1. INTRODUCTION:

“What makes a river so restful to people is that it doesn’t have any doubt - it is sure to get where it is going, and it doesn’t want to go anywhere else.

Hal Boyle, Pulitzer prize-winning columnist”

1.1. Research Problem and Hypothesis

This research study explores the relationship that exists between population displacement and impoverishment. It uses the example of Merowe Dam; a large scale, multi-purpose dam built at the Fourth Cataract of the River Nile in Northern Sudan. The Dam is located in an area inhabited by three tribal groups: Hamadab, Amri and Manasir. It has resulted in the displacement of over 50,000 individuals who now have to endure compounded social marginalization and long term economic impoverishment.

The study explores how impoverishment occurred by using two out of eight risks defined in the Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model as benchmarks. From among: Landlessness, Joblessness, Homelessness, Marginalization, Food Insecurity, Increased Morbidity, Loss of Access to Common property resources and Community Disarticulation, the two impoverishments risks: Landlessness and Homelessness have been selected as a focus for this study, because they are viewed by the researcher as major life impacting factors which have

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the ability to portray impoverishment in its most significant forms. The focus on landlessness stems from the fact that the communities being studied are primarily agrarian communities that rely on land as a source of employment and livelihoods. And the selection of Homelessness on the other hand is based on the importance of home to all human beings and the fact that having a place to call home is a mainstay to a stable and productive human life. The selection of these two risk factors is not intended in any way to undermine the other risks defined by the model, but to have a more focused approach and conduct a more in-depth analysis of those under study.

The research explores and analyzes how the three tribal groups of Hamadab, Amri and Manasir were turned from mostly self-reliant communities into impoverished ones; with specific subgroups suffering from added vulnerability and exclusion as a result of the project. To arrive at this point, theories of development as expansion of capabilities for the human beings are reviewed, along with guidelines from International Human Rights Law on displacement. The study then investigates the process of displacement that happened and analytically examines the compensation scheme which accompanied the project, revealing the flaws of the scheme and the jeopardy to the rights of the affected populations which accompanied the implementation of the compensation scheme.

The purpose of this study is not to endeavor to provide answers to the question of alternatives to large scale dams and the resultant displacement and impoverishment they cause. It

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rather seeks to establish a case of impoverishment that is directly linked to population
displacement of the particular communities targeted by the study. However, at its conclusion, the
study suggests areas for additional research and investigation in the domain of dams and
displacement.

In looking at the problem of population movement for reasons relating to development,
under the broader nexus of migration and development, it is very important to distinguish
between voluntary migration by individuals or communities to improve their livelihoods and
economic situations on one hand and forced migration and resettlement of communities
happening en masse as a result of development projects that lack the consensus and acceptability
of the affected communities on the other hand.

The latter falls under the niche of Development Induced Displacement (DIDR), which
has become a well acknowledged area for academic research and advocacy over the years. Most
cases of DIDR produce varying numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). In the domain
of DIDR, we find displacement resulting from the construction of large scale dams to be a
growing phenomenon in Africa, Asia and South America.

The construction of dams in and by itself is not viewed by the study as the problem,
because the study acknowledges the need for infrastructural development under the growing
move towards urbanization, which the world is witnessing on the larger scale. However, the
study is clearly critical of large scale dams, the main purpose of which is usually hydropower generation, because they have proven problematic in causing destabilization of populations, mass movements and resultant impoverishment.

The cause of the impoverishment in this type of DIDR is mostly the alteration in pre-project livelihoods represented by a decline in the socio-economic status of the displaced. The original means of survival of the affected populations are subjected to major changes with very little compensation in terms of agricultural land, skills training or replacement of those material assets lost in the course of relocation. The end result is population impoverishment that usually continues for extended periods of time and renders the affected populations vulnerable and needing assistance.

The impact on cultural and archeological heritage, and the environmental degradation caused by dams are additional reasons for people to seek alternative options for power generation. The entire set of issues is indeed cause for investigation and conceptualization by researchers as the problem of dam induced displacement continues to unfold.

When development projects come with a high human cost, we have to question whether the benefits compensate for the losses. Dam induced displacement, ecosystem damage and the submersion and destruction of cultural and archeological heritage usually result from the redirection of river paths and the creation of large water reservoirs in the course of constructing
large scale hydroelectric dams. The way out of this dilemma might be seen to lie in seeking alternative means of energy to hydropower generation. While the debate on alternative power sources is important and viable, it falls beyond the purpose and scope of this study.

The decision to construct large scale dams is usually one that is primarily taken by the government of the country where the project is to be implemented. However, the funds used to implement such huge projects do not always come from that specific government. Such governments are mostly those of developing countries and they lack the necessary funds for their development projects. Financing is therefore mostly sought from other nations or international funds such as the World Bank (WB). It would be naive to believe that when such funds are provided by other countries, they are given out of charity, with absolutely no interest behind them.

The interests of the countries funding large scale agricultural irrigation schemes and dam construction in developing countries could be seen under an overall picture of decreasing land and water resources over planet Earth. A number of factors affect the availability of natural resources on the planet. In Africa alone, the continent is expected to face more scarcity in its water resources with the current trends in water use and the growing populations, even if we exclude climate change effect\(^4\).

The growing interest of the funding countries in land and water resources of other countries has manifested in two phenomena, gauged by world economists and organizations working in the relevant fields. These phenomena are “Land Grabbing”\(^5\) and “Water Grabbing”\(^6\). The terms Land Grabbing and Water Grabbing signify cases where richer countries with meager natural land and water resources invest heavily and benefit remarkably from such resources of other, less developed, countries that are home to long rivers and vast agricultural land. “Stop Africa Land Grab” further details the definition of Land Grabbing as the:

“There is evidence to its occurrence dating to decades back in history\(^8\). However, the term as such re-emerged in the international scene with the sharp rise in food prices witnessed by the world in 2007-2008\(^9\). In East Africa, we can observe that Oil-rich Arab Gulf countries and China constitute the main international actors in land and water grabbing deals\(^10\).”

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\(^8\)Stop Africa Land Grab “About.”


Such deals may come in the form of financing the construction of large scale dams and massive agricultural schemes or else as outright leasing of huge stretches of farmland for durations that go up to three or more decades. The deals are usually endorsed and, I would rather say, enforced by the governments of the countries where the projects are to be implemented; where no serious consultation with local populations is carried out. Programs of this nature mostly come with unfair conditions for the populations at project site, who then start to be seen as obstacles to be removed, or at best silenced, in order for the projects to materialize as planned.

Protests, lack of acceptance and a complexity of human rights violations usually engulf these projects. It is the massive population displacement and resultant impoverishment that I am interested in, as a common factor among such type of projects.

The construction of large scale dams has led to massive DIDR around the world. The numbers of people displaced by development, worldwide, are estimated at 250 million\(^{11}\). Of these, 60 million have been displaced in India over the past 60 years and 40 million in China over half a century\(^{12} \quad^{13}\). During the period 1986 – 2006 alone, DIDR has displaced an


approximate two hundred million individuals\textsuperscript{14}. This reflects the growing nature of the problem and how it has intensified and escalated in the past few decades.

Statistics on Internal Displacement in Sudan mostly focus on those displaced by armed conflict in the regions of Darfur, Kordofan and Southern Blue with no reference to DIDR. The latest statistics from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), as of December 2012, quotes 2,430,000 IDPs\textsuperscript{15}. However, breakdown data attached to this figure clearly estimates 1,430,000 of these to be located in Darfur, around half a million in South Kordofan, approximately 120,000 in Blue Nile and 68,000 in eastern Sudan\textsuperscript{16}.

The above revealed lack of tracking on the number of IDPs displaced by development reflects how the issue of DIDR ranks low in the agenda of international organizations concerned with displacement, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

While the organization is doing a remarkable job in tracking the numbers of refugees and addressing their needs, expansion of the UNHCR mandate to include IDPs has stretched the demand on the organization, with its limited financial and human resource capacity. On the legal level, and to ensure effectiveness of the tools guarding against internal displacement and


\textsuperscript{16} IDMC “IDP statistics.”
guaranteeing the rights of IDPs, UNHCR may need to examine those international guidelines and legal instruments dealing with internal displacement. As will be explained by the study later, some of the current guidelines on internal displacement are non-binding and that may require very technical legal work by the organization – and hence more resources - to adapt these tools.

UNHCR acknowledges that IDPs fell outside its original mandate and that they have recently been incorporated under its Populations of Concern (POCs):

“UNHCR’s original mandate does not specifically cover IDPs, but because of the agency’s expertise on displacement, it has for many years been protecting and assisting millions of them, more recently through the "cluster approach." 17

Under the Cluster approach, UNHCR plays a major role in the oversight of the shelter and legal protection needs of the affected IDPs, and in coordination and camp management. It is very important to acknowledge the challenge faced by UNHCR and partners in accessing information, from the States involved, on IDPs in the territory of these States. In cases of war, or for political reasons, there is always a risk of the governments of the IDP producing countries using the flag of state sovereignty to undermine the reality of IDP situation and mask the scale of the problem to preserve their image in front of the international community.

In most cases of DIDR, development oustees are recorded to have been forced to move, where their choices and strong wishes to remain in their original habitat were ignored by their

respective governments. The motivation against relocating usually goes beyond mere emotions and has a lot to do with what people have to give up as compared to what they expect to gain in compensation.

While the ideal scenario in cases of DIDR would be to resettle people and provide them with stable lives in their new settlements and villages, evidence has shown that socio-economic impoverishment is an imprint characterizing displacement by development. The development and introduction, during the last twenty-years, of guidelines for such resettlement may have improved the situation but it has not prevented impoverishment from occurring.

Displacement in Africa is growing steadily; with many examples resulting from dams, oil excavation and mine projects. Undated statistics from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO) with a list of dams in Africa includes 1307 dams. This database shows only those dams that are operational and fails to capture a number of dams constructed during the last decade.

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18 De Wet “Problems, Policies.”
19 De Wet “Problems, Policies.”
20 De Wet “Problems, Policies.”
In the last decade and a half, seven large-scale dams have either been completed or are underway along the River Nile alone. Many of them have led to population displacement, negative environmental impact and submersion of ancient archeological and cultural heritage.

As of December 2010, the nonprofit organization International Rivers Netowrk (IRN) was able to track 150 proposed dams across 54 African countries. The alarming size of the problem is mapped out and depicted by IRN as seen in Appendix I of this study. The affected rivers include Congo, Niger, Zambezi and the River Nile, which is the longest river in the World. It is therefore important for researchers, policy makers, rights and environmental activists and riverine communities in general to to highlight the risk of impoverishment awaiting those populations residing along major African rivers with the aim of preventing, as much as possible, the problem from taking a full-fledged scale and remedying it to the extent possible.

In a recent visit to Uganda, the author of this study was able to witness, firsthand, the change in the ecosystem and the massive flooding that occurred as a result of the construction of Bujagali Dam. The Dam is located very close to Lake Victoria. It was completed in 2011 and inaugurated by Ugandan President, Yori Mosevini, on the National Day of Uganda in 2012. While riding a boat along the River Nile, could the author visually noted on the surrounding hilltops, the affected farmers, fishermen and women who had to abandon their original valley lands. The reason was the flooding of the lands, which were turned into the Bujagali Dam reservoir. A remarkable view within the path of the Nile was that of the top branches of submerged large trees, emerging from the water where they are now situated in the heart of the reservoir lake. The impacted people currently reside on top of surrounding hills, with very little farming and fishing activity to do.

For authenticity purposes, this research acknowledges that the size of population displacement along the River Nile is still less than that displaced by other large scale dams along the Mekong River in Asia. The Mekong River basin is home to 70 million individuals and a very rich ecosystem which is being jeopardized by hydroelectric dams all along. In the small landlocked Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR) – through which the Mekong flows alone, 60 dams are planned or are now under construction. The main international actor in grabbing water in Lao PDR is Thailand.

29 Hathaway “What.”
32 Matthews “Winners.”
The argument regarding dam construction in Africa is that African Dams are currently an evolving issue that will lead to more population displacement as time goes by.

In looking at the issue of dam induced displacement, under the broader domain of DIDR, the work of McDonald-Wilmsen and Webber is found to ask the most relevant rights-based questions and properly position the issue by calling for a broadened research agenda when looking at DIDR; one that would “raise the standards with which displaced people are treated” by employing a forced migration approach to research. The two scholars argue that “the debate about dams and displacement sets only minimal goals for developers to meet” when compared to the high standards set forth by those studying refugees; their movement, rights and the responsibility of the various actors towards them.

McDonald-Wilmsen and Webber believe that because the guidelines published in the World Commission on Dams (WCD) report that came out in the year 2000 have no power of implementation no major improvement has been recorded in the conditions of people being displaced by dams since then.

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34 McDonald-Wilmsen et al “Raising.” Page 143.
As professionals and scholars in the field of refugee studies, we tend to feel positive when the world devotes more attention to the plight of refugees; their journeys, rights and the responsibility of the international community towards them and we keep demanding for more.

