

**Economic Appraisals of Dams:  
A Case Study of Bagalihar Dam in Jammu and Kashmir, India**

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Dams play an important role in an economy by controlling floods, providing hydro-electricity, and enabling agriculture. However, there are also many negative impacts of dams, like, displacement of communities, forced migration, loss of livelihood, dangers of dam failure, drying of rivers, loss of bio-diversity, etc. Thus, while dams can be important agents of economic growth and development, they can also be the harbinger of social and environmental catastrophe. The present study has been conducted on the economic potential, benefits, and social disruptions accrued from, as well as caused by, the Bagalihar Dam in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. The Bagalihar Hydro-electric Power Project was conceived in 1992, and commissioned in 2008 as a 900 MW power plant. The project envisages giving boost to the ailing power sector of Jammu and Kashmir by building run-of-the-river power plant on Chenab River in the Doda district of Kashmir. For the purpose of this study, Pul Doda village in Doda district has been chosen. The project has led to the displacement of more than 200 families and caused disruption of social life and living standards. The present study measures the economic impact of the power project not just in terms of fillip provided to power sector, but also in terms of social and economic changes brought about by the project. Various issues like health, environment, livelihood, displacement, migration, and labour are used to assess economic impacts. Apart from these socio-economic indicators, impact of project on transport, road connectivity, fishing and tourism is also discussed. The study concludes with a discussion on the economic benefits vis a vis social costs of the Bagalihar Dam.