

Resettlement Action Plan (RAP)

1. When is a resettlement action plan needed?

For all projects that involve involuntary resettlement, a Resettlement Action Plan is required. Ideally the action plan is developed during project preparation. If time and resources are constraint and / or information about sites, extent of resettlement and other important variables are not known during project preparation, the development of the action plan will be postponed to the implementation phase. This requires, however, that during project preparation and prior to the approval of the project a resettlement policy framework is prepared with informed participation of affected communities.

2. What is the purpose of the resettlement action plan?

The purpose of a resettlement action plan is to specify all resettlement arrangements and the measures for avoiding, minimising or compensating losses or other negative social impacts resulting from resettlement. It establishes the basis for the agreement with the affected parties.

3. What should a resettlement action plan entail?

A resettlement action plan should include the eight components described below.

a. Introduction:

- Project description and rationale for resettlement;
- Actions taken to avoid and minimize the need for resettlement;
- Participatory process used to consult and negotiate with affected parties.

b. Legal framework:

- Review and list all policies, laws and regulations relevant to land acquisition and resettlement activities associated with the project, including legal mandates and authorities;
- Identify aspects where the IUCN Standard is more stringent than the legal framework of the host country, in particular on issues regarding compensation (e.g. guidelines and instruments to be used in the assessment of impacts, definition of eligibility, selection of measures and allocation of compensation); emphasize establish the need for projects to comply with the most stringent standard;
- Describe entitlement policies for each category of impact and method of valuation used for affected structures, land, trees, and other assets.

c. Resettlement and relocation:

- Definition of baseline:
 - Location and extent of resettlement, number of affected people and process of resettlement (based on a census) and establishment of cut-off date;

- Assessment of environmental, social and economic feasibility and suitability of resettlement and of social and environmental impact of the resettlement process;
- Identification of people and groups eligible for assistance depending on formal or customary land rights;
- Procedures and mechanisms for procurement and development of land and facilities needed for resettlement and relocation;
- Precise schedule of land acquisition for the resettlement process, resettlement and relocation arrangements, and other significant changes in access and use.

d. Compensation and livelihood restoration and enhancement:

- Independent assessment of all impacts and losses that may be generated by the project's resettlement activity, based on a census and inventory of affected assets, socio-economic studies and identification of affected sectors, groups and communities;
- Criteria for eligibility (based on legal and non-legal rights) and definition of cut-off date of census and inventory establishment;
- Participatory identification of negative livelihood impacts including impacts on cultural use and values of land and resources, social livelihood aspects and indirect impacts; comparison of quality of livelihoods between original settlement and proposed resettlement;
- Participatory identification of the overall compensation, restoration and enhancement strategy to be considered;
- Specific measures envisaged and assessment of their expected impacts and benefits;
- Provisions for livelihood protection and enhancement;
- Provisions for training, capacity-building and institutional strengthening and for technical assistance and transfer of technology;
- Provisions for monetary and/or in-kind compensation;
- Synthesis of provisions in form of an entitlement matrix.

e. Implementation arrangements:

- Current institutional arrangements related to the resettlement process, strengths and weaknesses;
- Roles and responsibilities in resettlement process and for implementing agreed measures for compensation and livelihood restoration and enhancement;
- Schedule of and responsibilities for compensation payments, and methods to effect, receive, document, verify and audit payment;
- Arrangements for sustainability and implementation beyond project time frame;
- Detailed resettlement implementation plan and linkages with work plan of the project.

f. Budget and financial arrangements:

- Detailed costing of resettlement action plan
- Financing plan and approach for ensuring financial sustainability of activities that extend beyond the project life.

g. Monitoring and evaluation:

- Monitoring plan including indicators and targets, responsibilities and institutional arrangements, schedule of data gathering and reporting, process for feedback and integration of results in planning and implementation decisions, and arrangements for end-of-process evaluation;
- Stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation;
- Mechanism for adaptive process management, if needed.

h. Grievance mechanism:

- Local provisions, regulations and practices for conflict resolution and grievance;
- Process whereby affected people can appeal property and resource use valuations they consider unfair or inadequate;
- Process for registering and addressing grievances regarding resettlement or compensation provisions and the implementation of the provisions;
- Special provisions for women and vulnerable peoples to ensure equal access to grievance procedures;
- Mechanism for legal recourse.

4. Further guidance

IUCN would generally stay away from implementing or supervising involuntary resettlement processes as these are complex and resource-intensive endeavours that require a solid body of expertise which IUCN does not possess. Therefore, IUCN has refrained from providing more in-depth guidance for establishing a Resettlement Action Plan. Instead reference is made to the existing IFC Resettlement Handbook (2002) which is generally considered industry good practice¹ and the forthcoming update of this handbook.

¹Available in different languages at:

https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/sustainability-at-ifc/publications/publications_handbook_rap_wci_1319577659424