However, it is important to highlight that, at the same time, less than satisfactory attention is being devoted to ensuring the rights of peoples internally displaced by development projects that are planned and implemented by their own governments. In the case of this category of IDPs, the international community tends to rest back and leave the responsibility to the individual states, under the notion of state sovereignty. And when such States are non-democratic, the stakes are high that the voices of the displaced will be undermined. The interests of the affected population then fall at the bottom of the government agenda.

Such scenarios usually involve an unmistakable set of human rights violations and lead to a protracted state of disadvantage and impoverishment to the local population. In my belief, this is exactly the case of the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir people displaced by Merowe Dam and targeted by this research study.

The aggressive trend of constructing dams along the River Nile is an alarming phenomenon that requires attention, conceptualization and proper positioning within the larger niche of DIDR and the global race for natural resources. My greatest interest in studying part of
this trend is the massive population displacement that has historically been coupled with the implementation of large scale dam projects.

In researching the subject, academics and human rights activists need not ignore the impact of bad governance on the freedoms, livelihoods and survival means of affected populations. In other words, the performance of governments implementing development projects should not only be evaluated on how much economic growth happens in the country on the larger scale, but also on the extent to which they involve their citizens in decision-making, how they protect the rights and interests of citizens during the process of development program planning and implementation.

Trans-national corporations involved in the implementation of dam, mine and oil excavation projects have also been incriminated in displacing communities. A live example of such involvement is the case of the German Lahmeyer International GmbH, hereunder referred to as Lahmeyer, in constructing and operating Merowe dam project. A lawsuit was filed by the representation of the affected populations from Sudan against the company. Lahmeyer has been accused and was sued for flooding more than 30 villages, and displacing over 4700 families in the process of constructing the dam and making it operational.


Merowe Large Scale Multi-purpose Dam, hereunder referred to as Merowe Dam, is located in Northern Sudan near Merowe city (thereby often referred to as Merowe Dam), which is 350 kilometers north of the capital Khartoum, at 32 E longitude and 19 N latitude\textsuperscript{38}.

The countries involved in funding the dam, in addition to the host government, include, but are not limited to, China, KSA, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Sultanate of Oman and The State of Qatar\textsuperscript{39}. The profile of the funding countries emphasizes the interest of the Arab Gulf states in the water and land resources of the Nile Basin. China, which is regarded as an emerging economic power, has been involved in oil excavation in Sudan for a few decades.

1.2 Research Objectives

In order to establish the facts on how impoverishment of the affected populations resulted from their displacement as a consequence to Merowe Dam, the research will do the following:

1) Firstly, the study will interrogate the process of project planning and examine the extent of involvement of the impacted populations in decision making, by exploring whether the interests of these populations were taken into account by the government.

2) Secondly, the study will review the displacement and resettlement and analyze the shortfalls of the compensation scheme that led to the great dis-satisfaction among the impacted


populations and caused them to resist and reject being resettled to the new villages constructed by the government, in substitution for their lost lands.

3) And thirdly, the study will set to provide evidence on how impoverishment of Hamadab, Amri and Manasir, represented by the two impoverishment risks of Landlessness and Homelessness, resulted, as an inevitable outcome to the chain of events outlined by the study.

1.3 Research Materials and Methodology

In studying DIDR, research approaches can be described as falling into two groups; the managerialist and the more critical approach\(^{40}\). The managerialist perspective concerns itself with analyzing the shortcomings of the displacement and resettlement processes and introducing measures to reduce their negative impact, i.e. a mitigation approach\(^{41}\). It reflects the view of agencies such as the World Bank, by focusing on correcting the shortcomings of resettlement, hence not asking the very radical social protection questions of how and why displacement happened, and whether it could have been avoided. The managerialist approach also ignores the basics of human development theory that emphasize the need to focus on the human subjects as the mainstay for development.

This study makes use of the tools developed by Cernea and the World Bank, represented in the Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model. However, it is very important to


\(^{41}\) Morvaridi “Rights.”
note that the study does critique and analyze the process of displacement and examines some of the human rights violations that accompanied it, linking them to issues of governance at the background of the human rights record of the government of Sudan. It reviews the process of decision making and establishes a case of impoverishment viewed on the backdrop of the IRR model.

This study uses the same tools developed by the managerialist – mitigation- approach to make a counter statement to this approach by establishing a case of impoverishment and highlighting the human cost of Merowe Dam project.

The main assumption of this study is that successful development projects should not displace populations, en masse, from their habitual places of residence, as is outlined clearly in Principle 6 of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. If and when development leads to human displacement and, furthermore, fails to provide the mitigation proposed through compensation schemes, then it has failed its purpose of attaining human prosperity, the enjoyment of equality and rights.

The problem explored by the study is how impoverishment of the three tribal groups happened in the course of project implementation, using the IRR model as a yardstick to explore the problem; by selecting two out of eight Risks defined in the model42. Out of Landlessness,

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Joblessness, Homelessness, Marginalization, Food Insecurity, Increased Morbidity, Loss of Access to Common property resources and Community Disarticulation, two impoverishment risks: namely Landlessness and Homelessness have been selected by the study. The rationale in using these two risks is the value and meaning of land to the agrarian societies being studied and, in principle, the importance of having a place to call home to all human beings. In agricultural communities, land is also a source of employment to those who do not own their own plots. I therefore see landlessness to involve a degree of joblessness when talking about the risks defined in the IRR.

Merowe Dam project was accompanied by a compensation scheme, which the study examines in an attempt to answer the question of why the impacted populations were still unhappy and largely unsatisfied with the deal. It explores the flaws of the scheme in relation to the two impoverishment risks used, and reveals a set of criteria upon which the Government has excluded certain groups from compensation. These groups have endured compounded impoverishment; first by being expelled – along with the others - from their homeland, and second by being stigmatized and excluded from compensation. The groups in question include single men and labor migrants working outside the project site, even though they had their families back in the affected area.

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The analysis embarks on various guidelines on internal displacement and resettlement devised by the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank (WB). It firstly draws on various articles from International Human Rights Law that could be interpreted to prohibit population displacement then critiques the lack of an explicit right to land in these International Convenants and argues that this is a weakness in International Law.

The study also addresses the subject from a human development view, using Amartya Sen’s “capabilities and entitlements” approach and the concept of “putting people first” as a reference. Linguistically speaking, the concise encyclopedia defines a dam as a “barrier built across a stream, river, or estuary to conserve water for such uses as human consumption, irrigation, flood control, and electric-power generation”. Historically speaking, the earliest human experience with dams was attributed at times to “Sadd Alkafra” (a 15 meter (49 foot) high masonry structure from 2900 BC found across the River Nile in Egypt) and at times to another dam, the remains of which were found in the town of Jawa in modern-day Jordan; the latter is 4 meters high and dates back to 3000 BC. Dams became more in use a century later to these dates, where a number of them were built in China, America and the Mediterranean region.

46 Meriam-Webster Online Dictionary.
There are mainly two methods in which dams are characterized and classified; one based on dam structure and another based on dam function. The structural classification, which is a civil engineering one, classifies dams based on their design and make-up into: gravity dams, earth dams, rockfill dams, arch dams, buttress dams, steel dams, timber dams and rubber dams, while the functional classification divides them into: storage dams, diversion dams, detention dams, debris dams and coffer dams. For the purpose of this study, I will be using the functional classification as it is more relevant to the purpose of the study. The reason is that I am adopting a socio-economic and not an engineering approach to my subject.

Most of the world’s modern-day dams are storage dams, built to serve multiple purposes, such as irrigation, flood control and/or hydropower generation, thus referred to as multi-purpose dams. Based on the functional classification above, Merowe dam can be described as a multi-purpose storage dam.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This research study is presented in five chapters. The introductory chapter introduces the research problem, hypothesis, and objectives and outlines the materials used as well as the methodological approach adopted by the study.

48 WCD “Framework.”
Chapter two provides a selective and targeted critical review of the literature on development, displacement, dams and the available international guidelines on internal and dam induced displacement. This chapter also reviews the concepts of Land Grabbing and Water Grabbing, and positions the research within the larger domain of the global race for natural resources.

Chapter three presents the facts on Merowe Dam; its history, location and objectives, and gives an account of the stakeholders involved in the project, ranging from donor countries to implementing companies. This section of the research argues that in the case of Merowe Dam, it is difficult to consider the impacted populations as active project stakeholders because of the lack of consideration to their interests from the beginning to the end of the project.

Chapter four of the study is about the population affected and the project impact of Merowe Dam. It introduces, in detail, the three tribal groups constituting the affected population and reviews and presents the pre-displacement livelihoods activities of these communities. The chapter then provides a thorough critical analysis of the compensation scheme developed and implemented by the government along the course of the dam project. It defines the flaws of the scheme and lays barren how it has excluded certain categories of individuals and rendered them doubly vulnerable.
Chapter five summarizes and concludes on the findings of the study. It further proposes a more active role for social scientists and rights advocates in shaping development policy, and concludes by suggesting an agenda for further research to address the question of alternative forms of energy other than building large scale hydroelectric dams in attempting to halt the steady trend of dam induced displacement.
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 History and Early Writings on DIDR

Earlier writings on the subject of displacement and resettlement date back to the 1960s. Anthropologists and social scientists compiled and generated a body of knowledge on displacement and resettlement even before the latter two subjects became public policy issues. Researchers who significantly contributed to that body of knowledge include David Butcher, Brokensha, Chambers, Roy-Burman, Gans, Scudder, and Colson. Interestingly, Cernea describes the expulsion from Paradise, of the first human couple, Adam and Eve, as the first experience of forced displacement and resettlement in human history.

The trend towards displacing populations for and by development projects is steadily growing, in response to the increasing demands of urbanizing; which involve various forms of infrastructure development such as hydropower generation, large scale agricultural irrigation schemes, roads, bridges and mining projects.

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53 Cernea “Understanding.”
2.2 People Centered Development

Brokensha, Warren and Werner emphasize the need by development planners to take into account the traditional skills and knowledge of the people at the intended project sites when engaging in development program planning. The study agrees with the argument of Brokensha, Warren and Werner that Merowe Dam project represents a case where the knowledge, interests, and traditional skills of the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir populations were not given due consideration along the course of the project, which has led to the impoverishment of these populations. The way Merowe Dam project was implemented raises questions on whether the impacted populations were seriously involved in the decision-making process. The succession of events in the case of Merowe Dam points out that population relocation counteracted the interest of the people, who expressed their objections to project implementation through protests and riots that were brutally clamped down by the government.

Colson, in her review of the edited volume: “Putting People First; Sociological Variables in rural Development”, summarizes five main messages for development planners to take into account when planning rural development projects. These involve taking into account and build on the experiences, interests, knowledge and skills of the affected populations; the importance of evaluating the cost effectiveness of project through the eye of human cost, rather than pure economic gains; the need for development planners to acknowledge the occurrence of impoverishment as an inevitable cost that is paid by at least some people when large

development schemes are implemented; recognition of the fact that technology, deployed en masse, can wipe out a lot of resources and forced the marginalized to “over-exploit” the natural resources remaining available to them causing environmental degradation on the long run; and finally the need for development planners to bring in social scientists at the initial stages before a high human cost is paid.\(^5^7\)

While the messages above were developed by a number of researchers over a decade ago, they remain valid to date and can be used by development planners to avoid the negative consequences of development on people. Development per se is not the problem, yet it has to be centered on using people as resources and benefiting rather than alienating them along its course. One of the ways to ensure a positive outcome to development is to make sure that the population residing at the project site is considered a prime beneficiary rather than an obstacle to the project. When constructing dams along a river, it is also important not to overlook the impact on populations down the course of the river. In many cases, dam and river redirection projects that were created with the purpose of irrigation end up depriving populations further down the basin from vast farmlands. This is especially true when the course of the river is redirected from a wide stretch of land to one single path.

By reviewing the five messages summarized above by Colson\(^5^8\), it can be seen that the second message “Projects should be evaluated in terms of their probable human costs and gains

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\(^5^7\) Colson “Putting.” Book Review.
\(^5^8\) Colson “Putting.” Book Review.
rather than by engineering or economic criteria alone\textsuperscript{59}. This ties in closely with the call made by Amartya Sen in 1989\textsuperscript{60}. Sen calls for considering development as an expansion of human capabilities to end human deprivation by focusing on human beings as ends and not means for development; an approach he defines as “The Capabilities Approach”\textsuperscript{61}. His call itself is inspired by earlier works by various social scientists and philosophers including Aristotle, Karl Marx, Adam Smith and the German philosopher Emmanuel Kant\textsuperscript{62}. In the eighteenth century, Kant made a call for treating humans as ends in themselves:

“So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other in every case as an end withal, never as means only.”\textsuperscript{63}

The basis of Sen’s theory rests upon evaluating the quality of life by assessing the human capability to function, i.e. certain capabilities enable the human being to perform certain functions where he sees life as a set of doings and beings, collectively termed as “functionings”\textsuperscript{64}. The various functionings include basic ones such having the right to life, being free from illness, having good nutrition and enjoying freedom of movement as well as more complex ones such as gaining self-respect, participating in one’s community activities and being free from shame or in other words living with dignity among other humans\textsuperscript{65}.

