

SCENARIO-BASED DISCUSSION ON CLIMATE DISPLACEMENT, PLANNED RELOCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Indigo is a small coastal village in a Pacific Island State inhabited mainly by people indigenous to the country. Their main livelihood is fishing. The village consists of about 50 families most of whom have lived there their entire lives. Their ancestors have lived there for centuries. The economy of the whole village revolves around fishing. Of late, major storms have ravaged the country and flooding is a frequent occurrence. The villagers find that it is becoming increasingly dangerous to go out to the sea due to the storms which are becoming unpredictable. They can no longer rely on their traditional knowledge of the sea. Their fish yield is also getting smaller and the exotic fish they used to catch which is part of their traditional diet seems to have disappeared.

The villagers are getting impoverished, and frequent flooding is destroying their homes. Recent storms and associated storm surges have claimed the lives of several children. Finally, the local authorities decided to move the entire village to a different location. However, no villager was provided with information, nobody was consulted, and they were given only 2 days to pack their things. Some villagers refused to leave their ancestral land. Some villagers defied the local authorities and decided to move to a different location on their own. But very soon things become even worse in the new location and become displaced and are forced to move to a different island close by which is administered by wealthier country included at Annex 1 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). These villagers are jailed because they entered the country illegally and they are harassed and beaten in jail. Their request to apply for refugee status is denied on the ground that they are not fleeing persecution.

The majority of the families move to the new location because the government promised them jobs. However, the new location is in the middle of the country, and they have no access to the ocean. They have no other skills and the promised jobs never materialized. Children had to walk a long distance to schools.
