve this by discussing this problem with my guide, who assured me that he respected my promise of confidentiality and would not refer to what he learned from listening to my interviews. After having a conversation about this I decided to have him to sit in with me when it felt natural, and if it did not feel natural to have him there I would ask him to leave. I also explained to my guide that this question did not come up because I did not trust *him*, but rather because I was afraid that people would not trust *me*. After all, he was a crucial help when it came to finding people to interview and I thought it was important to make sure he knew I trusted him.

The difficulties with conducting fieldwork for the first time, in an unknown setting, were numerous, and could probably comprise a thesis on their own. There is, however, not enough room in this thesis to mention all of them. Before starting my fieldtrip I had the pleasure of reading Elin Sæther's article *Fieldwork as Coping and Learning*³⁹, and this article describes the nervousness and fear of failing Sæther felt as a first timer in the field. I recognized many of the issues she describes when I was in the field. It was a constant fear of not having good enough language skills and I always worried that people did not want to talk to me. I was extremely nervous when I was going out to conduct interviews throughout my fieldwork.

It was also a challenge to stay with people I did not know and who were not used to foreign guests. Also, because the family I stayed with felt responsible for me they did not want me to

³⁹ (Sæther 2006)

leave their house without anyone accompanying me, and did not like to see me go out to do interviews without anyone assisting me. Consequently, I had a guide with me almost all the time. Even if this was not my intention, I am not unhappy with this solution in retrospect. My guide became a person with whom I could discuss all kinds of problems and I learned a lot from him. Though I would like to emphasize that the feeling of not being allowed to leave the house was tough, and was a source of great frustration for me.

The Limitations of my Thesis

When writing a master thesis one realises the need to set down limitations for oneself. First of all, both the time one has to spend writing the thesis and the number of pages one is allowed to use are limited. This means that there will always be topics one has to leave out.

That being said, the fieldwork done for this thesis was also limited. First of all, to spend only three weeks out in the field is a very short time. I had hoped to be able to spend at least four weeks out in the field, though my circumstances made it difficult for me to stay that long. I lived with my guide and his family, and after three weeks they were not able to have me as a guest any longer. I could have found another place to stay, but it seemed difficult to do this when this family was the only family I knew in that area.

Another limitation of my fieldwork was my interviews; all the people I interviewed had been moved less than a year ago. This means that this whole situation of being moved was new to them. Some people had still not finished decorating their houses when I talked to them.

Maybe the answers I was given would be different if I had interviewed them at a later stage. Then again, this would be an interesting starting point for going back to the same area to do more research later.

In terms of what topics and questions I choose to answer, my thesis is somewhat limited. I will try to analyse the answers I was given in order to answer my research question; does relocation change the lives of the people being moved? If that is the case, in what way are the resettlers' lives afflicted? This means I am not going to analyse the South-North Water Project in terms of economic growth or effects on a national scale, and I am not going to spend too much time on how this project influences a larger part of North East China. The reason why not spending too much time on these issues is not that I cannot see the use and

importance of them. It is the limitations of pages and time to write that forces me to leave these issues for someone else to research.

One of the premises of this thesis was that the fieldwork was conducted in an area that had new houses that people were moved into. It became important to recognize xincuns in the terrain in order to know where the resettlers lived. What then if there also were resettlers in the area that not was moved to new houses? If it is the case that not all resettlers have been moved to xincuns then there is a whole group of resettlers that not have had a say in this thesis. This then becomes an important limitation of this thesis; it only presents involuntary resettlers that have gotten a new home.

At last I want to emphasize that to do fieldwork for the first time was both very informative and a greater challenge than I had ever imagined before I started. To live in an unfamiliar environment and to find interviewees and conduct interviews was a challenge, both in terms of language difficulties and cultural differences. I want to put emphasis on the great benefit it was to have a local guide with me to introduce me and help as a translator between the local Henan dialect and standard mandarin. Another important lesson from my fieldwork is the importance of keeping an open mind in terms of what questions to ask and what you observe. What I learnt from my fieldwork was not what I expected and this is the main reason why it is so important to do fieldwork when studying a society that is unfamiliar.

2 Theoretical Framework

In an applied context, theories can be understood as interrelated ideas about various patterns, concepts processes, relationships, or events. In a formal sense, social scientists usually define theory as a system of logical statements or propositions that explain the relationship between two or more objects, concepts, phenomena, or characteristics of humans.⁴⁰

In this chapter I am going to give an introduction to Cernea's Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction model and how it can be used and the Sociological Framework for the Analysis of New Land Settlements by Scudder.⁴¹ Furthermore I will discuss briefly how these two models are different and if they can be used when looking at involuntary resettlement in rural China.

There are several scholars who have presented a theoretical framework or relocation, among them Robert Chambers who wrote about resettlement in tropical Africa as early as in 1969⁴² Colson and Scudder wrote the article *From Welfare to development: a conceptual framework for the analysis of dislocated people* which was first published in 1982⁴³. Scudder published a version of the model in 1991⁴⁴, which is the version used in this thesis. In relocation studies in recent years, one name stands out as a very important contributor to the field, that being Michael Cernea. Cernea has over the years constructed a model for calculating different factors that can lead relocated people into poverty, called The Risk and Reconstruction Model for Resettling Displaced Populations (IRR). The model was published in a World Bank review in 1996⁴⁵ and has later been further developed. A more current version can be found in the book, *Risks and Reconstruction, Experiences of Resettlers and Refugees* edited by Cernea and Chris McDowell.⁴⁶ A reason why I have chosen to use the IRR model is the status it has in academia and in organisations. The IRR model has been published at The World Bank, where Cernea worked from 1974 until 1997 where he was an important part of

⁴⁰ (Berg 2009) P 21

⁴¹ (Cernea 2007; Scudder 1991)

⁴² (Chambers 1969)

⁴³ (Scudder and Colson 1982)

⁴⁴ (Scudder 1991)

⁴⁵ (Heggelund 2004) P 88

⁴⁶ (McDowell and Cernea 2000)

developing the sociological aspects of the Bank's policies and research.⁴⁷ Cernea has also worked as a consultant in the Asian Development Bank and published in 2007 a training course to support the bank's Involuntary Resettlement Policy and Poverty Reduction Strategy.⁴⁸

The IRR model has been important at different stages in my research. First of all it was important at the planning stage as a tool to gain knowledge about mechanisms that occur in a relocation process. Then it became important to frame a research question, and to understand what questions that can be asked to investigate the livelihood of relocated people. The model describes eight impoverishment risks and suggested solutions to these risks, which became the foundation for developing my questions. I used the risks to ensure that the questions I asked had relevance for measuring changes people might experience when being relocated. At last it has also been important to understand the answers I was given, what have been written in media and the change in Chinese policies concerning relocation.

The risks and reconstruction suggestions are in my opinion useful for building a foundation for interviewing. The strategic directions can also be useful in research because one can measure whether or not these directions have been used and can then see if the related are being impoverished because these measures not have been followed. To use these directions as a foundation for interviews can also be a useful way of knowing what types of questions that can answer to different risks. One example on this can be homelessness, the risk of homelessness can be met by an effort to provide resettlers with housings, if I wanted to know if the government had taken measures to avoid homelessness I could ask about resettlers' housings and if they were given by the government or if the resettles have paid for them.

The Risks and Reconstruction Model for Resettling Displaced Populations

When reading about different research concerning relocation the IRR model is often mentioned. When it comes to research on relocation in China, Cernea's model has been used

⁴⁷ (*The World Bank Records of the Social Development Sector*, <http://go.worldbank.org/CTNVYJMAC0>, last accessed 26.11.2012)

⁴⁸ (Cernea 2007) P V

to do research on dams, especially in the research on the Three Gorges. Researchers such as Duan Yuefang, Shawn Steil, Gørild Heggelund, and Michael Webber all refer to Cernea in their work on the Three Gorges Dam Project.⁴⁹

Development as a Reason for Relocation

The background for Cernea's model is the need for guidelines that can prevent people from falling into poverty when being relocated. The number of relocated people in the last decade is actually higher than the number of refugees from wars and natural disasters. People are being moved to make room for bigger developmental projects such as roads, hospitals and electricity projects. One can then say that relocation is something that happens for the greater good. The problem is that projects that are created for development leads the victims of development projects into poverty, and they do not become a part of the development process. There are however methods that can prevent involuntary resettlement to send people into poverty. The model Cernea has made, which I am going to present in the following section both explains the risks of poverty and proposes ways of rehabilitating the livelihoods of the relocated population.⁵⁰

The Function of the Model

Cernea describes the model as

A conceptual model for analysing the socioeconomic content of displacement. The model anticipates displacement's major risks, explains the behavioural responses of displaced people, and can guide the reconstruction of resettlers' livelihood⁵¹

He further describes the four distinct functions of the model: a diagnostic, a predictive, a problem and resolution, and a research function.⁵² The model is useful in every stage in the resettlement process, from the planning stage to after people have been moved. It is worth to mention the fact that the model is useful for doing research, which has been beneficial for my thesis. I am going to borrow the words of Heggelund who writes, "By using the model,

⁴⁹ (McDonald, Webber, and Duan 2008), (Heggelund 2004; Duan and Steil 2003)

⁵⁰ (Cernea 1997b) P 1569-1570

⁵¹ (Cernea 1997b) P 1570-1571

⁵² (Cernea 1997b) P 1571

empirical findings are structured along the key variables. The key variables also make comparisons possible across cultures, countries and time periods.”⁵³ The model has also been used in a training program made by the Asian Development Bank for “building capacity for resettlement management” and “support the implementation of ADB’s Involuntary Resettlement policy,”⁵⁴ I will now briefly explain the specifics of each function and how they can be used.

The diagnostic function seeks to explain what the patterns in relocation processes are, and how recurrent problems can lead people into poverty. The model explains eight economic and social hazards. The use of this function is that it can show decision makers and people who might be affected of these projects both the nature and potential risks of forced relocation.⁵⁵

The predictive function becomes apparent when one turns the diagnoses into a prediction of what will happen in the future. When this happens one can use the knowledge of what has happened before and prevent previous mistakes and shortcomings of happening again. This function can be useful for those in charge of planning involuntary resettlement.⁵⁶

The problem-resolution function is what one can use to reconstruct the livelihoods of the relocated. This shows the diversity of the model, it does not only point out the dangers and risks in involuntary displacement, it also shows suggestions for how to solve problems that have arisen during a resettlement process.⁵⁷ This can also mean that model can be useful for older resettlement projects which have had a negative impact on the population. It can be used to improve the livelihoods of people who have experienced a lowered living standard after being resettled. The research guiding function of the model has showed to be useful for social researchers when it comes to creating hypothesis, and to do fieldwork framed by theory.⁵⁸

⁵³ (Heggelund 2004)

⁵⁴ (Cernea 2007) Introduction

⁵⁵ (Cernea 1997b) P 1571-1572

⁵⁶ (Cernea 1997b) P 1572

⁵⁷ (Cernea 1997b) P 1572

⁵⁸ (Cernea 1997b) P 1572

The Eight Impoverishment Risks

As already mentioned, this model presents eight impoverishment risks. I am going to introduce these risks and how they can lead to impoverishment.

The first risk Cernea describes is landlessness. Loss of land leads to impoverishment because it takes away people the foundation for people's livelihoods. This leads to a "decapitalization and pauperization of displaced people".⁵⁹ Joblessness is the second risk being described and can occur both in rural and urban settings. One problem with joblessness is according to Cernea that it can become a problem for a long time after the physical resettlement has been finished.⁶⁰ Third comes the risk of homelessness. Homelessness is often a situation that only lasts for a short period of time, but sometimes the homelessness becomes a permanent situation. The loss of a home can also be linked to loss of a cultural space in a group.⁶¹

Marginalization is also an impoverishment risk. Marginalization is what happens when people do not lose everything, but almost everything. This can be a farmer that does not lose all his land, but so much of it that he will struggle to survive, or someone who gets a new job, but not a job they are qualified for. This may lead to a loss of human capital and less faith in self and society.⁶² Increased morbidity and mortality can occur as a result of relocation. This can be seen both in terms of the social stress, and trauma caused by relocation that causes declines in health and unsafe water systems and poor sanitation systems that can lead to chronic diarrhoea and epidemics. Infants, children and elderly are the most vulnerable groups for diseases caused by relocation projects.⁶³ Another risk in involuntary resettlement is the risk of food insecurity. People might not have access to a nutritious food supply and can therefore experience chronic undernourishment.⁶⁴

Loss of access to common property can also be a consequence of resettlement. This means that the relocated loses the opportunity to use common property assets such as forested lands and grazing lands. This loss can lead to deterioration in income and livelihood, and this loss is often not compensated in the relocation process.⁶⁵ The last risk that Cernea mention is the

⁵⁹ (Cernea 1997b) P 1572

⁶⁰ (Cernea 1997b) P 1573

⁶¹ (Cernea 1997b) P 1573

⁶² (Cernea 1997b) P 1574

⁶³ (Cernea 1997b) P1574

⁶⁴ (Cernea 1997b) P 1575

⁶⁵ (Cernea 1997b) P 1575

risk of social disarticulation. Involuntary displacement can both destroy social organization and personal ties. The consequences of this can be insecurity, and what Cernea describes as “loss of sense of cultural identity”. Further Cernea argues that poverty is not only to not have land, work and food, it is also to lose power, and to be dependent and vulnerable, and in this way is social disarticulation an important risk of impoverishment in involuntary resettlement.⁶⁶

In addition to the eight impoverishment risks mentioned, Cernea also state that there also might be risks one can see in a specific local context. This can be a risk that has occurred because of geographical changes such as loss of roads, access to water caused by dams or highroads.⁶⁷ There are also certain groups who suffer more than others in relocation projects. One risk for children is the risk of loosing access to schools. Some children leave school to never come back in the relocation process. It is also documented that women are more severely affected in relocation processes than men, especially in terms of compensation where women receives less compensation than men.⁶⁸

Reversing the Risks

As already stated the risk and reconstruction model is useful for diagnosing risks and prevent risks to become reality. Another important part of the model is the reconstructing part where one can reverse damages already done. Cernea has a suggestion for how to reverse each risk he presents; these suggestions are as follows:

1. From landlessness to land-based reestablishment
2. From joblessness to reemployment
3. From homelessness to house reconstruction
4. From social disarticulation to community reconstruction
5. From marginalization to social inclusion
6. From expropriation to restoration of common assets/services
7. From food insecurity to adequate nutrition
8. From increased morbidity to better health care⁶⁹

⁶⁶ (Cernea 1997b) P 1575-1576

⁶⁷ (Cernea 2007) P 127

⁶⁸ (Cernea 1997b) P 1576

⁶⁹ (Cernea 1997b) P 1582, (Cernea 2007) P136

To also include suggestions for how to reduce risks means that the model also is useful for relocation projects that already are finished.

When using Cernea's model, one can see that to relocate successfully one need to do a lot more than just compensating with money. Cernea argues for this approach as an opposite to the *compensation only* approach, which is how resettlers were treated in rural China up until the end of the 1980s⁷⁰. The reason for this he argues, is that compensation excludes non-property owners, tries to compensate as little as possible and is done without participation. The *people-centred development approach* as he calls it, focuses on also solving risks that cannot be solved only through compensation and also uses other means to start a development process. Said with other words, when the main focus is on compensation the focus is on the tool, while when focusing on people's development one focuses on the final goal.⁷¹

Following the IRR model one can point out three strategic directions in reconstruction, these three are as follows:

1. Reconstruction of resettlers' economic/productive basis
2. Social/community building
3. Rebuilding of services at relocation sites⁷²

In reconstruction of resettlers economic/productive basis one needs to use measures that ensures relocates to be properly compensated and facilitating that they do not end up not having a job after being moved. Reconstruction of community ties, social re-inclusion and restoration of community assets are important in community building. To rebuild services at a relocation site it is necessary to facilitate health care and to give adequate nutrition.⁷³

To do Research with IRR as a Research Tool

The IRR model can also be useful when it comes to research. Cernea writes that the model can be used as a conceptual tool to use as a guide in further studies of relocation. It is still necessary to do research on relocation because there are still topics we do not have knowledge about, studies of behavioural responses and different groups methods for coping and reconstructing can be mentioned as areas where more research is necessary.⁷⁴

He writes further

⁷⁰ (McDonald 2006)

⁷¹ (Cernea 2007) P 138-140

⁷² (Cernea 2007) P 146

⁷³ (Cernea 2007) P 148-152

⁷⁴ (Cernea 1997b) P 1583

As a conceptual codification of already accumulated knowledge, the model generalizes and theorizes about resettlement in a way that further invites, and hopefully may inspire, creative new research to be carried out⁷⁵

To sum up this section, the IRR model is a useful tool for the planning, implementation and rehabilitation of relocation projects. The model is useful for research because the risks can be used as guidelines for what to look for in resettlement projects. Since the model also has a predictive function it can also be useful for predicting whether or not different risks will happen in the future.