\textsuperscript{59} Colson “Putting.” Book Review.
\textsuperscript{62} Sen “Capability.”
\textsuperscript{64} Sen “Capability.”
\textsuperscript{65} Sen “Capability.”
He does not condemn the pursuit of economic growth in itself, but rather argues for balancing the magnitude of economic growth sought out in planning and executing development projects with the extent to which such growth contributes to enriching human lives and developing the human beings themselves.\(^{66}\)

### 2.3 Understanding Impoverishment from DIDR

Development programs that lead to forced displacement of populations represent doing harm for a good cause, which is a contradiction in itself. If development is for the people, then the obvious question that would arise is: how could a development program intended to benefit people disrupt their lives and jeopardize their livelihoods? My intention in this study is not to irrationally condemn development in and by itself, but rather to examine the displacement and impoverishment caused by a dam project on a specific group of people, who are the subject of my research.

Displacement by development has in most instances lead to population impoverishment, manifesting in the form of economic, social and cultural losses.\(^{67}\) The displacement is usually necessitated by the need for infrastructural development, such as building highways, establishing irrigation schemes or generating hydropower, or else for the purpose of urban development such

\(^{66}\) Sen “Capability.”

as building schools, hospitals or airports. Such development programs are definitely needed, and come with their benefits to the country in question. Infrastructure has proven to be very important for economic development. In developed countries, users demand electricity, water, telecommunications and transportation to perform their day-to-day functions in an effective manner, hence cutting down on the time wasted and achieving more productivity.

However, when development programs especially those involving infrastructure development lead to impoverishment of populations rather than benefiting them and reducing poverty, they start to become problematic and difficult to defend. Hence, the need to examine the pros and cons of such programs arises, and it becomes an immediate necessity for development practitioners to devise ways to avoid and mitigate such negative impact.

An example of a project that had and continues to have massive benefits but has at the same time led to massive population displacement is the Aswan High Dam, constructed in South Egypt, around 300 Km north of the border with Sudan. Aswan High Dam was constructed between 1964 and 1973.

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Despite the population displacement it has caused, the value of the High Dam of Aswan cannot be underestimated. It has further boosted the storage capacity of Egypt on top of that established by the Aswan Low Dam, which was completed much earlier, in 1902\textsuperscript{71}. The two dams have together enabled year round irrigation for Egypt; a country where 95% of the people live in 3% of the land, basically around the Nile Valley\textsuperscript{72}. Before the dam, the country used to have only one crop season, since the River Nile floods only once a year\textsuperscript{73}.

The other side of the coin is the large population displacement that occurred as a result of the dam; mostly in northern Sudan and partly in South Egypt. The most significant negative impact of the dam is the flooding of vast areas of agricultural and archeological land. This has lead to the submersion of invaluable archeological and cultural heritage of Ancient Nubia dating back to seven thousand years.

The grievances of both Egyptian and Sudanese Nubians continue to the current date\textsuperscript{74}. The Nubians of Egypt and Sudan are ethnically considered as one larger group of people with a number of tribes living in two neighboring countries.

\textsuperscript{72} Smith “Aswan.”
\textsuperscript{73} Smith “Aswan.”
Aswan High Dam is not the only example, but I find it to be very relevant when discussing Merowe Dam as, in the current case, we are talking about the same River Nile and a population living only kilometers south to the displaced Nubians.

Other examples of dams that have resulted in population displacement include the Three Gorges Dam in China and Akosombo Dam in Ghana. The Three Gorges Dam is constructed on the Yangtze River and has led to the displacement of over 1.2 million individuals, while Akosombo Dam, constructed in the 1950s to 1960s on Volta River, has resulted in the displacement of 80,000 individuals.\(^{75}\)

A third and very controversial example is the Sardar Sarovar Dam Project being constructed on Narmada River in India. This dam stands as a positive mark in the history of the World Bank (WB), as the organization has decided to withdraw its funding for the dam because of the massive population displacement of around 127,000 people anticipated to result from the project.\(^{76}^{77}\) While the WB has stopped its funding for the project for the logical reasons cited, the government of India went ahead and continued construction of the dam, which now lies incomplete, with lots of funds spent and more people to be displaced.\(^{78}\)

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\(^{76}\) Stanley “Expert Guide, DIDR.”


\(^{78}\) Bal “Politics.”
In justifying the displacement and relocation of populations, national governments tend to use the argument of ‘the greater good’, which has, over the years, elicited continued criticism by human rights defenders, development practitioners and donor agencies. The argument for the ‘limited good’ that not everyone can benefit and someone has to sacrifice because of limitation of resources has also been critiqued by de Wet. He argues that the question of who gets what from the new resources in the course of a development project is primarily a political question; i.e. a question about rights. Since a national government is responsible for ensuring that all citizens are granted their rights and entitlements on an equal basis, jeopardizing the rights of any group of citizens for any reason cannot be justified.

The way in which populations are made to move from their pre-project land to the new settlements is another area for scrutiny. The question, in my opinion, is not of how relocation to the new settlements occurs, but rather how people are made to leave their pre-project places of residence. The use of arbitrary arrests, detention and coercion against those who object to the government decision and refuse to relocate is a practice observed in many cases of DIDR. In fact, actual bulldozing of houses or flooding by night has very often been documented by human rights organizations and news reporters. The case of Merowe Dam stands as a live example where the implementing company redirected the River Nile through a narrower course causing flooding of the Amri settlement.

79 Koenig “Toward, Mitigating.”  
80 De Wet “Problems, Policies.”  
81 ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft” 32.
In addressing DIDR as an area of research, I find it to be beneficial to focus on the forced displacement itself, then further classify it according to cause of displacement. Cernea suggests bridging the research gap between studying refugees and development oustees. The current divide, in his opinion, weakens the political influence of research in the two areas and negatively affects the design of assistance programs. It also weakens the efforts to build a solid body of knowledge on displaced people as a collective group. He further suggests a framework for classifying displacement, based on the causal factor, into four categories: a) natural disasters; b) wars/ political events; c) persecution; and d) development programs and policies which lead to major alterations in the pattern of land and water use.

In terms of the manifestations of impoverishment, Cernea divides the losses endured by development oustees into three categories: a) loss of home; b) loss of land and c) loss of both home and farm land. In the case of Merowe Dam, the affected population suffered, along with other factors, both loss of home and farmland, which denotes a combined loss and an undeniable degree of impoverishment.

International policy discussions on DIDR have been based on two major arguments; one of the impoverishment effects and the other of the jeopardy to the rights of the impacted

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83 Cernea “Bridging.”
84 Cernea “Bridging.”
85 Cernea “Bridging.”
86 Cernea “Bridging.”
people. Over the years, researchers have gone beyond documenting the negative impact of DIDR to practically debating and devising mitigation measures for such impact. As put by Cernea:

“Redressing the inequities caused by displacement and enabling affected people to share in the benefits of growth are [...] imperative, on both economic and moral grounds. Socially responsible resettlement [...] can counteract lasting impoverishment and generate benefits for [...] national and local economy.”

It is worth noting that a number of development programs that resulted in population displacement were financed by The WB, which prompted The Bank, in 1993-1994, to commission a review of all of those projects financed from 1968 to 1993 that involved involuntary displacement of populations, along with other non-WB financed projects, with the aim of introducing measures to prevent the impoverishment resulting from the displacement and resettlement experience.

In 1994, after the mid-term outcomes of the review came out, were held at Oxford University, bringing in over 120 researchers and NGO representatives. After finalization, the WB review and study culminated in the development and introduction of the “Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction Model for Resettling Displaced Persons - IRR”, the aim of which is:

“a) to explain what happens during massive forced displacement – a task very important in itself, and b) to create a theoretical and safeguarding tool capable of guiding policy, planning and actual development programs to counteract these adverse effects.”

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87 Cernea “Bridging.”
89 Cernea “Understanding.”
91 Cernea “Understanding.”
The model defines eight risks as the main causes of impoverishment when involuntary resettlement is carried out. These are: 1) Landlessness; 2) Joblessness; 3) Homelessness; 4) Marginalization; 5) Increased Morbidity; 6) Food Insecurity; 7) Loss of Access to Common Property; and 8) Social Disarticulation\(^92\).

As explained in the introductory section of this study, I have chosen to focus my research on two of the above risks - namely: 1) Landlessness; and 2) Homelessness - in examining the impoverishment of the Merowe Dam affected populations.

When it was first developed, the expectation of the World Bank was for the IRR Model to strongly contribute as a tool for explaining, identifying, anticipating and planning development programs, hence filling the void in guidance against impoverishment of development impacted populations\(^93\).

As a researcher, I find the IRR to be a very useful tool and a take-off point that is aiding me in approaching the subject of impoverishment, and narrowing down the causes or potential causes of impoverishment. I believe that as a practical tool, it allows researchers to focus their discussions around the subject and enables for a more tangible view of the losses endured by the displaced. However, on the theoretical level, the availability of the IRR should not stop

\(^{92}\) Cernea, “Risks, Safeguards.” Pages 11-55.

\(^{93}\) Cernea “Understanding.”
academics and practitioners from coming up with newer models if it proves to be insufficient or needing an update.

2.4 Existing guidelines on Displacement and Resettlement

A range of guidelines on displacement and resettlement exists, which should be used for guidance in such cases. The existing guidelines are also used as a yard stick by human rights defenders and activists to measure and evaluate the performance of governments and companies that are involved in implementing development projects which cause population displacement and involve resettlement and compensation schemes.

The guidelines can be classified into general guidelines on human and peoples’ rights, where certain articles can be drawn from International Human Rights Law treaties and conventions, and specific guidelines on internal displacement, DIDR and more specifically on population displacement and resettlement as a result of dam infrastructure development. Specific government guidelines on Merowe Dam relocation and compensation also exist, and will be addressed in Chapter Four of this study.

A number of articles from International Human Rights Law treaties can be interpreted to address the issue of forced displacement of populations. Below, is an enlistment and analysis of the articles that have a link to the issue at hand and can be used in arguing for the rights of the
forcibly displaced. The review below starts with general then narrows down to more specific guidelines.

Beyond the very basic fundamental human right to life, freedom and security of person set forth in Article 1, Article 13, Item 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) affirms the right of individuals to freedom of movement and residence with their state. Article 17, Item 1 of the UDHR specifically addresses the right of every one to own property and (Item 2) not to be deprived of such property. Article 12, Item 1 of the United Nations International Convenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) affirms the right of everyone lawfully present in a nation state to choose their residence. That in itself could be used as an argument in support of the will of Merowe Dam affected populations against being relocated from their pre-project places of residence. Furthermore, and with special reference to the case of displacement caused by Merowe Dam, it is important to highlight the right to privacy for persons and their homes and families, which is affirmed in Items 1 and 2, Article 17 of the same Convenant.

By examining the case at hand against the International Convenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), it can be argued that Article 6 was violated along the way when the population studied by the current research was forcibly displaced and deprived from the kind

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95 UN “UDHR.”
of agricultural work they had chosen and practiced for years.\footnote{The United Nations “INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (ICESCR).” New York, 10 December 2008. http://www.hrweb.org/legal/escr.html . Accessed April 7. 2013.} Item 1 of this ICESCR Article states that:

“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.\footnote{UN “ICESCR.”}

Regardless of any compensation set forth and how effectively and successfully the scheme was carried out, by forcing them to relocate, the Merowe Dam affected populations were deprived of their pre-project means of livelihoods, which is their land and that in itself goes against International Human Rights Law. Item 2 of the same Article 6 affirms the role of the state in safeguarding the right to work; something which was not done by the Government of Sudan as will be explained in coming chapters.\footnote{UN “ICESCR.”} The importance of land partially stems from the fact that land represents the basis for work in the example of the agrarian communities examined by this study. It is therefore a crucial tool to fulfilling and achieving the right to work.

While an explicit Right to Land does not exist in International Law, human rights are still interlinked and the collective spirit of the International Conventions and Treaties should be respected by member States.\footnote{United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights “Fact Sheet No. 25, Forced Evictions and Human Rights.” Available at: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FactSheet25en.pdf . Accessed May 25. 2013.} Based on the fact that some member States do not respect the collective and interdependent nature of human rights, which involve the right not to be displaced, the absence of an explicit ‘Right to Land’ from International Human Rights Law can be seen as a
weakness and a gap to be filled. Otherwise, there will always be room for violations by States committed against their citizens’ right to remain in their places of natural habitat.

The practice of forced eviction has been highly condemned by the UN. The Merowe Dam affected populations were subjected to degrading treatment, en masse, when their homes were flooded by night as a result of redirection of the Nile water, which goes against the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) to which Sudan is a signatory state\textsuperscript{101} \textsuperscript{102}. Although Sudan has not ratified the CAT, it is still expected to abide by the Convention as a signatory State.

On a more specific level, the United Nations Guiding Principles on the Internally Displaced Persons\textsuperscript{103} clearly state that IDPs “shall not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any rights and freedoms”\textsuperscript{104} on the ground of their displacement and affirm the duty of the state to protect its citizens\textsuperscript{105}.

