



cutting through complexity

Consultation Comments for Feasibility Study on Resettlement of the British Indian Ocean Territory

31st January 2015

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Acronyms and abbreviations

BIOT	British Indian Ocean Territory
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NHS	National Health Service
ToR	Terms of Reference
ZSL	Zoological Society of London

1 Introduction

In March 2014, the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) Administration commissioned KPMG to carry out a feasibility study for the resettlement of BIOT by Chagossians. This study was carried out in consultation with stakeholders, as outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR), which state that 'the study will seek input from Chagossians and interested parties throughout the review'. The Terms of Reference are available in the Feasibility Study Report Volume 1, 31st January 2015.

This consultation document sets out the details of the consultation process and documents the comments made by stakeholders during this process. It includes comments made in the consultation meetings and a summary of key written comments/issues on the report, together with our responses.

2 Initial consultations with Chagossian community

2.1 Methodology

The study team, including the social development and resettlement specialist, carried out initial consultations with the Chagossian community in Mauritius, Seychelles, Crawley, London, and Manchester between 21 June and 5 July¹. The purpose of this visit was to inform the Chagossian community of the study and consultation process, and to gather their views on this process and resettlement in general.

The consultation process involved holding individual and group meetings with Chagossian representatives and with members of the community. Chagossians were also invited to submit formal papers or provide comments via email to the study team.

A community focus group guide (Annex I) was developed to facilitate conversation between the study team and the Chagossian community. It was designed to capture information on the Chagossians' expectations of what resettlement would involve, issues that matter the most to the community, and what life was like for the older generation when they lived in BIOT. The community focus group guide was successful in facilitating the process of collecting information during the consultations.

2.2 Consultation comments

2.2.1 Mauritius

Two meetings with the Chagossian community in Mauritius were held over two days. On the first day the team met with 24 members of the executive committee of the Chagos Refugee Group; and on the second day the team met with approximately 190 of the wider Chagossian community in smaller groups. Table 2.1 shows the questions asked of the community during the consultation, their response, and the study team's comment on the community's responses to our questions.

Table 2.1: Focus group questions for the community in Mauritius, their responses and study team's review comments.

Questions	Community response	Review comment
How many would permanently return to BIOT?	Almost all members of the community in the consultation meetings said that they would like to permanently return to BIOT. None said that they wanted to go back temporarily.	All options in the study involve permanent resettlement.
Where is your first choice of relocating?	Approximately 100 people wanted to return to Diego Garcia; Approximately 85 people wanted to return to Peros Banhos; and 75 to Salomon. People generally wanted to return to the Island where they or their relatives were from.	The study considers options of resettlement on Diego Garcia, Ile du Coin (Peros Banhos atoll) and Boddam (Salomon atoll).
How many are currently employed and what are the most common types of employment?	Approximately 50% of non-retirees are employed. Most common professions are: Electrician, Mason, Maid, Watchman, Blacksmith, Lorry Driver, and Storekeeper.	This is useful information for the livelihoods analysis.

¹ Mauritius (21-22 June); Seychelles (26 June); Crawley (2 July); London (4 July), Manchester (5 July)

Questions	Community response	Review comment
Have you had training in your jobs and are you interested in training opportunities?	The majority had no specific training but a few had been apprentices. Most were interested in training opportunities.	As above.
What are some of your infrastructure requirements if resettlement was to go ahead?	Port facilities in Salomon, Edmond Island, Peros Banhos and Three Brothers. The Chagossians want access to all the types of infrastructure that Diego Garcia currently has, including a public health service. The population should have the same access to services as communities located in the UK, including schools, hospitals and houses that are robust to cope with climate change.	The infrastructure included in the report has been identified with a view to reasonable needs and environmental impact. A very small community in such a remote location would not be able to access the same sort of infrastructure as that available in the mainland UK.
Do you see any community involvement in community maintenance if resettlement occurs?	Most were happy to help with maintenance but the UK Government should bear all the expenses.	This concept is mentioned in the report.
What priorities would you set for education and training?	Pre-Primary, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary. Chagossians should have access to universities in the UK. There should be the introduction of scholarships for Chagossians attending university and for teacher training.	The smaller the community, the more limited the specialist educational services that can be provided. Primary education is likely to be the top priority and most feasible, but will depend on the number of children who resettle. Funding of tertiary education would be a matter for negotiation.
What would you consider the minimum and basic health services that should be available to your family on all or most of the islands?	Dispensaries, hospital, all NHS services, pharmacy, lab analyst.	Full NHS services are not feasible. The study includes costing for basic healthcare services.
If there is relocation, what are your major concerns about the environment?	The community want the environment to be protected. There is now illegal fishing etc. despite the presence of a patrol vessel. There is a need for more patrol boats to stop illegal fishing. Coral reefs are being destroyed by waste from ships. The Chagossian community proposed a green tax on all ships entering the area.	Environmental concerns are central to the Feasibility Study which will propose enhanced environmental monitoring. Taxation of shipping is an issue for consideration but will depend on the volume of ships and the feasibility to tax. Charges on cruise ships are a potential or promising source of revenue.
Questions about the Past: How abundant were agricultural crops?	The community only worked in copra. They did not have agricultural training.	The study will include some proposals on training needs.
What was the fresh water supply like? Adequate/Inadequate?	Never had any problems with water (Adequate).	This is helpful to confirm the viability of resettlement.
Did you have enough seafood?	Never any shortage of fish	As above, although reef fish decline is now evident across much of the Indian Ocean (as identified in the Feasibility Study).

