UNPACKING LOCAL COMMUNITIES’ DIFFERENT VIEWS ON HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT

Three villages along the Karnali river to show the physical location in relation to the Upper Karnali hydropower project. Their location will play a key role in determining their future when construction starts. For some village, life near the Karnali is already difficult but with the dam coming into their lives the future is uncertain for everyone involved. We present the stories from three villages who will be affected by this project.

**ASARAGHAT VILLAGE**

Sattalla municipality, Dailekh district

Dam site, many households will be resettled, house owners will receive compensation from GMR, constant engagement with GMR regarding land acquisition, many households have moved to the market to set up business in hopes of benefiting from the construction project. They are uncertain about the impact on their livelihood and there is a risk of livelihoods being lost. (Photo credit: Khinta Sunar)

"I see many women suffering because of their husbands’ bad habits" – Tek Bdr BC

This photo is of women returning home after collecting firewood from the forest. The village has limited employment opportunities and many women are now taking up responsibility beyond the household. She offered this photo to highlight the hardships faced by women in her village on a daily basis. Despite the presence of men at home, women are left to bear the brunt. (Photo credit: Tek Bdr BC, Accham)

"No food, no home" – Madan

A murky stream flows next to Ramaghat joining the Karnali river in Accham district. Madan resides here along with her family and lives in constant fear that the river might take everything away from her. She took this photo after it rained at night and expressed her concern regarding the situation when monsoon starts in June. But she also knows that the river also provides them a food and home. (Photo credit: Madan Badi)

"We want someone to come and take care of us" – Sukma

A fisherman gets ready to take his boat on the Karnali river in Ramaghat village, Accham district. Sukma took a photo of her husband to show the importance of the river in their everyday life. Fishing communities residing in Ramaghat rely on the income earned from selling fish to put food on the table every night. She is concerned that the construction of the dam might impact the river and the community of fishers depend on it for their livelihood. (Photo credit: Sukma Badi)

"Where will we get a place like this, river like this, forest like this" – Rupa, Jharana’s mother

The Karnali river flows along Daab village where the proposed Upper Karnali hydropower dam is planned. The residents of this village have been promised compensation for their land that is to be acquired by the developer. After ten years of delay little has changed for Jharana and her family who are residing in the house pictured. Her mother wants to be resettled in a place with easy access to forest and river but also wants to provide a good education for her children which would require a move to the Terai. (Photo credit: Jharana Thapa)

"Only the homes near the river will get compensated, what about us? Where will we go?" – Khinta Sunar

Karna river separates two districts, Dailekh and Accham. Sunar resides in the proposed upper Karnali dam site, many households will be resettled, house owners will receive compensation from GMR, largely aware of the benefit package and resettlement plans. (Photo credit: Khinta Sunar)

"We will be left with no land and no home" – Ram

A signboard stands on the bank of the Karnali river in Daab village. Ram’s village is the proposed site of the Upper Karnali dam. Ram resides here along with his family and lives in constant fear of losing everything. He took this photo to highlight the uncertainty and concern regarding the impact on their livelihood when the dam starts taking shape. (Photo credit: Ram Sunar)

"Where will we get a place like this, river like this, forest like this" – Rupa, Jharana’s mother

Jharana Thapa from Daab village took the photo of the Karnali river. The river separates two districts, Dailekh and Accham. Thapa lives near the Karnali river where the proposed Upper Karnali dam is planned. Her family has been promised compensation for their land that is to be acquired by the developer. After ten years of delay little has changed for her and her family who are residing in the house pictured. Her mother wants to be resettled near the river and forest but also wants to provide a good education for her children which would require a move to the Terai. (Photo credit: Jharana Thapa)

**Sattalla municipality, Dailekh district**

Evidence suggests that people are not very well informed about the GMR resettlement package and largely aware of the benefit package and resettlement plans for the residents of this village. Many households have moved to the market to set up business in hopes of benefiting from the construction project. They are uncertain about the impact on their livelihood and there is a risk of livelihoods being lost. (Photo credit: Khinta Sunar)

**Daab village, Dailekh district**

Evidence suggests that people are very well informed about the GMR resettlement package and largely aware of the benefit package and resettlement plans. Many households have moved to the market to set up business in hopes of benefiting from the construction project. They are uncertain about the impact on their livelihood and there is a risk of livelihoods being lost. (Photo credit: Khinta Sunar)

**Ramaghat village, Accham district**

Evidence suggests that people are very well informed about the GMR resettlement package and largely aware of the benefit package and resettlement plans. Many households have moved to the market to set up business in hopes of benefiting from the construction project. They are uncertain about the impact on their livelihood and there is a risk of livelihoods being lost. (Photo credit: Khinta Sunar)

**Three villages along the Karnali river to show the physical location in relation to the Upper Karnali hydropower project. Their location will play a key role in determining their future when construction starts. For some village, life near the Karnali is already difficult but with the dam coming into their lives the future is uncertain for everyone involved. We present the stories from three villages who will be affected by this project.**

**The photos were taken by participants in IWMI’s Fair Water Futures campaign and by Michelle Ng (Princeton-in-Asia fellow).**