Scudder and his Sociological Framework

In research it is always possible to look at a certain phenomena in light of different theories. The main theoretic framework in this thesis will be Cernea's IRR model. There are however also other theoretical approaches that can be interesting to use when looking at resettlement. I am going to give a short introduction to an alternative route to analyse and understanding resettlement. First of all, even though Cernea has had en great impact on the field of relocation studies, there are also other researchers who have written relocation theories; one of them is Scudder and his work *A Sociological Framework for the Analysis of New Land Settlements*⁷⁶ that I will give a introduction to.

Scudder criticizes planners of relocation projects, in his article *A Sociological Framework for the Analysis of New Land Settlements*, for not taking the knowledge from anthropology and sociology into consideration when planning projects. The projects are according to him more based on a technical knowledge about agriculture, water systems and construction of houses and does not focus on the potential of the settlers. He argues that the planners not having knowledge about social sciences' view on relocation are the reason for projects' failings in increasing the economic rates in settlement schemes. This is the background for him to develop a framework consisting of four stages for analysing settlement.⁷⁷

Scudder separates between four types of settlement, these are as follows:

⁷⁵ (Cernea 1997b) P 1583

⁷⁶ (Scudder 1991)

⁷⁷ (Scudder 1991) P 148-151

- 1 Spontaneous settlement with very little government or other assistance
- 2 Spontaneous settlement facilitated by government and other agencies
- 3 Voluntary settlement sponsored by government and other agencies
- 4 Compulsory resettlement sponsored primarily by government agencies.⁷⁸

Spontaneous settlement is when the population on its' own initiative decides to settle down in an area, while sponsored settlement is when there is an organisation or government that are the initiative takers. The two last categories can then be divided into voluntary and involuntary settlement.⁷⁹ Scudder writes further that involuntary settlement is often caused by bigger construction projects such as building of roads and hydroelectric projects. These settlements can cause problems that do not occur in other types of settlement and that these problems are taken into consideration and are being handled in the guidelines for resettlement in the World Bank. There are however room for improvement of these guidelines and the implementation of them.⁸⁰

The Model and its' Four Stages

Scudder's model is a conceptual framework that can be used for analysing the planning, implementation, management and evaluation of settlement projects. In this model, the settlement process is divided into four stages that cover at least one generation. The model has in Scudders own words "some simplified assumptions that attempt to break the settlement process into a series of critical periods"⁸¹ the periods might overlap in real life. If a settlement project is to be seen as a success then all the four stages must be gone through.⁸² The stages are as follows:

1. Planning, initial infrastructural development and settler recruitment
2. Transition
3. Economic and social development
4. Handing over and incorporation⁸³

The first stage is the planning period of projects; this is when the infrastructure, recruitment and the relation of settlers in a larger context of regional development are to be considered.

⁷⁸ (Scudder 1991) P 154

⁷⁹ (Scudder 1991) P 153-154

⁸⁰ (Scudder 1991) P 155

⁸¹ (Scudder 1991) P 160

⁸² (Scudder 1991) P 160

⁸³ (Scudder 1991) P 160

Scudder writes that it is a problem that this stage focuses too much on technical issues and to little on the potential of the settlers. It should be possible in this stage for the settlers to modify the plans themselves.⁸⁴

The second stage, which Scudder calls the transition stage, can last from less than a year and up to three years. This is the period where the settlers move from one habitat to another. The settlers cannot be expected to achieve economic development while they are in the transition stage. Settlers has a tendency to cling on to everything familiar in this stage, they want to move with people they know, they want to keep on to the farming practices they know and they also prefer to keep the same style of housings as they know of. They are in many ways conservative and this can be connected with the need of security and being able to feed ones family. This period ends when the settlers loses the conservative attitude and are able to look forward and shift to a more open ended attitude. It is an advantage in this period to move people who already know each other together, because that makes it more likely that they will help each other trough the move. It is also important to help the settlers to feel secure in terms of health, education and agricultural development.⁸⁵

The third stage called Economic and Social Development can be difficult to reach; some settlers jump from stage two to stage four, and will then not fall into the category of successful settlement.⁸⁶ This is the stage where settlers are willing to take risks, to try other crafts and to invest in order to make more money. Settlers also invest in the education of their children and upgrade their housings at this stage. Different organizations also starts to come apparent in this period, this can be religious, financial and social organization that all has a place in a community. It is according to Scudder important to support these organizations and to encourage settlers to organize and to take responsibility in the community.

The forth stage is called Handing over and Incorporation, this is when all control of the settlers and the new land is given from the planners to the settlers and the local organization. It is a risk in these projects that when one gives the control over to local organizations the

⁸⁴ (Scudder 1991) P 161-162

⁸⁵ (Scudder 1991) P 162-163

⁸⁶ (Scudder 1991) P 160

services breaks down, but it is a bigger problem those settlement agencies keep the power longer than it is necessary.⁸⁷

One interesting note on Scudder's model is that he places the settlers in different psychological modes in the settlement process. He writes that the settlers in stage two are looking for stability and do not want to take risks, which in my opinion also can be interpreted as the settlers being insecure. The third stage is different; this is when the settlers are willing to take risks in order to improve their own situation, which can be interpreted as the settlers being confident and brave. These notions are interesting in research where one analyses resettlers' reactions in a resettlement process. If the resettlers go through different psychological stages it is also possible that their answers will differ in different stages.

The Different Approaches of Cernea and Scudder

I will argue that in relocation studies, the work of both Cernea and Scudder can be useful. Scudder's model places settlers in different stages, and these stages can be useful for understanding the needs of the settlers. There is a difference in the needs and behaviour of a settler in stage two and in stage three. By looking at Scudder, one can place settlers in a stage, and thereby look at whether or not they are coping in that certain stage. It is however a problem with Scudder's model that it has a general approach since it analyses all kinds of settlement; it does not distinguish between different types of settlers in the model. This can be a problem when the needs and concerns of voluntary and involuntary settlers might be different.

Cernea's model is a model of analysing risks and both he and Scudder points to some of the same needs and risks in settlement. The importance of settlers' participation and the need of resettling the livelihood of the settlers are mentioned in both models. Cernea does however go further in analysing *involuntary* resettlement, and the special risks of these projects. Scudder's model is then useful for placing settlers at a certain stage in the relocation process, and it can be useful in understanding the context the settlers live in. He explains the psychological stages settlers are in, which are useful for understanding and analysing interviews done with settlers. Cernea is useful for understanding issues more related to the settlers actually being forced to move. I am going to try to place the interview objects I have

⁸⁷ (Scudder 1991) P 167-168

talked to in stages taken from Scudders model in my thesis, I will do this in order to explain where the settlers are at a mental level in the relocation process. Since the inspiration from the questions I have asked came directly from Cernea's model am I also going to try to analyse the answers I was given in light of Cernea's model.

Conclusion

There are several theoretical approaches that are interesting to look at when studying relocation. In am going to base my analyses in this thesis on the theoretical frameworks of Cernea and Scudder. I have chosen to use these two models because they both have relevance for understanding relocation processes, but in different ways. Cernea describes difficulties in involuntary resettlement in a clear manner, while Scudder explains the different stages settlers go through. The two theories work together, and can even be found in the same book.⁸⁸ Both Scudder and Cernea also emphasise many of the same things, for example the importance of planning, resettlers involvement, and a development plan in resettlement areas.

The question is if the theories are too old to be used as theoretical framework in recent relocation projects? Both theories have existed since the 1980s and are somewhat old, and if the theories are from the 80s, that must mean that the empirical data the theories are built upon are even older. And, especially in the case of relocation in China there have been many changes in policies concerning relocation since the 1980s. Can these theories still be used? There is no easy answer to this question but I will claim that even if these theories are rather old the risks and stages described can still be found in relocation studies. And as Maldonado pointed out the models have been changed over the years.⁸⁹ An indication on the relevance of these models can be found in recent resettlement research where one finds that the models still are at use. This was clear at the International Resettlement held in The Hague in 2010 where several researches presented research where these models were utilized.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ (Cernea 1985)

⁸⁹ (Maldonado 2012) P 204

⁹⁰ (Maldonado 2012)

3 Relocation in Rural China- An Overview

In this chapter my aim is to give an introduction to how relocation projects in China has changed from 1950 and up to recent time. I chose to limit the time period to the post-1950 period for several reasons; first of all, it was only after the establishment of the Peoples Republic in China that the government started to implement extensive infrastructure and water projects, which subsequently lead to forced relocation on a scale hitherto unseen. Secondly, the limited scope of this thesis forces me to limit the time period studied, although the history of relocation before 1950 is also interesting. The aim of this chapter is to point to certain changes in the public policies and methods concerning relocation. In my opinion, it is important to be aware that there have been changes in policies concerning relocation in rural China, because it allows us to have a better understanding of what is going on in present day projects and to be able to see how the situation today is part of a bigger picture.

Water Moves People

The Chinese population is on the move; some move from the countryside to cities in order to find jobs (rural-urban migration), some move because of their family situation and some move because they do not have a choice. The latter group is what can be referred to as involuntary migrants. According to Li et al., this group can be divided further into three subgroups; political refugees, environmental refugees and people displaced by infrastructure projects.⁹¹ There is no other country in the world where forced relocation due to infrastructure projects is happening on a scale similar to that in China. Over 45 million people have been resettled since 1949 and 12 million of these have been moved because of government hydro/hydropower projects.⁹² This means relocation caused by the construction of dams, reservoirs and water canals. The sheer magnitude of these projects and the vast resettlement is one reason for focusing on these kinds of projects; they are an important part of the history of relocation in the PRC.

⁹¹ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P. 196

⁹² (Webber and McDonald 2004) P 673

People being moved because of infrastructure projects have certain features, according to Lee et al⁹³. Unlike people being moved due to natural disasters, infrastructure migrants know about the move in advance, and can thus to some degree plan the move, and have expectations that the government to take responsibility for their situation. The situation for infrastructure migrants differs also in that they cannot return to the area they came from. The land they used to live on may be under water because of a dam or a water canal, or it is no longer possible to live there because roads have been built on the property.⁹⁴

When looking at relocation caused by hydro and hydropower projects in China, one project stands out as more important than the others; namely the Three Gorges Dam Project. At the time of construction and when it had been completed in 2006, it was the biggest water conservancy project in the world.⁹⁵ Because of the size and magnitude of this project, its' development, implementation and results has been subject of debate and research, which in turn produced a greater volume of literature on this project than any other involuntary relocation projects in China⁹⁶. *The River Dragon has come*, a book of essays about the project by Audrey Ronning Topping et al., is one of the most quoted books on the topic, and is published in both Chinese and English.⁹⁷ Another book concerning the Three Gorges Dam project and the environment is *Environment and Resettlement Politics in China* by Heggelund.⁹⁸ Scholars such as Duan Yuefang have been researching the Three Gorges for years and have written several articles and a dissertation on the topic. *China Three Gorges Project Resettlement: Policy, Planning and Implementation* was written by Duan Yuefang and Shaun Steil, while *China Three Gorges Project Resettlement: Policy, Planning and Implementation* was written by Duan Yuefang together with Brooke Wilmsen and Michael Webber.⁹⁹ Articles such as Li Heming, Paul Waley, and Phil Rees' *Reservoir Resettlement in China: Past Experience and the Three Gorges Dam*, are also useful for seeing the Three Gorges in a historical perspective.¹⁰⁰ The importance and magnitude of this project makes it an established example of dam projects in later years. For a general introduction to hydro/hydropower-induced relocation in a historical perspective after 1949 in China the

⁹³ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 197

⁹⁴ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 197

⁹⁵ (Duan and Steil 2003) P 422

⁹⁶ (McDonald-Wilmsen 2009; Wilmsen, Webber, and Duan 2011; Xi and Hwang 2011)

⁹⁷ (Topping et al. 1997)

⁹⁸ (Heggelund 2002, 2004)

⁹⁹ (Wilmsen, Webber, and Duan 2011; Duan and Steil 2003)

¹⁰⁰ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001)

article *Displacement, Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Reparation, and Development* by Jun Jing published by the World Commission on Dams can be recommended.¹⁰¹

In order to gain an understanding of relocation in rural China, it is also important to understand the Chinese government's attitude towards relocation projects, which has determined the way relocation projects are conducted. The following section will introduce specific circumstances of the people being relocated because of hydro/hydropower projects. I claim that there has been a change in the way relocation projects have been conducted from the 1950s and up to the present. The change of laws and the change in the attitude towards relocation have made the situation for resettlers better than it was in earlier projects and I will use the rest of this chapter to try to explain some of these changes.

A Historical Overview

In 1949 there were only 40 hydroelectric dams in China, but in the following decades this number would greatly increase. From the 1950s, the PRC with help from the Soviet Union started to build dams on a large scale, in order to control floods, generate electricity and increase irrigation. During the two first decades of the PRC around 7.8 million people were moved in order to make room for water projects.¹⁰²

Heggelund writes that in the first three decades of the Peoples Republic over 600 dams were built each year. The Chinese government states that altogether ten million people were consequently forced to resettle, but Heggelund claims that the number might be even higher.¹⁰³ The Chinese government has recognized some failures of earlier relocation projects. The leading Poverty Relief Agency wrote in a publication in 1989 that around 70 per cent of the country's 10,2 million resettlers were living in extreme poverty (极度贫困 *jidu pinkun*).¹⁰⁴ Former Premier Li Peng stated in 2000 that of the ten million people that were moved between 1950 and 1980, one third of the moves have been declared unsuccessful, one third are considered "fairly successfully resettled" and one third are considered to be successfully resettled.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ (Jing 2000)

¹⁰² (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 197

¹⁰³ (Heggelund 2002) P 68

¹⁰⁴ (Jing 2000) P 5

¹⁰⁵ (Heggelund 2002) P 68-69

Jing writes that in the Mao era (1949-1976) the focus of infrastructure projects was the success of the project in terms of engineering and as “development showcases” in building campaigns, whereas the human costs were not of much importance.¹⁰⁶ Put differently, the focus was on getting people *out of the way* to make room for development and successful projects. Where people were moved to and under what circumstances was less important at this time. Cernea describes the situation like this:

Government insistence on a communal approach to life led planners to simply push displacees into the surrounding communities, with little compensation for assets lost (...). At that time China lacked a legal framework for resettlement: the results were tragic displacements¹⁰⁷

The same period of time was characterized as having “low compensation, semi-political mobilization and semi-coercion”¹⁰⁸ by Li et al. These projects have thus later been seen as being great failures, and scholars point to reckless policies and political campaigns, such as The Great Leap Forward, as contributors to the unsuccessful relocation projects.¹⁰⁹ The compensation was in this period not sufficient for the relocatees to set up new housings, reclaim wasteland and reconstruct basic infrastructure. The lack of funding in some cases actually led the relocatees into poverty and in some instances the relocatees moved back to the area they came from.¹¹⁰ It is, however, interesting to note that even in the 1950s there was a legal framework that should have protected resettlers, the only problem was that no one paid attention to the laws. Political campaigns such as the Great Leap Forward help explain why the laws were not followed.¹¹¹

One example of an unsuccessful relocation project from this time period is the Xin’ anjiang Dam constructed between 1957-1960. In this relocation project 280 000 people were moved. Originally each resettler was supposed to receive 508 yuan in allocation to fund the move, and the resettlers were going to receive new land and new housings. The government had a very cautious approach to the resettlement at this point. Unfortunately, before the move was

¹⁰⁶ (Jing 2000) P 3

¹⁰⁷ (Cernea 1997a) P 13

¹⁰⁸ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 198

¹⁰⁹ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 197

¹¹⁰ (Duan and Steil 2003) P 425

¹¹¹ (Jing 2000) P 8

initiated the government implemented the Great Leap Forward in 1958. After this the government changed their approach dramatically and the resettlers were ordered to “take more good ideology with them and less old furniture”.¹¹² After this the government lowered the allocation to 150 yuan per head, and peoples’ housing were torn down before people had moved. The resettlers had to walk to their new destinations and several people died during the walk. The new areas where people were moved to were appropriate for neither living nor farming. Many people had to move a second time. At the start of the Cultural Revolution more than 10 000 resettlers marched to the county seat where they attacked and badly injured a resettlement official. The resettlers became and stayed impoverished for decades after the move.¹¹³

Some of the projects from the 1950s, 60s and 70s were characterized by poor and inaccurate planning that led to more people having to move than was strictly necessary. In some cases, insufficient knowledge about the construction of dams led to environmental problems. In the Sanmenxia dam that started operating in 1962, almost 100 000 people more than first estimated had to move because of rapid silting in the area, which had led to landslides, soil erosion and houses collapsing.¹¹⁴

It was not only the ground area around the dams that had difficulties; people that moved to new areas experienced difficulties as well. One problem was connected to the topography in the area they were moved to. People that were moved close to the area they came from were moved from a flat and fertile area, and up to a steep and less fertile area. This made it difficult for the resettlers to maintain a livelihood as farmers. The ones who were moved further away were moved to more flat and fertile areas, but these areas were also more crowded and there were struggles over resources.¹¹⁵ Thus both the resettlers who were moved close to the areas they came from, and the ones being moved further away, were worse off after the move. Lack of drinking water was also an issue for resettlers in the 50s and 60s. After the Liu-Yan-Ba dams were built in 1987, 60 717 resettlers were without easy access to drinking water. The problem stayed unresolved until the early 1990s, and as late as in 1995 there were still resettlement areas lacking drinking water.¹¹⁶

¹¹² (Jing 2000) P 8

¹¹³ (Jing 2000) P 8-9

¹¹⁴ (Jing 2000) P 13

¹¹⁵ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 199

¹¹⁶ (Jing 2000) P 12

From this evidence, one can see that resettlement in the three first decades of the PRC was characterized by poor planning and construction, and little consideration and help for the resettlers. The main goal was to get people *out of the way*; where they went, and what problems they had, was of no importance. This attitude led people into poverty and in some cases resettlers were forced to live under hazardous conditions.

