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Technical Review of Pak Beng Hydropower Project – Socio- economics

*The 2nd Regional Stakeholder Forum
The Pak Beng Hydropower Project
5th May 2017
Vientiane, Lao PDR*



Structure

- Background
- Main findings
- Recommendations



Background (1)



Review of

- Transboundary and Cumulative Impact Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Social Monitoring and Management Plan
- Environmental Monitoring and Management Plan
- Resettlement Action Plan

Background (2)



- Review structure based on
 1. IFC guidelines for hydropower assessments
 2. MRC RSAT hydropower sustainability criteria
 3. Systems analysis of water, food and energy nexus for hydropower
 4. Stakeholder meeting feedback
 5. JCWG on Pak Beng Prior Consultation

SIA review implemented via 89 questions

Review Domains

Description of the project

- Size of existing and proposed projects;
- Social impact area: incl. transboundary impacts;
- Affected people: incl. transboundary impacts;
- Physical attributes and location;
- Consideration of alternatives;
- Risks of accidents and hazards

Description of the affected environment

- Community characteristics and existing land/water use;
- Data collection methods and surveys

Significant transboundary effects

- Scoping of transboundary social and economic effects;
- Assessment of direct indirect effects: sediment, fisheries, navigation and the impacts on livelihoods;
- Consultation with affected communities;
- Prediction of effects on human health and sustainable development;
- Impact assessment methods
- Avoid, minimize and mitigation options

Monitoring and Mitigation

Non-technical summary

Rationale



Direct effects:

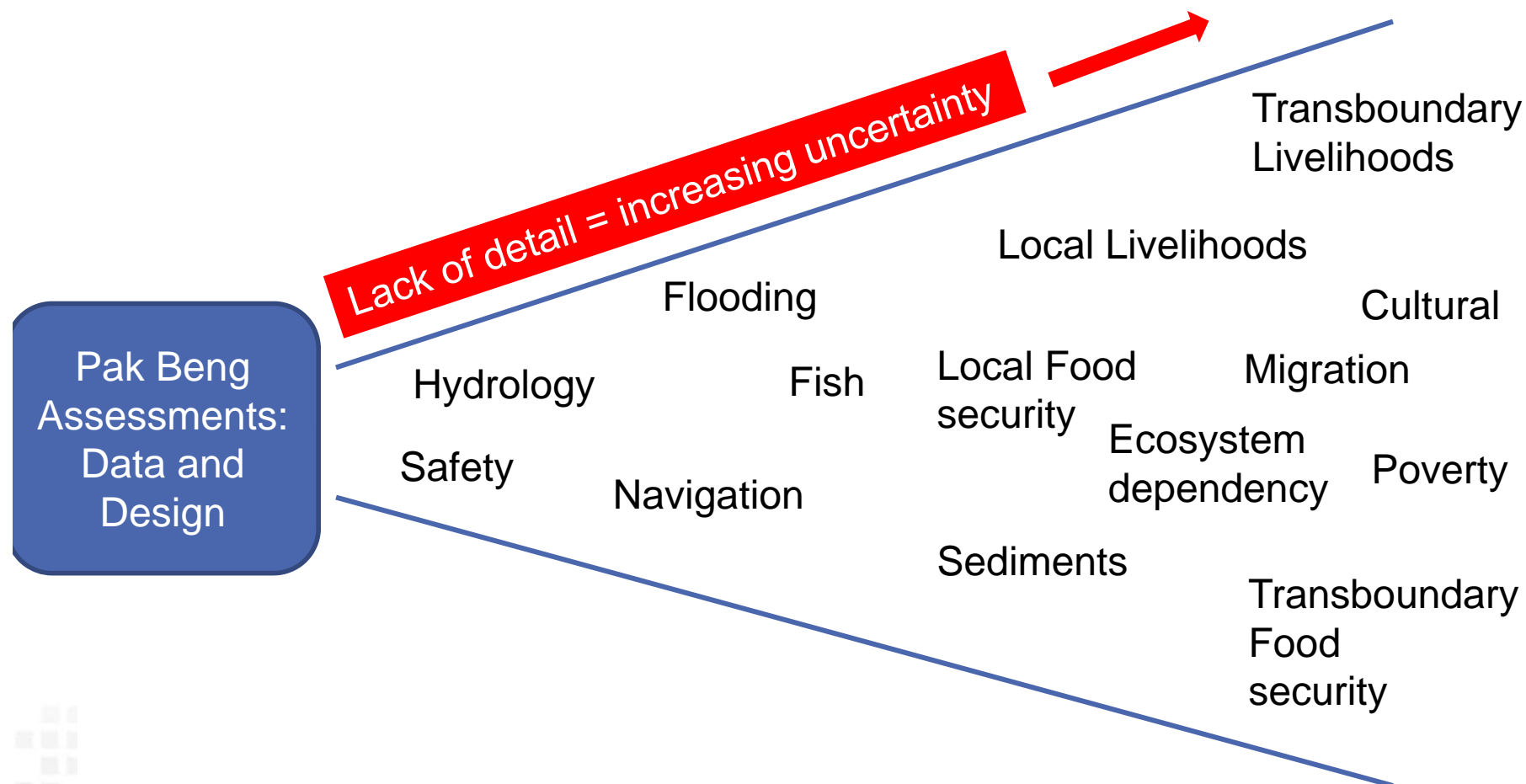
- Relocation of affected villages,
- Construction
- Influx of migrant workers

