

Occasional Papers No. 15 (March 2002)

Involuntary Resettlement, Production and Income: Evidence from Xiaolangdi, PRC

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Abstract

A variety of risks are associated with the resettlement of people to make space for development projects such as dams. We surveyed two villages that were relocated because of construction of the Xiaolangdi dam on the Yellow River in Henan to find which risks they had been subjected to. Although located in the same geographical region, the villages were quite different in income levels, equality, and forms of production. Since resettlement, the villagers have had access to less land (though more of it can be irrigated) and to construction and transport jobs associated with building the dam and the village. The incomes in the poorer village have risen, both because of paid employment and improved agricultural productivity. The people in the richer village have reduced agricultural productivity and lower incomes. In both villages, the prospective end of the construction of the dam and village infrastructure will reduce current incomes substantially. We conclude by drawing attention to the manner in which the capacities of the Chinese state and the institutions of agriculture in China induce a particular patterns of risks.