The 1980s turned out to be a turning point for relocation caused by water projects in China. Changes started to appear in the late 1970s when Deng Xiaoping initiated economic change and a new economic policy.¹¹⁷ The Chinese government started to have a different approach to relocation, both in terms of the size of projects, and in terms of how resettlers were treated. Perhaps the most important change that happened in the 80s was the willingness to learn from previous mistakes and the attempt to make an effort to improve the living conditions for people being relocated before 1980.¹¹⁸

According to Jing in the early 1980s the government started to resolve what the Chinese government calls *leftover problems of reservoir resettlement* (水库移民遗留问题, *shuiku yimin yiliu wenti*)¹¹⁹ concerning poverty in relocation areas.¹²⁰ By 1985 China had already built 70 000 dams and 80 000 reservoirs, and more than 10 million people had been moved.¹²¹ As already stated, many resettlers in earlier projects were suffering because of the move and it was not until the 80s that the government started to give compensation to the victims of relocation. At first the government only gave compensation to specific projects. In 1983 the State Counsel decided to spend 300 million yuan RMB on compensation to the Danjiangkou resettlement, and the Xin'anjiang resettlers were given 200 million yuan RMB. This aid was given to improve the living conditions of the resettlers and led to improvements in food production and social services in the inflicted areas, and an increase in income per capita.¹²²

The aid given in 1983 was earmarked for specific projects, and many other resettlers were still suffering. In 1986 the Ministry of Water Resources and Electric Power started a

¹¹⁷ (Heggelund 2002) P 70

¹¹⁸ (McDonald, Webber, and Duan 2008) P 82

¹¹⁹ (Jing 2000) P 3

¹²⁰ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 199

¹²¹ (Jing 2000) P 3

¹²² (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 198-199

rehabilitation program at the cost of 1,900 million yuan to improve the living conditions of 5 million resettlers. Jing states that the situation for early resettlers was improved in the 80s and early 90s, but in 1994 the World Bank stated that 46 per cent of the relocated had not been successfully relocated.¹²³ The 80s turned out to be the decade of compensation, and earlier projects turned out to be a big financial burden for the Chinese government. In 1987, even after the government had spent several hundred million RMB on compensation and poverty relief, over seven million resettlers were still living in extreme poverty.¹²⁴

Compensation was not the only shift in the government's approach that happened in the 80s. The Chinese government also started to focus on a new resettlement policy called *Resettlement with Development* (开发性移民政策 *kaifaxing yimin zhengce*).¹²⁵ This policy was fundamentally different from the previous *one-time payment policy*; was aimed at improving resettlers living conditions. Cernea writes that the goal in Resettlement with Development is that "resettlement operations should be treated as development operations in their own right, benefitting the resettler"¹²⁶ In reality it meant that resettlement plans must take local economic development into consideration in order to give resettlers an economic foundation to live, which ensures jobs, loans, training and other help to give resettlers an opportunity to participate in the growing economy.¹²⁷

A number of laws have been issued since the 1980s to protect the interests of resettlers. The Reservoir Resettlement Law, issued in 1981, established that hydropower stations were to give 0,001 yuan RMB per kilowatt-hour of electricity they generated to poverty relief for relocated people. The Law of Land Acquisition was improved and incorporated in the Land Administration Law in 1986; these improvements were made to raise compensation rates for land acquisition and to clarify land titling. Stipulations concerning the protection of income and assets, as well as required consultation with affected communities, were also implemented.¹²⁸ The Ministry of Water Resources and Electric Power also instituted several new resettlement regulations in the 1980s. In 1986 infrastructure projects were required to

¹²³ (Jing 2000) P 5

¹²⁴ (Jing 2000) P 5

¹²⁵ (Jing 2000) P 5, (Croll 1999) P 6, (Duan and Steil 2003) P 424

¹²⁶ (Cernea 1997b) P 1579

¹²⁷ (Jing 2000) P 6, (Duan and Steil 2003) P 425

¹²⁸ (Jing 2000) P 6

include resettlement funding in the budget, and in 1987 the same ministry forbade approval of projects that did not have a resettlement plan.¹²⁹

Even though the Chinese government established a legal framework and regulations to support resettlers, the Resettlement with Development policy was not fully implemented in a project until the construction of the Three Gorges in the 1990s.¹³⁰ According to McDonald et al. the Chinese government had to pay for their past mistakes in the 1980s, and the huge costs of trying to make right previous mistakes have influenced the government in terms of creating new policies that will avoid this from happening again.¹³¹

Many of the changes in the policies concerning relocation projects were done in the 1980s, but several of the changes were not implemented until the 1990s. In 1991 the State Council introduced the “Guidelines for compensation and resettlement in large- and medium sized water conservancy projects and hydraulic power projects construction”, which contained most of the regulations from 1985.¹³² The first project where the Resettlement with Development Policy was implemented was the Three Gorges Projects, where the Regulation on Resettlement for the Construction of the Three Gorges in the Yangzi River implemented the new policy.¹³³ In 1996 the Electric Power Law stated that one cannot start a relocation project before resettlement fees have been determined and the resettlers have been assisted in the relocation process.¹³⁴

Two big dam projects were approved in 1992, namely the Three Gorges dams and Xiaolangdi dam. The construction of the Three Gorges started in 1993, and the Resettlement with Development policy was made known in most of the reservoir areas.¹³⁵ According to Yuefang and Steil it is also clear that the government had learned from previous projects that it is necessary to have a relocation plan in order to ensure the success of dam projects.¹³⁶

¹²⁹ (Heggelund 2002) P 70

¹³⁰ (McDonald, Webber, and Duan 2008) P 87

¹³¹ (McDonald, Webber, and Duan 2008) P 83

¹³² (Heggelund 2002) P 87

¹³³ (Duan and Steil 2003) P 425

¹³⁴ (人民代表大会常务委员会中华人民共和国电力法, *Electricity Law of the People's Republic of China*, edited by Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, <http://www.law24.cn/a/tw58/2700.html>, 1996, last accessed 5.8.2012)

¹³⁵ (Jing 2000) P 245

¹³⁶ (Duan and Steil 2003) P 426

In the Three Gorges project, the resettlers were more aware of their rights and to some degree also expected to benefit from the move. This meant that the settlers also had higher demands and expectations in the relocation process.¹³⁷ One can argue that the new demands from the resettlers also introduced new problems in the relocation process. Both in the Three Gorges Project and in earlier projects there have been problems with the new land that resettlers are moved to. These problems are often connected to the quality and amount of land that are given to the resettlers. If the land is less fertile than the land the resettlers owned before there may be fewer opportunities for farming and for applying the farming methods the farmers are accustomed with. When farmers were moved from rural to urban areas they were in some cases given new jobs, but since the farmers lacked adequate training they often lost their jobs quickly. The change of scenery, turned out to be a financial burden for the resettlers because they could not maintain a livelihood in their new environment.¹³⁸

The Chinese government has to some extent addressed the difficulties of maintaining a livelihood, by changing the policy and attempting to move people further away from their place of origin in order to offer more resources. This is done to ensure that the resettlers are able to maintain a livelihood, but can lead to other difficulties. When the resettlers are moved further away they may experience problems with integrating with a new community, they might lose their social network, and they have to adjust to a new environment.¹³⁹

Even if the resettlers in the Three Gorges have experienced difficulties, Jing still states that the situation for resettlers has improved over the last decades. The difficulties encountered in recent projects are different from the problems in earlier projects. China has also received international approval for the change in relocation policies and the execution of recent projects such as the Three Gorges.¹⁴⁰ One important factor in the decision-making process concerning resettlement is the environment. According to Heggelund, the resettlement plan for the Three Gorges Project was changed in order to safeguard the fragile environment around the dams. This meant that 125 000 people more than originally planned were moved completely out of the area.¹⁴¹ Yuefang and Steil writes that it was only after a flood in the area around the Yangzi River that the government implemented new rules concerning where

¹³⁷ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 202

¹³⁸ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 203-204

¹³⁹ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 205-206

¹⁴⁰ (Jing 2000) P 16

¹⁴¹ (Heggelund 2002) P 244

one can do farming and where people can be relocated to, with the campaign “*Reforestation of cultivated land*”. This campaign stated that it was illegal to clear land with more than a 25 degree incline, and land that was already used for farming with more than a 25 degree incline was to be returned to forest.¹⁴² Now that the Chinese government takes the environment into consideration when conducting relocation projects, it can lead to conflicts with resettlers that have to move longer than expected and sometimes also with resettlers who have to move a second time because of environmental problems in the area they were moved to.

Conclusion

The situation for water infrastructure project resettlers has been through several changes since the 1950s. These changes include a shift from one-time payment compensation to a Resettlement with Development policy. The biggest changes in policy happened in the 1980s, and were aimed at making the situation better for people being relocated before 1980 and preventing the same mistakes from happening again. The new policies were implemented in the 1990s.

To bear in mind these improvements when studying relocation is fundamental to understand what is happening in present day relocation projects in China. Some problems concerning relocation in rural China have stayed unchanged from the 1950s and up until recent time. To name a few, there are still problems connected to the quality and size of the land the resettlers are moved to. The South-North Water Transfer is a present day project, and the policies vary a lot from the 1950s -60s and 70-s relocation projects? Does the policies also differ from more recent projects such as the Three Gorges Dam Project? The next chapters will give an introduction to the South-North Water Transfer and a comparison of different relocation projects in China.

¹⁴² (Duan and Steil 2003) P 436

4 The South-North Water Transfer Project

The South-North Water Transfer Project (SNWT) is an infrastructure project to transfer water from the south, where there are abundant water resources, to the north, where the land is dry and arid. The project is the biggest water transfer project in the world and will connect a network of canals and rivers in China referred to as the *four horizontal and three vertical* (四横三纵 *siheng sanzong*)¹⁴³. The four horizontal refers to the Yangzi River, the Yellow River, the Huai River and Haihe River, while the three verticals are the eastern, middle and western canals that will lead water from south to north in China in order to supply the north with water.

Several routes have been suggested since the 1950s, and three routes were selected in the 1980s. The East route will go from the upper reaches of the Yangzi River to the north, along the ancient Beijing Hangzhou Grand Canal.¹⁴⁴ The Western route will go from three upper tributaries of the Yangzi River through the Qinghai Plateau and to the Yellow River.¹⁴⁵ The middle route will go from the Danjiangkou reservoir to Beijing and Tianjin. The water transfer will provide water for agriculture, industry and improve the water flow in the ecosystem.¹⁴⁶ This is a big project, both in terms of the amount of water that will be transferred and in terms of the cost of the project. The total water amount that is going to be diverted will be 45 billion m³ a year by 2050. The eastern route started delivering water in 2010 and will transfer 15 billion m³ water yearly. The middle route was first planned to start operating in 2010, but the start has been postponed until 2014, and this route will transfer 10 billion m³ water yearly. The western route will transfer most water, 20 billion m³ yearly and is still in the planning phase.¹⁴⁷

This chapter aims to give an introduction to the project as a whole, but provide more specifics of the middle route where I conducted my fieldwork. I want to start this chapter by giving an introduction to water resources in north and northwest China. The reason why I am spending time on this topic is that I think it is important to understand the serious water shortage in the

¹⁴³ (河南省南水北调中线工程概况, *Overview of the South-North Water Transfer Project in Henan* 2012)

<http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/index.asp>. Last accessed 3.10.2012

¹⁴⁴ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 342

¹⁴⁵ (Yang and Zehnder 2005)P 342

¹⁴⁶ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 342-343

¹⁴⁷ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) 343

north and thereby the government's effort to solve this crisis, where the South-North Water Transfer Project is a part of the solution.

Map 2: Map of the Project



The Water Crisis in China

The fast development in China has led to an annual growth rate of 10 per cent since the 1970s according to Chunmiao Zheng et al. in the article *Can China cope with its Water Crisis?*¹⁴⁹ This growth has also led to a greater demand for water. The water use has increased from the 1950s and up to the present. The Chinese population is expected to peak at 1.6 billion people in 2030, at which time China will need 700 to 800 billion m³ of water supplies. This growing demand for water is one of the biggest challenges in China according to Zheng et al. The growth has however slowed significantly in recent years due to more efficient water use in agriculture and industry.¹⁵⁰ The water resources in China are different in different regions, and according to Zheng et al. the water resource per capita in south China is roughly four times more than in northern regions. This means that while the biggest problems in the south are connected to risk of floods and pollution, the problems in the north are connected to lack of water resources.¹⁵¹ Zheng et al. writes that the North China

¹⁴⁸ Copyright New York Times 2007,

http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2007/09/27/world/28china_map.html last accessed 21.11.2012

¹⁴⁹ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 350

¹⁵⁰ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 350-351

¹⁵¹ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P340, (Zheng et al. 2010) P 350

Plain (NCP) has a water resource per capita of less than 500m³ each year, this low number places the region in the category of *absolute water scarcity* in accordance with the Falkenmark *water stress indicator*.¹⁵² The Falkenmark indicator is an indicator used to measure if a region has enough water resources created by Malin Falkenberg. Falkenberg, quoted in the IPCC Third Assessment Report - Climate Change 2001, writes

There are several indicators of water resource stress, including the amount of water available per person and the ratio of volume of water withdrawn to volume of water potentially available. When withdrawals are greater than 20% of total renewable resources, water stress often is a limiting factor on development withdrawals of 40% or more represents high stress. Simple numerical indices, however, give only partial indications of water resources pressures in a country or region because the consequences of “water stress” depend on how the water is managed.¹⁵³

The North China Plain (NCP) region will receive water from the SNWT project. It is the region from the Yanshan Mountains in the north, to the Taihang Mountains in the west, the Yellow River in the south and to the Bohai Gulf in the Northeast. This area struggles to meet the growing demands for water caused by industrial and municipal demands, population growth, and higher food demand. This region is reckoned as the cultural and political centre of China, it is also an important economic region and it is one of the most densely populated areas in the world. The NCP also stands for 12 per cent of China’s grain production.¹⁵⁴ Agriculture in the region has high water demands; irrigation is, according to Hong Yang and Alexander J.B Zehnder, essential in order to ensure production in areas where multiple cropping is common. In 2005, 70 per cent of the annual water withdrawal in the region was used for irrigation in agriculture.¹⁵⁵

The groundwater supplies 70 per cent of the total water supply to agricultural irrigation, water demands caused by population growth and the economic development in the NCP region. The problem is that the groundwater is declining. Zheng et al. and Yang et al. writes that water levels are declining with more than 1 meter each year both in deep and shallow aquifers. This decline has serious environmental and economic consequences; it can lead to

¹⁵² (Zheng et al. 2010) P 350

¹⁵³ (Working Group II: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, 2003)

<http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/tar/wg2/index.php?idp=180>, Last accessed 26.11.2012

¹⁵⁴ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 351

¹⁵⁵ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 340

rivers drying up, land subsidence and groundwater quality deterioration.¹⁵⁶ The rivers in the Haihe basin have been hit especially hard and many rivers have dried up.¹⁵⁷

The water resources cannot supply the growing demand for water both in the present and in the future. If the problems concerning water shortage in the north is not solved one can only imagine the consequences for food production, industry and people living in the area. Even if water demand is kept at the status quo it will create difficulties, because the groundwater is already declining. What then, will happen in the future when we know that the water demand is growing? There is an ongoing water crisis in this area, which needs to be solved. The Chinese government has already implemented several approaches for solving the crisis, whereas the SNWT is a part of the solution. Zheng et al. writes,

Several options for dealing with water scarcity and achieving more sustainable groundwater supplies have been implemented, or considered. It should be recognized however, that any comprehensive solution to sustainable water management requires consideration of social, political, economic and institutional factors.¹⁵⁸

Water conservation is an important method for limiting the reach of the water crisis in northern China. The largest water user in this region is the agriculture industry, and it has been important to make the water use in agriculture more efficient. It has also been important to use education and public campaigns to make people aware that there is a water resource problem in the region. Rainwater harvesting is a traditional practice in mountainous areas and is also an important method to save water. One of the most dramatic solutions that the Chinese government relies on to solve the water crisis is, according to Zheng et al., water transfers through the South-North Water Transfer Project.¹⁵⁹

An Overview of the South-North Water Transfer Project

Chairman Mao mentioned the South-North Water Transfer Project as early as 1952; on a trip to the Yellow River he said that “southern China has abundant water and northern China has

¹⁵⁶ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 351, (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 339

¹⁵⁷ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 341

¹⁵⁸ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 352

¹⁵⁹ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 353

less water,” and he proposed to “borrow some water from the south to the north”.¹⁶⁰ Hence the idea of the project is over 50 years old, but the project was not approved until 2004.¹⁶¹ Even if Mao saw an opportunity in leading water from the south to the north, China lacked the knowledge and resources to transfer water more than 1000 kilometres. In the 1950s China was struggling with a weak national economy and setbacks from both external and internal wars.¹⁶² Yang et al. points at the economic reforms in the 1970s, and the economic growth that has happened in the years after the 1970s, as the reason why China now has the financial resources to go through with the project.¹⁶³ One might argue that the growth in the Chinese economy has given China the opportunity to carry out the SNWT project that is necessary in order to solve a crisis that can have serious consequences for China as a nation. It is an oxymoron that it is the same growth in the Chinese economy that has caused the water crisis.

