

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

Turmakhand rural municipality, Accham district

Households will be compensated by GMR, constant engagement with GMR regarding land acquisition, many have moved to the market to set up business in hopes of benefitting from the construction

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

View from Thalpatta village overlooking the Karnali river. The river separates two districts, Dailekh and Accham. Khinta took this to show her concern regarding the planned Upper Karnali dam. While the households near the river will be compensated she feels that she is quite uncertain about the impact on her livelihood. She is concerned about the loss of biodiversity around her home since many hills are already naked and there is a risk of landslides. (Photo credit: Khinta Sunar)



In this photo women return home after collecting firewood from the forest in Turmakhand rural municipality

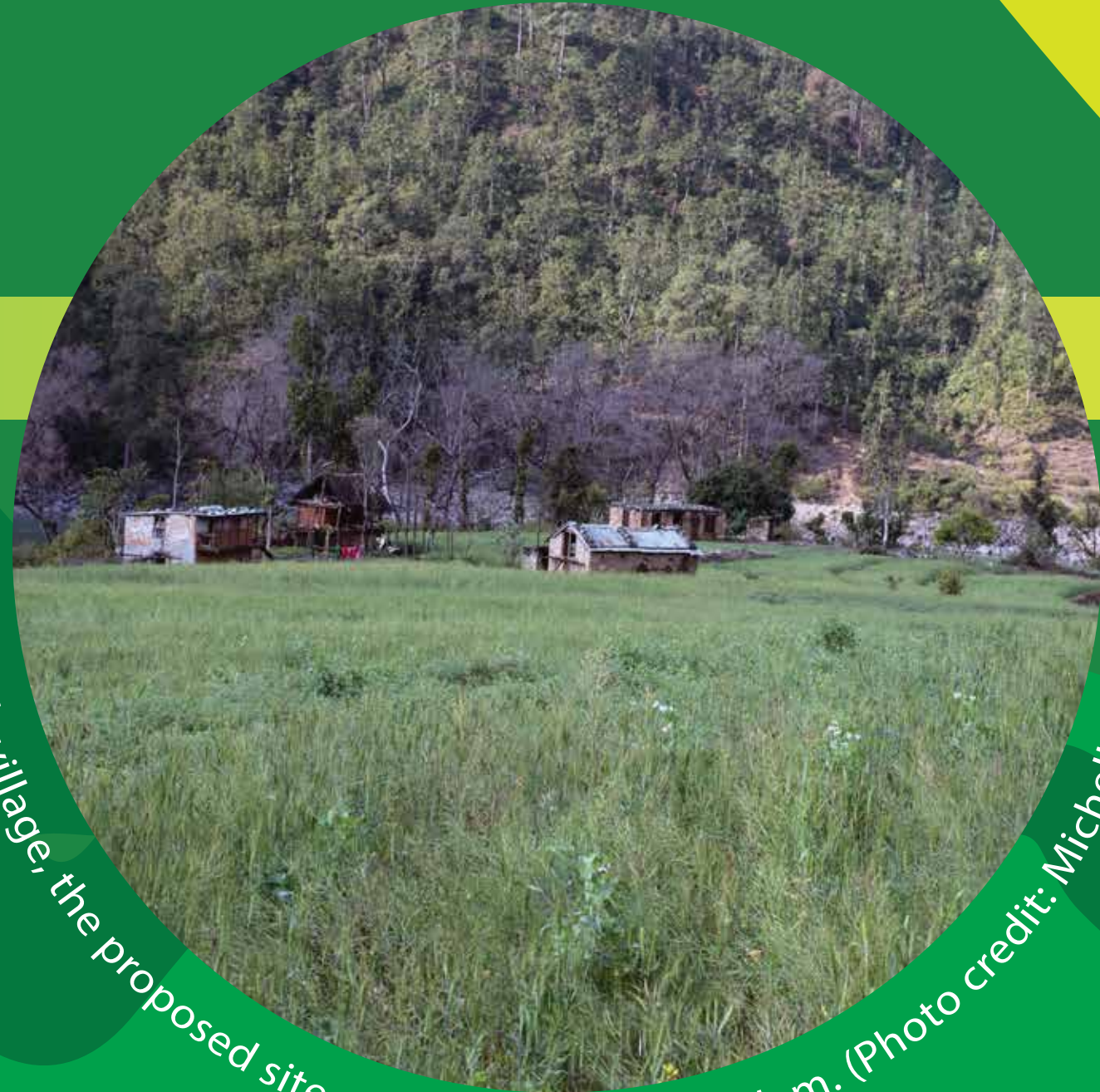
“I see many women suffering because of their husbands’ bad habits.” – Tek Bdr BC