\textsuperscript{101} The United Nations, http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cat.html
\textsuperscript{102} The United Nations, http://www.hrweb.org/legal/catsigs.html
\textsuperscript{104} UN “IDPs.” Section I, Principle 1, Item 1.
\textsuperscript{105} UN “IDPs.” Section I, Principle 3, Item 1.
The Guiding Principles are a compilation of relevant human rights, humanitarian (the law of war) and refugee laws dealing with internal displacement\textsuperscript{106}. The Guiding Principles on their own are not a convention or a treaty; therefore they represent a non-binding International Law instrument\textsuperscript{107}. They were not negotiated or ratified by States Parties to the UN and are often described by scholars as “soft law”\textsuperscript{108}. However, those parts of the Guiding Principles that draw from other binding International Law instruments are definitely binding\textsuperscript{109}. The main purpose of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement is to emphasize the special need and duty of states to protect the rights in reference\textsuperscript{110}. IDPs have the right to request and receive assistance and protection by the state and shall not be punished or subjected to harassment for seeking such rights\textsuperscript{111}. More importantly, the Guiding Principles specifically affirm the right of citizens to be protected from arbitrary displacement\textsuperscript{112}, such as what happened to the Merowe Dam affected population. Item 2-(c), Principle 6 states:

“The prohibition of arbitrary displacement includes displacement: In cases of large-scale development projects, which are not justified by compelling and overriding public interest.”\textsuperscript{113}

The controversy that arises here is: how do we define public interest? Is it always well represented by government policy? And what if the government policies do not represent or reflect public interest? In the case of Sudan, the current government, which has been in power since 1989, has a long track record of human rights violations which included waging wars


\textsuperscript{107} Fisher “Epilogue.” Page 327.

\textsuperscript{108} Fisher “Epilogue.” Page 327.

\textsuperscript{109} Fisher “Epilogue.” Page 327.

\textsuperscript{110} UN “IDPs.”

\textsuperscript{111} UN “IDPs.” Section I, Principle 3, Item 2.

\textsuperscript{112} UN “IDPs.” Section II, Principles 6.

\textsuperscript{113} UN “IDPs.” Section II, Principle 6, Item 2 (c).
against specific ethnic groups, persecuting, harassing, arresting, detaining and torturing political opponents, some of whom literally died under the effect of torture in custody. While elaborating on the human rights record of the Government of Sudan would deviate us from our core discussion, it is brought here to ask the question of: how can a government with such record of practices which systematically violate the rights of its citizens truly represent the interests of these citizens?

The answer is that there is no guarantee that public interest would be represented by government decisions in a fair and transparent way; therefore we need more binding international instruments to prevent displacement by development, or any other reason for that matter. Such dilemma is accentuated by the non-binding nature of the Guiding Principles and is believed to be a gap in International Law that needs to be revisited.

It is clear that the question of internal displacement by development is a very political one that has more to do with the intentions and economic plans of states than the rights or welfare of their citizens. The government may argue that building dams is for the greater good, but as explained earlier in this study, the argument of a greater good that jeopardizes the rights of groups of citizens cannot be justified.

In November 2000, the WCD published its review of the development effectiveness of large dams. The outcome of the review was a Knowledge Base which included eight case studies
of large scale dams, one briefing paper on Russia and the recently seceded Independent States, country based reviews for China and India, 17 thematic reviews, a Cross-Check dam survey, covering 125 existing dams in addition to over 900 submissions made available to the Commission\textsuperscript{114}, which indeed constituted a wealth of knowledge and a reference pool on the subject.

The Knowledge Base provided a basis for assessing the social, economic, financial, technical and environmental performance of large scale dams as well as a review of possible more cost effective alternatives\textsuperscript{115}. It highlighted issues relating to compliance and governance that have to do with large dams\textsuperscript{116}.

The Report defined seven strategic priorities and some related policy principles that would assist planners with future decision-making\textsuperscript{117}. The seven strategic priorities are:

“1) Gaining Public Acceptance; 2) Comprehensive Options Assessment; 3) Addressing Existing Dams; 4) Sustaining Rivers and Livelihoods; 5) Recognizing Entitlements and Sharing Benefits; 6) Ensuring Compliance and 7) Sharing Rivers for Peace, Development and Security.”\textsuperscript{118}

The Commission acknowledges that in order to realize the above priorities, the involvement of various stakeholders should be ensured; thus ensuring that the outcomes are

\textsuperscript{114} WCD “Framework.” 2000.
\textsuperscript{115} WCD “Framework.” 2000.
\textsuperscript{117} WCD “Framework.” 2000.
\textsuperscript{118} WCD WCD “Framework.” 2000, Chapter 8, Page 214.
negotiated and agreed\textsuperscript{119}. It can be argued that this in itself is a utopian approach and might not lead to any real commitment by the various stakeholders. WCD report identifies five stages in the project cycle where positive change can be effected; namely: 1) Needs Assessment; 2) Selecting alternatives; 3) Project preparation; 4) Project implementation and 5) Project operation\textsuperscript{120}.

While the Commission’s proposal represents a much appreciated effort that has managed to bring in social and environmental to the forefront and raise their rank in the agenda, we need to be realistic about the expectations from such guidelines which carry no power of implementations. States can still choose to be guided by these principles or ignore them without fear of being brought to accountability.

Based on the above evidence, cited from International Law, on the series of violations to the rights of the affected populations, the study finds it very important to ask the question of whether the three tribal groups of Hamadab, Amri and Manasir were targeted for specific ethnic reasons, or face the threat of ethnic cleansing by the Government of Sudan.

The importance of the question is based on a well established record for the Government of Sudan in systematically undermining the rights of specific ethnic groups in the country. This

\textsuperscript{119} WCD “Framework.” 2000.
\textsuperscript{120} WCD “Framework.” 2000, Chapter 9, Pages 262-3.
is evidenced by the history of war and ethnic cleansing both in South Sudan, which has ultimately seceded into a new country, and in Darfur region of Western Sudan.

Over 2.5 million individuals have been killed and more than 5 million displaced in the South Sudan civil war, which continued for over 20 years and culminated in the secession of South Sudan on July 9th 2011\textsuperscript{121}.

The Darfur genocide, on the other hand began in 2003, as the first genocide to open the 21\textsuperscript{st} century\textsuperscript{122}. It continues to exist, fueled by the government armed Janjawid militia, and is estimated to have led to the killing of more than 480,000 people and the displacement of over 2.8 million\textsuperscript{123}.

In the case of Merowe Dam, there is no remarkable evidence to suggest that the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir were specifically targeted for ethnic reasons by the displacement process. The fact that the project has been in the books for over half a century, and the high interest of the government of Sudan in its economic relations with China and the Arab Gulf

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\textsuperscript{121} Genocide Watch “South Sudan and Sudan Country Profile: The Birth of a New Country.” Available at: http://www.genocidewatch.org/southsudan.html. Accessed May 25, 2013
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\textsuperscript{123} World Without Genocide “Darfur”.
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countries suggest that the project is more driven by economic growth interests than a possible intent at ethnic cleansing or an ethnically motivated clampdown against the affected tribes.\textsuperscript{124}

It can therefore be argued that, to a large extent, the affected populations happened to reside at the site of a project much desired by their implementing government. And when it comes to social responsibility for its citizens, which may have prevented the events from taking the course they had, from forcible displacement to arrest of activists organizing or demonstrating against the project, the practices of the Government of Sudan fall short of safeguarding its citizens’ rights.

The implementing government has consistently shown readiness to proceed with such major development projects, like Merowe Dam, without having engaged duly in a process of fair, transparent or cumulative and productive consultations with the affected populations.

Ideally, the government should engage in such consultations with the aim of creating a win-win situation with its affected citizens. However, the cases of Kajbar and Dal dams, planned further down the River Nile to Merowe Dam, demonstrate a pattern where the government practice is to proceed with its plans and contracting deals without establishing consensus from its impacted citizens. In the case of Kajbar dam, and while the affected Nubians were protesting against the relocation and submersion of their ancient archeological heritage, the Government of

Sudan went ahead with its plans, ignoring the voice of the affected villagers and contracted the Chinese company Sinohydro for USD 705 million to proceed with the construction of Kajbar Dam\textsuperscript{125}.

The donor countries of Merowe Dam project are a collective of Arab States and China, and the case of Merowe Dam, where the Government proceeded with signing the needed deals with the various donors and implementing companies before establishing reasonable consensus from its affected citizens is no different from that of Kajbar.

It is therefore a pattern of practices that violate the basic democratic rights of the citizens and undermines their voices.

2.5 Land Grabbing and Water Grabbing

It is very important to establish the link between Land Grabbing and Water Grabbing and explain how the construction of large scale dams constitutes an integral part of the entire picture of resource grabbing, represented by land and water.

The interest of the Arab Gulf states in land and water resources in the Nile Basin can be explained under the globally rising land and water scarcity. Arab Gulf states have limited

agricultural land, because of the mostly arid climate and dry sandy or else rocky nature of the soil in the Arab peninsula. They are exchanging their money from Oil for land, and financing dams along the River Nile with a far sighted look at securing hydropower irrigation for the vast tracts of land they are leasing or buying from these countries.

The two phenomena of land and water grabbing are manifestations of the interest in natural agricultural resources, encouraged by the growing food shortages in the World. As overtly put by “Grain”, a non-profit organization supporting small farmers around the world, “behind every land grab is a water grab.”

Their interest in financing dam projects stems from the investors’ need to ensure more sophisticated means of irrigation than the primitive ones - like the animal-operated water wheel for the tracts of land that they are buying or leasing. As explained above, the investors are approaching the collective deal of land and water grab in a holistic manner that would ensure their ultimate benefit in the long run.

Countries of the Arab Gulf are signing long term farmland lease or purchase deals with the undemocratic governments of Sudan, Ethiopia and others on one hand, and financing dam construction in the same countries to secure water and power for irrigating the acquired stretches of farmland on the other hand. This two-pronged approach by the investing countries would

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ensure reaching the goal of access to highly productive farmland with sustained irrigation for years to come and is the key to explaining how Land Grabbing and Water Grabbing mostly go hand in hand, and how they further relate to and include the construction of high dams.

The majority of the deals in question are government-to-government deals, where the buyers are usually foreign governments or government-affiliated companies, such as “sovereign-wealth funds” and the sellers are the host governments, home to the intended project. A number of land leasing deals have been signed during the last decade between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Qatar and Kuwait on the purchasing side and Sudan and Ethiopia on the providing side. In Ethiopia for example, a vast land irrigation project, is owned by Mohammed al-Amoudi, a Saudi based billionaire. The project is established in Gambela, using water diverted from Alwero River, which has resulted in the deprivation of thousands of people from their means of survival.

Such deals tend to overlook the rights of the local farmers as the prime producers of crops and deprive them from the right to use food they grow, since the food is already pre-owned by the rich food importers. In my opinion this is a new form of servitude, interestingly described in “The Economist” as “neocolonialism”, quoting Jacques Diouf, Head of the UN FAO.

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To put it simply, the following continuum of events demonstrates the steps from dam construction to food export (see Figure 2 below). In the continuum below, step one feeds into step two and so on until step five. The continuum starts with the construction of large scale dams and ends with food crops going to the buyer countries:

**Figure 1: The Continuum of Events from Dams to Food Export**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Large scale dams construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Hydropower generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pumping water for irrigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Irrigating large tracts of agricultural land to grow food crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Food produced and exported directly to the foreign countries according to land leasing agreement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, the interests of China in Africa are not new. However, they are a bit different from those of the Arab Gulf States. While the Arab States come for the land and water, China, a country with a population of 1.344 billion persons comes in and brings its own labor. The official unemployment rate for China is 4.1%, but the result from a household finance survey conducted by two universities from the United States (US) and China each, is 8.05%, which is almost double the announced rate.\textsuperscript{132} \textsuperscript{133}

The Chinese deals also involve non-food crops, such as biofuels. In the past few years, China signed a deal with Congo granting it the right to use 2.8 million hectares of Congolese


land to grow palm oil and negotiated another 2 million hectare deal with Zambia\textsuperscript{134}. Sources estimate that in 2009, around 1 million farm laborers from China were working in Africa\textsuperscript{135}.

The now troubled African country, Mali leased away 470,000 hectares of its land, mostly around the Niger Delta, to companies from China, the United Kingdom (UK), Libya and KSA\textsuperscript{136}.

\textbf{2.6 The Role of Trans-national Corporations}

In an attempt to allocate responsibility, I would also like to highlight the role of Trans-national Companies engaged in the implementation of infrastructural development projects that involve human displacement in developing countries. Examples of these companies include Shell Transport and Trading Co., a United Kingdom holding company of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group of companies, the Canadian Talisman Oil, the Spanish mining company Rio Tinto and the German Lahmeyer Corporation\textsuperscript{137}\textsuperscript{138}\textsuperscript{139}\textsuperscript{140}. The latter is the implementing company of Merowe Dam.