In 2000, President Jiang Zemin stated that the water crisis in north China was serious and that the SNWT needed to be started. He said, quoted in Yang et al., “In order to radically alleviate the severe water shortage in the north, it is necessary to implement the South-North Water Transfer Project”. Jiang further said to “Speed up the preparatory work of the project and start the construction as soon as possible”. Then the project became a part of the Tenth Five Year plan and the project was officially launched on December 27, 2002.¹⁶⁴

Scholars have expressed concerns about environmental problems that can occur because of the project. Zheng et al. writes that the SNWT can lead to dramatic consequences for the environment and ecosystems. If the water flow in the Yangzi River will be reduced by climate change, there will be less water to transfer. The risk of polluted inflows and return flows can also cause environmental problems.¹⁶⁵ Less water can have consequences for the fisheries in the river and will therefore be both an environmental problem and a problem for people that depend on the river for their livelihood. There have been concerns about what the middle route will do to the environment in the source area. Guo et al. expresses concerns that the water diversion can damage the economy and ecosystems in the source area. There is also a risk of water shortage in the downstream of Danjiangkou, which is the starting point of the

¹⁶⁰ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 339, (河南省南水北调中线工程概况, *Overview of the South-North Water Transfer Project in Henan* 2012) <http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/index.asp>. Collected 3.10.2012

¹⁶¹ (Gu, Shao, and Jiang 2012) P 3479

¹⁶² (Yang and Zehnder 2005)P 345

¹⁶³ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 339, 345

¹⁶⁴ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 339

¹⁶⁵ (Zheng et al. 2010) P 353

water transfer.¹⁶⁶ Relocation in the middle route can also lead to impoverishment for the resettled population.

The Middle Route in Henan

The middle route of the project will go from Danjiangkou dam, which is situated on the border between Hubei and Henan, via cities in Henan and Hebei, and ending up in Tianjin and Beijing.¹⁶⁷ According to the project's webpage from Henan Province, the length of the canal from the Danjiangkou dam to Beijing is 1267 km. The Henan Province SNWT web page states that Henan has invested a lot in the construction of the canal, they write:

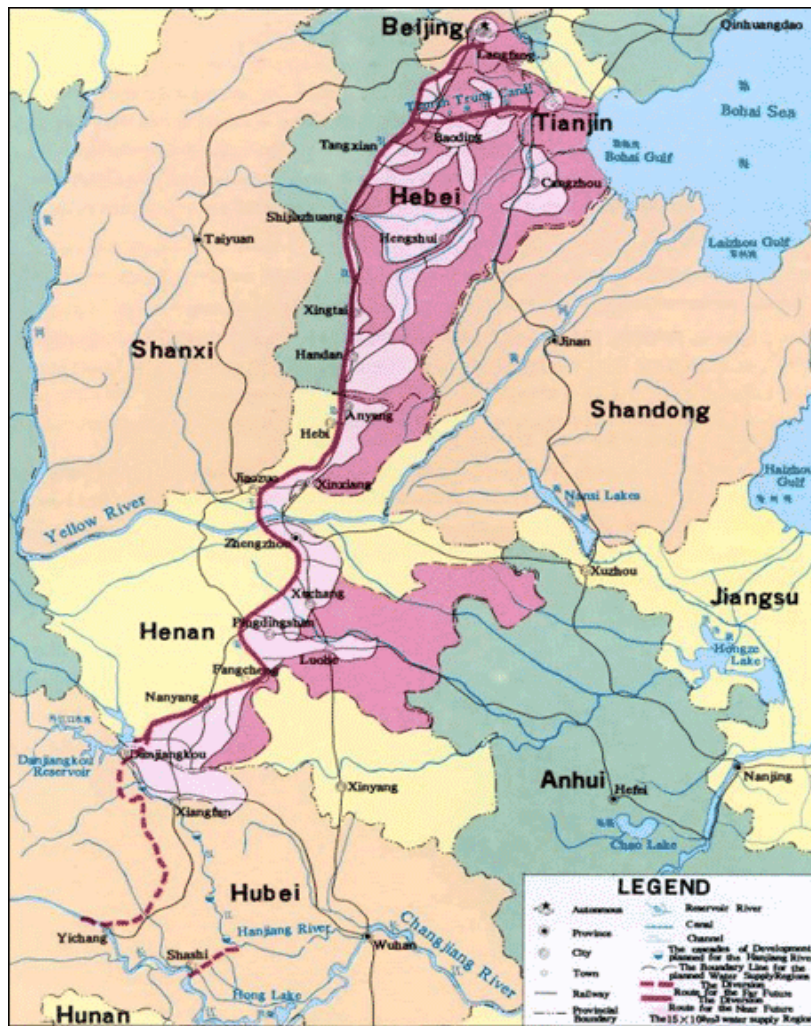
In the middle route of the South North Water Transfer Project, our province is both the source of the water and a receiving area, with the longest canals, the most migrants, most occupied land, the biggest investments, and it is the province that plans to transfer most water.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ (Gu, Shao, and Jiang 2012) P 3480

¹⁶⁷ (Gu, Shao, and Jiang 2012) P 3480

¹⁶⁸ (河南省南水北调中线工程概况, *Overview of the South-North Water Transfer Project in Henan* 2012) <http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/index.asp>. Collected 1.10.2012

Map 2: Map of the middle route ¹⁶⁹



The starting point of the middle canal is the Danjiangkou reservoir that has been raised to have a surface area of 303 km². This means that 144,7 km² in Henan has been occupied by the project. The occupation of land has forced more than 150 000 people to relocate because of the project.¹⁷⁰ Along the whole route about 300 000 people have been moved, according to official numbers, to make room for the canal. Yang and Zehnder claims that the number of people being moved might be even higher.¹⁷¹ The resettlement process started with a trial

¹⁶⁹ Map collected from; 国务院南水北调工程建设委员会办公室, South-North Water Transfer Project Construction Committee Office of the State Council, <http://www.nsb.gov.cn/zx/english/mrp.htm>, collected 31.10.2012

¹⁷⁰ (河南省南水北调中线工程概况, *Overview of the South-North Water Transfer Project in Henan* 2012) <http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/index.asp>. Collected 3.10.2012

¹⁷¹ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 342, (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 4

phase in 2009 around the Danjiangkou Reservoir in Hubei. The first phase of the relocation started at the end of 2009 and the whole relocation process is expected to take three years.¹⁷²

According to the official website of the project, the main purpose of the middle route is to ensure that the water supply to Beijing is safe. The office responsible for the middle route is called the Administration Office for the Construction of the Main Middle Route. It is responsible for the planning, implementation and results of the middle route of the SNWT and is subject to the State Council.¹⁷³ The official web page for the project in Henan also states that the project is important in order to ease the lack of water resources in the north, to improve the ecosystem, to improve people's standard of living and to strengthen the national power.¹⁷⁴

The middle route was originally planned to be finished in 2010, but the opening has been postponed until 2014. According to a report written after Second Vice Premier Hui Liangyu visited Henan for an inspection in September 2012, the middle route has experienced difficulties with technicalities concerning environmental protection. The Second Vice Premier stated that it is important to continuously work to improve the quality of the water and the environment around the canal.¹⁷⁵ The report further states that it is important to ensure safe water and a safe environment around the canal in order to make sure that the people living along the river are safe. Hui Liangyu also took time to meet with people that had been relocated, and expressed gratitude towards the resettlers. According to the report he said:

We sincerely want to thank all levels of the government's party committees, authorities and the people living along the canal. They have given full understanding, support, and have given major contribution to the project.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 4

¹⁷³ (南水北调中线干线工程建设管理局简介, *Introduction to Middle Route Project Construction Administration Office* 2012) <http://www.nsbdc.cn/gzcx/zyzn/index.html>. Last accessed 1.10.2012

¹⁷⁴ (河南省南水北调中线工程概况, *Overview of the South-North Water Transfer Project in Henan* 2012) <http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/index.asp>. Last accessed 3.10.2012

¹⁷⁵ (回良玉在河南考察南水北调工程时强调严格质量管理 强化水质保护 搞好移民安置切实把南水北调建设成为民生民心工程, *Hui Liangyu visits the South-to-North Water Diversion Project in Henan and Stresses the Importance of Water Security and a Successful Resettlement Process* 2012) <http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/new-s.asp?newsid=4416>, Last accessed 2.10. 2012

¹⁷⁶ (回良玉在河南考察南水北调工程时强调严格质量管理 强化水质保护 搞好移民安置切实把南水北调建设成为民生民心工程, *Hui Liangyu visits the South-to-North Water Diversion Project in Henan and Stresses the Importance of Water Security and a Successful Resettlement Process* 2012) <http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/new-s.asp?newsid=4416>, Last accessed 2.10. 2012

Both information from the web page and quotes from government officials such as Hui Liangyu emphasize that the government is grateful towards the resettlers. The focus on environmental safety as well as the appreciation shown for what the resettled population have done for the project, make it different than earlier infrastructure projects. As discussed previously, earlier projects were mainly focused on the mechanics and the end result, and not on the resettlement. It is this difference in policy and method that makes this project interesting in terms of the relocation process.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to introduce the background for and the most important details concerning the South North Water Transfer Project. The project is one of several methods to secure the water supply in north China and especially on the North China Plateau. The lack of water in north China is a serious problem that needs to be solved in the near future. The consequences of a water shortage in the future will be dramatic. North China is not only an important area for agriculture and industry, and it is also the location of Beijing and Tianjin; the home of 20 and 13 million people respectively.

The water crisis in north China is a result of both population and economic growth in China. The Chinese government's willingness to invest US\$ 60 million is an indicator of the importance of these canals. Also, the magnitude of the whole project means that it is important to build these canals and that the Chinese government is willing to pay for it. The question, is what will be sacrificed in the name of the project? The project can have serious environmental consequences along the canals. Will the 330 000 people that either have been, or is in the process of being relocated, be taken care of? Is it an example on hazardous politics that will lead the resettler into impoverishment? Or is it an example on recent relocation projects that tries to resettle the people in a sustainable manner? I am going to in the next chapter try to answer these questions by comparing the SNWT Project with two earlier projects.

5 From Displacement to Resettlement

One can use many different methods to analyse the results of involuntary resettlement; one method is to compare different relocation projects in order to look for political and economic changes. To place this project in a wider context of relocation in China, I am going to compare the Middle Route of the SNWT Project (the Middle Route) with the Danjiangkou Reservoir Resettlement and the Three Gorges Project Dams (TGP) Resettlement. In interviews, when I asked what the resettlers thought about the situation for resettlers in China today, some said that the situation is better than before. (Interview 12, 18, 20) This notion makes it interesting to look into what resettlers experience today, compared to in earlier projects. I claim that relocation has been, and still is, subject to changes, often for the better. Though some problems do remain, most importantly the lack of resources in resettlement sites. The World Bank makes a distinction between the two terms displacement and resettlement, and I will show how the Chinese government has gone from displacement of migrants as a result of a greater construction project, to a strategic resettlement policy.

The Danjiangkou Reservoir and the Middle Route

According to Cernea, local conditions can affect how relocation projects are carried out.¹⁷⁷ The starting point of the Middle Route and the surrounding area is interesting in this sense because it has been the site of another big relocation project in the past. The construction of the Danjiangkou Reservoir is an example of a less successful resettlement project in the same area as the Middle Route. It is interesting to compare these two resettlement projects because the location is the same and both projects were very important national projects at the time of construction. It is also interesting to compare these two projects in terms of the political climate during which they were constructed. The Danjiangkou Reservoir was built between 1958 and 1974, at a time when the government's attitude with regards to relocation was different than it is today in terms of compensation and resettlement plans. It was the biggest reservoir in China when it was built.¹⁷⁸ In 1999, Li Peng said that the Danjiangkou Reservoir still had "enormous problems with resettlement"¹⁷⁹, which is evidence on what deep impact the move had on the resettlers. The Danjiangkou Reservoir was a costly experience, both for

¹⁷⁷ (Cernea 2007) P 127

¹⁷⁸ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 2

¹⁷⁹ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 199

the Chinese government and for the resettlers; and in the next section I will introduce some of the experiences from that resettlement operation.

In order to compare the present situation with the construction and resettlement process of 1958, I will give a short introduction to some of the difficulties that arose in the resettlement of the Danjiangkou. As a result of the construction of the Danjiangkou Reservoir, 100 000 people were relocated in Hubei and Henan provinces over the course of two years. In this project the planning was insufficient, and the government did not provide adequate housing and farmland for the resettlers. Those who were relocated to steeper terrain got less fertile land than what they had before, which made it difficult to maintain a livelihood by farming. The resettlers received “some money” according to Li et al. but little effort was done to re-establish peoples livelihoods. There have also been reports about resettlers that lost their housing were living in cottages of grass after being moved.¹⁸⁰

Li writes that the reason why relocation in the Danjiangkou Reservoir led to impoverishment was that the project was not adequately planned; the size of the dam was changed several times and the water level was altered five times.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, the resettlers and the relocation authorities were in conflict with each other; the compensation money was delayed and the authorities were accused of spending compensation money on irrelevant activities. Of the 100 000 that were moved out of the reservoir area, two thirds returned because the conditions of the relocation sites were inadequate, and the compensation for assets lost were too low. The resettlement authorities had a hostile attitude toward the resettlers and tried to stop the resettlers from moving back to their hometowns. This attempt did not succeed, in 1985 there were as many as 8000 people returning. Some of the Danjiangkou resettlers blamed the local government for using illegal methods, which led to confrontations where tens of people were killed and injured,¹⁸² The three major consequences of forced relocation are economic impoverishment, social instability and degradation of land quality.¹⁸³ As discussed previously, these negative outcomes were also evident in other relocation projects from the first three decades of the PRC. There is little evidence to suggest that the government provided the migrants with sufficient help to *resettle* during the Danjiangkou Reservoir Project; they were simply *displaced*.

¹⁸⁰ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 199-200

¹⁸¹ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 200

¹⁸² (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 200

¹⁸³ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 199

This area is the same as the relocation site for the Middle Route, as previously mentioned, the dam has been raised 14,6 metres.¹⁸⁴ It is therefore interesting to compare the Middle Route's relocation project with the Danjiangkou Reservoir resettlement. When the area was cleared in 1958-1973, people became impoverished and the area has struggled for a long time to re-establish peoples' livelihood. When the resettlers in Xichuan were moved in 2011-2012, there was a resettlement plan with housing and financial compensation for the resettlers. As I am going to show in the next chapter, the new housing is of good quality compared to other housing in the area, and the government has carefully planned and set up infrastructure, water systems and electricity. The situation was completely different during the Danjiangkou Reservoir resettlement when some people built cottages of grass. Today the living conditions in relocation projects have improved to such an extent that people who are not relocated did express envy toward those who get new housings. (Personal conversation 6.3.2011)

Based on results from the fieldwork, it is still unclear who gets compensation and how much; the interview objects explained the grounds for getting compensation in many different ways. Compensation must also be seen as more than money, new housing is also a form of compensation. Even if the calculation of compensation is vague, I will argue that the situation is better now compared to previous relocation projects, during which people only received a small amount of money and no assistance in the resettlement process.

Government representatives have expressed gratitude to the resettlers in the Middle Route; signs in the relocation areas and official speeches evidence this. I will give a further introduction to signs in the next chapter. This is a marked change from the reportedly hostile attitude of authorities in earlier projects. The area has experienced violent confrontations between people and the local government before, and it is likely that the government is trying to prevent both impoverishment and confrontations. One of the major differences between the Danjiangkou Reservoir displacement and the Middle Route resettlement is that the Middle Route resettlement took place *after* the Chinese government adopted the Resettlement with Development policy. In my opinion, it is too early to determine whether or not the resettlers will become impoverished as a result of relocation. It is however, important to be aware of

¹⁸⁴ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 4

the major improvements and reforms of Chinese relocation policy, which makes it unlikely that the situation will become as bad as it was after the Danjiangkou resettlement.

The compensation and the housing standard were not the only things that were different in the Middle Route; the planning stage of the project was also different. One example from the new planning strategy is the trial relocation that was carried out in Hubei before the rest of the resettlers were moved. In this stage 6625 people were resettled first, then the next phase of resettlement started, during which 141 000 people were relocated.¹⁸⁵ To have a trial phase is another indication that the political climate concerning relocation has changed a lot since the Danjiangkou relocation.

From this it is evident that carrying out resettlement projects has changed dramatically from the time of the construction of the Danjiangkou Reservoir to the Middle Route.

Improvements in planning, compensation and the governmental attitude towards resettlers are all a part of making relocation a less traumatic experience than it was in the past. Most important is the change in policy aim, from dislocation to resettlement. This political decision has had a great impact on resettlers and the government. The government can instead of re-establishing peoples livelihood years after moving them focus on resettling them as good as possible from the start. The first project that implemented the Resettlement with Development policy was the Three Gorges Project on the Yangzi River. The next section will show how different projects under the same policies also can be different.

The Three Gorges Project and SNWT

The resettlement policies faced by the Middle Route Project and the TGP are more or less the same; the only major difference is the location of the two. A comparison of the two projects can be found in a report from the International Rivers Network (IRN) called *Resettlement in Action*. The report from IRN is based on results from the new reservoir resettlement process around Danjiangkou in Hubei. According to this report the Middle Route resettlement is different than the TGP in terms of compensation standards, resettlement locations, and post-resettlement assistance. The compensation standards in the TGP varied in different locations, but generally speaking the compensation in the Middle Route was higher. In the TGP the compensation was around 7500 RMB per person, in the new Danjiangkou resettlement in

¹⁸⁵ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 4

Hubei this amount increased to 32 000 RMB per person.¹⁸⁶ This increase in compensation can explain why the resettlers interviewed in Xichuan did not complain about compensation, and the IRN report confirms that the resettlers in Hubei neither complained.¹⁸⁷ When I asked my interview objects about the size of their monetary compensation, nobody mentioned the official figure of 32 000 RMB. The resettlers in Henan answered, that they received between 530 RMB (Interview 13) and 30 000 RMB (Interview 4), in several interviews the resettlers answered that they had not received any compensation (Interview 5-8, 10, 11, 14-19). This might be because the compensation had not been paid out yet, and the government had not yet had given out information about how much each person will receive. Relocation scholars also discuss the meaning of financial compensation. According to Maldonado, the World Bank should be criticized for paying too much attention to financial compensation and too little attention to other aspects of re-establishing peoples livelihood.¹⁸⁸ Cernea, who writes, “compensation is flawed and reconstruction is under-financed. The revealing fact is the numerous projects that do pay compensation fail to restore livelihoods and leave people worse off”¹⁸⁹ reflects the same attitude. This means that the increase in monetary compensation does not necessarily mean that the resettlement process is improving. There are many other aspects of resettlement that are important to consider in order to avoiding impoverishment.

Another difference between the TGP and the Middle Route are the locations people have been relocated to. In the TGP there was resettlement both within – and across provinces, some were moved as far as to Shanghai and Yunnan. When moving people this far, the risks of what Cernea describes as social disarticulation and marginalization are big.¹⁹⁰ The resettlers had problems with language, culture and traditions, which were different. The resettlers moved far away struggled in the new areas and sometimes moved back to their hometowns. The IRN describes the move to a new place as a waste of resources when it had to be undone, because the resettlers when moving back were putting extra economic and social pressure on the reservoir area.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁶ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 6

¹⁸⁷ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 6

¹⁸⁸ (Maldonado 2012)

¹⁸⁹ (Cernea 2008) P 90

¹⁹⁰ (Cernea 2007) P 106

¹⁹¹ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 6

Many of the resettlers in the Middle Route area were moved close to their previous homes, and even if they had to adjust to a new environment with other housing, they did not have to adapt to a completely new environment. It is, however, questionable that the solution should be to avoid moving people out of their home provinces. The resettlers in the Middle Route who were moved to a resettlement village on the outskirts of Zhengzhou were moved a distance of about 330 kilometres. They said it was difficult to adjust to the new environment. (Interview 20, 21) Xichuan is on the border of Hubei and Henan province, and it is possible that the environment in the neighbouring counties in Hubei would have a more similar environment than what the resettlers met outside of Zhengzhou. It is not certain that resettling them within the province is the best way to avoid resettlers moving back to the areas where they came from. In my opinion, the main point should be to resettle people in areas close to their hometowns, in terms of both distance and culture, in order to avoid social disarticulation and marginalization. A problem connected to moving people locally is the lack of arable land per person in some areas in rural China. Both the areas in Hubei and in Henan are densely populated agricultural areas where there is little uncultivated land¹⁹², and this complicates the relocation process.

To move people locally can also lead to conflicts with other people living in the area who lose land to the resettlers. One outcome of local resettlement in areas with scarce resources can be that the resettled population loses land when being moved, which was evident in the results of the fieldwork. The loss of land can, as I will discuss further in Chapter 7, also be a risk of impoverishment. The government surely must both take account of the risk of landlessness when moving people locally and the risk of social disarticulation when moving people further away, when planning and going through with relocation schemes.

The post-resettlement assistance is also strengthened in the Middle Route compared to the resettlement in the TGP, according to the IRN report. One recurring problem in resettlement is the problem of resettlers who move back to the areas they came from. Both in the Danjiangkou Reservoir and in the TGP people have been moving back to their hometowns. This can be seen as examples on the resettlement scheme not working as it should, but the government does make improvements to better the situation for the resettlers. In 2006 the State Counsel released the “Opinions about Improving Post-resettlement Assistance Policies

¹⁹² (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 7

for Medium and Large Reservoirs”, which gives resettlers from medium and large reservoirs a subsidy of 600 RMB per year for 20 years. This subsidy is also given to previous resettlers.¹⁹³ This is a method to prevent people from becoming impoverished in present relocation projects and a way of improving the situation for resettlers who have struggled with re-establishing their livelihoods after relocation in the past.

According to the IRN report, one person from each relocated family will receive job training to make the shift from working in the agriculture sector to other sectors easier in the Middle Route project.¹⁹⁴ This is interesting because it can, if actually implemented, be a great help for the resettlers. At this stage, none of the resettlers in Henan conformed that they had received any help from the government in terms of job assistance. Since the Middle Route resettlers were moved less than a year ago, it is possible that the job assistance will happen in the future. The new approach to post-resettlement is positive because it means that the Chinese government makes an effort to improve the carrying out of relocation projects, which is positive both for the resettlers and the government itself. It is beneficiary for the government because it can reduce the risk of resettlers moving back to the area they came from which is a waste of resources. Assisting resettlers with job training was also as mentioned previously a part of the TGP resettlement, but with various results. Many of the resettlers lost their new jobs after a short time, in some cases because their new workplace went bankrupt. It can in the future be an interesting topic for future research to see if the job assisting initiative in the Middle Route will be more successful than the one in the TGP, if the policy is fully implemented. Both the Middle Route and the Three Gorges project have *resettlement* projects, and not just *dislocation* projects.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have showed how the change from displacement to resettlement policies in development projects has changed what impact the move has on the resettlers. The situation during the construction of the Danjiangkou in 1958-1973 was unbearable for the involuntary resettlers. The relocation process turned out to be a disaster due to poor planning and a hostile approach to relocation by the authorities. The Middle Route relocation process takes place in a different environment, both in terms of planning and carrying out the project. In the Middle

¹⁹³ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 7

¹⁹⁴ (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 7

Route the situation has been improved when it comes to compensation, planning, and implementation. Furthermore, the way the Middle Route resettlers are treated corresponds with the Resettlement With Development policy in the sense that people's livelihoods are *the same as before*. Since the RwD policy is new, it is still being improved upon. One can see these changes from one project to another, especially when it comes to resettlement sites, compensation and follow-up after resettlement. By using the Danjiangkou resettlement and the TGP as examples, I have shown that relocation has changed from being completely life altering in early projects, to a resettlement with development policy in the TGP, which has been further improved in the Middle Route. This means that the resettlement policies in the PRC are under constant change and evaluation, it may seem as if the Chinese government learns from previous mistakes and successes and changes their policies thereafter. By looking at these changes I argue that the policies go in the direction of making the impact of relocation as little as possible for the resettlers. However, some problems associated with relocation projects are difficult to solve with new policies. For example, the lack of natural resources in some relocation areas is not necessarily a result of bad planning and policies, but it must be taken into account when planning these kinds of projects. All the improvements shown in this chapter can be a part in explaining why the resettlers thought the situation concerning resettlement is better now than how it used to be. While this chapter has placed the middle route of the South-North Water Transfer Project in the context of resettlement in China, the next chapter will look into the specific details of the resettlers in Xichuan County.

6 The Resettlers and the Housings

Observations in Henan Province

The fieldwork conducted for this thesis was in greater parts conducted in Xichuan County in Henan. In this section I will introduce some findings from my interviews and observations of the resettlement area. Though some of the interviews were not conducted in Xichuan, they were with resettlers *from* Xichuan, whom had been moved out of Xichuan to a resettlement village in the outskirts of Zhengzhou, more than 300 km away from their hometown. The fieldwork in Xichuan gave several interesting discoveries. First of all, the government built resettlement housings had a better standard than other housing in the area. Secondly, even if research showed that people had lost land, which one might assume would lead to people complaining about their situation, most people I interviewed did not complain. Instead they said that they were happy with their new living conditions. In fact, when asked if their life had changed because of the relocation process, most of the local resettlers said no, *it is just a new house*, or *life is the same* (without mentioning the house).

This notion of people being satisfied with their new situation in a new place is good news, especially in light of studies from previous relocation projects in China that show how some people being resettled have ended up being impoverished. Therefore it is important to understand the context around relocation in the South-North Water project, what does the answer *it's just a new house* really mean? And, is it true? Also, *most* of the resettlers answered that the relocation did not have a big impact on their lives, not all of them. I found that one of the biggest differences in the interview responses was between people who had been moved to a new house close to where they came from, and those who had been moved out of their county and far away from their hometown. The aim of this chapter is to first describe the new housings people have been moved to; what do these new housings have that the old ones do not have? Then there will be an analysis of the answers from interviews in the context of the different stages of relocation provided by Scudder and the Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction model provided by Cernea. Lastly, I will discuss the importance of distance, where I claim that resettlement difficulties are, more often than not, directly linked to the distance people have been relocated.

I will start with a short introduction to Henan and Xichuan county before I am going to present the observations I did under my fieldwork. I want to spend some time describing my observations because I think it is important to understand the context of where I conducted interviews.

Henan is an agricultural province that is located in the central part of China. It is one of the most densely populated provinces in China¹⁹⁵, with a population of 104 million in 2011¹⁹⁶. Henan is one of the provinces with the biggest rural population and the biggest agricultural production.¹⁹⁷ The province has been and is still reckoned as a fairly poor province, along with other provinces such as Anhui, Sichuan and Inner Mongolia. The economy has, however, improved after the 1980s, when the country went through several reforms such as rising grain prices, the end of the “grain first” policy and the decollectivization of rural land.¹⁹⁸ In 2010, gross domestic product per capita was 43 000 RMB in Henan, in comparison GDP per capita in Beijing was 141 800 RMB.¹⁹⁹ Xichuan County is situated at the border of Henan and Hubei and the county is the starting point of the South-North Water Transfer and the location of the Danjiangkou Dam. Xichuan county has 686 300 inhabitants, of which 200 000 are employed in the primary industry, according to the Henan Statistical Yearbook from 2011. The gross domestic product per capita was 18 713 RMB in 2010.²⁰⁰ Henan province has experience with relocation from earlier projects, the Danjiangkou Dam is situated on the border between Henan and Hubei, and the Sanmenxia Dam is situated on the border between Henan and Shanxi.

Description of the New Housings

The new housings (新村, *xincun*) for people being relocated are easy to recognize in the terrain in Xichuan. The Chinese term 新村 literally means *new village* 村 and I will refer to these areas where relocatees are being moved to as *xincun* in the text. Another term for the new villages are 移民村 (*migrant village*) which is a term used by other scholars such as

¹⁹⁵ (Hu, Miao, and Qiao 2002) P 298

¹⁹⁶ (河南省人口民族概况, *Overview of Population and Ethnic Groups in Henan Province* 2012) <http://www.henan.gov.cn/hngk/system/2011/03/04/010233542.shtml>, Last accessed 5.10

¹⁹⁷ (Xiaojian and Xinsheng 2010) P 2

¹⁹⁸ (Tsui 1996) P 362

¹⁹⁹ (*Comparing Chinese provinces with countries All the parities in China*, 2012)

http://www.economist.com/content/chinese_equivalents, last accessed 6.11.2012

²⁰⁰ (*Henan Statistical Yearbook* 2011)

Heggelund, but since the term *xincun* is the term that people living in Xichuan use for the new resettlement villages that is the term I am going to use.

Xincuns have features that make them stand out from other housings. All of the xincuns that I observed consist of townhouses; and every townhouse consists of five to twenty living units, depending on the size of the xincun. The townhouses are placed in rows, and the smallest of the xincuns I saw had six townhouses with four living units in each, whereas the biggest had around forty townhouses with ten living units in each. The townhouses are painted white or bright yellow. The colour makes them look different than other houses in the area, which are either painted in dark grey or brown or not painted at all. In most places there is a garden in front of the house, in some places the garden is enclosed by a brick wall, in other places brick walls surround the whole xincun area. In most of the xincuns I visited the houses had two floors, though a few houses had only one floor.

The inside of the xincuns was often in a remarkably better condition than other houses I visited in relocation areas. A lot of housing in Xichuan shows signs of poor construction work and few resources; the isolation is all but non-existent in some of the houses, which means that they are cold and damp in the winter. The isolation of the houses is better in the xincuns, probably because they are new. This makes it easier to keep the temperature warm, or at least ensure that it is no draft inside. It is, however, not normal to use heating in houses in this area, regardless of whether the house is old or new, if it is cold people simply put on warmer clothes.

In all the new houses I visited they had installed running water, whereas in other houses in the same area it is more common to have a well in the yard where one collects water either manually, or with an electric water pump. The new houses often had squat toilets with running water, a shower and a washing machine inside the house. Not all the houses I visited had washing machines and showers, but all had running water and a toilet inside. In comparison, the toilets in older houses were often located in the backyard and were not always connected to the public sewer system, but were emptied manually. Most older houses in the area do not have showers, instead people go to the public shower houses (公共澡堂, *gonggong zaotang*).

At the time of my fieldwork, relocatees in some of the xincuns were finishing the inside of their houses themselves. The first xincun I visited was located close to a small village centre; it was special because it was still under construction. The outsides of the buildings were done, but the inside was not finished. Construction workers had built the outside; the people who were going to live there finished the inside, and were painting, tiling and so forth. The types of rooms were the same in all the living units, but since it were the relocatees who were finishing the inside; there were differences in colours, floors and interior.

Relocatees were doing construction work themselves, to make improvements to their new homes. In relocation projects in China, the resettlers can choose to use their own savings or borrow money to make the house bigger than the government standard. In some places where the standard was one floor the resettlers paid for a second floor. This upgrading of the housings was also common in the Three Gorges Dam resettlement. In a study of the Three Gorges Dam resettlement by Wilmsen et al the resettlers increased the size of their house from 154.5 m² to 194.8m² on average.²⁰¹ When asked if the resettlers in Xichuan had used their own money to improve their housings some of the resettlers confirmed that they had done so, some had paid no more than 6 000 yuan (Interview 15) while the ones that had paid the most out of their own pocket paid 90 000 (Interview 12). Some of the resettlers did not pay to improve their new housing and said that they just followed the standard size (Interview 13).

There are two features of the xincuns that makes them look different than other older buildings. First of all, the bright colours of the townhouses stand out; I only observed xincuns outside of township centres painted in white or yellow. Also, when I asked people living in the area they confirmed that the colour is a way to distinguish the government built housing from other buildings. (Personal conversations with my guide and others during fieldwork).

Secondly, the structure of a xincun is also different from other housings. The structure in xincuns makes them different than other housings in the area because *there is* a structure. Other housing in areas with farming look different just because they do not look like they have been built at the same time, they are not built in rows with a certain number of houses on each row and there are no townhouses. The structure is also different because many of the

²⁰¹ (Wilmsen, Webber, and Duan 2011) P 366

xincuns do not have a natural centre for the villagers to meet, except on the street outside the houses. In other areas there are often a small shop or a restaurant on street corners where people meet for drinking tea and chatting. Most of the xincuns lacked these meeting points. The reason why it is like this might be due to the fact that the housings are new, all the xincuns I visited were less than a year old, it might be that there will be more natural meeting points (such as small restaurants and shops) when people have lived there for a longer period of time.

Picture of a Xincun in Xichuan, picture taken by the author, 24.02.2012

Picture 1



A third note on the structure is that most houses in Xichuan are not townhouses, but separate houses that are built close to each other. There are some apartment buildings in central areas, but no townhouses. This means that one can see if housings are government built xincuns from far away.

Some of the xincuns give an impression of being remote and far away from basically everything. Of the places I visited, two xincuns in particular stood out as being placed in “the middle of nowhere”. One of these places was close to the Danjiangkou reservoir, and as mentioned earlier, the reservoir has been raised for the sake of the SNWT project, which means that people have been moved both to make room for the dam and also to build the

canal. This particular xincun was located a 20 minute drive from the reservoir and was one of the biggest xincuns I visited. Here the houses were painted yellow, there were almost only one-floor townhouses and the houses did not have a garden in the front. The houses did not have a fenced area in front of the house at all; instead there were big doors that looked more like a garage door than a door to a house people lived in. (Picture 2) This was the only xincun I visited where most of the townhouses only had one floor. There were no other housings close to it, and the standard inside the houses was not the same as the others in terms of tiles and paint, in this area three different living units were visited and none of them had painted walls or floor tiles. Other xincuns I visited had separate small gardens outside the living units, while in this xincun there was only a road outside the houses. This means that even if the xincuns share features that make them recognizable, there are still differences between them. It is somewhat difficult to explain these differences. One possible explanation could be that the construction cost of different xincuns varies, which in turn is determined by location, different building costs and so forth. This topic has not been further investigated in this thesis, because of limits of time, but it is an interesting topic that hopefully will be researched in the future.