Questions	Community response	Review comment
Question about Sustainability: How can the islands become sustainable after 10 years? What are your ideas to generate income?	The EU has stated that if the Chagos resettlement happens then the UK can apply for funding for Chagos Islands. Fishing can generate income; 3000 hectares are available for coconut trees which can be used for fuel, cosmetics, etc. Eco-tourism could be developed and there should be a tourism budget for the Chagos Islands.	The feasibility study considers these livelihood ideas. As a dependency, we agree that the EU would be a useful source of development assistance.

Table 2.2 lists additional issues raised by the Chagossian community in Mauritius together with the study team's response to the issues raised.

Table 2.2: Additional issues raised by the community in Mauritius and the team's review responses.

Topic	Community comments	Review Response
Economics	Economics should not dictate the case for resettlement. The future economic system should be sustainable.	The feasibility study is multi-faceted. The UK government will ultimately decide what is feasible and affordable. Sustainability will be a major challenge for a small community.
Mission Participation to BIOT	The field mission to BIOT did not include Chagossian community members as part of the team.	The Feasibility Study was intentionally 'neutral' so was not undertaken by the community but includes consultation with it.
Diego Garcia	It was questioned whether Diego Garcia is within the scope of the Study?	Diego Garcia is central to the study.
Maritime Protected Area (MPA)	The MPA was declared with no input from the Chagossian community.	Our understanding is that Chagossians were consulted during the process (http://chagos-trust.org/sites/default/files/images/MPA%20Facilitator%20Report.pdf). The MPA, or its declaration, is not part of the study but a consideration in evaluation of resettlement options.
Citizenship	Who would be eligible for British citizenship? Who will be eligible to resettle? At the next meeting the consultants should report on citizenship issues.	Issues of citizenship are outside the scope of the study.
Income	Income information will not help the study.	The study needs to include an assessment of livelihoods so it is relevant.
Coconut Oil Study	Study should examine the Marshall Islands.	This was not possible within the budget for the study and not considered to be essential.

Topic	Community comments	Review Response
Environment	Waste water is disposed of in the sea and the UK and the USA do not act responsibly to protect the environment. Oil is being dropped in the sea by and on the coral reef damaging the environment.	The study includes environmental assessments as a core concern.
Fishing	Sri Lanka is fishing on the islands. There has always been plenty of fish both for export and consumption. Men will fish and women should be involved in fish processing.	Fisheries protection is a key environmental responsibility of BIOT. The study considers livelihood options. Gender issues are not included because of lack of information provided.
Graves	Access to ancestors' graves have been restricted, with only a few people going each year.	The focus of the study is on resettlement, not temporary access for this purpose.
Gender	No response to the gender questionnaire, and to ask about gender is gender discrimination.	This limited the scope for the study to consider gender issues.
Resettlement Plan	What is the plan for Chagos from the Government?	The government will develop plans following the study.
Housing	Appropriate housing for all members of the family.	The study considers housing requirements.
Energy, Education, Health, Agriculture, Employment	There will be a need to ensure that there are roads, bridges, ports as there is nothing now.	The study considers infrastructure requirements.
Training Centre	There have been limited training opportunities. A Training Centre should be established.	The study considers training requirements.
Land Use Plan	This was especially focused around animals and livestock.	The study considers livelihood opportunities. Livestock has environmental impacts.
Energy	Solar and Geo-thermal energy from the sea were stated as options to guarantee energy supply.	The study considers energy options.
Education	The education system should be specific and the curriculum developed for Chagossians.	The study considers educational requirements but not in detail of curriculum.
Pension Scheme	It should be the same as the UK pension scheme.	This is outside scope of the study.
Green Tax	Introduce a green tax for all ships entering the port at Chagos. Also, if they pollute the lagoon they should pay a fine.	Revenue options should be developed as a further study if resettlement goes ahead.

2.2.2 Seychelles

The team met with 14 members of the Chagossian leadership in **Seychelles**. Table 2.3 shows the questions asked during the consultation in Seychelles, their response, and the study team's comments on their responses to our questions.

Table 2.3: Focus group questions for the Chagossian community in Seychelles, their responses and the study team's review comment.