\textsuperscript{134} The Economist “Outsourcing.” May 21\textsuperscript{st} 2009.
\textsuperscript{135} The Economist “Outsourcing.” May 21\textsuperscript{st} 2009.
\textsuperscript{136} GRAIN “Squeezing Africa.” 11 June 2012.
Advocacy groups are intensifying their monitoring efforts against human rights violations committed by trans-national corporations in developing countries. A number of lawsuits have been filed against these companies. A prominent example of these is the lawsuit filed in November 1996 by the family of the deceased Nigerian environmental activist, Ken Saro Wiwa, against Royal Dutch Shell; accusing the company of collaborating with the military government in Nigeria to:

“Bring about the arrest, torture, and execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, head of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and eight other leaders of the nonviolent movement to end the environmental degradation and human rights abuses accompanying Shell’s operations in their land.”

Another example is of the lawsuit filed, under the Alien Tort Claims Act in the federal court of the United States of America in 2000, by the inhabitants of Bougainville Island in Papua New Guinea against the Spanish mining and metals company, Rio Tinto. The company has been accused of engaging in a project that lead to health hazards for the residents, and racially discriminating against black-skinned workers.

A third and live example is of the lawsuit filed by the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) on May 03, 2010, against the German Lahmeyer constructing Merowe Dam on behalf of the representation of the affected populations. The complaint is

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143 Business and Human Rights “Rio Tinto.”
145 Business and Human Rights “Rio Tinto.”
146 ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft.”
based on two incidents of flooding and displacement; one in 2005-2006 affecting the Amri people, and the other in 2008-2009 affecting the Manasir.

In December 2005, the company was reported, before any population relocation was carried out, to have redirected the water from the main arm of the River Nile into a narrower tributary, causing serious flooding of the land of the Amri tribe, and displacing 2740 families during the period August 7-23, 2006; the displaced were forced to abandon their homes and property. The company is accused of swelling the reservoir of the dam as of April 16, 2008 and onward, which has ultimately led to drowning of the homes and properties of the Manasir and their departure during the period July 2008 to January 2009.

ECCHR reports that:

“Lahmeyer began construction even though the resettlement plans had not been fully negotiated with the affected population - as demanded by international World Bank standards.”

The Independent non-profit resource Center “Business and Human Rights”, in a move to hold the corporate world accountable to the impact of their involvement in controversial projects in developing countries, compiles a record of cases and developments in this regard.

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147 ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft.” 32.
3. OBJECTIVE AND STAKEHOLDERS OF MEROWE DAM

Chapter Two of this study provided a selective review of literature dealing with DIDR and analyzed guidelines from International Human Rights Law, as well as specific guidelines on large scale dams. It also linked the phenomenon of constructing large dams, especially along the River Nile to two globally emerging phenomena; Land Grabbing and Water Grabbing, in an attempt to situate the issue at study within the big picture of the race for the meager land and water resources on a global scale.

The current chapter will position Merowe Dam by introducing the countries of the Nile Basin and the threats facing the River Nile, locating the Dam geographically and providing a historical overview of earlier studies for constructing the Dam. It will then review the various stakeholders to the project and link that to earlier analysis of the interest by Arab Gulf countries and China in Sudan’s land and water resources. The role of international companies will also be explained.

3.1 Positioning the Dam: The Nile Basin

The eleven countries of the Nile Basin are: Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt. In terms of origin and source, the part of the Nile farthest from the sea is the Luvinizora River, starting in Burundi and forming a tributary of the Kagera River. The Kagera River then flows northeast; marking the geographic boundary first between Congo and Tanzania then between Tanzania and

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Uganda to finally flow into Lake Victoria\textsuperscript{153}. Lake Victoria has an estimated surface area of 67000 km\textsuperscript{2} and is regarded as the second largest freshwater Lake of the world; second to Lake Baikal in Siberia, Russia\textsuperscript{154}. The total length of the River Nile is estimated to be 6700 kilometers\textsuperscript{155}. It is very important to note the recent cessation, on July 9, 2011, of South Sudan from Sudan as it has added to the countries of the Nile Basin a new country, the share of which from the Nile water is yet to be determined.

In 2007, the World Wild Life Fund (WWF) identified the River Nile as one of the World’s 10 most threatened rivers\textsuperscript{156}. The threat faced by the Nile was, however, seen to be from climate change and not from damming. The two criteria upon which those ten rivers were identified are, either the river is already under the heavy impact of the identified threats, or it is going down that road, i.e. being relatively intact but undergoing massive degradation that requires immediate action in order to save the river\textsuperscript{157}. The six major threats defined by WWF are: 1) infrastructure- including dams and/or navigation; 2) Water Over Extraction; 3) Climate Change; 4) Invasive Species; 5) Over Fishing and 6) Pollution\textsuperscript{158}. According to the report, the River Nile, along with Lake Victoria face a climate change threat, from the wide surface area that characterizes them and the arid climate of the basin, hence allowing for excessive evaporation and water loss\textsuperscript{159}.

\textsuperscript{153} UN FAO “Irrigation, basin.”
\textsuperscript{156} Wong et al. “Top 10.”
\textsuperscript{157} Wong et al. “Top 10.”
\textsuperscript{158} Wong et al. “Top 10.”
\textsuperscript{159} Wong et al. “Top 10.”
Despite the facts in WWF report mentioned above, the threat posed by dam infrastructure on the River Nile and Lake Victoria cannot be undermined. In the last 15 years alone, at least seven dams have either been completed, are under construction or are planned in a number of Nile Basin countries. These are namely: Bujagali Dam in Uganda, completed in 2011 and inaugurated in 2012, Merowe, Kajbar and Dal dams in Sudan and Renaissance and two other dams in Ethiopia. With the current picture, and using the WWF criteria, damming of the Nile can be characterized as an increasingly growing threat on this river.

3.2 Location, History and Earlier Studies on Merowe Dam Project

Merowe Dam is located in Northern Sudan near Merowe city, which is 350 kilometers north of the capital Khartoum, at 32 E longitude and 19 N latitude. The dam is often referred to as Hamadab Dam or Manasir Dam because it is geographically located in the land historically inhabited by the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir tribal populations groups. As it stands, Merowe Dam is considered Africa’s largest Dam with a reservoir extending 112 miles in length.

The idea of Merowe Dam first came into existence during the British colonial rule on Sudan and Egypt. While having Egypt and Sudan as colonies, Britain used Egyptian Civil
Servants to run government Ministries in Sudan; hence the period is often referred to in some Sudanese historical resources as The British-Egyptian Condominium era. A study conducted by the colonial government in 1946 identified Merowe as the best location to construct a dam with the purpose of storing water to prevent flooding on downstream land and use that reservoir water for irrigation in times of droughts\textsuperscript{167}. Hydroelectric generation was not a prime motive at that time.

In my opinion, the study - as can be revealed from the published outcomes - overlooks various factors, which can be summarized in the following: a) it ignores possible scenarios of regime change, and assumes the continuation of the same rule on the two countries of Sudan and Egypt indefinitely; b) it does not take into consideration the interests of other Nile Basin countries that may counter the building of a dam at Merowe; c) it overlooks the possibility of a secession of parts of Sudan, as has happened with South Sudan, thereby overlooking a possible change in the quota of water that each of the two countries, Sudan and Egypt, is getting. Overall, the study approached the issue of national sovereignty on water in a very short-sighted, colonialist way and I consider it as incomprehensive in its approach.

A later study conducted in 1979 by a consortium of consultants including Alexander Gibb, the Scottish Civil Engineer\textsuperscript{168}, proposed the construction of either two small dams at Merowe and Sheeri Islands, or a larger dam at the Island of Merowe\textsuperscript{169}. The purpose of the dam was then identified as hydroelectric power generation, with a target capacity of 750 mega volt\textsuperscript{170}.

\textsuperscript{168} http://www.scottish-places.info/people/famousfirst3417.html.
By the time this study was conducted, we can derive that hydropower generation has become a priority need due to the expanding urbanization and the growing need for electric power in Sudan.

By 1983, hydropower generation had crystallized as a prime purpose in establishing Merowe Dam. The Government of Sudan identified Merowe Dam as a multi-purpose project and, represented by its Ministry of Agriculture and National Electricity Corporation, signed an agreement with the Swedish consulting company, SWECO to conduct a pre-feasibility study for the dam.\textsuperscript{171} The study aimed at exploiting the stretch of the Nile between Abu Hamad and Merowe for: 1) hydropower generation; 2) improved irrigation of agricultural land; 3) Improved river navigation and 4) making better use of fishing opportunities\textsuperscript{172}. The study concluded that the area is not much suited for further agricultural development due to its mountainous nature\textsuperscript{173}, and this, in my opinion, is the most critical finding because it has put hydropower generation at the forefront of the project purposes. The results came out in 1986\textsuperscript{174}.

In October 1989, a multi-stage feasibility study was commissioned by the Government of Sudan to the Canadian consulting company, Monenco Agra\textsuperscript{175}; a few months after the current government took power by military coup on June 30, 1989. By the time the study was entrusted to Monenco Agra, the Government had already reviewed the outcomes of earlier studies and concluded on the option of establishing one large dam at Merowe\textsuperscript{176}. The final report of the

\textsuperscript{172} Government of Sudan (DIU). Accessed April 8, 2013.  
\textsuperscript{175} Government of Sudan (DIU). Accessed April 9, 2013.  
\textsuperscript{176} Government of Sudan (DIU).
study, which addressed five areas: economic, social, agricultural, fish and environmental issues, was submitted in February 1993\footnote{Government of Sudan (DIU).}. 

While the study itself could not be located, it can be argued from available evidence that the 1989 study by Monenco Agra introduced a new aspect of the potential displacement and made a proposal for the resettlement of the affected population, along with other proposals including a construction plan, an electric transmission system and cost estimates\footnote{Government of Sudan (DIU).}.

In 2000-2001, the Canadian consulting company, SNC-Lavalin Group was contracted to prepare a review of earlier studies, provide technical answers on specific hydropower engineering matters, come up with a timeline for the project and provide a more precise cost estimate for the detailed steps of the project\footnote{Government of Sudan (DIU).}. The collective cost estimate came close to one million United States Dollars; the timeline suggested is from 2001 to 2009 and additional infrastructure projects were also proposed, including a bridge between Atbara city and Merowe as well as paved roads to facilitate transportation (see appendix II)\footnote{United Nations Cartographic Department. www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/sudan.pdf. Accessed May 05. 2013.}.

In 2001, the Russian Hydro-project Institute was called upon to determine the exact location for the dam and power plant, where it concluded that Merowe Island and the right arm of the River Nile are the two best options successively\footnote{Government of Sudan (DIU).}.
The aerial photograph in (Figure 1) below shows the part of the Nile where the dam was later built. It is important to note the narrow right arm of the Nile as opposed to the wider left arm, starting from where the Nile branches as seen at the bottom right corner of the image.

The specific focus, by this research, in showing the image below is to provide a visual perception to the reader linking to the flooding events stated in the lawsuit filed by the Dam impacted populations against Lahmeyer. In December 2005:

“following the instructions by the defendants [i.e. Lahmeyer], the main arm of the river Nile was closed off and the river was redirected through a narrower tributary causing the flooding of the settlement area of the tribe of the Amri.”

Figure 2: Aerial photograph of Merowe Dam's location before construction

As a concluding step in a series of studies, spanning a period of over five decades, the German consulting company, Lahmeyer International GmbH was contracted by the Government to provide a financial and economical analysis of the project along with the prime goals of reviewing the engineering designs, construction materials, environmental impact, water

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183 ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft.”
184 Government of Sudan (DIU).
resources and overall project cost\textsuperscript{185}. The review was completed and submitted in October 2001, as a preparatory phase for international tendering\textsuperscript{186}. During that time, a smaller scale, more targeted study on the power transmission lines was prepared and submitted by British Petroleum (BP)\textsuperscript{187}.

When the bids were opened, three major entities won. These are: 1) the French company ALSTOM; 2) a Consortium of two Chinese companies (CWE and CWHEC); and 3) an unidentified German-Austrian Consortium.

These three companies were indicated by the Government’s DIU as bid winners. However, another page on the DIU Web site lists the names of two additional Chinese companies as implementing companies. This is a discrepancy that calls for questioning of the process of how the additional companies came to be involved in the project. However, providing an answer to this question requires a further investigative exercise which is believed to derail the course of this study. The study will therefore leave the question open for other interested researchers to cover.

For the sake of authenticity, it is important to reiterate from the above evidence that Merowe Dam project is not an invention of the current Government of Sudan. It is a project that has been in the making for over half a century and came to realization at the hands of the current government, which has taken special interest in completing it, sought funding for its implementation, and carried out the displacement and resettlement of the affected populations.

\textsuperscript{186} Government of Sudan (DIU).
The interests of the Government of Sudan are more driven by its partnerships with China and the Arab Gulf states and the mutual interests of the two parties in each case.

The concern of this study is with the displacement and the resultant impoverishment of those populations impacted by the project. The current research is thus envisioned as a contribution to the body of research documenting dam induced displacement and its negative human cost.