Picture of a xincun, close to the Danjiangkou Dam, taken 28.2.2012

Picture 2



Reactions From Local Residents When Visiting a Xincun

Observations of people who were *not* resettled were also important to my understanding of the differences in standard between xincuns and other housing in the same area. When my guide and I entered a new housing before an interview, I observed the reactions of my guide. He often expressed that he was impressed by the house and commented on the running water, the shower, the quality of the buildings and so on. This could of course be politeness, we came as guests and it is natural when visiting someone's new home to praise it. We did, however, often talk about the places we had visited on our way home, and he would then repeat the things he had noticed as especially good or impressive and would also tell his wife about it when we arrived at his home. (Observations done after interviews, 28.2, 7.3, 16.4)

The fact that he also talked about the new housings when he was not around the people living in them gave me the impression that he was impressed by the higher standard in these houses, he compared them with the living standard in the area he lived in and found the new housing better. He also made remarks such as "The migrants are lucky" and "These housings must have been expensive". I would also agree that the new housings were in better condition and had much higher standards than other housings I visited in the area.

After an interview on March 6th, I talked to one of the neighbours of a xincun, she and her family had not been moved, but her house was only a couple of meters away from the houses that had been demolished. She shared the same admiration for the new housings as my guide had. After she had told me about her house not being demolished and her family not being moved, I had an impression of her being envious of the people getting new houses. I asked her about it and she said that she wished she had been relocated as well. "I was living next to these people, now they have new houses and I don't" she told me. (Personal conversation, 6.3.2012) This gave me the impression that it was not just the resettlers who thought well of their new housings, others living in the area thought so as well.

Signs

Another observation I made was of the signs at the construction site of the canal and at construction sites for relocation housings. The signs had messages such as; "To resettle the migrants is not a small task, the construction should last for a lifetime" and "The responsibility of developing technology and to maintain the water quality is very important". (Picture 3) These signs can also be seen as the government trying to *get the message out*

about working to care for the migrants. It is an important message for people being resettled and anyone else living in the area. The signs make the shift in government policy (to Resettlement with Development) all the more clear.

Picture of signs taken outside a construction site close to the Danjiangkou Dam, 28.02.2012

Picture 3



On a final note it is important to emphasize some points. First of all, in observing the housings, the shape of the xincuns is similar to each other, but there were also differences between them, both in terms of where they were placed and how they looked. Some of them were placed in areas with other housings close by and some were placed in more remote areas.

There might be several reasons for the xincuns being designed in such a similar way; first of all, the townhouses take up less land than it would have if the houses were regular houses built apart from each other. When building a townhouse it also means that you have several living units finished at the same time, you can move more people to the same place faster. The relocation in the SNWT is planned to be carried out during three years, from the start in 2012, and plans to move 100 000 people each year on average.²⁰² To move so many people each year is surely a task that demands efficient solutions. It is possible that it is easier to connect a xincun to the public services such as the public sewer system and electricity

²⁰² (Resettlement in Action 2010) P 4

because the living units are close to each other. It can therefore be more economical to build townhouses both in terms of saving space and to simplify the construction of the public services in the area.

The distinguishing shape and colour of the xincuns also make them a symbol of how relocatees are treated in Xichuan, everybody knows that these new housings are built by the government to house people being moved because of the South-North Water Transfer. The housings then become a symbol of the success of the project; one can see by looking at the xincuns that the government takes responsibility for the inflicted people.

Whether or not the intention behind the uniform layout of xincuns is to make them recognizable for others and make them a symbol *on purpose* is uncertain. It is, however, clear that the government wants to get the message out that the resettlers are important and that the government cares for them. This message can be found by reading the obviously political messages and slogans on signs at relocation and construction sites. Another is government reports such as the one presented at the Middle Route Henan Province website, in which second vice premier Hui Liangyu expressed gratitude towards the resettlers.²⁰³

In light of the unfortunate history of relocation in Henan Province, it is understandable that the government wants to send a strong message about the good work of the government in this area. The construction of the Danjiangkou Dam between 1958 and 1973 is as discussed previously one of the less successful relocation projects in China. Scudder calls the people being moved in the Danjiangkou relocation process for development refugees.²⁰⁴ This was before the government implemented the *Resettlement with Development* policy and there have been, as discussed in chapter four and six, many changes to how resettlement projects are implemented since then. By looking at the new housings in Xichuan one can conclude that there has been a change in policies, from a time where people only were *displaced* to a time where people are *relocated*.

²⁰³ (回良玉在河南考察南水北调工程时强调严格质量管理 强化水质保护 搞好移民安置切实把南水北调建设成为民生民心工程, Hui Liangyu visits the South-to-North Water Diversion Project in Henan and Stresses the Importance of Water Security and a Successful Resettlement Process 2012)

<http://www.hnnsbd.gov.cn/index/new-s.asp?newsid=4416>. Last accessed 3.10.2012

²⁰⁴ (Scudder 1993) P 125

Which One Of Scudders Stages Do The Resettlers Belong To?

Now the focus will shift from observations of the area to the resettlers. One way of contextualizing the interview responses of the resettlers is to place them in Scudder's theoretical model of stages that resettlers go through. The different stages can help determine and explain what people worry about and what they think about being relocated. To place the resettlers in the Middle Route in the right stage thus becomes a method to improve our understanding of their situation and the answers resettlers gave in interviews.

Scudder introduces four stages of resettlement, and during the course of the fieldwork for this thesis two of the stages were identifiable. One could recognize features of the first stage because the relocation process showed signs of a *completed* first stage; such as villages designed for resettlers with a basic infrastructure and public services. And the second stage could be identified because the resettlers were at stage two when they were interviewed. The first stage is called *Planning, Initial Infrastructure Development and Settler Recruitment*.²⁰⁵ Scudder writes that in an optimal setting the resettlers should be able to participate in the planning of relocation projects in terms of where they want to move, and to what kinds of housings and so forth.²⁰⁶ A part of Stage One is settler recruitment, the stage in which you in some cases find people that *want* to move, and in other cases the ones responsible *decides* who are moved to where. In the case of resettlement in Xichuan there was no evidence of the resettlers being able to decide where they wanted to move. Resettlers, whom were asked whether or not they had been given an opportunity to choose where they wanted to move, all answered that they had not. However, when it came to housing there were differences in the number of floors, and some had chosen to build an extra floor on their own initiative/out of their own pocket. In this sense the resettlers were able to have a say in terms of housing, and actually had a small part in the planning process, at least if they paid for the changes themselves. (Interview 10, 12, 18, 20).

Most of the resettlers interviewed in this thesis were at the time of the interviews at Stage Two of the resettlement process, called *Transition*.²⁰⁷ The resettlers are placed in the

²⁰⁵ (Scudder 1991) P 162

²⁰⁶ (Scudder 1991) P 162

²⁰⁷ (Scudder 1991) P 162

transition stage because they were either in the process of moving to their new housings or had moved there less than one year ago. Scudder writes that the transition stage can last for less than one year in special cases, but normally people stay in this stage for at least two years, and in some cases the transition stage can last for as long as five years.²⁰⁸ One sign that the resettlers are in the transition stage is that they are risk-averse, he writes

Risk aversion is a coping response to the stress and uncertainty associated with not only a new physical and biotic environment but also neighbours, an increased governmental presence (in case of government sponsored settlement) and frequently a new host population²⁰⁹

This means that the resettlers are more preoccupied with making ends meet and supporting their families than with economic and social development²¹⁰ (which does not happen until Stage Three in Scudders model²¹¹). If this basic concern is the most common attitude, it can account for resettlers who did not seem to have such strong opinions about the resettlement process, especially when it came to their own situation. Most people said that the biggest change for them was just to get a new house (Interview 1, 2, 3, 6, 8). Others answered that life was just the same as before the move (Interview 5, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). When asked what they thought about the situation for resettlers in general, most people said that they thought the situation was good. It is a good thing that people are satisfied with their situation, but it is also surprising because most of the resettlers had also lost land, which one would think could lead to complaints. If the resettlers in this stage are mostly concerned about getting used to their new environment and making ends meet, and the family can still survive on the land they have left, then loss of land might not be of the biggest concern. To reclaim land or to lease or buy extra land is according to Scudder part of Stage Three²¹², which means that the answers given when the settlers are at Stage Two could be different at a later stage.

The observations also supports the notion of people being in Stage Two, one of the observations made in the fieldwork was that the xincuns lacked shops and restaurants. To

²⁰⁸ (Scudder 1991) P 162

²⁰⁹ (Scudder 1991) P 162

²¹⁰ (Scudder 1991) P 163

²¹¹ (Scudder 1991) P 164

²¹² (Scudder 1991) P 165

invest in businesses outside the home but within the resettlement area is more likely to happen in stage three when according to Scudder settlers are more willing to take risks and to invest.²¹³ The lack of private enterprises in the resettlement areas can then be seen as natural in this stage, and it would be interesting to do further investigations in the future in the same area to see if the resettlers reaches Stage Three and then invests in the area or try to reclaim land.

Even though the resettlers fit the transition stage in terms of a timeline and recent relocation, there are some problems with defining Scudders stages in the Middle Route. Not all of Scudders definitions such as being risk averse match the attitudes that the resettlers showed. Were the resettlers interviewed in Xichuan risk averse? In terms of investing outside of their homes yes, but many of the resettlers had invested their own money into their new homes. This is not a new trend; according to Wilmsen et al., this also happened in the Three Gorges Project, where the housings were more costly than the government standard.²¹⁴ To spend extra money on housings can hardly be seen as being risk averse, but it is not the opposite either. It could be viewed as an opportunity for the resettlers to invest where the government has invested already, in order to secure housings that are better than they could have afforded on their own. It can also mean that the resettlers expect their new housings to be permanent, they do not expect to be moved again and invests savings in their housings.

The notion of resettlers trying to maintain a livelihood and to settle in the new environment in this stage also fits the resettlers that were not moved locally. People that were moved further away said they found it difficult to adjust to a new environment, and they seemed preoccupied with how to make ends meet. After explaining that they had lost land, did not have new jobs and did not really know what to do, one would expect them to complain over their situation, but they still said that the situation for resettlers was ok or that it was *better than before* (Interview 20). These answers can be understood as the resettlers not yet having reached Stage Three when the resettlers start to look for opportunities to improve their situation and to take risks to earn more money. It might be more rational to dwell on how the loss of land has affected ones economic situation when one is ready to make an effort to make economic and social improvements.

²¹³ (Scudder 1991) P 165

²¹⁴ (Wilmsen, Webber, and Duan 2011) P 366

To sum up this section, there are many reasons why the resettlers interviewed in Xichuan can be defined as being in Scudder's transition stage. The short time people had been living in their new homes, the lack of opinions concerning loss of land, the *it's ok* attitude towards the new housings and their life situation and lack of private investments in relocation areas are all elements that places the resettlers in the transition stage of the resettlement process. The resettlers could be considered risk-averse in terms of not having invested in businesses in the relocation area, but some of the resettlers had invested savings in their new homes, and this action shows willingness to improve their living conditions. This mean that Scudder's stages is useful for giving a general idea of where the resettlers are at in the relocation process, but there have also been found elements that would fit better into other stages.

How has Relocation Changed the Lives of the Involuntary Resettlers?

In the Middle Route, many of the resettlers have only been moved one or two km away from their old housings, they are described by the term 近迁安置 (*jinqian anzhi*), which means *settle nearby*. For some, the distance was not even 1km and these people are placed in the category of on the spot resettlement (就地后靠, *jiudi houkao*). It was also common that people who lived in the same area before relocation were moved to the same xincun. This means that the resettlers in many cases were able to stay in touch with the same people as before the relocation, either because they now liven even closer together than before or because they still lived close to each other.

The time that people had lived in their new housings varied from not yet being moved and to some being relocated 9 months ago. The average amount of time people had lived in their new homes at the time of my fieldwork was 4.7 months. The interviews did not reveal that the lives of people being interviewed actually had changed to greater extent in the relocation process. On questions concerning if relocation had an impact on peoples lives most answered that their lives went on as usual. These answers are interesting because even if the resettlers themselves did not point to great changes besides new housings, there is still possible to see that their lives did in fact change in terms of how they live, where they live and with whom.

These results does not however count for all the interviews, the ones being interviewed that were moved further away from their hometown (远迁安置, *yuanqian anzhi*, resettlement at a

distance), the ones that had been moved furthest away had been moved 330 km away from their hometown. These resettlers did express more concerns, and that the relocation had in fact changed their lives in other aspects than living conditions in a new house.

One method to analyse qualitative data from fieldwork is to use Cernea's IRR model. The main purpose of the model is to recognize risks that can lead to impoverishment and suggestions on how to prevent risks and re-establish resettlers' lives if they have been impoverished, but it also describes changes for the involuntary resettlers that can occur in relocation processes. The following sections aims to analyse some of the risks described in Cernea's IRR model in light of relocation caused by the Middle Route in order to point out some of the changes that the resettlers have experienced. Each section discusses different risks in a relocation process and whether or not the resettlers in the SNWT are experiencing these risks. The risks that I have chosen to discuss are landlessness, joblessness, marginalization, social disarticulation and risk of morbidity, mortality and food insecurity.

The Risk of being Landless

Loss of land removes the main foundation on which many people build their agricultural productive systems, workshops, commercial businesses, among others. The land lost is rarely fully replaced and often only partially replaced or not replaced at all²¹⁵

To understand the circumstances concerning loss of land due to relocation it is necessary to understand Chinese land laws. Chinese land laws are special, first of all because land ownership is different in the cities and in rural areas, and also because there is a difference in who owns the land and who has a right to live on and cultivate the land. Rural China was separated into different communes until early 1980s, and the land was communally owned. When the communes were dismantled the land ownership was transferred to the townships. Before the de-collectivization of rural land China had three administration units, first there was the commune, then there was the production brigade and then there was the production team. According to Peter Ho the production team formally owned the land but this power over the land did not mean that the production team actually controlled the land. If the commune decided to transfer the ownership of the land to another unit they did so, and the commune also decided what the land was going to be used for. This means that if the commune decided to change the type of crops in a farm they just did it, without the farmers

²¹⁵ (Cernea 2007) P 109

consent.²¹⁶ Ho also writes that the even if the land *formally* belonged to the lowest administrative unit, the production team, and land was easily transferred to governmental projects such as constructions of roads and reservoirs.²¹⁷

The township, the administrative village and the natural village group replaced these three units after de-collectivization. The land was transferred from one governmental unit to another and *not* to the individual people living on the land. The natural village group should own the land that was formally owned by the production team before the de-collectivization. But the Land Administration Law is vague and does not explicit give the natural village ownership to the land. The problem is that the description of the *collective* is unclear. Ho describes this as “deliberate institutional ambiguity”.²¹⁸

Valerie Jaffee Washburn writes in her article *Regular Takings or Regulatory takings? : Land Expropriation in Rural China* that not only is land ownership complicated in rural China, but how peasants are allowed to use the land is regulated as well. This is problematic when it comes to compensation for lost land in relocation projects. The compensation in relocation cases is calculated by several factors; the use value of the land, the costs of the relocation and loss of assets. The value of the land after development is not a part of the calculation.²¹⁹ The county government controls the use of rural land, and agricultural land cannot be converted to other uses without the approval of the county government. This means that the land will not be more valuable for the peasants than the value it has as agricultural land, what the land is worth after it is taken from the peasants and is developed can be much higher.²²⁰

This complicated situation where peasants do not own the land they live on, cannot use the land as they want, and do not get proper compensation (taking the *after development* value of the land into consideration) is an important background when looking at land loss. Loss of land in development projects in China is then different than in other countries where the people who live on the land also own it and can use it more freely.

Washburn criticizes the Chinese *Resettlement with Development* policy because the compensation given for lost land is too low, she writes:

²¹⁶ (Ho 2003) P 94-95

²¹⁷ (Ho 2003) P 96

²¹⁸ (Ho 2003) P 95

²¹⁹ (Wilmsen, Webber, and Duan 2011) P 362

²²⁰ (Washburn 2011)

Attempts to guarantee a certain standard of living indefinitely, and particularly attempts to do so through mechanisms other than one-time cash payments, put farmers at the mercy of notoriously corrupt local governments and hamper the development of free marked and labour²²¹

When asked about loss of land most of the people interviewed in this thesis owned land and had lost land during the relocation process. The amount of land that was lost differed from 4 *mu* (Interview 9) to 0,4 *mu* (Interview 6, 8, 12). Not all of the resettlers had lost land; some because they did not have any land to lose in the first place, others had been given the same amount in the new place as they had in the old one. Re-planting of areas that earlier have been used for farming also caused some resettlers to lose land. This was the case in interview 9 where the interview object had lost 4 *mu* of land. This family had lost more land than the other interview object, but they also had more land to lose, and the loss was not only caused by the SNWT but just as much the government's attempt to replant the area.

