

# Evaluating Resettlement Action Plan Implementation in Kenya's Sondu-Homabay-Awendo Transmission Project

Lillian Aluoch Wandigu<sup>1</sup>; Dr. Yasin Kuso Ghabon<sup>2</sup>

MA Research & Public Policy<sup>1</sup>, Senior Lecturer<sup>2</sup>  
Maseno University – Kenya  
MA/DS/00050/025

Publication Date: 2026/02/25

**Abstract:** Kenya's expanding energy infrastructure increasingly demands land acquisition, often leading to complex socio-economic displacement. Although Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) are designed to address these disruptions, gaps frequently arise between policy and implementation. This study investigates RAP implementation along Sondu-Homabay-Awendo transmission line to assess compliance with legal provisions, the effectiveness of livelihood restoration efforts, and the availability of grievance redress mechanisms. Employing a qualitative case study approach, the research incorporates in-depth interviews, participant observation, focus groups, surveys, and document analysis. Thematic and statistical methods will be applied to evaluate outcomes. Initial findings indicate persistent challenges, such as delayed compensation and fractured community ties, despite the presence of Kenya's Land Act 2012 and KETRACO's Resettlement Policy. The study aims to inform future infrastructure planning by providing actionable insights for balancing national development goals with community well-being.

**Keywords:** RAP Implementation, Livelihood Restoration, Land Acquisition, KETRACO, Infrastructure Development.

**How to Cite:** Lillian Aluoch Wandigu; Dr. Yasin Kuso Ghabon (2026) Evaluating Resettlement Action Plan Implementation in Kenya's Sondu-Homabay-Awendo Transmission Project. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(2), 1466-1468. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26feb785>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Global transition towards reliable and affordable electricity has accelerated high voltage infrastructure development, making involuntary resettlement a critical socio-legal issue. Kenya's push towards "vision 2030", infrastructure development, particularly within the energy sector, necessitates significant land acquisition and the subsequent displacement of local communities. The success of high voltage projects is evaluated not by kilowatts delivered but through effective Raps. To manage these transitions, the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) serves as a critical charter designed to mitigate physical, economic, and cultural impacts on Project Affected Persons (PAPs).

According to African Development Bank (2023) and KETRACO (2016), the primary objective of RAPs is to avoid involuntary displacement where possible or to minimize impacts through fair compensation of all affected persons. Furthermore, current resettlement frameworks aim to transform

displacement into sustainable development programs, ensuring that livelihood and community ties are not merely retained but reestablished and upgraded. In the Kenyan context, RAPs are governed by the Land Act of 2012 and the Kenyan Electricity Transmission Company (KETRACO) Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) for KETRACO. These instruments dictate the principles of eligibility, grievance redress, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for public right-of-way projects (African Development Bank, 2023 and KETRACO 2016). This study focuses on the Sondu-Homabay-Awendo line to examine whether RAP implementation truly achieves livelihood restoration or merely facilitates land clearance.

### ➤ *Statement of the Problem:*

Despite established legal framework and existence of RAPs for high voltage projects, a significant gap remains in the execution of these plans. Unsuccessful implementation often results in inadequate compensation, delayed payments, and the disruption of socio-economic livelihoods. There is a dire need to understand the disconnect between policy design and the

existing experiences of PAPs during the implementation of the Sondu- Homabay- Awendo transmission line project.

➤ *Objectives of the Study*

The study seeks to;

- Assess the level of compliance with RAP provisions within the Sondu- Homabay -Awendo project.
- Evaluate the success of livelihood restoration measures and compensation procedures.
- Examine the functionality and availability of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).
- Define the long term socio-economic outcomes for project affected persons.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The effectiveness of resettlement is a global worry, bordered by the tension between national development and individual privileges.

➤ *Global Perspective on Resettlement Compliance*

International finance institutions such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank mandate that RAPs move beyond mere compensation to “livelihood restoration”. However, research by Cernea (2000) indicates that in many developing economies, compensation is often calculated based on market value rather than “replacement costs”, leading to the immediate impoverishment of Project Affected Persons (PAPs).

➤ *Theoretical Framework; The IRR Model*

The study is grounded in Michael Cernea’s Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model. Cernea (2000) identifies eight risks: landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, increased morbidity, loss of access to common property, and social disarticulation. Effective RAP implementation must serve as a “reconstruction” tool to reverse these risks through timely compensation and social integration.

➤ *Compliance and Legal Framework*

In the Kenyan Context, RAP implementation is guided by the Land Act 2012 and the National Land Commission (NLC) mandates. Recent studies suggest that while technical compliance (mapping and census) is often high, procedural compliance specifically the timing of “compensation before displacement” is frequently violated due to budgetary constraints at the National Treasury (KETRACO, 2022).

➤ *Livelihood Restoration and Social Capital:*

Livelihood restoration is more complex than cash compensation. Cernea (2000), argue that social capital community ties and informal support networks are among the most difficult assets to restore. In high-voltage projects, the fragmentation of land can render remaining parcels economically unviable, a phenomenon often overlooked in

standard RAP audits. Infrastructure projects often overlook “intangible assets” such as communal grazing rights and ancestral ties which, when lost, cannot be adequately restored even with fair monetary compensation.