3.3 Objective and Expected Outcomes of the Dam Project

The Government of Sudan defined ten objectives to the project, the first among which is hydropower generation. The way the objectives are formulated could be criticized, as some of them do not seem as direct objectives to the project and can be grouped together as sub-objectives under Objective One, which is hydropower generation for economic and social development. Objective One is:

“To generate electricity power to meet the increasing demand for purposes of economical and social development”\(^{188}\),

The second objective revolves around generating low cost electricity for irrigation; and the third objective again repeats benefiting from irrigation for agriculture and adds improving agricultural breeds\(^{189}\). It is not clear, however, how the construction of a dam would directly lead to improving agricultural breeds.


\(^{189}\) Government of Sudan (DIU).
Objective Four also repeats irrigation and expansion of the agricultural sector, yet details the use of electricity to pump underground water for the purpose of that expansion; while objective five introduces the establishment of food industry and mining fields benefiting from the electricity generated by the project. In my view, the food industry and mining projects are not direct objectives to the dam building. They can be classified as secondary objectives to Objective One, which is hydropower generation.

Objective Six, however, could be seen as directly linking to the dam by introducing the fishing industry in the dam reservoir. As it stands, improved fishing is seen by some as a major benefit to dam reservoirs, and that could be cited as one of the benefits of large scale dams. However, the issue of reservoirs and fisheries is more complex than it seems.

According to the UN FAO, the problems with dam reservoirs come from the “severe changes in hydrology and the impacts on fish” that they cause. This is directly represented by the blockage or establishment of hazardous routes to downstream and upstream migration of fish, which, sadly, manifests in an increased mortality or physical injuries when fish swim through the dam. The issue can be understood if we apply simple mechanics to the movement of fish in a river path that was previously clear but is now blocked by the dam structures.

190 Government of Sudan (DIU).
191 Government of Sudan (DIU).
193 Bernacsek “Fisheries, Dams.”
Objective Seven is the protection of the area downstream from excessive flooding, and objective Eight is the improvement of river transportation\textsuperscript{194}.

Objective Nine calls for special examination, as it is the only objective explicitly mentioning the affected populations and indicating what benefits they may reap from the project. It is stated as follows:

“To improve the living standards for the local residents in the area of the project, by creating investments and new job opportunities\textsuperscript{195},”

Since this is the only objective explicitly mentioning the affected populations and making reference to their living conditions, the study will be interrogating Objective Nine along the way in analyzing the landlessness and homelessness which ultimately contributed to the impoverishment of the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir.

The last objective cited by the government is to reduce the load on current Sudanese hydropower dams in terms of power generation\textsuperscript{196}. The dams meant here include Sinnar Dam and Al-Roseiris Dam further upstream on the Nile.

In summary, the stated objectives revolve mostly around expanding the economic growth opportunities of the country and controlling the Nile flooding on downstream land. It is evident from the way they are formulated that the sociological aspect of the project and its potential impact on the lives of the people residing at the planned site were not given high regard from the

\textsuperscript{194} Government of Sudan (DIU).
\textsuperscript{195} Government of Sudan (DIU).
\textsuperscript{196} Government of Sudan (DIU).
beginning. This partially explains the arbitrary way in which the displacement and relocation were carried out, and will be subjected to further discussion in Chapter Four and Five.

3.4 Stakeholders of the Project

Ideally speaking, one would consider the stakeholders to the project to include the Government of Sudan, the project donors, the implementing companies and the populations residing at the project site. However, the extent to which each stakeholder is playing an active role is a matter of question. As Merowe Dam project has been criticized for the massive population displacement and human rights violations that accompanied its implementation, it becomes difficult to speak of those impacted populations as active stakeholders.

While the term project stakeholders, rather than calling them actors or beneficiaries, is much preferred by development practitioners because it indicates an active role for these stakeholders, it is a challenge to describe the dam affected populations as active stakeholders in the case of Merowe Dam. Development planning, in its best should approach development as an act to improve the lives of the people, done by the people, with them and lends its benefits ultimately to them.

The study will therefore devote this section to providing an overview of the parties funding the Dam and the companies implementing it, leaving the discussion on the impacted populations to the chapter on Population and Project Impact. The funding parties of Merowe Dam include a multitude of Arab Funds and Arab Governments in addition to the Governments
of Sudan and China\textsuperscript{197}. The companies implementing the various parts of the Dam include the German Lahmeyer International GmbH, a Consortium of two Chinese companies (CWE and CWHEC), the French ALSTOM, another Chinese company named Harbin Power Engineering Company Ltd. (HPE), and a myriad of national bodies ranging from companies to government Ministries to Universities\textsuperscript{198}.

The total cost of Merowe Dam project was budgeted at 1.2 billion United States Dollars\textsuperscript{199}. Following the establishment of a specific committee tasked with seeking funds for the Dam, the Committee agreed that longer term loans should be sought for constructing the body of the Dam, and commercial loans for the other parts of the operation, such as Power Plant and its Transmission Lines\textsuperscript{200}. The rationale was that no revenue is expected from building the body of the dam, while the last two activities are expected to generate fast revenue and timely payment of the debt\textsuperscript{201}.

The DIU, which had been established by the Government, explored various options and tapped onto many doors, to finally get an enthusiastic response from Arab States\textsuperscript{202}.

\textsuperscript{200} Government of Sudan (DIU).
\textsuperscript{201} Government of Sudan (DIU).
\textsuperscript{202} Government of Sudan (DIU).
A delegation, described by the Government as “high ranking”, was received in Sudan in November of 2000 where an agreement was reached that the Arab States will finance 70% of the engineering works, all consultancy fees and maintain reserve funds for further engineering works on the Dam as needed\textsuperscript{203}. Sudan then pledged to cover the remaining 30%\textsuperscript{204}. And the Government of China contributed as well. In summary, the various funders can be listed in no specific order as follows: Government of Sudan, Government of China, Arab Fund for Economical and Social Development (AFESD), Kuwaiti Fund for Development, Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, Sultanate of Oman and the State of Qatar\textsuperscript{205}.

It does not need a very critical eye to discover the duplication of engagement of the Arab States, once as represented in the collective pool termed AFESD and another time as individual state Funds or individual States. While there is no rule to prevent the duplication of funds, it signifies the very high interest of those Arab States in investing heavily in water and agricultural projects along the River Nile. Therefore it is beneficial, for analytical purposes, to view such interest through the eye of Land and Water Grabbing, as discussed in the previous chapter.

The human rights record of the implementing companies is tarnished with grave involvement in displacing populations, corruption and bribery and a long history of involvement in controversial dam projects. The contested record of Lahmeyer, Alstom and the trans-national ABB (concerned with power transmission) is emphasized by Hildyard, where he cites the involvement of ABB and Lahmeyer in the “Lesotho Highlands Water Project” that involved

\begin{itemize}
\item Government of Sudan (DIU).
\item Government of Sudan (DIU).
\item Government of Sudan (DIU).
\end{itemize}
gross resettlement of populations and concerns of corruption\textsuperscript{206}. In 2004, Hildyard reports, Lahmeyer was found guilty on “seven counts of bribery” and “debarred from bidding for World Bank contracts”\textsuperscript{207}. Alstom, on the other hand, was involved in the Three Gorges Dam project in China, which raised serious concerns over corruption and major resettlement, and a dam project in Turkey that was engulfed with grave concerns over DIDR; the Birecik\textsuperscript{208}. In 2001, ABB declared that it is withdrawing from power generation altogether, by selling its shares of the hydro power division to the French Alstom, however, the company continues to be engaged in Merowe Dam project through its involvement in the power transmission lines\textsuperscript{209}.

Hildyard’s report further indicates that Lahmeyer’s contract amounted to $34 million, Alstom’s contract $299 million and ABB’s contract $16 million\textsuperscript{210}.

On the fact of the trans-national ABB selling its hydropower division to Alstom in 2001, it can be argued that the modus operandi of such mega companies does not change much, even

\textsuperscript{208} Hildyard “Neutral?”
\textsuperscript{209} Hildyard “Neutral?”
\textsuperscript{210} Hildyard “Neutral?”
if they transform themselves through large mergers or sell outs of some of their controversial divisions.

What matters in this case is the continuation of the undermining of rights of members of those communities residing at project sites. The scenarios stem from the fact that such communities and groups of citizens are seen by their undemocratic governments, and hence its trans-national partners, as obstacles to the projects the companies are implementing on behalf of the governments.
4. POPULATION AND PROJECT IMPACT

Chapter Three of this study laid the grounds by positioning the Dam in question within the greater Nile Basin, explaining the objectives of the Dam and critically reviewing the project stakeholders. This chapter will further delve into the core of the problem, by first introducing the origins and pre-displacement livelihoods of the impacted populations, then defining the various factors that lead to the impoverishment of these populations. The discussion will involve two impoverishment risks from the IRR Model; which I have selected as benchmarks. These are: Landlessness and Homelessness.

4.1 Origins and Pre Displacement Livelihoods

The population affected by the dam consists of three main tribal groups; the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir. The three groups are historical inhabitants of the riverine area around the Fourth Cataract of the Nile; populating “small farming villages”\(^{211}\).

Limited literature exists in English on the historical genealogy of the three tribes. Hashim, who was part of a Sudan Archeological Research Society (SARS) team that conducted ethnographic and linguistic field research among some of the populations impacted by Merowe Dam in 2002-2003, explains the origins of the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir as follows: Hamadab (often referred to as Hamdab) people inhabit the northern part of the area submerged by the dam; their tribal origin is Shayqiyya, Awlad Hamid (the sons of Hamid) and they are

named after their ancestor; Amri is the name of a large, seasonal island located to the South of
the Hamadab land, inhabited by a mixture of Shayqiyya and Manasir; and further south of Amri
lies the land of Manasir, who are the most impacted by flooding from the dam as their land now
represents the dam reservoir\(^\text{212}\).

Hashim further documents the oral history about the origins of the Manasir where his
research reveals various tales, some attributing the Manasir to the bigger Jaaliya tribe, and some
indicating that they have come to Sudan from a place called Aljazeera Almansuriya (the
Mansurian Island i.e. the Island of the Victorious) in Egypt\(^\text{213}\). Yet, he never concludes or claims
to have decisive evidence on the exact origin of the Manasir\(^\text{214}\).

The Hamadab, Amri and Manasir people are mostly self sufficient agrarian societies\(^\text{215}\). They depend for their livelihoods on traditional farming, where the main livelihood activities
center on date and cash crop (okra, wheat and beans) farming along the river bank and in areas
irrigated by the traditional water wheel\(^\text{216}\). Along with the main farming activities, they are
known for small scale animal husbandry, which aids them in farming and helps them become
more self reliant.


\(^{214}\) Hashim “Oral.”


\(^{216}\) Haberlah “Dar al-Manasir.”
Territorially speaking, according to State boundaries set by the Government, Hamadab and Amri are considered to be part of the Northern State of Sudan, while the Manasir are located in the Nile State. However, this division is only political and does not change the commonalities among the three communities.

4.2 Landlessness, Homelessness and Unfair Compensation

The problem with depriving people from their land resources is that it deprives them from their source and means of productivity, thereby turning them from self-reliant to disadvantaged people who need assistance in order to survive. It is considered as a form of “decapitalization and pauperization of displaced people, as they lose both natural and man-made sources of income.” As correctly pointed by Cernea:

“Unless the land basis of people’s productive systems is reconstructed elsewhere, or replaced with steady income-generating employment, landlessness sets in and the affected families become impoverished.”

Even when the replacement demanded by Cernea is granted in the form of compensation, the quality of that compensation should be examined. The replacement of fertile agricultural land with desert land is but an unfair deal that cannot be accepted smoothly by the displaced populations, and this is exactly what has happened in the case of Merowe Dam. Those intricate matters constitute the real issues where problems of mistrust between governments and displaced citizens arise. They create a feeling of unfairness and give way to an endless set of grievances by

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217 Hildyard “Neutral?”
218 Cernea “Risks, Safeguards.”
219 Cernea “Risks, Safeguards.”
the displaced. The statement by an eviction victim, quoted by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) raises questions of whether these people are victims to their own trust in their government authorities:

“On the first day […] they spoke to us of progress […] measured our lands […] we said nothing […] second day […] they invaded our houses […] expelled our children […] third day the water covered everything and because we said nothing we will never be able to do anything. Are we going to let this happen again?”

In the case of Merowe Dam affected populations, land represents the source of livelihoods, and therefore being deprived from their land resources also meant joblessness to the agrarian communities affected by the project. The traditional modes of farming, cultural life and many customs of the Manasir are closely linked to the landscape and riverine nature of the Fourth Nile Cataract, with its characteristic arid climate and many widely dispersed small islands.

This is one of the reasons why to the study focused on examining landlessness as a major impoverishment risk. The deprivation from land also involves jeopardizing employment opportunities for those who did not own land but worked as farming laborers on other people’s land plots; hence comes the relevance of land as a source of livelihoods for the riverine communities under study. Such category relatively disadvantaged in the first place, as they are not land owners in a society that puts greater value to land ownership. When rendered jobless, the disadvantage gets compounded on those who did not own land in the first place, and they sink deeper into poverty with minimal hope for recovering or improving their economic


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situations. The compounded poverty is represented by the lack of land resources from which income could be generated added to the lack of jobs in other people’s land that may act as a source of wage income.