Questions	Community response	Review comment
Can you please provide us with your opinions about resettling? What are your major concerns?	Most of us are concerned about a standard of living, most of us want a standard of living similar to what we have now or an improvement.	This is taken into account in the study. However, resettlement is high risk and will involve many changes. It is impossible to maintain every aspect of current standard of living in Chagos.
How many would permanently return to BIOT?	All raised their hand. None wanted to go back once a year. None wanted to go back once every few years.	This is useful confirmation for understanding the viability of resettlement.
Where is your first choice of relocating?	Diego Garcia	The study includes this in all options.
How many are currently employed and what are the most common types of employment?	Everybody was employed. Marine Biologist, Administration, Police, Manager, Lawyers	The study suggested a detailed human resources study in advance of resettlement.
Have you had training in your jobs and are you interested in training opportunities?	The group did have training in their jobs and would like training if resettlement was to go ahead.	The study makes some outline proposals on training.
What are some of your infrastructure requirements if resettlement was to go ahead?	All of it. Green technology for energy.	The study considers options for energy including green energy.
Do you see any community involvement in community maintenance?	Yes, people should be trained on maintenance.	The study anticipates training and employment in this area.
What are your major environmental concerns with possible relocation?	The island is already polluted because there is no nation there. We can make it a model for all other Island nations. We don't need to use oil as we can explore more environmentally sustainable options if resettlement is allowed.	These suggestions are in line with the suggestions in the study which give priority to environmental sustainability.
Are there any mitigation measures that you would recommend if you relocated?	It would be a good idea to take measures to reduce pollution from Americans, and improve processes for cleaning the Islands.	These could be developed as part of the environmental monitoring.
What priorities would you set for education and training?	Education should be there for all ages, primary, secondary, university, and training.	Education solutions would need to be considered in the light of demand and affordability. Tertiary education would not be available on the island.
What would you consider the minimum and basic health services that should be available to your family on all or most of the islands?	Advanced health services because of the distance involved. Education and health should be free. Hospitals with doctors and specialists. Women mentioned maternal/child health care.	See previous comments. There will be severe constraints on what can be provided to a small community in such a remote location.

Questions	Community response	Review comment
How abundant were resources such as rainwater and fish on BIOT in the past?	They all said that there was plentiful freshwater, fish and seafood in the past.	The report considers evidence on availability of key environmental resources.
How can the islands be sustainable in 10 years? What are your ideas to generate income?	Tourism –high end tourism and eco-tourism rather than mass tourism. Fisheries. Agriculture.	The report considers income earning opportunities, though sustainability in 10 years is not anticipated.

Table 2.4 shows lists additional issues raised by the community in **Seychelles** together with the study team's responses to the issues raised.

Table 2.4: Additional issues raised by the community in Seychelles and the study team's review responses.

Topic	Community comments	Review Response
Government Timing on Resettlement	Will it take the Government another 10 years to act on resettlement?	This is a matter for the UK Government.
Payment from Americans for Diego Garcia	British receive a lot of dollars every year from the Americans, why can't they use that money to resettle the Chagossians?	How the costs of resettlement are financed is a matter for the UK government. We understand the statement to be incorrect regarding payments from the US.
Communication with FCO	I would urge you for the next visit to invite the FCO – they never reply to us via email etc.	The FCO will not participate in the visits because the review is neutral.
Who will be allowed to resettle?	What generations will be allowed to resettle?	This is a matter for the UK Government to consider following publication of the study.
Poverty	Quite a lot of Chagossians are suffering from poverty – can't the Government look into helping these people before resettlement?	This is outside the scope of the study.
Lack of expertise (doctors etc.)	Will the study consider the lack of expertise in resettling?	Without a detailed inventory of who is resettling and what skills they have, this cannot be definitive.
Have you planned on meeting everyone in the Seychelles?	Best way to do that is to request a large meeting.	An additional meeting was held in January.
Local Resource – For follow up meetings with the Committee and a larger Meeting	They would think about the job description and a local Community Liaison Coordinator.	This has not been completed yet.

2.2.3 Crawley

Consultations with the Chagossian Community in Crawley were held over two days – on the first day the team met with approximately 100 members of the wider Chagossian community; and on the second day the team held smaller meetings usually consisting of between 1-4 people for 30 minute slots.

Table 2.5 lists the issues raised by the community in Crawley on the first day of consultation together with the study team's responses to the issues raised. The Crawley meeting was in a slightly different format than the meetings in Mauritius and Seychelles with the community keen to ask questions rather than answer the study team's questions.

