Planning to safeguard affected communities' future well-being

Anadarko Mozambique Area 1, Limitada (Anadarko), co-proponent of the Mozambique Gas Development Project (the Project), considers it important to disseminate accurate information about the resettlement process associated with the development of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) park on the Afungi peninsula in the District of Palma. In support of this aim, a series of articles is being published to provide an update on progress made with resettlement planning activities during the past 24 months. The publishing of these articles coincides with the third series of resettlement public meetings to be convened in August 2015.

Summarizing the beginning of resettlement planning

On 10 August 2013, the Government of Mozambique announced the commencement of a resettlement planning process to be undertaken by the Mozambique Gas Development Project. The announcement was made during a meeting in Quirimba village situated on the Afungi peninsula, the location selected for the proposed LNG park. Similar announcement meetings followed in the adjacent villages of Senga and Magana.

The announcement meetings coincided with a period of public consultation that had been on-going since 2011 as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the development of an LNG Project in the District of Palma, Cabo Delgado Province.

Prior to the announcement meetings, Anadarko, on behalf of the LNG Project, appointed a multi-disciplinary resettlement team. Since August 2013, this resettlement team has collaborated with affected communities, the Government of Mozambique and civil society to assess, discuss and quantify the extent of physical and economic displacement that affected communities may experience as a result of the LNG Project development, and to plan a process to restore and in many cases improve the lives and livelihoods of affected communities on the Afungi peninsula.

The resettlement planning process

The Project proponents recognize resettlement is a complex process in which social, economic, technical, environmental and cultural aspects need to be considered and harmoniously coordinated in order to design and implement a program focused on the long-term well-being of affected communities.

To this end, the Project has approached resettlement planning as a multi-layered program with long-term development goals. Mozambican legislation, specifically Decree No. 31 of 2012, as well as international standards, such as the International Finance Corporation’s Performance Standard 5: Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement (January 2012), require a resettlement program to, at a minimum, restore the livelihoods and incomes of affected communities.

Based on national regulations and best practice requirements, the Project’s objective is for the resettlement process to promote environmental protection, as well as, at a minimum restore and in many cases improve affected households’ quality of life.

The following activities have been and continue to be undertaken a part of the resettlement planning process:

- A series of announcement meetings took place in August 2013 during which the Government of Mozambique and the Project informed potentially affected communities of the need for resettlement and that a planning phase would commence.
- A census was conducted to identify and record all people, households and enterprises residing on the Afungi Project Site.
- Teams of agriculture and fisheries specialists commenced research, consultation and pilot programs in affected communities and combined these with the results of the census and asset surveys and other specialist studies to inform the development of agriculture and fisheries livelihood restoration plans.
- Studies were conducted to determine and identify potential replacement village sites and to analyze the suitability of the sites as potential replacement sites. Site identification took community preferences and host community agreement into consideration. Communities that need to be physically displaced selected their preferred site, which was then endorsed by the Government. The host community was also consulted as part of the process.

In October 2013, Community Resettlement Committees (CRCs) were established in the villages of Senga, Quitupu and Magana. A CRC was formed in Palma Sede in August 2014 after the extent of economic displacement in Palma Sede had been determined. The CRCs act as the Project’s primary communication mechanism with communities in relation to the resettlement process. CRCs continue to receive training and are actively involved in the resettlement planning process.

Following the census process, asset and socioeconomic surveys were initiated among all potentially affected households. A communal asset survey was conducted with community and village leaderships in settlements where communal infrastructure will be lost as a result of Project development.

Reports summarizing information gathered during the asset, socioeconomic and communal asset surveys were compiled and distributed to surveyed households.

A participatory community boundary mapping process was undertaken by Forum Terra, an NGO from Nampula Province, to understand the limits of each affected village and to quantify the extent of Project-related impacts on the communal resources of each affected community. The process included recording affected communities’ tangible and intangible communal property and resources.

A draft compensation entitlement framework was developed and refined in consultation with the Government of Mozambique. At district level, working sessions were convened with the District Government, while at national level, the Technical Commission for Resettlement Monitoring and Supervision set up working groups within the Commission to analyze the framework. The framework describes compensation for both physical and economic losses due to resettlement or displacement and identifies those who will be eligible to receive compensation as a result of losses. Consultation with affected communities on the content of the framework is continuing.

Between March and May 2015, the Technical Commission working groups conducted a comprehensive review of the entire resettlement process to date.

Open sharing of information, consultation and dialogue with affected communities, the Government of Mozambique and civil society organizations have been paramount to and continue to inform all activities of the resettlement planning process. The process will culminate in the development of a Resettlement Plan that the LNG Project proponents will submit to the Government of Mozambique for approval.

This series of articles forms part of the LNG Project’s commitment to publicly share information on the resettlement process.

For more information on the resettlement process, visit www.mzing.com