The displacement of the three tribal groups, in the case of Merowe Dam, occurred in stages and from a number of causes; all related to rising water levels in the river path. The direct cause of displacement, however, is flooding of the settlements and villages populated by these groups.

Geographically speaking, the Manasir live South most of the project, where the reservoir lake is, the Amri live north of Dar Almanasir, where redirection of the main arm of the Nile was carried out and the Hamadab live further north, downstream from the Amri. The numbers of families affected is quoted differently in various sources. According to the Criminal Complaint, filed by the representation of the affected people against Lahmeyer,

“… 560 families of the Hamadab, 2,500 families of the Amri settling further upstream and 4,500 families of the Manasir, living even further upstream. This results in an estimated total number of circa 38,000 people affected. According to other reports between 50,000 and 78,000 people were affected.222

On a more precise note, the complaint indicates that over 2740 families of Amri were displaced, during the period August 7-23, 2006, as a result of redirection, by Lahmeyer, of the

wider, main, left tributary of the River Nile into the narrower right arm of the river; hence forcing them to abandon their homes, property, animals and farmland\textsuperscript{223}.

And in 2008, the water level in the reservoir lake steadily rose, after an order, by Lahmeyer, to close the dam walls and set the Dam to operation on April 16\textsuperscript{224}. Approximately 2000 families from the Manasir, who had not resettled, were flooded and forced to leave their homes during the period July 2008 to January 2009\textsuperscript{225}.

The reality, in the case of Merowe Dam, is that some families had accepted the resettlement, much earlier in the course of the project. Resettlement was part of a Compensation Scheme explored and mapped out by the Government\textsuperscript{226}. As in many compensation schemes in cases of DIDR, the one related to Merowe Dam has strongly been criticized for not using up-to-date cost estimates for the losses, being open to bias and corruption, and finally not coming to fruition in a full blown and fair manner.

It is the negative experience of the early resettlers that provided evidence base, upon which the remaining villagers established their refusal to relocate to the new villages created by the Government in outlined in the compensation scheme. The reason is that the new villages are literally located in the Nubian Desert, which is characterized by very poor agricultural

\textsuperscript{223} ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft.”
\textsuperscript{224} ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft.”
\textsuperscript{225} ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft.”
productivity, thereby making it very difficult to cultivate. This in turn, makes it hard for agrarian societies, coming from fertile river banks, to survive.

Hildyard put it boldly as:

“The dam authorities intend to remove all three affected communities, against their will, out of their ancestral lands to remote desert resettlement sites.”

Peter Bosshard, Policy Advisor to IRN reports as a first hand eye witness, who also collected information from discussion with farmers, from a field visit he conducted in February 2005, with another concerned activist, on the quality of land and the outcome of the resettlement at El Multaga resettlement site in the “Nubian Desert” as follows:

“New plots were covered by sand, and … harvests … so poor … they could not sell …. on the market. Poverty … was spreading rapidly, and families were already abandoning … for the slums of Khartoum.”

From the above account, it can be seen that the ultimate outcome of the displacement is a compounded form of impoverishment, where people preferred living as IDPs in the slums of Khartoum to enduring the long term hardships of the desert they have been relocated to.

African societies are known for the tradition of storytelling. They preserve their history through their oral culture, which is an indication on how information flows among the members of these societies. Merowe Dam impacted population is no exception to this pattern. Once the

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227 Hildyard “Neutral?”
flaws of the new land were discovered, people propagated the news and the remaining families refused to settle, which is only logical.

An examination of testimonies of the impacted villagers available on Web sources, mostly filmed on the background of their flooded land, reveal a consistent feeling of bitterness over the forced removal from their habitat and the economic disturbance of their means of livelihoods. An accompanying sense of betrayal by their own government can be deduced from those testimonies.

During the flooding phase, people woke up in the morning to find their household items floating in water and had to flee for their lives. A three-minute video news report from Aljazeera Arabic News Channel, re-posted on You Tube on August 07, 2008, shows some of the Manasir people fleeing with whatever belongings they could rescue. From this report, one may conclude that the government had given the people two unequal options in April 2008; either to relocate to new villages it had built, or face flooding if they insist on staying. Upon refusing to relocate and choosing to stick to their lands, the government did not hesitate to go ahead with dam construction, where people then had to face the flooding option.


232 Sid Ahmed.

233 Sid Ahmed.
The project has thus turned the impacted populations into disadvantaged, disempowered communities, with lots of grievances that need to be resolved.

It is worth noting that the project site is also home to rich archeological heritage, of which the affected people are well aware, that was flooded in the process. While the impact on the environment and cultural heritage are of paramount importance, they fall beyond the scope of this study.

As this research is focused on landlessness and homelessness, it will not cover other aspects of project impact such as deprivation from public services that were available to the impacted people in the pre-project site.

It is, however very important to review the loss of assets versus the compensation that was provided under the resettlement part of the project. The controversy between Government reports and reports shared by the villagers is clearly shown in the report by Bosshard and Hildyard, from IRN and The Corner House, respectively. While the Government sources indicate that the villagers would be provided with housing, plots of land and free services (water, electricity and fertilizer) for two years, the villagers revealed gaps and problems with the compensation scheme as follows:

a) single men who used to have their own houses and land were only provided with land plots; no houses were provided, thus turning them into a vulnerable group, en masse;
b) migrant laborers and others working or living outside their homeland were excluded from compensation, despite having their houses and land plots in the pre-project site, which created an additional criterion for vulnerability;

c) all of those who owned houses after 1999 were excluded from housing compensation, as the compensation seems to have targeted home owners registered in the 1999 population census;

d) the monetary value for a productive date palm was calculated to cover only four years of cash crop, knowing that a date palm continues to be productive for an average 100 years;

e) the payment scheme spanning a period of six years does not take into account the inflation rate in Sudan;

f) additional acres for each family were promised but not fulfilled;

g) people were offered desert land that is hard to cultivate in replacement for their earlier fertile land; and

h) as for the quality of housing, the new residences were closely packed, with limited breather space and no proper sanitation facilities²³⁴.

The unfair and inhumane treatment of Merowe Dam affected populations over the years of project implementation has been documented by various news sources, rights groups and

²³⁴ Bosshard and Hildyard “A Critical Juncture.”
monitoring organizations. A joint call from IRN and The Corner House, issued on November 30, 2005, reports on a serious incident of water deprivation at the project site as follows:

“In November 2005, Chinese contractors of the dam project occupied wells in the Sani area, a centre of Manasir nomads. They prevented women and children from fetching water, and stated that they needed the water for construction activities and their own domestic use.\textsuperscript{235}"

The above evidence shows that it is not only the livelihoods of the Dam affected populations that were jeopardized but even their access to water; a basic means of life was affected. A major observation to be made from the above incident is that the authorities are using or else allowing the implementing companies to take the forefront and silence the affected populations. This, in and by itself, is an ultimate display of poor governance and lack of accountability by the implementing government.

The above case is not an isolated incident and is very similar to when Lahmeyer was given green light by the Government of Sudan to carry on with steps of dam operation that led, without doubt, to flooding of Amri and Manasir in 2006 and 2008 successively\textsuperscript{236}.

Attempts by the affected populations to organize, in order to defend their land and homes, were systematically cracked down by the government, as we can see from the following report


\textsuperscript{236} ECCHR “Askouri vs. Nothdurft.”
on a raid by government forces, described as “dam militia”, of a meeting of Amri community, held in a school on site:

“The attacking militia opened fire on people without warning when they were having breakfast in the school courtyard. Three people were immediately killed and more than fifty injured.”

Those reporting the incident quoted the use of “heavy artillery and machine guns” in the attack, where the “militia” cordoned the school and at around 11:00 O’clock in the morning, “opened fire without warning on people who are using school as their meeting place” while they were having their breakfast before starting the meeting.

From the above, we can see where the Government of Sudan stands from protecting the rights and freedoms of its citizens, including the very fundamental right to life.

Evicting local inhabitants from the project site must have been a goal for the Government that it was ready and willing to achieve at all costs. It did not hesitate to use the power of the companies in reaching that goal.

Evidence shows that the populations impacted by this project did not stand and wait until they were flooded. Even before the systematic eviction took place, the impacted populations

238 IRN “Sudan Government Massacres.”
rallied with many rights defender groups to make their voices heard. As early as the first quarter of 2004, IRN approached the implementing companies, on behalf of the Dam affected populations, to express concern over the Dam’s negative impact on the social and environmental situation in the area.

The response of one of the companies, the French Alstom, reflected a strong position to go ahead with the deal it has signed with the Government of Sudan. The company wrote back, clearly stating at the end its response letter:

“In conclusion, we have no intention of withdrawing from the Merowe Dam project and will honor our contractual obligations towards our Customer, MDPIU.239

MDPIU refers to Merowe Dam Project Implementation Unit, or DIU as used in this research. The company’s response typically reflects a corporate view that has little to do with social responsibility. The response focused on how Merowe Dam would:

“[…] practically triple the power generation capacity of Sudan (currently only 500 MW, i.e. less than one percent of the installed capacity in California […] same population as Sudan), providing vital infrastructure which can only aid the country’s social and economic development over the years to come.240

While the provision of electric power by any government to its citizens could be seen as a much desired developmental goal, it cannot be done at the expense of the stability and personal safety and security of citizens. When a project displaces over 50,000 individuals, all from specific tribal groups inhabiting the project site, it has to be questioned. The investigation in this

240 IRN “Alstom Responds.”
study has so far revealed how a range of rights of the affected populations have been violated in the course of the displacement caused by the project.

On another level, comparing Sudan to the State of California in order to make a case for hydropower generation shows how Western companies come to developing countries with a mindset that is far from grasping the realities of the local communities and social make up of these countries. The communities under research in this study have, for decades, depended on traditional farming as a way of generating their livelihoods. Sociologically speaking, a responsible state that takes into account the natural skills of the groups of citizens to be affected by a development project cannot decide to transform such groups of citizens, overnight, into urbanized ones, using electricity just like Californians.

The justification used by the company should have not been allowed by the Government in the first place. It can also be observed that it uses the argument of the greater good for the entire country. Although not said explicitly in the company’s response, it can be derived that Alstom assumed that it is acceptable to displace the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir if the project would triple electric power for Sudan. It is not acceptable, by any means, for the greater good of the majority to undermine the interests and violate the rights of minorities.

The ongoing violence against the Dam impacted populations has also been condemned by the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT). On November 30, 2007, OMCT issued a brief
report calling for action to put an end to the ongoing violence exercised by the Government of Sudan against population groups impacted by Merowe and Kajbar Dams and resisting the projects.\(^{241}\)

The concerns of the affected communities were clearly communicated by OMCT as the right of these communities to adequate housing, an acceptable standard of living in the form of fair and effective compensation for the losses in fertile agricultural land and houses these people must leave behind in order to give way for the dam reservoir.\(^{242}\) OMCT also highlighted the concerns of the affected communities over the “lack of transparency in the planning process”, reporting that the Government’s DIU often took major decisions without consulting, involving or at least informing the impacted communities.\(^{243}\)

The above reveals, outright, how the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir, along with other population groups in Nubian Sudan, affected by Kajbar Dam, were made to suffer from landlessness and homelessness. Kajbar Dam is located on the Fifth Cataract of the Nile, further North of Merowe Dam.

\(^{242}\) OMCT “Sudan, Dam Construction.”
\(^{243}\) OMCT “Sudan, Dam Construction.”
Among the incidents reported by OMCT is the use of teargas and rubber bullets against student protesters from the Manasir, who organized and led a demonstration, on May 6, 2007 in Khartoum, protesting the arrest of 6 Manasir community leaders by the authorities in March of the same year\textsuperscript{244}.

The clampdown on the Dam impacted population did not stop at the level of arresting, torturing and denying them their basic rights but extended further to include harassment of foreign citizens showing interest in the issue of the Dam. On November 5, 2011, two German citizens visiting Sudan were arrested at the project site, and transferred to Khartoum where they underwent intensive interrogation for suspicion that they were trying to collect information from the impacted populations\textsuperscript{245}. They were accused by the Government of “seeking to generate international publicity around the issue of Merowe Dam’s affected population.”\textsuperscript{246} The case was linked to the investigation of the German Lahmeyer, which had to face a lawsuit filed by ECCHR on behalf of the representation of the Dam impacted population and referred to earlier in this study.

The lawsuit against Lahmeyer represents a strong example of the actions and steps taken by the leadership of the impacted populations to publicize their problem and gain international

\textsuperscript{244} OMCT “Sudan, Dam Construction.”
\textsuperscript{246} Sudan Tribune “Sudan arrests.”
attention. Lahmeyer responded to the lawsuit in a press release issued on May 7, 2010 stating that it acknowledges that lawsuit yet “fully rejects the accusations.”

The right to adequate housing was recognized by the UN as an integral part of the right to adequate standard of living in the UDHR (1948) and the ICESCR (1966). It has thereafter been referred to or else endorsed in many other human rights treaties. On August 27, 2007, the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, Miloon Kothari, issued a statement, expressing great concern about the situation of the people impacted by Merowe and Kajbar Dams in Sudan; saying:

“I am deeply concerned by the situation of the communities affected by the hydro-electric projects in the Merowe and Kajbar areas in the northern Nile valley in Sudan which has continued to worsen during the past two years.”