In some cases the resettlers from the same area lost more or less the same amounts of land, interview 6, 7, and 8 were all conducted in the same xincun and the interview objects in the three interviews were neighbours. In those three cases each family had lost 0,4-0,5 *mu*. None of the interview objects did bring up the loss of land as a problem, and of course they had not lost all of it, only a part. The resettlers that were moved further away, as in interview 20 and 21, had lost almost all their land, from having around 2,5 *mu* before the move they only had 0,5 *mu* after the move. Interview object 20 pointed at this as a difficulty because they did not have enough land to maintain a livelihood of what they grew on it.

Only in two out of 21 interviews did the interview object state that they had the same amount of land as before. If the governmental approach of giving the resettlers the same or better conditions as before are to be followed the resettlers will need a compensation for the loss of land. In some cases the resettlers might even need help to find a new job because the old job was lost with the land. Losses of land can according to Cernea both mean loss of natural capital, because the land in it self is a value and man/woman made capital.²²² As explained earlier are Chinese land laws special and some scholars claim that the compensation for lost

²²¹ (Washburn 2011) P 109

²²² (Cernea 2007) P 109

land do not answer to the real value of the land. But the physical capital in the land is still lost for the peasants and some interview objects also themselves stated that the loss of land was a problem because people had lost their income. It is also interesting to mention that many of the interview objects were unclear about compensation, would they get any compensation and if yes then how much?

The answers to questions concerning compensation did not match each other. While some people confirmed that they had been given compensation others said that they had not received compensation because it only was for poor people. Also when it came to questions about how the compensation is calculated did the answers vary. Some said that the compensation had to do with income; some said it had to do with land and others said that it had to do with how far one is moved. In an interview on March 6th an interviewee even said that they had not received compensation because compensation is only for the poorest families (Interview 5). The general impression then becomes that the knowledge of rights and compensation rules are poor. Another aspect of the compensation question is that all the people interviewed in this project had in fact received some compensation because everyone had gotten new housings; this means that the resettlers themselves do not have to carry the costs of building a new house and the new houses *are* compensation, but for the old houses which is a part of the loss of assets part, not for the use value of the land.

Why were the answers concerning compensation so different? One reason could be that since people not own their land they do not know what the rules are for deciding on compensation, another possibility is that people in some areas not had been given compensation because the relocation process had not come to that point yet. Some of the interviewees had not even moved into their new housings at the time of the interview. The answers might be more similar if one were to go back to the same area at a later time. As the situation was at the time of the interviews it became clear the loss of land *is* a reason for some of the resettlers to might become impoverished in the future. None of the resettlers did however say that they had become impoverished at the time of the interviews.

The knowledge about how land laws and compensation have been, and still are being conducted in rural China gives room for speculation of if the conduction of earlier policies have influenced the present resettlers, if they know that the government at any time can take their land, since it actually belongs to the government. And since the compensations

generally have been low does this then make the resettlers not expect a high compensation or even to get compensation at all? The resettlers have lost land, but it is still too early to give a conclusion on whether or not the land loss has lead people into poverty. But if the case in fact is that many of the resettlers not are going to receive any compensation for the land use value then one could criticize Washburn for thinking to far ahead when she wants the cash compensation to be raised, the first priority should be to ensure that everyone actually receives cash-compensation. One can however say that the loss of land has a say in people's livelihood and that there is a risk of landlessness leading to impoverishment in this relocation project. The following sections will show landlessness also influences other risks described by Cernea.

The Risk of Joblessness

When it comes to joblessness Cernea writes that it can happen both in rural and urban resettlement, the jobs lost can be in sectors like industry, agriculture, and the service industry. The risk of joblessness is an important risk because it can last for a long time after the physical relocation process is over. Duan et al. writes in some cases the government can assist the resettlers in finding new jobs, which was the case in the Three Gorges Project where township village enterprises in the Reservoir Area were given up to 7000 yuan for each resettler that was hired. The problem in some cases was that the factory went bankrupt, the compensation money was lost and the resettlers lost their jobs.²²³ Li et al. also write that many young resettlers were given jobs in industries, but they often lost their new job after a short while.²²⁴ In the Three Gorges one can then discuss if the efforts of the government have had a positive effect on finding resettlers jobs, but there has at least *been* an effort. The government realised that there would be a problem with joblessness and did try to solve it.

What then about the resettlers in the Middle Route? According to Cernea's theory, if the distance is far from the old job to the new home, it can be too expensive for the resettlers in terms of time and money for them to keep the old job.²²⁵ When people are moved as far as 330 km away from their hometown it obviously becomes difficult to keep the job one used to have. Loss of jobs can also be connected to loss of land, if one lives off the land one loses his job when he loses his land. On a trip to a xincun in the outskirts of Zhengzhou on the 11th of

²²³ (Duan and Steil 2003) P 431

²²⁴ (Li, Waley, and Rees 2001) P 203

²²⁵ (Cernea 2007) P 113

March 2011, I met a group of resettlers sitting in a house eating hot pot in the middle of the day. This trip was not intentionally for making interviews, but more for research to see if this area was worth going back too for doing interviews later. It was odd to see several men in the 50s and 60s sitting at home at this hour, when people normally are off to work. So I asked them what they were doing home in the middle of the day and they told me that none of them were able to find a job in their new hometown. Later the same day in a group interview with the same group the resettlers were asked if they had received any help with finding jobs after being moved, which they had not. They said that those kinds of efforts only existed in bigger relocation projects. Not all of the resettlers that were moved far away were struggling to find new jobs, in another interview on March 11th the person interviewed had used to work the land to make a living, now she had gotten a job in a factory in the area. The salary was however lower than before (Interview 20).

It can seem that the resettlers in the Middle Route not are receiving the same help to find new jobs, as the resettlers in the Three Gorges, but then the number of resettlers in the TGP were much higher and the consequence for not helping there would be worse. Even if people had lost land in the Middle Route they did not say that they lost their jobs, this can be because they have other jobs besides farming and since most of the interviewees were local resettlers they did not lose their other job because of the move.

The Risk of Homelessness

Cernea writes that in many cases are loss of land temporary, but it can become a long-term condition.²²⁶ In the case of resettlement in the Middle Route the Chinese government has in greater parts minimized the problem of homelessness by doing the job of building new housings themselves. The safest way of ensuring that people actually receives a new house must be to build it self. Another point is that is also easier to control people when they are being moved to houses that are built by the government. The government both can decide the standard and the location of the xincuns. Results from my fieldwork did also show that the interviewees were very pleased with their new housings. This is evidence on the government's efforts to *resettle* people, and not just move them out of the way.

²²⁶ (Cernea 2007) P 115

When only giving out compensation it can be more difficult to ensure that the money actually goes to building houses. It also might be that the costs of building housing are kept down when the resettlers not have to negotiate prices and contracts themselves. Environmental degradation caused by earlier relocation projects in some cases lead to people being moved more than once. By deciding where resettlers are placed it can also be possible for the government to avoid moving people to the most sensitive areas.

The Chinese government's commitment to the resettlers is important when looking at the housing. The change from earlier relocation projects where people received a one-time payment and no further help to a *Resettlement with Development policy* where the government is committed to resettle the migrants is evident in the SNWT. The building of new housings that holds a good standard can be seen as the government doing what it is committed to do in terms of housings. It can also mean that the government have learnt from previous mistakes and not want to create a situation where people become impoverished; the costs of re-establishing livelihoods of impoverished resettlers became a huge cost for the Chinese government in the 1980s. Also, while other aspects of the *Resettlement with Development policy* can be difficult to measure, housings can be measured. One can count how many that are built, how many that have running water, a toilet inside the houses and so on. These details can then be seen as *evidence* that the Chinese government does a great deal for resettlers, which is the same message as one can read on signs in areas with involuntary resettlement.

In a interview in a xincun, on the 24th of February a man that were working to finish the inside of his house said that his old house had been torn down before the new one was finished, he and his family then became homeless for a short period of time. He said that the old house had been demolished three months before. This xincun consisted of all together 45 living units and the resettlers that were to move in all came from the same area. None of the other interviews in the same xincun showed that others had the same experience. This can mean that the others not have experienced that their old houses had been demolished yet or that they did not see it as a problem to live in more provisional housings for a shorter period of time. A month later the xincun was done except the fences around the gardens and resettlers were observed living in the housings.

This was the only area visited that by late February 2012 not already was inhabited. people had been living in the other xincuns from two months and up to eight months. This means that this xincun was inhabited later than the others in the area. The reason why some of the people that were going to live here had lost their old house before the old one was finished can be that these housings were finished late in the relocation project. The homelessness was not permanent in this case; the interviewee was already at place in his new home, finishing it. In an optimal setting it would have been better if all the housings were done *before* the old housings were demolished. Then there would be a less stressful situation for the resettlers to move. This is an example of the necessity of good planning of relocation projects, which is stressed by both Scudder and Cernea.²²⁷ Cernea writes that

Cernea writes, “Relocation of related people and neighbours as groups is preferable instead of dispersed relocation”²²⁸ The relocation in the Middle Route does indeed relocate people together, people that used to live in the same area before the move also does live together after the move. The difference lies in that people lives even closer than that did before. As far as the data I found shows, the risk of homelessness is not high in the SNWT. The governmental approach with providing housings is in my opinion a method to prevent homelessness, and it shows the government’s effort to support the resettlers.

The Risk of Marginalization

Marginalization occurs when relocated families lose power and slide down towards lesser socioeconomic positions: middle-income farm households become small landowners: small shopkeepers and artisans lose business and fall below poverty threshold²²⁹

Marginalization is not the risk of losing everything, but the risk of losing *almost* everything. The risk of marginalization can be difficult to measure; one method can be to look at land loss. The loss of land in these cases can be seen as marginalization because the resettlers did not lose *all their land*, they only lost parts of it, and in some cases the loss of land led to the people not being able to maintain a livelihood. When marginalization occurs, the “human capital (skills) may become unusable, obsolete; affected people slide to perform lower-ranked

²²⁷ (Scudder 1991) P 161-162 (Cernea 2007) P 92

²²⁸ (Cernea 2007) P 115

²²⁹ (Cernea 2007) P 117

jobs”²³⁰ according to Cernea. The resettlers who experienced loss of land did not express that they felt “unusable”, but some said that they had less money than before. (Interview 20)

One woman told me that she did not know how she and her family would survive in their new *xincun*; they could not live off the land anymore and she was struggling to find a new job because she was too old. (Personal conversation, 11.03.2012) In the process of marginalization the resettlers can experience a loss of confidence in society and self. The woman who said she could not find a new job because she was too old was only 55 years old, but she still had no hope of finding work, and this loss of confidence can be seen as a part of the marginalization process.

At this stage in the relocation process it is difficult to conclusively determine whether the risk of marginalization is high or low. It is possible to point to certain features that may in the future lead to marginalization such as landlessness and joblessness. The loss of land has already occurred; the interviewees had less land than before, almost without exception. The question is how the government is going to deal with this? If the resettlers receive a decent compensation and job training, then the risk of marginalization will be low. If the government stands back and does nothing the risk will be much higher.

The Risk of Social Disarticulation?

“Such disarticulation undermines livelihoods in ways usually not recognized and not measured by planners, and is a major cause of disempowerment and impoverishment”²³¹ Social disarticulation is described as the “destabilization of social organization patterns and interpersonal ties”.²³² The people who were moved locally are not in danger of losing contact with people they know because of distance. One can argue that they are not at risk for what Cernea refers to as social disarticulation in the IRR model.²³³ Personal ties will not be lost and the resettlers will not have to rebuild their *guanxi* (relationship) with new people in a new setting. This means that resettlers will not lose benefits that they have worked hard to obtain with personal ties. But, even if distance is not a factor, social disarticulation might still

²³⁰ (Cernea 2007) P 117

²³¹ (Cernea 2007) P 125

²³² (Cernea 2007) P 126

²³³ (Cernea 2007) P 126

happen, and there might be risks connected to people living closer together than they did before.

The resettlers have to get used to new living conditions and living closer to their neighbours. The habit of having neighbours at a certain distance has been altered for the relocatees in Xichuan. Some do not have a problem with it and think it is nice to live closer to other people; one woman said in an interview that living closer to other people was one of the benefits of the move. When asked about what changes she had experienced in her life due to the move she said: “The new house is good, it is better than the old one, and we all live close together now, that is nice”. (Interview 19, 9.3.2012)

Even though no one explicitly said so in an interview, one might speculate whether or not living closer to each other may lead to conflicts. If one person has a problem with a neighbour it is harder to avoid each other when you live in a townhouse. As mentioned previously, some of the people who were not moved expressed envy of the people being moved. People who used to live next to each other were now separated, not so much by distance, but by the difference in the housing standards. In some cases this could lead to problems and arguments, because it can lead to what Cernea describes as “increased social discord, both within and between communities.”²³⁴

While the people being moved locally did not lose their social ties, the situation was different for people who were moved further away. People being interviewed in the outskirts of Zhengzhou missed their old surroundings and their families. In a xincun in the outskirts of Zhengzhou, there were a group of men who explained that they not had been able to find new jobs in their new hometown. A reason why this was so difficult was that they did not know anyone in that area who could help them with finding a new job. They said that no one would hire them because they were too old. This can also be seen as social disarticulation in terms of loss of social ties that could have been useful for finding work in a new environment. (Conversation after Interview 21, 11.03.2012)

The risk of social disarticulation is difficult to avoid in resettlement. In my opinion, the risk is not very high for the local resettlers in Xichuan; people have not been moved out of the

²³⁴ (Cernea 2007) P 126

society they are a part of. The resettlers who were moved further away have a greater risk of social disarticulation. The resettlement in the SNWT is, however, an example on a resettlement scheme where the government has moved people from one area to the same place, which is one way of reducing the risk of social disarticulation.

Risk of Morbidity, Mortality and Food Insecurity,

The exposure of the poorest people to illness is increased by forced relocation because it causes increased stress, psychological traumas, and often the outbreak of parasitic or vector – borne diseases.²³⁵

In relocation projects, the risk of worsening health is serious. With regards to the resettlers in and from Xichuan, my general impression was that the stress of moving had not led to bad health conditions. For most of the people it seemed that the move in it self had been non-traumatic. Most of the people interviewed were only moved a short distance, and many of the people were happy about getting a new house. However, the result might have been different if the main focus of interviews had been on people that were moved further away, because they need to get used to a new environment *and* new living conditions. It is also assumable that the stress of being relocated is more acute if the resettlers do not have new housings to go to, but this is speculation. In other relocation projects, such as the TGP, researchers have found that many of the resettlers have become depressed, Juan Xi and Sean-Shong Hwang write,

The displacement process is very stressful to resettlers not only because it disrupts their normal life but also because it is often imposed on resettlers by a powerful entity such as government, a situation that would increase the level of distress among resettlers by weakening their sense of control.²³⁶

It would also be interesting to look into whether or not resettlers of the SNWT will become depressed as a consequence of the move, and to my knowledge no such studies have been carried out at this point.

²³⁵ (Cernea 2007) P 118

²³⁶ (Xi and Hwang 2011) P 508

When it comes to waterborne diseases, scholars have raised concerns of the water quality in the middle canal. The worst-case scenario is that the canal becomes a carrier for waterborne diseases that can damage both resettlers and others who live close to the canal.²³⁷ As mentioned earlier, the water quality is also important for the government. Poor water quality will not only have an impact on the resettlers but on the project as a whole; the whole purpose of the project is naturally depending on that the quality of the water is good enough for agricultural use and for drinking. The government even has a message concerning water quality printed on signs at construction sites (picture 3). Whether or not the water quality will become a health risk remains to be seen when the project is finished in 2014. The effects of the canal both in the source area and in the receiving area are subjects worth further investigations in the future.

“Food insecurity is defined as levels of calories and protein intake that are below the minimum necessary for normal healthy growth and work”²³⁸ Food security problems can occur in involuntary resettlement projects because, as Cernea writes, “Displacement disrupts agricultural production cycles, or employment, and reduces food availability”²³⁹. The results of the research in this thesis shows loss of land, and this loss can lead to the resettlers having less food resources than before. Both because the land has been used for self-supplying and if the resettlers before used to earn money from what they used to grow on their land. Then they will lose income and can then risk having less money to buy food. If the resettlers do not cultivate the land themselves, but rent it out instead, it can also lead to food security problems because it will have an impact on the resettlers’ income. If the land is rented out to someone else who uses it for farming, others who not have been relocated but who no longer have land to cultivate can be at risk of food shortage. Resettlers who have moved further away and who do not find new jobs in the new villages can also risk being short of food, especially if they are without a job and a salary for a longer period of time.