Table 2.5: Issues raised by the community in Crawley and the study team's review responses.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Decision on resettlement	The comment was made that FCO would decide about whether resettlement would happen so why were we asking the community what they think?	FCO wish the process to be consultative.
FCO	Why is FCO not here?	FCO wish the study to be neutral and independent.
Past Studies	In 2009 FCO came and nothing came of it. How can we trust you as past studies have achieved nothing?	KPMG is an independent firm completing a study on behalf of the BIOTA.
Diego Garcia	Diego Garcia is inhabitable as it stands – my suggestion is that as a show of good faith, why do they not resettle a part of the community on Diego Garcia. Are the Americans aware of what the FCO is considering? What is their position?	The FCO is planning to consult with the Americans on the study and its follow up.
Passports and Citizenship	Citizenship issue is the major concern. You can suggest to the FCO that when we move then all generations can move.	This is outside the scope of our study.
Airport	Will we have use of the airport at Diego?	This is included in the options analysis but would be subject to agreement from the US.
Economic	There is an understated potential of the Coconut economy. Recommend a pilot scheme involving 200 persons.	The Study will include coconut economy issues.
Wealth Funds	Have sovereign wealth funds been explored for this project?	No.
Building Costs	Building costs are sensitive in Mauritius, better to go through the Seychelles, there are better buildings in the Seychelles anyway.	The infrastructure adviser considered appropriate cost comparators.
Training	The younger generation have benefited from better education opportunities. What will be their training opportunities? There are many people of my age that have skills but no certificates/diplomas. What would that mean for me?	The study can only identify broad areas of need for training as well as possible applications of the skills of members of the community that would be willing to resettle.
Return	I want to go back but I won't return empty handed. My wife is from Mauritius and I want her to come with me. Can she? Would I receive the same amount of pension than I would over here?	The study cannot answer questions on individual circumstances.
MPA	Would the government rule out resettlement because of the establishment of the MPA? The London Zoological Society (ZSL) is said to be interested in environmental conservation but does not want resettlement.	The MPA is identified as a factor in relation to resettlement. Whether the government will rule out some options because of the MPA is a matter for them.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Chagossian Group	Our group only deals with native born Chagossians. We would welcome being part of a sub-committee to discuss plans for resettlement. What are the next steps? We want the same standard of education and health and to receive our pensions.	We have no responsibilities beyond the study. The establishment of committees for consultation is a matter for the UK government.
Airport and Port	Do the Americans control both the airport and the port?	Yes.

2.2.4 London

The study team met with 8 members of the Chagossian community in London. Infrastructure points raised included the need for a police station, a community centre, shops and a church. None of the earlier meetings had mentioned commercial shops or a police station. It was also urged that housing that was to be constructed should be built by the 'many qualified Chagossian masons'. There was a male participant with relevant port experience who was interested in returning. In terms of the environment, the participants preferred adopting the Seychelles model where about half of the island was set aside for conservation objectives. In terms of tourism potential they saw the possibility of cruise ships coming to the islands in the future as a key opportunity.

2.2.5 Manchester

The study team met with 20 members of the Chagossian community in Manchester. The question of Citizenship was raised. The question of who will be allowed to resettle, whether it will promote family reunification or divide families was a major topic in the Manchester consultations, even though it is outside the terms of reference.

All of the participants – multi-generational – wanted to return. They mainly wanted to return to Diego Garcia but were open to other islands. In terms of employment, some were working as machine operators, welders, brick makers, as well as in the hospital sector, and hotel business.

Participants in the Manchester meeting were very concerned about climate change and the potential impact on the islands.

2.3 Conclusions

The consultations allowed the team to reach several key conclusions which were helpful in informing the study:

- **Permanent right of resettlement.** A large majority of the community expressed the desire to permanently resettle in BIOT. No consulted member of the community said that temporary visits would be an acceptable alternative to resettlement.
- **Modern standard of living.** The community generally expects a modern standard of living with modern amenities and a high standard of public services provision.
- **Diego Garcia as a resettlement option.** Though members of the community wanted to return to the island where they or their relatives used to live, it was generally agreed that Diego Garcia should form part of the resettlement options.
- **Environmental awareness.** All the Chagossian groups consulted seemed aware of the environmental pressures facing the islands in BIOT and the risks that resettlement poses to the environment. They were enthusiastic about environmental conservation, renewable energy, sustainable fishing, and were keen to be involved in environmental monitoring if resettlement went ahead.

- **Jobs skills.** There was quite a wide variety of jobs skills within the Chagossian community from vocational roles, professional roles, to public service positions. The community was also keen to receive training in skills that would be useful for employment specific to resettlement on BIOT.
- **British Citizenship/Nationality.** Though issues of citizenship and nationality are outside the scope of this study, this issue is extremely important to the Chagossian community and is the issue most commonly flagged by them.

3 Consultation on the draft feasibility study

3.1 Methodology

On 27th November 2014 KPMG circulated the draft 'Feasibility Study for the Resettlement of the British Indian Ocean Territory' to stakeholders. Stakeholders were given a deadline of 22nd December 2014 to provide comments to KPMG on the draft report. The study team considered stakeholder comments and edited the report accordingly. At KPMG's request, BIOTA/FCO reviewed an updated draft for final factual corrections which they also requested from other UK government departments and the US government.

3.2 Consultation comments

This section provides a summary of the key messages taken from the consultation comments received.