Local impacts: not directly concerned with PNPCA but recurring and increasing budget costs may affect operations with transboundary impacts

Indirect transboundary effects

- Impaired navigation through slower vessel passage;
- Reduced fisheries and cropping & livelihood change; and
- Reduced downstream sediment and nutrient movement.

Socio-economic assessment reliability



Main findings (1)

- ❖ Submitted documents attempts to cover a wide range of issues (livelihood, education, infrastructure, tourism, cultural)
- ❖ Baseline data is detailed on areas along the 5 km corridor
- ❖ Section 5 of the TESIA&CIA builds on research and publications of varied reliability
 - The assessment design does not compare future developments with and without PBHPP.
 - The impacts of the PBHPP are assessed for a 5km corridor of the Mekong mainstream, divided into 5 zones. The MRC uses a 15 km corridor.
 - Limited consideration of impacts upstream (focusing mainly on navigation and a partial fish survey)

Main findings (2)



- MRC data bases and documents not utilized (e.g Basin Development Plan 2)
- The assessment methodology is insufficient and non-transparent (no socio-economic modelling, no details on the expert panel, sampling, consultation workshop participants)
- Numerous data inconsistencies (e.g. poverty levels, resettlement numbers, current and future land uses)
- Insufficient details on resettlement strategies to assess livelihood transitions with possible transboundary consequences
- Lack of supporting evidence for the effectiveness of proposed mitigation options (e.g fish ladders – fisheries impact downstream).

Gaps – some examples



Consultation/Ethnic Minority

- SIA reported consultations with ethnic minority and vulnerable groups;
- No detail on compositions of these groups
- Financial offer of \$250 for each household vs loss & cost of moving unclear

Gender

- Some gender disaggregated population and household data
- No detail on how women participation is affected due to PBHPP
- No treatment of gender disaggregated changes in livelihoods or living conditions (e.g access to water)

Gaps – some examples



**Transboundary impacts
listed:** Cropping, health and
nutrition, tourism, socio-political
risks

FISHERIES ??????
**Livelihood (Laos: 16%,
Thailand: 20%, Cambodia:
19%, Vietnam: 5%)**
Protein (8-16%)

Recommendations (1)



Strategies to improve the assessment:

- Provide robust evidence for the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures
- Make use of available external and MRC datasets
- Disclose expert panel details and criteria
- Provide comparison of futures with and without PBHPP
- Consider socio-economic modelling to assess the losses, risks and benefits for downstream livelihoods, food security, poverty levels and migration.

Recommendations (2)



- Implementation of a fish nursery programme based on the recommendations of the Fisheries Review
- Livelihood transition programmes designed and fully resourced; e.g. training programmes
- Participatory resettlement planning
- Finance Mechanism established to manage benefits and costs across the corridor/basin

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Thank you!