The Link Between Distance and Risks

What is the biggest risk of impoverishment in the relocation process? And is it even possible to say that one risk stands out as being more serious than the others? The risks described in the IRR model are intertwined with each other, and if one finds *one* risk for impoverishment,

²³⁷ (Yang and Zehnder 2005) P 345

²³⁸ (Cernea 2007) P 121

²³⁹ (Cernea 2007) P 121

then other risks are present too. The risks are somewhat like dominos; if one falls, the others will easily follow.

Take the risk of being landless as an example. The loss of land in itself can lead to people losing money, if the land is not adequately compensated. If one loses a piece of land that is not being used for farming or other activities that provides an income, then only the *value* of the land itself is lost. But to lose money is not the same as being impoverished. In my opinion, it is when you lose the *function* of the land that the real risk of impoverishment arises. When the land has a function as a provider of food, or a source of income, the loss becomes a problem. Suddenly one needs to buy food and find a new job. Thus, landlessness can lead to joblessness, marginalization and food insecurity, which in turn can lead to social disarticulation and maybe even morbidity and mortality. Using the IRR model to point to difficulties in a relocation process is therefore a more complex action than to just describe what people have experienced.

People interviewed in Xichuan answered that their lives were just as before. How can this be? When looking at land loss, in the way that Cernea describes it, one can see that it can lead to many difficulties. So can social disarticulation, but few of the interview objects regarded the move as something that meant anything more than a new house. One solution to why the resettlers said that the resettlement only meant a new house can perhaps be found by analysing the meaning of a new house. Getting a new house that has a rather high standard compared to other rural housings can actually make a big difference in people's lives. First of all, if a new house is provided for free, the resettlers save a big cost, they do not have to invest in a new house themselves. The access to running water, the public sewage system and better quality houses can have a positive effect on health and living standards. Making sure that resettlers' houses are safe and providing services that have a positive effect on health will reduce several risks at the same time; both the risk of homelessness and risks concerning health issues.

Conducting interviews at an early stage in a relocation process can also have its weak sides, which may influence the results of the fieldwork. The resettlers had not even lived a year in their new homes and might be satisfied with their present situation, but the long term effects of the move remains to be seen. This means that the research in this thesis gives an indication

to some of the changes that have occurred in the lives of the resettlers, and using the IRR model one can give an overview over *possible* risks that might happen in the future.

One factor that Cernea does not describe in his model is the distance relocated. When interviewing people who had been moved so far away that it not was possible to keep the same jobs as before, or to keep in contact with people that stayed behind, it became clear that distance has a huge impact on involuntary resettlers lives. Perhaps even the greatest impact. Some of the interviewees had been moved as far as 330km away from their homes. These resettlers, in contrast to local relocatees, did not say that the biggest change in the process was a new house. Rather, they said it was difficult to get used to a new environment, it was difficult to find jobs and to become part of a new community. In the same way landlessness risk might lead to joblessness, food insecurity and marginalization, long distances can lead to joblessness, social disarticulation and marginalization. Thus, at the very least, being relocated several hundred kilometres away from one's work place leads to job loss. Therefore the crucial question remains; will the government make an effort to *re-establish* peoples livelihood in their new homes? The results of the interviews done in this thesis suggest that the answer on this stage in the resettlement process is no.

Social disarticulation can be difficult to prevent, and it might be that the best method is to avoid moving people to very distant locations. But if the government has no other choice but to move people out of their local area, then it is a good idea to move people that know each other and are from the same area to the new place. This way the resettlers will not lose their entire social network, because it moves with them. This was the case with the long-distance resettlers from Xichuan. Several of them had been moved from and to the same area.

When the resettlers were asked if they got to choose where they wanted to move, the answer was no. It may seem as if some people are better fitted to move far away than others. Outgoing people might find it easier to become a member of a new society and to find a new job, even without having a big network. One might argue that in the planning phase of the relocation process it would be a good idea to let people suggest where they want to be moved. That way, one could move people who were motivated to leave their old lives behind further away, and move those who lacked this motivation closer to their old homes.

Conclusion

The most important lesson learned from doing observations of housings and people in Xichuan was the status that resettlement housings has in Xichuan. From a western perspective, government planned housing, and a relocation process in which you cannot decide where you live, is unimpressive. But this is a poor comparison, not least because housing in rural areas in northern Europe already have a high standard. In northern Europe it is not impressive to have tap water and being connected to the public sewer system, but *it is* in some parts of rural China. This means that to have a house with a high standard is important; it means that people's lives can actually be improved just by giving them a new home. Understanding the differences between government built xincuns and local housings where the rest of the rural population lives has been key to understanding the answers people gave in the interviews.

To further gain an understanding of the interview answers I have used the framework provided by Scudder, which places the resettlers in a the transition stage. Not all of Scudder's defining characteristics of this stage fit with the results of this study or even other studies concerning relocation in rural China. For example, the notion that people in the transition stage are unwilling to take risks does not explain why most resettlers invested their savings in their new homes. The fact that the government houses have a higher standard than other houses, and the notion that resettlers in a transition stage are preoccupied with settling in and making a living, can help explain why people did not consider loss of land and new living conditions as life-changing in a negative way. After all, no one was starving and everyone had better housing conditions than before. Scudder writes that all four stages must be completed before one can conclusively determine whether or not a relocation process has been successful. If the resettlers reach the next stages in Scudder's model remains to be investigated in the future. It would also be interesting to research whether or not Cernea's risks are more evident at a later stage.

In light of Cernea's IRR model, I will conclude that the risk of losing land is high in relocation projects in China, which in turn can lead to other risks. Risk of joblessness, marginalization and social disarticulation were all found, but these are risks at this stage in the relocation process. Whether or not the risks become reality remains to be seen. My fieldwork shows no evidence of food insecurity and health risks, but with the loss of land and

the risk of unclean water from the canal one might argue that there is a possibility of these risks to occur in the future. Other water projects in China have led to environmental degradation in the past; one recent example is the Three Gorges Project.²⁴⁰ There are several possible outcomes of the SNWT relocation project, and while it is too soon to make any conclusions at this stage in the process, this thesis shows the need to do further research in the area.

²⁴⁰ (Wines 2011) http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/20/world/asia/20gorges.html?_r=0, last accessed 7.11.2012

7 Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to introduce and analyse some of the aftereffects of the relocation process in the South-North Water Transfer Middle Route in order to answer my research questions; does relocation change peoples' lives? If that is the case, in what way are the resettlers' lives affected? In the following sections I intend to highlight some of the main findings and conclusions from my research on resettlement in Henan Province.

One similarity between previous and current relocation projects in China is their goal of providing the nation with something it needs; flood control, electric power or water supplies. The subsequent relocation that occurs because of these engineering projects can, at least in a historical perspective, be seen as a necessary evil and a sacrifice for the greater good. For a long period of time relocation was equivalent with impoverishment; people were taken away from their families and social networks and were treated in an illegal manner by the government. The whole process of relocation due to water infrastructure projects in China has improved by leaps and bounds, and the government has made substantial efforts to adopt more humane, considerate and sustainable policies in the 80s and 90s.

The Three Gorges Project was the first project in which the new Resettlement with Development policy was fully implemented. The SNWT and the Three Gorges are projects that have been started *after a policy change*, and it is therefore reasonable to believe that the methods of policy implementation are the same. There are, however, some differences in the carrying out of the resettlement in these two projects. The monetary compensation is higher in the SNWT project, and some claim that the government will do more for the resettlers after the construction work is completed. This means that the policies concerning relocation in rural China are still being modified and improved. The policies and policy implementations are not set in stone, but are targets for improvement from one project to another. I claim that the Chinese government is making changes to the implementation methods of relocation projects in order to ensure that the relocation will have as little impact as possible on the resettlers' lives. This means that there are many different ways of conducting these projects in terms of how the government move people out of the way, and this is one of the reasons why these projects are so interesting to research.

The SNWT is of great importance to the Chinese government, as it is an important part of the solution to the water shortage in the north. For the government's part, with their aim of improving living conditions for millions of people, the difficulties associated with relocating 330 000 people must therefore seem as necessary evils.

What does relocation mean for the resettlers? Is it a new house or is it a new life?

My research has shown that it can be, and often is, both. Many people say that the only difference in their lives is just a new house, but what does that mean? It means new living arrangements with townhouses, with several families living in the same building. A new house can also mean connection to the public sewage system, electricity and less land for each household. This means that there is no such thing as "just a new house". Resettlement does in fact change the lives of the people being moved. An important aspect of the "just a new house" notion is that it reveals what is not being said; people do not say that they have become impoverished. In fact, many considered the changes in their lives as changes for the better.

Scudgers Four-stage Model for Settlements has been a useful tool for understanding the interviewees' answers and attitude. It is important to understand the stages in the resettlement process and be able to place the resettlers at a stage within this framework. This method gave me an indication of what I could expect to find when interviewing resettlers who have moved less than a year ago, and also a method to understand what I could not expect to find. The resettlers in Henan were at the Transition stage²⁴¹ in the resettlement process. It will be interesting to see how long time it will take the resettlers to move to the next stage, Economic and Social Development²⁴², which is the stage where the resettlers try to improve their economic situation and take risks to earn money. In my opinion, most of the resettlers have a good opportunity to move from Stage Two to Stage Three, because basic needs such as housings are already in place. It is also possible that there will be more complaints about loss of land and compensation in the next stage when the resettlers have gotten used to their new situation.

When analysing answers from fieldwork I found that many of the risks described in Cernea's IRR model were evident, but very few of them were at a high risk of causing impoverishment

²⁴¹ (Scudder 1991) P 162

²⁴² (Scudder 1991) P 165

at this stage in the resettlement process. The main purpose of the Risk and Reconstruction Model is in fact to discover risks that can lead to impoverishment and how to reconstruct peoples' livelihoods after being impoverished. This thesis shows that risks can be present without necessarily allowing us to make a clear prediction of whether or not it will lead to impoverishment in the future. This model does, however, show that peoples' lives do change when resettling, in terms of housings, home facilities, and the amount of land each household has.

I found the risk of landlessness as the most probable risk for resettlers at this point in the relocation process; most resettlers did lose land. Later, other risks may become more apparent. The key to avoiding impoverishment must be how landlessness is handled. Loss of land may not be avoidable, but proper compensation and consideration of the consequences for livelihood and employment is crucial, not least in order to prevent other risks from following as a consequence of the landlessness. In this thesis the IRR model has once again proved to be a useful tool for understanding the consequences of resettlement. One of the findings from Henan was the difference between people who were moved close to their previous homes and those who were relocated far away. Distance is not brought up as a risk in itself by Cernea, but the fieldwork showed a clear difference in how resettlers were affected by the relocation depending on whether they were being moved close or far away. I have found that distance is a variable that has a great impact on the consequences of resettlement. It can, based on my findings, be counted as a risk in itself. Resettlement changes peoples' lives to a greater extent when they are moved far away than when they are moved close to their homes.

The SNWT relocation project is a recent project; the long-term consequences for the resettlers are still unknown. This is why I am not going to make a final conclusion on the success of the project at this stage. I still hope that this thesis has shed some light on a recent relocation project in China, and that it can be an encouragement for other researchers to do more studies on the resettlement in the South-North Water Transfer. Especially when it comes to topics such as compensation, the long-term consequences of land loss, have a big potential for further research. It would also be interesting to follow resettlers moved over different distances over a longer time period in order to investigate if the resettlers do in fact struggle more and even easier become impoverished when they are moved further away from their hometowns.

The most interesting aspect of the SNWT resettlement project is the future. What will resettlers say about being resettled in two years, or in five years? If they still say that resettlement only means a new house, it can be used as evidence that the Chinese government does in fact resettle the SNWT migrants instead of just displacing them. It bears repeating: comments such as *just a new house* also mean that people have not become impoverished. The conclusion at this stage is that the new housings can be seen as a rise in the living standard, and if the loss of land does not lead to impoverishment in the future, the project can turn out to be beneficial for the resettlers. This project can turn out to be one more reason why the Chinese government has been praised for their efforts to improve resettlement standards. My research has shown that the government has made efforts to improve resettlers' life situation by substantial policy changes, but that it remains to be seen whether or not they have avoided impoverishment. This thesis has also proved that there is a link between the distance relocated and the risks of impoverishment, and it is my hope that future projects will pay more consideration to this link, this risk, in order to avoid impoverishment and extreme life changes.

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Appendix A

Dictionary

丹江口水库	<i>Danjiangkou shuiku</i>	Danjiangkou Reservoir
关系	<i>Guanxi</i>	Relationship
极度贫困	<i>Jidu pinkun</i>	Extreme poverty
近迁安置	<i>Jinqian anzhi</i>	Settle nearby
就地后靠,	<i>Jiudi houkao</i>	On the spot resettlement
开发性移民政策	<i>Kaifaxing yimin zhengce</i>	Resettlement with development
南水北调中线	<i>Nanshuibeidiao zhongxian</i>	The Middle route of the South-North Water Transfer
南水北调中线干线工程建设管理局	<i>Nanshuibeidiao zhongxian ganxian zhongxian jianshe liju</i>	South North Water transfer project administration office of the middle route
生态环境	<i>Shengtai huanjing</i>	Ecosystem
水库移民遗留问题	<i>Shuiku yimin yiliu wenti</i>	Leftover problems of reservoir resettlement
四横三纵	<i>Siheng sanzong</i>	The three vertical and four horizontal
新村	<i>Xincun</i>	New Village (term used to describe the new housings for people being moved)
远迁安置	<i>Yuanqian anzhi</i>	Resettlement at a distance

Abbreviations

NCP	North China Plain
SNWT	South North Water Transfer Project
RwD	Resettlement with Development
PRC	Peoples Republic of China
TGP	The Three Gorges Project

Appendix B

Interview guide/采访手记

Background/背景

Age and profession?/ 年龄，职业

Who do you live with? (How many, adults/children)/ 你跟谁住? (几个人，成人 / 儿童)

When did you move?/ 你什么时候搬到这里?

Why were you moved?/ 你为什么搬到这里?

Changes

How far did you move?/ 从你原来的住址搬到来这里有多远?

Did you have to change your job?/ 你需要因为搬迁的原因而更换职业吗?

-do you have the same salary as before?/ 你的工资跟以前一样吗?

-did the government assist you in looking for a new job?/ 政府有协助你们找新的工作吗?

How is the new house compared to the old one? / 新的房子跟旧的房子比较起来如何?

-size?/ 多大?

-facilities?/ 有什么设备?

Do you have the same amount of land as before? / 你现在有的土地跟以前的一样大吗?

-if no, how much did you lose?/ 如果不是一样大，那么你失去了多少?

Were you asked where you wanted to move?/ 对于你搬迁的目的地，你有选择权吗?

Compensation and investments

Who paid for the new house?/ 谁为新房子买单?

Did you invest in the new house? / 你为新房子投资吗?

Have you received compensation? / 你有收到补偿费吗?

Experiences with being moved

What changes have you experienced in your lives after moving?/ 搬迁之后，你的生活经历了怎么样的改变?

What is your impression of the situation for resettlers in China today? / 对于今日中国的强制性移民的情况，你有什么看法?

Other/ 其他

An overview over some relevant data

Fieldwork data							
	Time after relocation	Compensation	Extra costs at the new house	Distance	Land loss	Changes in life?	Impression of resettlers' situation
1	0	Not yet	Did not know	1 km	Did not know	Only a new house	It is ok
2	0	Not yet	Did not know	300 m	Did not know	Only a new house	No opinion
3	0	Not yet	Did not know	1 km	Did not know	Just a better house	No opinion
4	7 months	30 000 RMB	0	70 km	1 mu	Life more convenient	NA
5	8 months	No, only poor ones get comp.	0	1 km	Half of the land	No change	NA
6	8 months	No	10 000	300 m	0,4 mu	Better house	Good
7	9 months	No	0	300 m	0,5 mu	Life is the same	Not handled in a good way
8	9 months	No	0	1 km	0,4 mu	Only a new house	Resettlers are better of than other
9	7 months	Yes, unclear how much	0	300 m	0,4 mu	Life a bit better than before	Good
10	5 months	No	10 000	200 m	NA	No change	Good, ref. the new house
11	5/6 months	No	0	200 m	Same as before	No change	Good
12	5 months	Yes, each person got 2000 RMB	90 000	200 m	0,4 mu	No change	Better than before
13	3 months	Each person got 530 RMB	0	1 km	1,2 mu	Better sanitation	Better off than other
14	3 months	No	15 000	Almost 1 km	Have lost, unclear about the amount	Better facilities in the house	Good, is happy to be resettled
15	3 months	No	6000	Less than 1 km	NA	No change	Good
16	3 months	No	30 000	1 km	0,5	No change	Good

17	3 months	No	10 000	1 km	Did not know	No change	Good, ref new housings
18	3 months	No	80 000	400/500 m	Same as before	No change	Good, better conditions than before
19	3 months	No	5000	Ca 1 km	NA	Better house and lives closer to the nieghbours	No opinion
20	7 months	Not yet, will receive later, unclear on how much	40 000	330 km	2,5 mu	New environment, closer to the city, new job, less money	Ok, better than before
21	6 months	Not yet, tells each person will receive 5000 RMB	4000 and 10 000	330 km	2,5 mu	New environment, different climate, less money, no jobs	Neither good or bad

IN = Interview Number

1 mu = 614,4 m²

NA = No Answer