3.2.1 Infrastructure costs

There were differences of opinion between stakeholders as to whether the study's indicative costs of the resettlement options were too high or too low. Several stakeholders stated that the costs would be lower if infrastructure was supplied by countries in the region (such as Mauritius) rather than US contractors. Some stakeholders also argued that costs could be lowered if a more basic standard of living was considered in one of the options. We responded by acknowledging that savings could be made on the options and included a variant on Option 3. However we used a variety of benchmarks in developing cost estimates including Mauritius and the Maldives and not only the US. We have also presented a variant of Option 3 to start on a smaller pilot scale with overall lower costs (but higher costs per person), responding in particular to suggestions from UK parliamentarians (in the All Party Parliamentary Group). We have also strengthened the analysis of the level of uncertainty surrounding the cost estimates which depend on specific requirements and numbers of resettlers.

The US Government conversely felt that the costs were under-estimated because of the reliance on US infrastructure which in many cases could not be provided. The US government has indicated that it will allow limited use of the airport and port for Chagossians. Another stakeholder also argued that the costs could be underestimated due to sea level rise and the underestimated cost of sea defences. We responded by noting the difference of opinion on costs and our cost estimations are indicative only and try to strike a balance between precautionary and realistic budgets.

Our three resettlement options all assumed a 'modern' standard of living in line with Chagossian expectations expressed in the June/July consultations.

3.2.2 Environment

There are substantial differences of opinion between stakeholders over the level of sea level rise due to climate change and the ability of coral reef accretion in keeping pace with sea levels. Stakeholders/scientists/reviewers hold differing views on the magnitude of change of sea level rise determined from tidal gauge data. Some thought the study team was questioning whether sea level rise was occurring at all, which was not the case. We have taken on board consultation comments on sea level rise and as a result believe that the report's section on sea level rise is improved and balanced.

Several key comments related to zoning of the MPA, if the outer atolls are included as resettlement locations, and the desirability of adopting No Take Areas (NTAs) as a means of confining fishing only to certain islands. We agree and have made amendments to the report accordingly.

3.2.3 Legal/Political

The consultation responses highlight British citizenship as an emotive issue of fundamental importance to the Chagossian community. The US Government and FCO provided a number of clarifications and corrections on the Exchange of Notes which have been taken into account.

3.2.4 Livelihood options

Stakeholders commented that the report did not have sufficient analysis on different potential livelihood options. Detailed analysis on employment, income generation and relevant costs (capital expenditure and operational expenditure) are addressed in Chapter 7 and Annexes 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4. These were not available at the time of the publication of the consultation draft. The US Government stated in their consultation response that 'Any tourism in BIOT would have to be on the outer island only, and would need independent infrastructure. The United States will not support the movement of tourists through Diego Garcia via US military infrastructure'. This would affect commercial transport to tourist areas on the outer islands and have implications for resettlement options.

4 Concluding consultation with the Chagossian community

4.1 Methodology

The study team met with the Chagossian community in Manchester, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Crawley during 4-12 January 2015²³. The purpose of this visit was to present the draft report's main findings and give the community an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarifications on the draft report. The comments provided by the community during these meetings went towards helping the team draft the final report.

4.2 Comments

4.2.1 Manchester

Table 4.1 lists the comments from the January meeting in Manchester along with the study team's response to these comments.

Table 4.1: Comments from January meeting in Manchester and the study team's review responses.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Diego Garcia (DG)	Do the options only comprise DG?	Options 2 and 3 comprise of DG only but option 1 comprises of DG and outer islands.
People allowed to resettle	Will children, and older persons (past working age), be allowed to resettle?	This is outside the scope of the study and is a decision for the government.
Nationality	Will it just be Chagossians and their families that will be allowed to go or all nationalities?	This is outside the scope of the study and is a decision for government.
Government decision	When will the Government make their decision?	This is outside the scope of the study and is a decision for government.
Resettlement timeline	When will initial resettlement begin, if Government approves resettlement?	This is outside the scope of the study and is a decision for government.
Conservation	Does the report mention Chagossians being involved in conservation projects?	The opportunity for Chagossians to be involved in environmental monitoring is highlighted in the report.
Construction materials	Use of materials from BIOT can be harmful to the environment, so couldn't construction materials be purchased from other countries (e.g. Mauritius)?	The report considers materials being transported from other countries such as Mauritius.
FCO	Can't the FCO meet with the Manchester community?	We have passed this comment onto the FCO.

² Manchester (4 January); Mauritius (8 January); Seychelles (10 January), Crawley (12 January).

³ A meeting did not take place in London due to the time timeframe involved in preparing the final report and the relatively low numbers of Chagossians in London. The chosen venues for the January meetings provided a good geographical spread and enabled most of the Chagossian community the opportunity to attend at least one of these meetings.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Living standards	Will the standard of living on BIOT be the same for all Chagossians regardless of what country they are currently living in?	This is outside the scope of our study.
Housing	What would the standard of housing be?	Too specific to be included in this study.
Coral reef accretion	Are the coral reef accretion (growth) rates in the presentation measured for BIOT specifically?	Reef accretion rates quoted in the presentation are for other parts of the world, and so only serve as a possible approximation for BIOT. Estimates for BIOT are planned.
US and Diego Garcia	The US should leave DG, not negotiate whether or not the port and airport may be available to any resettled Chagossian population.	This is outside the scope of the study.