From the above described course of events and the details revealed by this study, it can be concluded that the following contributed as main factors to the impoverishment of Hamadab, Amri and Manasir:

1. Project planning that did not take seriously the interests of the populations residing at the selected project site;

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249 UN Habitat “The right to Adequate Housing.”

2. An unfair and mostly flawed compensation scheme, tainted with exclusion and marginalization of some groups. The compensation scheme also did not come to full fruition;

3. Resettlement that was forced upon those who refused relocation. The mechanism of allowing water to flood people was dramatic and cannot be expected from any government that is keen on protecting the rights of its people, including the very basic right to life and security of person.

The problem was made worse by the continuous clampdown by the Government on the rights of the impacted citizens to voice their concerns or communicate effectively with news outlets and advocacy organizations from inside or outside the Sudan.

The outcome of the entire scenario is impoverishment, exclusion, psychological scarring, and further alienation as some people chose to move to the outskirts of big cities in preference to continuing to remain in the new villages.

The study has revealed evidence to the inadequate quality of housing provided by the compensation scheme. Even if the housing was adequate, it is unrealistic to expect the displaced to continue to stay in the relocation site with no viable means of livelihoods. The investigation conducted by this research, of original sources, has shown that the impacted people were provided with plots in the desert, and crammed in houses that had no proper sanitation where
contagious diseases started to spread among the residents. In the face of that, the villagers demanded being given plots of land along the Nile, but that did not happen\textsuperscript{251}.

### 4.3 Interrogating Dam Objective Nine

Having introduced the various issues and problems with the resettlement and compensation schemes, this section of the study provides a set of questions based on the dam’s objective that relates to the populations residing at project site, i.e. Objective Nine. Objective Nine from the list of Dam objectives stated by the Government reads:

“To improve the living standards for the local residents in the area of the project, by creating investments and new job opportunities.\textsuperscript{252}"

The series of questions to be asked is: Did the Dam project actually improve the living standards of the people at the project site? How can this happen when they are no longer considered “the local residents”, as they have already been displaced? Did the Dam project really create opportunities for investment; and for whom? Did it create new job opportunities? How can this be said when the pre-project livelihoods were jeopardized? If new job opportunities have been created, do they outweigh the job losses in magnitude and quality?

In attempting to address the first question of whether the living standards were improved, the following eye witness account by Hildyard can be very reflective of the reality, and would give guidance to the answer:

“10,000 ... Hamadab ... been moved to El Multaga ... in the Bayuoda Desert, ... [R]esettlement package ... failed to deliver the benefits promised. ... in 2005, many plots ... still covered with sand. ... soils were so poor ... farmers could not sell their produce.\textsuperscript{253}”

\textsuperscript{251} Sudan Tribune “Sudan Farmers. “
\textsuperscript{252} Government of Sudan (DIU).
\textsuperscript{253} Hildyard “Neutral?”
The promised services, as indicated by the above source had been denied or for some reason did not come to realization. As a consequence and a compounding factor to their impoverishment, the villagers were charged for services promised to be free, such as water and electricity. The poverty rate in El Multaga Settlement had reportedly increased “from 10% in 2003 to 65% in 2005”, which has prompted the families to leave the settlement, as a survival strategy, in search for a better place to live.

On interrogating the sub-objectives of creating new investment and employment opportunities, no credible sources were found to confirm any growth in investment or in the job market among the local inhabitants. I would therefore indicate that the issue needs to be further investigated.

Thus, the mounting evidence confirming the disadvantage that had to be endured by the impacted populations far outweighs any claims of an improved socio-economic status of these populations that might have come as a result of the project. Logically speaking, these are people who have been displaced from their natural habitat, deprived of their homes and farmlands, and further lost their material assets to the floods. It is therefore very difficult to say that their situation has improved after the project.

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254 Hildyard “Neutral?”
255 Hildyard “Neutral?”
256 Hildyard “Neutral?”
5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Chapter Four of this study provided information on the displaced populations; their origins, pre-displacement livelihoods and analyzed the factors that led to their impoverishment by the project. This concluding Chapter will review and discuss the findings of the research and summarize how impoverishment of the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir happened. At the end, a more proactive role for researchers in shaping development policy is encouraged, and propose, based on evidence from the study, more advocacy to explicitly include a right to land in International Human Rights Law is proposed.

5.1 Understanding Impoverishment from Merowe Dam

In summary, the following were found to be factors that contributed to the problems encountered by Hamadab, Amri and Manasir in the course of project implementation:

1. Merowe Dam project has long been in the books although it only took off during the last twenty five years. Having reviewed the history of the project from the earliest feasibility studies, the study may confirm that the populations residing at project site never came up as an important stakeholder in any of the earlier feasibility studies. While this can be understood for conducted by the British colonial government on Sudan, it becomes questionable when a national government overlooks the interests of its own citizens. This study has provided strong evidence to conclude that the Government of Sudan did not take the interests of the impacted populations into account, and most likely did not involve them at the planning stage of the project.
2. The compensation scheme developed by the Government of Sudan overlooked, perhaps purposefully, specific issues and excluded certain groups who ended up as more impoverished than the rest of the population. Problems with the scheme include the fact that it ignored the steady inflation happening in Sudan, under-estimated the value of date palms, and did not fulfill its promise in providing further acres on top of the basic compensation.

Groups excluded from housing compensation include single men; labor migrants working outside the project site and those who owned houses after 1999. This exclusion created negative feelings among the members of the same community. Seeing single men being turned into a vulnerable group is not new. It has been observed as a negative practice in many refugee assistance programs. Refugee aid often focuses so much on women and children at the expense of other groups. The exclusion of single men from housing compensation in this project could be criticized as a form of discrimination against this particular social group.

3. Overall, the way in which the impacted population was forced to resettle involved violations of basic human rights including the right to life – manifesting in the deprivation of locals from access to water. People protested the quality of compensation and had legitimate concerns that were not addressed by the Government, which further complicated the problem.
The culmination of all of the above played a significant role in the Hamadab, Amri and Manasir losing their land with no fair compensation, and losing their houses and belongings to an unfair and incomplete housing compensation.

The IRR model suggests reversing the Impoverishment Risks in order to see positive results on the lives of the affected populations\textsuperscript{257}. To remedy landlessness, “land-based re-establishment” is suggested and to remedy homelessness, the model suggests “house reconstruction”\textsuperscript{258}. However, not every land is the same, as the study has shown. As well, it is practically difficult for resettlers to remodel a village that has already been constructed and finalized. With regards to housing, limited space was available and the authorities had to squeeze the number of houses to be built in that limited area of land. The outcome was crowded, unsanitary dwellings.

The redirection of the Nile is indeed cause for an ecosystem change in the basin. While the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommends special attention to be devoted to indigenous populations who rely on subsistence livelihoods and to population groups that have meager access to information and limited adaptation means, and emphasizes the need for economic development programs to incorporate equity issues, the government of Sudan has

\textsuperscript{257} Cernea, “Risks, Safeguards.”
\textsuperscript{258} Cernea “Understanding.”
largely disregarded the potential vulnerability in which the traditional agrarian societies impacted by Merowe Dam would suffer\textsuperscript{259}.

From all of the above, it can be said that landlessness and homelessness as impoverishment risks have indeed come as consequences to the project on the impacted populations.

5.2 A role for social scientists and rights advocates

Building on the proposition by the IRR in favor of risk reversal, it can be argued that researchers in the field of migration and development are capable of exploring and documenting qualitative comparisons between the land, housing and lives of the displaced before and after relocation until patterns are clearly revealed and commonalities detected. This would enable further development of the IRR model to address the current questions around resettlement of development oustees and the proposition of more suitable remedies if any.

On the importance of development planners acknowledging the need for the efforts and involvement of social scientists at early stages of projects, the study proposes reversal of the recommendation made by Colson and others, by suggesting a more pro-active role for social

Instead of waiting to be called upon, anthropologists and social scientists engaged in the field of Forced Migration research can step forward to effect further contribution in shaping development policy and influencing planning.

Most of the research done in the area of Forced Migration is not done for the purpose of entertaining in academic debates. It has an aim and a purpose of either attempting to understand the dynamics of Forced Migration as a phenomenon, or finding out the facts in order to act as advocacy and policy research. In addition to that, there is evidence that people are combining research with practice in their lives and career paths.

It is therefore reasonable to believe that researchers with the capability of influencing the circles of policy makers in the big Financial Institutions such as the WB and in government circles do exist. They can exert their influence in order for the major development players to acknowledge the need for their efforts in shaping less harmful development strategies and programs. That is to say, development programs that would not disrupt the lives of populations and not displace them en masse or throw them into long-lasting impoverishment.

Turton believes that Forced Migration itself, as a field of study and research, has been formulated, to a large extent, around what may appeal to policy makers, and that this has

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260 Colson “Putting.” Book Review.
weakened the field’s research agenda and definition of priorities\textsuperscript{261}. He uses this argument to highlight the need to do more research on DIDR. The study partially agrees and partially disagrees with Turton. The position taken and argument made by this study is to see no harm in researchers working to shape development policies.

However, before turning into tools who model their research to satisfy and appeal to policy makers, researchers, in the field of DIDR, need to step back and define their research agenda for at least the coming two decades. This could be done through think tanks and discussions sponsored by academic institutions and Refugee and Migration Studies Centers in various universities of the world to ensure academic independence.

As put by Bushra and Ahmed (Sudanese Social Scientists) on another problematic Nile redirection project; the Canal of Jonglei in South Sudan, anthropologists should be involved at the earlier stages when pre-implementation studies carried out, thus allowing them to contribute to shaping the outcomes of the socio-economic events to follow\textsuperscript{262}.

Researchers can situate ourselves ahead of surprises, by developing their own seismic sensors to anticipate newer causes of Forced Migration and work to conceptualize and mitigate these causes.


On another level, and to build on Bushra and Ahmed’s argument, the study warns against the pitfall of researchers allowing themselves to be used by policy makers or government authorities in manipulating the choices of people by, for example, convincing them to accept any relocation or compensation that they reject for logical reasons. In other words, they former should not lose sight of the inquisitive role they are expected to play if they wish to reveal information not available at the surface. Such information may, at times, be intentionally masked by authorities to silence the voice of development oustees. The question of to whom a researcher should be accountable is a subject for another debate.

Efforts like those done by Cernea and others in developing the IRR model are well appreciated, however, they can achieve their target of preventing and reversing situations of adversity caused by DIDR only when they find strong backing in International Law.

The gap in International Law, of having no specific ‘right to land’ is an area that needs to be addressed through more intellectual, academic and advocacy work from those engaged in International Law discussions.

Among the efforts to be noted is that of rights activists concerned with bringing to realization the various rights stated by the ICESCR. They have come together in 2000, forming
the Economic Social and Cultural Rights Network (ESCR-Net)\textsuperscript{263}. As they describe it, (ESCR-Net) is:

“a collaborative initiative of groups and individuals from around the world working to secure economic and social justice through human rights. … with a special focus on economic, social and cultural rights…\textsuperscript{264}”

As part of its agenda, the Network is trying to build international recognition of a right to natural resources, land and territory\textsuperscript{265}. Such efforts of raising awareness, lobbying and acting as pressure groups are definitely helpful and deserve to be publicized by those working in the same field.

More detailed and intricate work can also be seen from land rights groups and alliances such as the International Land Coalition (ILC), the goal of which is:

“to promote secure and equitable access to and control over land for poor women and men through advocacy, dialogue, knowledge sharing and capacity building.\textsuperscript{266}”

In Africa, the Coalition is represented by community organizations in 14 countries in the various parts of the continent; namely:

“Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Togo, Burundi and Zimbabwe.\textsuperscript{267}”

\textsuperscript{264} ESCR. http://www.escr-net.org/cat/i/1372.  
\textsuperscript{265} ESCR. http://www.escr-net.org/docs/i/1614990.  
\textsuperscript{267} ILC. http://www.landcoalition.org/about-us/regional-platforms.
Sudan is not one of the Nile Basin countries represented in the ILC. The formation of such coalitions is indeed an effective tool for advocacy. It is not unexpected that the people of Hamadab, Amri, Manasir and their likes in struggle may be seen to engage actively in such advocacy bodies in the near future, if their issues and grievances do not get resolved.

5.3 An Agenda for Further Research

At the end of this study, it is important to reiterate that the primary concern of this study, at its outset, has been to establish the causative relationship between displacement and impoverishment in the particular case at study and explore how the impoverishment happened in this case. As the study progressed, a question emerged on the alternatives to large scale dams. The question comes from an acknowledgment and agreement to the need for electric power as a corner stone to development. The issue at hand becomes a quest of seeking viable alternatives to hydropower generation. Due to limitations of time and space for this MA study, the question of alternative energy remains to be addressed by another, possibly related, study under a much larger scope than this one.

End.
APPENDICES:

Appendix I: Map of Proposed Dams in Africa (IRN, 2010)

Appendix II: Map of Sudan showing Merowe and Atbara cities

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