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Title: The setting of negotiation agendas in involuntary resettlement
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Past experiences with DFDR projects (Development-induced forced displacement and resettlement) demonstrate that involuntary resettlement is a highly complex and underestimated issue involving two main processes - the dismantling and rebuilding of entire societies. International polices on involuntary resettlement have been developed for the last 30 years following the ground breaking World Bank guidelines from the 1980s. The World Bank is now reviewing their safeguards on involuntary resettlement presented in The Environmental and Social Safeguards Frame (ESF) (2014). The review process and the content and form of the ESF have been severely criticized and compared with the present OP 4.12 it is regarded by the critics to be less able to deal with the complexity on the ground. These policies partially set the agenda for the protracted and conflictive on-the-ground negotiations between the main stakeholders (lender, client (government or private) and the people to be displaced. In these policies, the participatory model has been in focus in order to empower and strengthening the community engagement. This paper argues that it is not about participation per se, but about negotiations. How can negotiations be crafted to strengthen the displacees negotiation power? How can negotiations be crafted to be made meaningful for all stakeholders involved? What are the issues to be negotiated? And what level of representation is required? Ethnographic cases will be presented, among them the Zimapán hydroelectric dam that offers a laboratory for the exploration on this topic.