➤ *Grievance Redress Mechanism:*

A functional GRM is the “safety valve” of any resettlement project. Literature indicates that for a GRM to be effective, it must be culturally appropriate, accessible, and transparent. Pande and Hossain (2022) underscores that when GRMs fail, majority of affected persons resort to litigation which significantly increases project costs and delays critical energy projects. (Pande and Hossain 2022)

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will adopt a qualitative case study approach, a design suited for exploring complex social phenomena and answering “how” and “why” questions regarding policy implementation (Coombs 2022)

➤ *Sampling Design*

The study will utilize purposive sampling to identify participants with deep insights. This technique will ensure right selection of participants including project affected persons (PAPs), community leaders, and KETRACO officials who possess specific knowledge and direct experience with the transmission line project (Palinkas et al., 2015). Purposeful sampling, widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources. This study will use this method to help identify and select individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest.

➤ *Data Collection Methods*

To guarantee data triangulation and increases validity, four primary methods will be employed in this study:

➤ *Data Analysis*

Qualitative data will be processed through thematic analysis, which will assist to identify recurring patterns related to compensation and grievance. Thematic analysis is a flexible method that allows the researcher to focus on the data in numerous different ways. Thematic analysis will enable the researcher to focus on analyzing meaning across the entire dataset, or examine one particular aspect of a phenomenon in depth (Braun et al, 2012). Quantitative data, where applicable, will be subjected to statistical analysis including correlation and regression to determine relationships between project variables and socio-economic outcomes. This research will also employ descriptive analysis. According to Dong, (2023), descriptive statistics is the simple tool used help researcher organize and summarize the inevitable variability in collections of actual observations or scores. Descriptive statistics will help to demonstrate the relationship between variables in a given sample. It is often used to clean up and summarize scattered

data, which is crucial for making inferential statistical comparisons and conducting research. In this study, descriptive statistics will be fundamental to data analysis for summarizing the main features of a dataset such as central tendency (mean, mode, median), variability (range, standard deviation, variance), and frequency distribution (Dong, 2023).

#### ➤ *Significance of the Study*

The findings of this research will hold practical implications for several stakeholders including ministry of Energy and KETRACO:

- **Policy and Practice:** By highlighting the challenges in the Sondu- Homabay-Awendo project, the study will inform the development of more robust resettlement policies for future Kenyan infrastructure while contributing to the refinement of Land Act 2012 for “right of way” for public utilities.
- **Socio-economic Welfare:** Ultimately, the study will advocate for the rights of PAPs, ensuring that the balance between national energy needs and individual livelihoods is maintained in line with Kenya’s broader development agenda. This will ensure strengthened link between compensation and actual replacement cost.
- **Reduce Project Delays:** This study will enable prompt identification of common grievances, thus future projects can avoid costly litigation.
- **Accountability:** The research will promote transparency by evaluating whether KETRACO and government agencies adhered to the approved commitments of the projects.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This research proposal seeks to assess the implementation of Resettlement Action Plans within Kenya’s high-voltage transmission infrastructure, focusing on the Sondu-Homabay-Awendo line. By applying qualitative and quantitative approaches, the study aims to uncover implementation gaps, challenges in livelihood restoration, and the effectiveness of grievance mechanisms. Its findings are expected to contribute to improved policy execution, institutional accountability, and the safeguarding of community livelihoods amid Kenya’s energy expansion efforts.

#### REFERENCES

[1]. Adekola, G., & Olumati, E.S. (2023). Focus group discussion: A research method in community development. *International journal of Research and innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 7(5), 392-399.[doi.org](https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26feb785)

[2]. African Development Bank. (2023). Kenya Transmission Network Improvement Project (P-KE-FA0-022): Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) Final Report for the Proposed Malindi-Kilifi Double-Circuit 220kV Transmission Line. African Development Bank Group

[3]. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper, P.M. Camic, D.L. Long, A.T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (Eds), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology: Vol 2. Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological* (pp. 57-71). American Psychological Association.[doi.org](https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26feb785)

[4]. Coombs, H. (2022) Case study research: single or multiple [White paper]. Southern Utah University. [www.suu.edu](http://www.suu.edu)

[5]. Cernea, M. M. (2000). IRR: An operational risks reduction model for population resettlement. In M. M. Cernea & C. McDowell (Eds.), *Risks and reconstruction: Experiences of resettlers and refugees* (pp. 11–55). The World Bank. [doi.org](https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26feb785)

[6]. Domede, A. B., & Dinkelman, A. (2022). Survey forms for data collection: Key considerations. In H. Magd & S. K. Kunjumammed (Eds.), *Global Perspectives on Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education Institutions* (pp. 182–199). IGI Global. [doi.org](https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26feb785)

[7]. Dong, Y. (2023). Descriptive statistics and its applications. *Highlights in Science, Engineering and Technology*, 47, 16-23. <https://doi.org/10.54097/hset.v47i.8159>

[8]. Kenya Electricity Transmission Company (KETRACO). (2022). Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) final report for the proposed Malindi-Kilifi Double- 82.5 km, 220kv transmission line. KETRACO. [www.ketraco.co.ke](http://www.ketraco.co.ke)

[9]. Kenya Electricity Transmission Company Limited. (2016). Proposed resettlement action plan (RAP) for Kabarnet-Rumuruti 132kV transmission line [Report]. [www.ketraco.co.ke](http://www.ketraco.co.ke)

[10]. Palinkas, L. A., Hortwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015) Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533-544.[doi.org](https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26feb785)

[11]. Pande, S., & Hossain, N. (2022). Grievance redress mechanisms in the public sector: A literature review. *Open Government Partnership; Accountability Research Center*. <https://doi.org/10.17606/c4m8-d865>

[12]. Sahoo, R.K., (2022). Interview as Tool for Data Collection in Educational Research. *Lucky International*