4.2.2 Mauritius

Table 4.2 lists the comments from the January meeting in Mauritius along with the team's response to these comments.

Table 4.2: Comments from January meeting in Mauritius and the study team's review responses.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Consultation	The community was happy that they have been consulted and their comments taken on board.	The consultation process has informed the study.
Returning to BIOT	All of the community want to return.	It is difficult to estimate the number of Chagossians that want to return.
Other nationalities on BIOT	It is not acceptable that other nationals (e.g. Sri Lanka, Filipinos) live in DG, but not Chagossians.	This issue is outside the scope of the study, but we understand that Chagossians are eligible to seek employment on similar terms to these other nationalities.
Living by military facilities	Local people live on/hear military facilities elsewhere; why not on DG?	That is true but outside scope of the study.
Environment	DG military personnel do not care about the environment	We cannot comment on this.
Infrastructure	Why can't the Chagossians use the infrastructure on DG? Why is infrastructure so expensive?	The use of DG infrastructure depends on negotiations between the UK and the US governments. The remote location makes transporting materials for infrastructure expensive.
US and resettlement	Do the US agree to resettlement?	The US has no objection to the study going ahead but has made no comment on potential resettlement.
Citizenship	Would the Chagossians get British passports?	This is outside the scope of the study.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Employment	There should be more emphasis on employment, especially in agriculture.	Section 7 and Annexes 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 analyse livelihood opportunities.
Living standards	We did not say that we wanted a UK standard of living – happy with a more basic standard of living.	In the initial consultations in June/July the majority of the Chagossian community wanted a UK standard of living. The standards will in any case not be directly comparable.
Renewable energy	The community is keen on renewable energy such as solar farms.	Energy would need to take account of demand and cost factors, as well but options include renewable solutions.
MPA	MPAs and people co-exist elsewhere – why not in BIOT?	The study does not see the MPA as an impediment to resettlement.
2014 Annual visit to BIOT	Frustrated that the 2014 annual visit to BIOT was cancelled.	This is a matter for the FCO and not relevant to the study.
Green tax	US should pay for environmental damages to DG, via a Green tax (e.g. from ships, airport use), to help finance resettlement – especially provision for older persons returning.	This is outside scope of study.
Resettlement timeline	How long will it take to resettle?	This is outside scope of study.
Government decision	When will the Government make their decision?	This is outside the scope of the study and is a decision for government.
Rising sea level	All countries have to deal with sea level rise – why would we be any different?	BIOT is made up of low lying islands and are therefore at more risk than most other countries to sea level rise. It is not however uniquely vulnerable and the report identifies solutions being developed in other countries.
Private enterprise	How will the private enterprises on BIOT be selected.	This is outside scope of study.
Private property rights	Would we have any private property rights?	Property rights are mentioned in section 4 of the main report. This is ultimately a decision for the UK government.
Cultural heritage	Need to consider cultural heritage (look after the church/old buildings etc.), as it represents the Chagossian strong sense of belonging and socio-cultural identity.	Agree with the sentiments here as it will enhance the tourism potential of the Islands and minimise costs.
Law	Why does the legal section only take into account UK legal considerations and not the US ones?	BIOT is governed by UK legal frameworks as applied to BIOT within the context of laws in other Overseas Territories.
Sources of funding	Could we have more on alternative funding sources other than the UK tax payer? EU etc.	Section 7 and Annex 7.4 now provide further analysis of financial sustainability.

4.2.3 Seychelles

Table 4.3 lists the comments from the January meeting in Seychelles along with the team's response to these comments.

Table 4.3: Comments from January meeting in Seychelles and the study team's review responses.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
US/UK Army	Don't want to live alongside US/UK army.	Option 1 includes potential outer island development. But any settlement on Diego Garcia would have to share the island with the military facility as long as that is in place.
Citizenship	Would the Chagossians get British passports?	This is outside the scope of the study.
Livestock	Have we explored livestock on BIOT as livelihood?	Agriculture is discussed in section 7 of the main report.
Private property rights	Would we have any private property rights?	Property rights are covered in section 4 of main report. This is ultimately a decision for the UK government.
Economy	The UK government needs to establish an economic base fuelled by private enterprise first then resettle people later; this would fuel or catalyse further livelihood options.	The study assumes that resettlement would take place and private sector activities would develop as soon as possible alongside this.
Radioactivity	Are radioactive traces currently monitored on DG?	Yes and there have been no radioactive traces found in underwater or intertidal sediments ⁴
Option 3	Option 3, although least costly, might also be the least attractive to Chagossians; possibly insufficient critical mass. Put another way, an option with too few could be no option as a small scale resettlement with only low skilled jobs available would be of little interest to Chagossians.	This is a possibility and something the government would have to weigh up in their final decision on resettlement.
Fishing	The current recreational fishery on DG should no longer be exploited by facility personnel, given that relatively light/modest fishing has been shown to affect fish populations.	It is recommended that fishing would be controlled (e.g. by reduced fishing) and monitored to maintain stocks. One option might be for any fishing to be done only by Chagossians, in the event of resettlement.
Airport	Was the DG airport built on reclaimed land?	This is not relevant to the study.
Infrastructure	If resettlement is approved, how long would it take to build infrastructures?	The timeframe would depend on a large range of variables including the type of infrastructure selected, the

⁴ The study (Ministry of Defence, 2008) '...concluded that there has been no radiological hazard to any inhabitant of Diego Garcia as a result of the operation of nuclear powered submarines.'

Issue	Comment	Review Response
		procurement process, and technical factors.
Compensation	Chagossians evicted to Seychelles were not adequately compensated.	This is outside scope of the study.
Population	Former populations of Chagossians on BIOT were >3,000 (1,800 on DG).	The report mentions our understanding of the best information on former populations.

4.2.4 Crawley

Table 4.4 lists the comments from the January meeting in Crawley along with the team's response to these comments.

Table 4.4: Comments from January meeting in Crawley and the study team's review responses.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Resettlement	Can any individual or Government (with Mauritius in mind) stop resettlement from happening if the UK Government gives it the go ahead?	Resettlement is a UK Government decision only and no individual or country but the UK could block resettlement if the UK Government decided to proceed with it. The Mauritian Government has been informed about the study and was invited to comment – but they have not objected to anything in the report.
US Government	Does the US government accept resettlement on DG?	This would be a matter for subsequent negotiation by the UK government.
Training	What long term provision for training would there be?	Training provision is covered in section 7 of the main report.
Pensions	Would the older population still get a UK pension and would they receive pension credits?	This is outside the scope of the study and is a decision for the UK Government.
Costs	The costs at the moment seem fixed and rigid – i.e. no multiplier seems to have been used for determining costs of different options. Would the costs be the same if trained/skilled people resettled than they would be if unskilled people resettled?	Costs are indicative and any detailed costing would need to be done at a stage beyond this study. Most of the costs are infrastructure costs and would be roughly the same if skilled or unskilled people resettled
Costs and standard of living	Resettlement costs seem high, which are linked with high standards specified. This might be seen by the UK government as a barrier to resettlement. So it may be necessary to re-consider more basic standards.	'UK standard of living' is perhaps a misleading term as the facilities considered in the report are already quite basic but a 'modern standard of living' might be a more appropriate term.
Resettlement plan	There is no detailed resettlement plan. Why not?	This is outside the scope of the study.
Socio-economic questionnaire	Where is the information from the socio-economic questionnaire?	The socio-economic questionnaire wasn't filled out by the community.

Issue	Comment	Review Response
Citizenship	Does the study consider the issue of citizenship?	This is outside the scope of the study.
Government decision	When will the Government make their decision?	This is outside the scope of the study.
G4S	First time many of us have heard about G4S, and current salaries offered to Chagossians for work on DG are too low and act as a deterrent.	The issue of salaries for those employed on the Military Base would be for the UK government to raise in consultation with the Community in the event of resettlement.

4.3 Conclusions

Many of the comments received during the January meetings were similar to those received in the June/July consultation meetings. Key issues include:

- **Standard of living.** In earlier consultations all Chagossian groups expressed a preference for 'modern lifestyle' resettlement options. In the January meetings however this preference wasn't quite so universal with some Chagossians content with more basic lifestyle options.
- **Source of funding.** The issue of sources of funding for resettlement was prominent in both comments received during the consultation period and the January meetings. The community was keen to emphasise that the sources of funding for resettlement are potentially multiple and could include institutions such as the EU and private enterprises. Diversifying the source of funding would place less burden on the UK taxpayer.
- **Option 3.** Some felt that Option 3, although least costly in terms of total capital and operational costs, might also be the least attractive option to Chagossians as the low number of resettlers might be an insufficient critical mass to warrant the inclusion of certain facilities and high skilled employment opportunities. A small scale resettlement with low skilled job opportunities may be of little or no interest to Chagossians.

Annex I: Community focus group guide

Instructions: Please ask the following questions following the slide presentation. Please ensure that a range of respondents answer. You can assure the participants that there is no right or wrong answer – we just want their opinions, views and listen.

Date	Venue, Country	Number of Participants	
		Male	Female

Issues around Resettlement

1. Now that you have seen the slide presentation and reviewed the short handout can you please provide us with your opinions about resettling? What are your major concerns?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. Is there anything you would like the Feasibility Study team to consider or add to their work regarding resettlement?

3a. How many of you would like to permanently return to live in the British Indian Ocean Territory? (raise your hands)

3b. How many of you would like to visit once a year?

3c. How many of you would like to visit every few years?

4a. For those that would like to permanently return where is your first choice of relocating?

4b. For those that would like to visit where do you want to visit?

4c. For those that would like to visit every years what location do you want to visit?

If Yes – Right/desire to Visit Outer Islands, permanently or temporarily – please answer the following questions

The outer islands settled most recently were Ile Boddam (Salomon atoll) and Ile de Coin (Peros Banhos atoll). Other islands previously occupied were Ile Diamont (former leper colony), plus Ile Sudest and Eagle island (both abandoned).

- Which of these outer islands would you like to settle on or visit?

Employment

5. How many of you are currently employed?

6. What are the most common types of employment for men at this meeting? Women?

7. Have you had any periods (short or long) of unemployment?

8. Have you had training in a job?

Infrastructure

9. Roads, bridges, sanitation, water supply, telecommunications, and housing are essential infrastructure. What are some of your urgent infrastructure requirements if relocation was a possibility?

10. Infrastructure maintenance is costly. Would any of you be interested in learning or training on infrastructure maintenance? Are they prepared to participate in the 'clearance and construction work'? Are they prepared to undertake administrative and maintenance responsibilities? Are they prepared to undertake appropriate training, if necessary?
11. Do you see any community involvement in community maintenance?

Environment

12. If any, what are your major environmental concerns with possible relocation? Please elaborate.
13. Are there any mitigation measures that you would recommend or suggest that would enhance the environment if you relocated?
- 13.b.

For people who lived in Chagos,

For each of the above (named) outer islands, when you were living there:

Resources for Chagossians

How abundant was the freshwater supply?: (a) plentiful; (b) adequate; (c) inadequate? (Please specify island)

How abundant were fish/seafood in terms of food for Chagossians: (a) plentiful; (b) adequate; (c) inadequate? (Please specify island)

How abundant were agricultural crops e.g.copra/coconuts? (a) plentiful; (b) adequate; (c) inadequate? (Please specify island)

14. Commercial and work opportunities and Environment

When you lived in Chagos, did your island(s) engage in the following commercial activities?

- fishing: Yes/No (Please specify island)
- agricultural crops e.g.copra/coconuts: Yes/No (Please specify crop and island)
- other activities (please describe):

..... (Please specify island)

Based on your past experiences, how do you rate the potential of the island(s) to support the following future activities?

- 1) commercial fishing (Please specify island):
 - open water: (a) Good; (b) Moderate; (c) Insufficient
 - inshore: (a) Good; (b) Moderate; (c) Insufficient
- 2) agricultural crops copra/coconuts (Please specify island): (a) Good; (b) Moderate; (c) Insufficient
- 3) tourism (Please specify island):
 - recreational/game fishing: (a) Good; (b) Moderate; (c) Insufficient
 - coral reefs and diving: (a) Good; (b) Moderate; (c) Insufficient
 - Island attractions e.g. accommodation, restaurant cafes, beaches: (a) Good; (b) Moderate; (c) Insufficient
- 4) Other activity (please describe) ((Please specify island):

.....

(a) Good; (b) Moderate; (c) Insufficient

If the environment could provide work opportunities now, which areas would you be interested in;

- 1) commercial fishing
 - open water: Yes/No

- inshore: Yes/No
- 2) agricultural crops e.g. copra/coconuts: Yes/No
- 3) tourism
 - recreational/game fishing: Yes/No
 - coral reefs and diving: Yes/No
 - Island attractions e.g. accommodation, restaurant cafes, beaches: Yes/No
- 4) other (Please describe):

.....

15. Environmental events

If you lived in Chagos, did your (named) island experience extreme weather/environmental events? Yes/No.

If yes, how vulnerable was the island to the following:

- Storm events: (a) Vulnerable; (b) Moderate – neither vulnerable nor resilient; (c) Not vulnerable – resilient
- Strong waves: (a) Vulnerable; (b) Moderate – neither vulnerable nor resilient; (c) Not vulnerable – resilient
- Coastal erosion(a) Vulnerable; (b) Moderate – neither vulnerable nor resilient; (c) Not vulnerable – resilient
- Other physical disturbances, such as changes in climate and sea level – please specify?: (a) Vulnerable; (b) Moderate – neither vulnerable nor resilient; (c) Not vulnerable – resilient

Social Issues

16. Do you have any concerns about education and health services in the Territory? If yes, please elaborate.
17. What priorities would you set for education and training in the Territory for those that returned?
18. What would you consider the minimum and basic health services that should be available to your family on all or most of the islands?

Sustainability

19. Sustainability is an important feature in any resettlement programme. How could sustainability be promoted in a relocation programme? Short term ideas? Long term ideas? Need to generate their ideas on how they would sustain their potential lifestyle? What would they do to sustain their families?


Other Issues

20. Are there any other issues that you would like to raise, question or clarify to the facilitators?

Closing: If there any persons or families attending that would like to speak privately with members of the Feasibility Team please wait after the meeting concludes to arrange a time. Also, please revisit the handout that you were provided before the meeting and if you have any follow up points you can mail or email them to the address provided.

We would like you to complete a short questionnaire before you leave the meeting and hand it to the facilitator after you finish.

Thank you for participating in the meeting.



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Produced by Create Graphics/Document number: CRT033778A