This photo is of women returning home after collecting firewood from the forest taken in Turmakhand rural municipality. Tek took this photo to highlight the hardships faced by women in his village on a daily basis. Despite the presence of men at home, women are now taking up responsibility beyond the household. The village has limited employment opportunities and while there is hope to benefit from the employment prospects during the dam construction, the delay has left many uncertain for what the future holds for them. (Photo credit: Tek Bdr BC, Accham)

DAAB VILLAGE

Sattalla Municipality, Dailekh District

Dam site, many households will be resettled, house owners will receive compensation from GMR, largely aware of the benefit package and resettlement plans



Daab village, the proposed site of the Upper Karnali dam. (Photo credit: Michelle Ng)

“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)



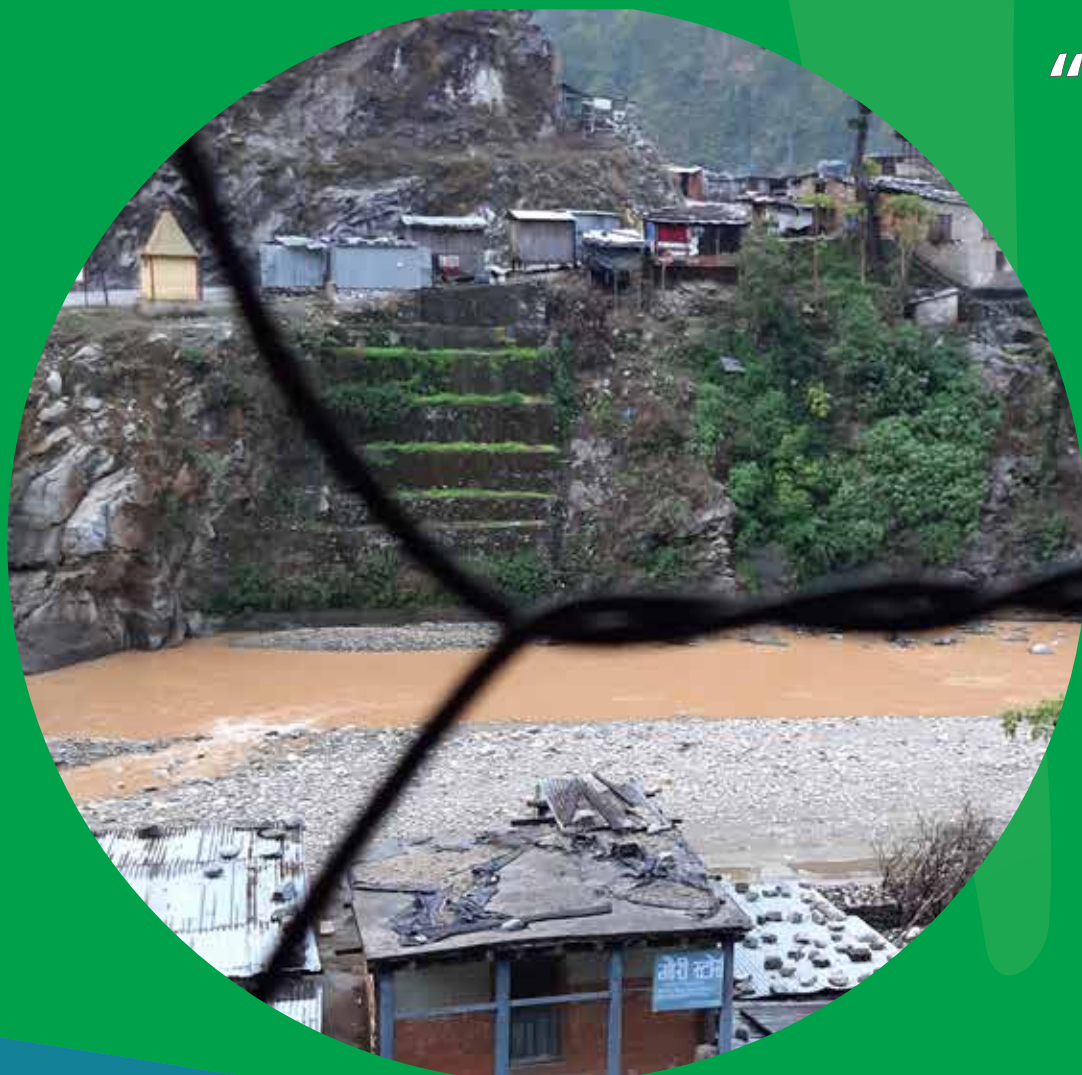
RAMAGHAT VILLAGE

Sattalla municipality, Dailekh district

Fishing community, Dalit families, built homes on unregistered land, many from Badi community who used to beg for a living, have been largely ignored from the discussion with GMR

“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 Upper Karnali will threaten their livelihood. She wants to be resettled somewhere else and provide a better future for her children. (Photo credit: Sukma Badi)



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



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