



Japan Center for a Sustainable Environment and Society

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Re: Potential Social Impacts of Sindh Coastal and Inland Community Development Project

Dear Vidhisha Samarasekara,

I am Yuki Tanabe, a staff of Tokyo-based non-governmental organization named Japan Center for a Sustainable Environment and Society (JACSES). From Sep 18 to 19, I have visited Badin, Thatta, Keti Bandar and Amin Mori, which are core areas of Sindh Coastal and Inland Community Development Project (PPTA 4525-PAK) through Japan Special Fund (JSF) of Asian Development Bank (ADB). During the visit, many local communities are raising voices against the project, since it does not comply with the reality of the Indus Delta region to reduce poverty.

Before 1960's, the Indus Delta was a place to support people's livelihood through various usages, such as farming (sugarcane, rice, bean, chili, vegetables, etc.), fishing and trading. However, due to construction of many dams, barrages and canals, which are funded by World Bank and ADB, along the Indus River, water flows of the river have been drastically decreased¹ and sea intrusion has been seriously stretched in the Indus Delta². Due to the decrease in water flow and degradation of land, people living by the costal area cannot engage farming, and they can only engage fishing as a main income source, which created poverty in the region. Moreover, people cannot access to fresh drinking water, and they are purchasing water tanks out side their villages by using motorcycles and tracks, which is a heavy burden for low income families.

ADB is now making a feasibility report on the project in the coastal area. According to the Interim Technical Assistance Consultant's Report prepared by ANZDEC (December 2005), it is planned to reduce poverty through helping fishing sector in the region. However, helping only in fishing sector cannot improve people's livelihood. Fisherpersons living in the costal area can catch enough fishes only from March to June. In other months, they

¹ The average fresh water flow in Indus Delta before 1947 was about 150 million Acre Feet (MAF) a year, the flow went down to less than 10 MAF recently. See "Indus Delta" published by Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum.

² 0.6 million ha land have been affected due to sea intrusion in Badin and Thatta area. See Appendix 4, Interim Report on Sindh Costal and Inland Community Development Project, prepared by ANZDEC.

cannot engage fishing as a main income source, since fish catchments is not enough to support people's lives, and moreover, people has been traditionally supporting their lives through fishing and farming activities. Therefore, people living in this area believe that only increasing fresh water flows of Indus River and recovering farmland is the realistic way to reduce poverty in this area. One of the largest people's organizations, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum demands that at least 35 MAF should be released to the downstream of Kotri Barrage³. Therefore, redesigning of Indus water management should be included in the project. Without the Indus water management, reduction of poverty in the costal area would not be progressed. I would like to ask you how ADB would reduce poverty in the costal area without increasing fresh water flows of Indus River.

This might not be your first time to hear about this claim. In facts, people have raised this concern several times to ADB and the Government of Pakistan. However, people have not received any meaningful responses from ADB and Government of Pakistan at this point of time. I would like to ask you to give a meaningful answer to people's concern in this issue. As a citizen living in the biggest donor country of ADB, I am sure that ADB will not leave this problem and open-heartedly answer people's concern.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Yuki Tanabe

Japan Center for a Sustainable Environment and Society (JACSES)

CC: Masaki Omura, Excutive Director for Japan, Asian Development Bank
Shigeki Kimura, Director, Ministry of Finance Japan

³ See "Indus Delta" published by Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum.