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UNDERSTANDING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION
IN POST-DISASTER RECOVERY (CASE STUDY: NAGAPATTINAM, INDIA)

BY

DIVYA CHANDRASEKHAR

DISSERTATION

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Robert B. Olshansky, Chair and Director of Research
Professor Lewis D. Hopkins
Assistant Professor Faranak Miraftab
Assistant Professor Courtney G. Flint

ABSTRACT

Stakeholder participation is widely acknowledged as a critical component of post-disaster recovery because it helps create a shared understanding of local hazard risk and vulnerability, improves recovery and mitigation decision efficacy, and builds social capital and local resilience to future disasters. But approaches commonly used to facilitate participation and empower local communities depend on lengthy consensus-building processes which is not conducive to time-constrained post-disaster recovery. Moreover, these approaches are often criticized for being overly technocratic and ignoring existing community power and trust structures. Therefore, there is a need for more nuanced, analytical and applied research on stakeholder participation in planning for post-disaster recovery.

This research examines participatory behavior of three stakeholder groups (government agencies, non-local non-government organizations, local community-based organizations) in three coastal village communities of Nagapattinam (India) that were recovering from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The study found eight different forms of participation and non-participation in the case study communities, ranging from transformative participation to marginalized non-participation. These forms of participation and non-participatory behavior emanated from the negotiation of four factors, namely stakeholder power, legitimacy, trust, and urgency for action. The study also found that the time constraints and changing conditions of recovery pose particular challenges for how these factors operated on the ground and over the course of recovery. Finally, the study uses these insights to suggest four strategies for recovery managers to use in the short- and long-term to facilitate more effective stakeholder participation in post-disaster recovery.

To my mother and brother

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CHAPTER 1

LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLANNING AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

1.1 LONG-TERM RECOVERY FROM DISASTERS

In the aftermath of disasters, many different types of activities are set into motion. Residents are evacuated to safety, and provided with food, temporary shelter and other basic life services; damages are assessed and debris removed; basic infrastructure facilities are restored to serve returning populations; and, decisions are taken on what to rebuild, where, when, and how, and followed up with on-ground implementation. The nature of these activities differs significantly depending on the hazard, the immediate goals of the activities, the actors they engage, the resources they require, and the mechanism by which they come about. Moreover, while some of these actions have clear start and end characteristics (for example, evacuation), others have only identifiable start or end points (such as temporary shelter), and others have neither (for example, permanent reconstruction).

For decades, researchers have been attempting to define the various stages of post-disaster recovery. The general consensus amongst researchers is that over time, the focus of recovery moves from immediate response to restoration and finally redevelopment and reconstruction. Researchers also agree that there is a qualitative difference between immediate response—which involves activities like emergency shelter, evacuation, food provision, etc.—and later phases of recovery—which involve activities related to permanent reconstruction, redevelopment, and rehabilitation. For instance, Haas et al (1977) suggested that recovery occurs in four consecutive but overlapping phases, with each successive phase being much

lengthier than the preceding one and following a logical and logarithmic relationship between them. The four phases identified by Haas et al were: *emergency period*, referring to the initial hours or days of relief and rescue activities; *restoration period*, when evacuees return, major urban services and transportation are restored, and rubble debris is cleared; *replacement reconstruction* period, during which capital stock is rebuilt to pre-disaster levels and social and economic activities return to previous levels, and; *commemorative, betterment, and development reconstruction* period, during which “major projects are undertaken and future growth and development begin to take hold” (Haas, Kates, & Bowden, 1977, pp. xxvi-xxviii). However, a 1985 study of 14 disaster-affected communities in the United States by Rubin et al showed that recovery did not follow the logical pattern suggested by Haas et al. The study found that in some case communities different recovery phases started simultaneously—for instance, while one part of the community may be in the restoration period, another may already be reconstructing because of their superior resource capability (Rubin, Saperstein, & Barbee, 1985).

Along the same lines as Rubin et al, Johnson (1999) also found that these phases did not follow a uniformly sequential pattern and instead suggested an alternative set of phases to describe recovery: *immediate response*, which involves rescuing people and property, and providing immediate aid; *restoration*, which involves “bringing about some sense of normalcy” such as utility restoration and short-term housing; *short-term or interim recovery*, which is a “period of intense policy making and interim solutions, restoring pre-disaster levels of functioning to impacted groups or areas”; and, *long-term recovery or permanent reconstruction*, which involves “repair, rehabilitation and redevelopment, and dealing with unresolved problems” (Johnson, 1999, p. 78). According to Johnson, the exact sequence and timing of these phases would be different for different places and for disaster events. Borrowing from

Johnson (1999), the later phases are referred to here as ‘long-term recovery’ and the process as the ‘long-term recovery process.’

1.2 SALIENT FEATURES OF LONG-TERM RECOVERY

The idea of disasters as being social, rather than solely geo-physical phenomena has garnered an increasing interest through the 20th and 21st century (Quarantelli, 1999). Research has provided invaluable insights into individual, community and organizational behavior in the aftermath of disasters, but most disaster research relates to short-term disaster response, and few analytical insights exist about the long-term recovery from disasters, its mechanics, or its management (Quarantelli, 1999). Such insights would be critical to local planning practitioners faced with disaster recovery in their local communities and who need to not only facilitate sustainable decision making, but also ensure strategic use of the opportunities presented recovery. Some of the salient features discussed in the existing literature on long-term recovery are:

- *Different communities have different needs for recovery:* Disasters affect each community, and each social group within it, differently, based on geographic location, race, class, caste and gender (Rubin, Saperstein, & Barbee, 1985; Mileti, 1999). This, combined with the differences in pre-disaster resource capabilities of these groups and communities, results in a wide range of recovery needs and calls for “site-specific [recovery] strategies” to address them (Rubin, Saperstein, & Barbee, 1985, p. 28).
- *Post-disaster recovery occurs in a constantly changing environment:* Disasters, particularly from catastrophic ones, often break down or weaken the usual structures of social exchange and information. Inaccurate or unclear knowledge of recovery needs, of

the motivations or actions of other actors, and of the changing social, demographic, economic, and political circumstance over the course of recovery, makes decision-making more challenging and highlights the need for rapid access to information, more effective information dissemination and more flexible and responsive decision-making structures (Quarantelli, 1999; Olshansky, Johnson, Horne, & Nee, 2008).

- *Disaster recovery is time-constrained:* To successfully meet social and economic needs, recovery actions must proceed quickly. Delays in decisions regarding long-term recovery and its financing can lead to uncoordinated redevelopment actions on the part of individuals within a community; cause small businesses to relocate or close down permanently; force low-income groups to sink further into poverty or leave the disaster area; or lead to certain interests and needs being overlooked during resource allocation and distribution (Dahlhamer & Tierney, 1998; Comerio, 1998; Olshansky R. , 2005; Green, Bates, & Andrew, 2007). This makes timely decision-making an important feature of successful repopulation and revitalization of disaster-affected communities.
- *Societies can be more divisive after disasters:* Disasters often divide communities over time. Tierney (2001, p. 3), for instance, points out that in the long-term, events of September 11, 2001 exposed differential vulnerabilities and community fault lines in New York society, and gave rise to “competing and often conflicting disaster framing processes”. Similarly, Abrams et al (2004, p. 128) argue that in post-9/11 New York, residents actively created, negotiated and contested the meaning of ‘community’, which “was rooted in uncertainty about identity, interaction, and the boundaries of community in the wake of the attacks”. A related feature is the emergence of new citizen and community groups during long-term recovery. These arise because traditional agencies

and procedures are inflexible or ineffective in dealing with disaster-generated difficulties, and new groups often come into conflict with these established organizations and institutions over the course of recovery (Nigg & Tierney, 1993; Comfort, 1994; Quarantelli, 1999).

- *Post-disaster recovery is an opportunity to improve upon pre-disaster status quo*: The recovery decision process provides an opportunity to: (a) improve upon pre-disaster community conditions through a strategic use of resources; (b) mitigate the physical and socio-economic impacts of future disasters by building back ‘safer’; and, (c) change *status quo* of local planning practices to make future development outcomes more sustainable (Schwab, 1998; Godschalk, 2003). Because long-term recovery eventually merges or transforms into ‘regular’ local development planning in most communities, this recovery phase is the most salient phase of emergency management to planners.

Planning for post-disaster recovery poses a unique challenge because it involves making a higher number of highly deliberative decisions within a shorter time-frame than planning during non-disaster times. Deliberation is important to successful recovery because of the variety of recovery needs, the precipitation of old issues and the emergence of new interests, as well as the need to utilize the opportunity presented by disaster recovery. This dilemma of balancing speed and need for deliberation in recovery planning, its implications for the decision process, and its outcomes are some of the least understood aspects of long-term disaster recovery (Olshansky R., 2005).

1.3 THE DILEMMA OF PARTICIPATORY RECOVERY PLANNING

Most communities attempt to fulfill this need for deliberation by initiating participatory planning for long-term recovery, which provides three distinct advantages. First, it helps contextualize hazard risk, vulnerability, disaster impact, and capture the diverse recovery needs (Rubin, Saperstein, & Barbee, 1985; Oliver-Smith, 1991). Second, it helps increase the efficiency and efficacy of decisions made, by utilizing local resources and knowledge (Burby, 2003; Berke, Kartez, & Wenger, 1993). Lastly, local participation in recovery planning helps build social capital and adaptive capacity, which in turn increase community resilience to disasters in the long run (Godschalk, 2003; Olshanksy, 2006). Therefore, local participation is critical to making long-term recovery and its subsequent development plans more equitable and sustainable.

But while disaster recovery literature exhorts the use of participatory approaches for more effective recovery decision-making, little is known about how this participation occurs or can be facilitated under time-constrained circumstances such as post-disaster recovery. Participatory planning approaches commonly used in practice are consensus-based, which requires that all stakeholders first identify the information and skills they can bring to the table; familiarize themselves with the other stakeholders, their needs, skills and cultural practices; and then build consensus or resolve conflicts on decisions (Maginn, 2007). But doing so requires time, an ill-afforded commodity during post-disaster recovery (Maginn, 2007).

Moreover, participatory planning approaches are often criticized for being too technocratic and not adequately self-critical. Participatory techniques are often accused of not taking into account the fractured nature of local communities and therefore, failing to achieve

their goal of true empowerment (Chambers, 1994). Nelson and Wright (1995) suggest that participatory planning can follow two lines of approach: one set views participation as a tool to accomplish project goals more efficiently, effectively, or cheaply (i.e. as a means to an end), while the other sees it as a process aimed towards increasing control of communities over their own development (i.e. as an end in itself). According to Nelson and Wright, most commonly used participatory approaches treat participation as a means, instead of, as they should, an end in itself. These sentiments are echoed by Kothari and Cooke (2001) and Craig and Porter (1997), who find that participatory approaches in current practice tend to be more focused on methodology than outcome, are victims of 'professionalization' (and consequently, standardization), and are continuously losing sight of their theoretical, political and conceptual limitations. The inability of these approaches to acknowledge historic societal divisions, pre-existing power structures, and issues of mistrust, often reaffirms disempowering relationships within communities, and because these techniques are masked in the rhetoric of empowerment they are simply reproduced over and over again (Kothari and Cooke, 2001). There is little research on how these weaknesses are mitigated or exacerbated when participatory planning is conducted under time pressure or in a constantly changing environment.

1.4 RESEARCH NEED, SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

It is clear from preceding discussions that there is need for more research on long-term recovery from disasters, and particularly how to balance the need for speedy decision-making with the need for deliberation. It is also clear that there is need for more nuanced and analytical research on the dynamics of stakeholder participation in planning overall, but particularly under recovery conditions. Finally, there is need for more practical guidance for disaster recovery

managers on how to facilitate more effective stakeholder participation under time-constrained contexts.¹

This research aims to address these three research gaps by exploring the dynamics of participatory planning in the context of the speed-deliberation dilemma of long-term recovery. First, it analyses how and why stakeholders participate in time-constrained, post-disaster recovery planning. Second, it provides practical insights and strategies for recovery managers to use in the short- and long-term to facilitate more effective participation in post-disaster recovery. Because some of these strategies, particularly the long-term ones, are also useful for improving local development planning in general, this research contributes to both the fields of disaster studies as well as community planning and development.

¹ By the term ‘recovery manager’, I imply any planner or development practitioner made responsible for managing recovery planning exercises in the aftermath of disasters. This includes officials from local planning departments as well as consultants (non-governmental, non-profit, or private) hired to or charged with the responsibility of conducting land use reconstruction, redevelopment or rehabilitation at the local level after disasters.

CHAPTER 2

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING, RESEARCH

OBJECTIVE AND QUESTIONS

This goal of this research is to examine the dynamics of stakeholder participation in post-disaster recovery planning. In this chapter, I first review existing literature on the forms and types of stakeholder participation, the factors affecting it, and their measurement. From this, I then refine the research objectives and questions for this study.

2.1 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING²

Perhaps, the most commonly referenced work on citizen involvement in planning is that of Arnstein (1969) which portrays citizen participation as a term for citizen power. Arnstein's 'Ladder of Citizen Participation' described eight levels of participation, namely,

- i. Manipulation: which involves 'educating' citizens about a proposed plan or action, with the aim of engineering their support;
- ii. Therapy: which involves engaging citizens, but only to 'cure' them of their own 'pathological powerlessness';
- iii. Informing: which involves imparting information to citizens through a one-way medium with no channel for feedback;

² For the purpose of this research, the term "planning" and "planning process" refers to any organized decision process undertaken for land use and physical development. While on ground these decision processes may manifest as formal or informal, group-level or individual, and as comprehensive or ad-hoc processes, for this study, I have focused on decision processes that are formally organized, group-level, and both, comprehensive and ad-hoc. The term "stakeholder" is used to refer to any person, group or organization that can place a claim on a planning process, its resources or outcome, or is affected by that outcome (modified from Bryson (1995)).

- iv. Consultation: where citizen input is actively sought, but within restrictions or with no assurance of being taken into account;
- v. Placation: which involves hand-picking some citizens to be part of decision-making, but with no regard to local structures of power and representation. Success in placation depends on the quality of technical assistance available to citizen participant “for articulating their priorities and the extent to which the community has been organized to press for those priorities”;
- vi. Partnership: where power is redistributed among citizens and ‘power holders’ through negotiation. Here, decision-making responsibilities are shared through structures and pre-established ground-rules.
- vii. Delegated power: where citizens hold clear majority (such as of seats on committees) and have ‘specified powers’ to demand accountability. Here, there is more pressure on power holders for active bargaining as opposed to belated response;
- viii. Citizen Control: where “participants or residents can govern a program or an institution, be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and be able to negotiate the conditions under which "outsiders" may change them” (Arnstein, 1969, pp. 216-224).

Based on the levels of power, Arnstein further classifies Manipulation and Therapy as ‘non-participation’; Informing, Consultation, and Placation as ‘tokenism’; and, Partnership, Delegated Power, and Citizen Control as ‘citizen power’ (see Figure 2.1). As per this framework, to move from non-participation to citizen power requires devolution of power from the ‘haves’ to the ‘have-nots’.

Despite its usefulness, Arnstein's 'ladder' is most suited to planning processes conducted in the United States. To address this limitation, Choguill (1996) modified Arnstein's 'ladder' to better reflect the project-based nature of planning as it is conducted in the developing world. Choguill (1996) portrays community participation as both, a means to fulfill basic community needs which were previously inaccessible and as a means to exercise broader political agency. Her 'Ladder of Community Participation in Under-developed Countries' identifies eight types of participation (see Figure 2.2):

- i. Self-Management: occurs in situations where there is a "lack of governmental interest in or opposition to the local community demands". Here, community members plan and control local improvements on their own, or in collaboration with independent non-governmental organizations, but there is no control over the decisions of the local authorities and no reflection on power in the larger political structure;
- ii. Conspiracy: occurs when participation in the formal decision-making processes is not allowed or where reasons given by local authorities for action disguise ulterior motives or benefits for particular groups;
- iii. Informing: occurs where local authorities inform local communities about their "rights, responsibilities and options without providing any mechanism for feedback or negotiation. Here, the agenda and project details have usually already been developed, often along controversial lines;
- iv. Diplomacy: occurs where local authority officials seek opinions on potential local development project but provide no assurance that project will be implemented, that the community input will be incorporated into the project, or that community

efforts will be supported. This behavior by local authority is usually attributed to a lack of interest, available financial resources or their incompetence;

- v. Dissimulation: occurs when community members are placed on “rubber-stamp” advisory committees or boards with the express purpose of “educating them or, more frequently, engineering their support”;
- vi. Conciliation: occurs when local authorities devise solutions that are then ratified by community representatives appointed to advisory groups or decision-making bodies. Here, while there is opportunity for community representation, there is also the possibility of co-optation by the more powerful or persuasive elite;
- vii. Partnerships: occurs where community members share planning and decision-making responsibilities with outside decision-makers and planners through involvement in joint policy boards, planning committees and through informal mechanisms for resolving problems and conflicts;
- viii. Empowerment: where community members have a majority of seats or functional specified powers on formal decision-making bodies regarding particular projects when local authorities are unable or unwilling to undertake improvements. This differs from self-management in that local communities have control over actions of local authorities.

White (1996) portrays participation as a site of conflict between ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ interests. Here, “top-down” interests refer to those who “design and implement development programmes have in the participation of others”, while “bottom-up” interests refer to “how the participants themselves see their participation and what they expect to get out of it” (White S. , 1996, p. 7). According to White’s understanding, participation is an dynamic outcome of how

these interests interact, with some interests dominating over others at certain times therefore changing the character of participation over time. In turn, participation outcomes change the status of quo of these ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ interests. White identified four different forms of participation occurring in local development programs around the world:

- i. Transformative participation: where participants are involved in considering options, making decisions, and taking collective action, in a manner that leads to a greater consciousness of the problems in the community and a greater confidence in being able to collectively address it. This form of participation therefore, engenders empowerment and serves as a means as well as an end.
- ii. Representative participation: where participants are involved in order to influence the design of the project or program and its subsequent management (i.e. “leverage”) and which program designers and implementers use to ensure that the project/program is suitable to the local context and need (i.e., “sustainability”). This form of participation serves to add ‘voices’ to the program/project development.
- iii. Instrumental participation: where participants view their participation as a means to an end and which program designers and implementers use as a tool to improve cost-effectiveness. An example of this would be program managers requiring residents be involved in constructing a new school. Here, residents may view their participation as a “cost” incurred towards getting a new school and having no value beyond the project, while program managers may view it having improved “efficiency” in the program.
- iv. Nominal participation: where participants want to simply be included and which program managers use to demonstrate that they have a ‘popular base’ or are ‘doing something’ and

therefore boost their claims for personnel or financial support (i.e. for “legitimation”).

This type of participation serves the purpose of ‘display’ for both actors.

White’s forms and interests in participation, along with the function they serve, are summarized in Figure 2.3.

The insights from Arnstein, Choguill and White imply that stakeholder participation is a function of both presence in decision arenas as well as impact on decision outcomes. In contrast, non-participation is understood as visible but ineffective participation. While these conceptualizations are helpful in emphasizing both impact and presence as measures of participation, they assume that visible presence is necessary for impact to occur. They do not explicitly acknowledge either participation that is non-visible yet effective or different forms of exclusion.

It is possible for some stakeholders to have impact on the decision process while not visibly participating in decision-making. For instance, a study on water management programs in South Asia about women’s non-participation in water users’ organizations found that women often participated in these programs through informal means such as: having their husbands or male relatives relay their wishes to the formal organization and in turn, receiving information from them about decisions made in the organization meetings; using location advantages of their fields along the irrigation canal, or using their own physical (bodily) advantage to take water first; and using female-based networks or individual contact to access resources. However, the study also acknowledged that using such indirect means meant that women had less control over the management of the resource, and that increased dependence on connections to gain access to resources tended to reduce the overall standing and bargaining power of women in the

community (Meinzen-Dick & Zwarteven, 1998, p. 343). Similarly, stakeholders may indirectly influence the outcome of certain decisions by opposing the decision process from outside or by actively pursuing alternate (even conflicting) agendas of development.

Non-participation may also imply lack of visibility, resulting from complete exclusion from a decision process. Not much research exists regarding characteristics and causes of the different forms of exclusion. If planning managers are to facilitate participatory development, then they must understand not only reasons for visible and/or impactful participation in decision-making planning, but also exclusion from it. Distinguishing between the various forms of participation and non-participation is particularly important because common planning practice assumes that stakeholder presence in decision forums is an adequate measure for successful participation while ignoring non-visible and non-impactful forms (Gramberger, 2001; Kelly, 2004).

Lastly, existing literature speaks little to participatory planning specifically for post-disaster recovery: whether participants behave differently under conditions of urgency and time constraints, and what happens to the different forms of exclusion under such conditions. One possible line of inquiry into these unresolved questions about participatory behavior would be to identify the factors that affect participation and then to examine how their interaction under recovery conditions lead to different forms of participation and non-participation, both in terms of visibility and impact.

2.2 FACTORS AFFECTING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Two sets of literature were used to identify factors affecting stakeholder participation in planning and decision-making. The first is of stakeholder theories within the field of

organizational behaviour and strategic management. This theory argues that organizational decision-making should not cater to the needs of traditionally recognized parties such as investors, employees, suppliers, and customers, alone. Instead, organizations should also consider other groups such as governmental bodies, political groups, other trade groups, and local communities, who also have an interest in, as well as influence on the actions of the organization.

While there is much debate in the field on how to identify stakeholders from other groups, Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) provide a useful starting point. They employ three attributes to describe stakeholders and their salience on decision-making within organizations: power (the extent a party has means to impose its will in a relationship), legitimacy (mutual recognition due to conformance with expected structures or behaviours), and urgency (time sensitivity or criticality of the stakeholder's claims) (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 853). Based on these attributes, Mitchell et al derive eight types of stakeholders, each with their own set of implications for the organization's decision process. While it was originally developed to explain decision-making within organizations, the stakeholder theory approach has its particular uses to describe stakeholder participation in larger public processes as well. For instance, the stakeholder approach is commonly used to explain the process and outcomes of collaborative planning in natural resource management (Buckles, 1999).

The second set of literature that examines factors affecting stakeholder participation is that of collaborative planning, in the field of planning and development. Collaborative planning theories visualize planning as a decision process where the planner is essentially a mediator between various stakeholders. Through collaborative planning, participants in a decision process

can arrive at an agreement on action that expresses their mutual interest (Healey, 1996). The manner in which this consensus building process proceeds, as well as the factors that affect it have been the subject of many research studies. For example, Booher and Innes (2002, p. 221) note that stakeholders within a collaborative process generate, negotiate and utilize network power to achieve their interests. Groups or individuals become involved in collaborative efforts because they believe, or have learnt, that their interests are interdependent on the actions of other actors, and would like to be recognized within the decision process as stakeholders (Booher & Innes, 2002). Further, Booher and Innes (2002, p. 221) note that trust between stakeholders is essential to the collaborative process, and it often forms the reason why stakeholders continue to remain within the process.

Kumar and Paddison (2000, p. 205) used the example of a joint structural planning exercise in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley in Scotland to illustrate how trust emerges as a crucial factor in a stakeholder's decision to enter a collaborative process, as well as to continue within it. An important aspect reflected through these studies is that factors influencing stakeholder participation in collaborative decision processes do not remain static over its duration. These factors are constantly negotiated by the stakeholders within the process, and this negotiation has implications for the continued involvement of the stakeholder in the process, as well as for the goals of the process itself.

From these literatures, there are at least four identifiable factors that may influence the level and manner of stakeholder participation in recovery decision-making: power, legitimacy, trust, and urgency of action. Furthermore, these factors do not remain static over the duration of the process. Instead, stakeholders may constantly negotiate their levels of power, build or lose

trust, are granted or actively gain legitimacy, and have a changing sense of urgency throughout the decision process. Urgency of action is particularly relevant to post-disaster recovery because of time-constraints and high uncertainty that characterize this process.

An analysis of power, legitimacy, trust and urgency of action would first involve deconstructing the concepts into measures or identifiable instances. Doing so, however, also increases the possibility of overlooking the subtle manner in which these sociological phenomena operate in real life. To address this, I started with broad conceptualizations of power, trust, legitimacy and urgency of action, and refined these in the field through an iterative process involving local NGOs and residents to guide key informant interviews. Table 2.1 shows the final interview guide used in fieldwork.

2.2.1 Power

A stakeholder's perception of having or not having any meaningful influence on the outcomes of a process may guide their decision to participate, or not, in the process. Pfeffer (1981, p. 3) defined power as "a relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not have otherwise done".³ Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) followed this definition to categorize power into three bases: coercive (i.e. using force or threat), utilitarian (i.e. material or incentive-based), and normative (i.e. symbolic influences). Welcomer et al (2003), in their study of the relationship between forest product companies in Maine and their stakeholders, used four constructs to define stakeholder power: primacy (importance of the resource that the stakeholder brings to the table);

³ Pfeffer (1981) here is rephrasing Dahl's (1957) definition which was as follows: "A has power over B to the extent that A can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do".

substitutability (the degree to which one stakeholder's resource can be substituted with another); positive discretion (extent to which a stakeholder can positively affect an organization's access to resources or practices); and, negative discretion (extent to which a stakeholder can negatively affect an organization's access to resources or practices).

However, these studies employ a highly utilitarian approach to power analysis, which increases the potential of stakeholders being under-represented or misunderstood. It also ignores more latent forms of power, those that occur even in the absence of visible conflicts between stakeholders (Lukes, 1974). This is a particularly useful starting point to understand participation, or more importantly *non*-participation, of marginalized social groups in recovery planning, and helps place the relationship between stakeholder power and their participation (or non-participation) in a historical, cultural and institutional dimension. For instance, in the study on water management programs in South Asia, Meinzen-Dick and Zwartveen found that both formal and informal rules of membership of water users' organizations dictated women's participation in these organizations. Formal rules required representation of the head of the household or of formal right-holders to irrigated land, who are usually men, while informal rules based on gender division of labor and "appropriate male and female behavior" further limited women's participation in these organizations (Meinzen-Dick & Zwartveen, 1998, p. 340). These informal practices and stereotypical ideas included: the traditional dominance by men in public decision-making forums; the idea that only men are farmers and interested in irrigation; the idea that women are not capable of participating in meaningful ways (either because they are illiterate or because they are assumed to be busy with other, "more appropriately female activities"); social norms prescribing women to confine their activities to a small geographical area (homestead or village). Lastly, women's participation was also found to be hampered by

program design owing to the pre-conceived notions of planners about who were to be considered users, as well as the sequencing of activities such as tasks typically considered as ‘male’ were conducted before tasks which were not (Meinzen-Dick & Zwarteveen, 1998, p. 340).

For this study, I used the following measures as guides to identify stakeholder power: impact of stakeholder on the survival of the process; interest of a stakeholder in the outcomes of the process; ability of a stakeholder to influence these outcomes; importance of the resource that the stakeholder brings to the table; relative importance of the stakeholder’s resource; extent to which a stakeholder can positively or negatively affect another stakeholder’s access to resources or process; and the stakeholder’s own perception of the power they wield. To counteract any utilitarian bias, these constructs are utilized in combination with narratives and ethnographic accounts, so as to illuminate the more subtle aspects of stakeholder power.

2.2.2 Legitimacy

Mitchell et al (1997: 869) define stakeholder legitimacy as, “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, definitions”. While stakeholder power is something that is both inherent as well as externally acquired, stakeholder legitimacy as used here is external to a stakeholder. While a stakeholder may negotiate for legitimacy in a planning process, it is ultimately and essentially granted through an external process, either by planning managers and other stakeholders.

I used the following measures as the initial indicators for legitimacy in this study: groups with contractual claims (formal/legal or informal/social) on the process; groups with critical

contributions to make to the process; groups to whom the process or its outcomes are directly responsible; groups with a moral or legal claim on the process; groups that bear some form of risk as a result of having invested some form of capital, human or financial, something of value, in the process; groups placed at risk as a result of proposed activities, or whose rights are violated as a result; groups that have perceived interest in the actions of an organization.

2.2.3 Trust

In their study on structural planning in Glasgow, Kumar and Paddison (2000) identified two complementing forms of trust: affect-based and cognition-based. Affect-based trust is characterized by emotional bonds formed on the basis of emotional investment, while Cognition-based trust is characterized by competence (whether an actor can perform the particular tasks), responsibility (whether the actor can act with restraint), reliability (whether the actor can consistently act as expected by other participants), and dependability (whether there is a likelihood of major behavioral deviations). In a study on public trust in risk managers of pharmaceutical and nuclear plants, White and Eiser (2006) identify three forms of trust: interpersonal trust (e.g. trust or distrust in among close friends and family), role-based trust (trust in persons playing a certain socially or occupationally defined roles, e.g. doctors or politicians), and system trust (e.g., trust in the political or legal systems). In their study they describe how pieces of new information about the risk manager, especially those relevant to his or her specific role, can increase or decrease public trust in him or her (White and Eiser's, 2006).

In this research, I used indicators of trust modified from Kumar and Paddison (2000) to include the temporal view reflected in White and Eiser (2006). These indicators include: the presence of and changes in networks of social exchange and delegation; reciprocity and

protection of other stakeholder's interests over time; full and frank information sharing; meeting the expectations of all stakeholders; fulfilling of expected desirable behavior by stakeholders; absence of feelings of vulnerability; and shared values of stakeholders. It is also possible that higher levels of trust between various stakeholders and in the recovery managers would positively affect the level and manner of stakeholder participation in and over the course of recovery planning.

2.2.4 Urgency for Action

Mitchell et al (1997: 869) define urgency as the “degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention”. Urgency for action is one of the least studied characteristics of stakeholders, and is especially pertinent to the disaster recovery process where time is of essence. Moreover, in consideration of the differential impacts on different sections of society due to delayed action, a stakeholder's decision to participate or not participate in a recovery planning process may depend upon whether they perceive the process to be in or not in cognizance of their urgency. In this study, I used two constructs for measuring urgency for action: time sensitivity (i.e. the degree to which delays in attending to stakeholder claim or relationship is unacceptable to the stakeholder), and criticality (the importance of the claim or the relationship to the stakeholder).

2.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND QUESTIONS

The objective of this research is to create a deeper, nuanced and analytical understanding of the factors that affect stakeholder participation and how they evolve over the process of post-disaster recovery. Additionally, this research aims to provide practical and strategic advice to

recovery managers on how to conduct participatory recovery planning. Specifically, it examines the following research questions:

- i. What are the factors that influence the level and manner of stakeholder participation in post- disaster recovery planning? Specifically, what roles do stakeholder power, trust, legitimacy and sense of urgency of action play?
- ii. How do stakeholders negotiate their participation as recovery evolves?
- iii. What are the strategies and policies that recovery planning managers may develop, adopt or implement in order to facilitate stakeholder participation in long-term post-disaster recovery?

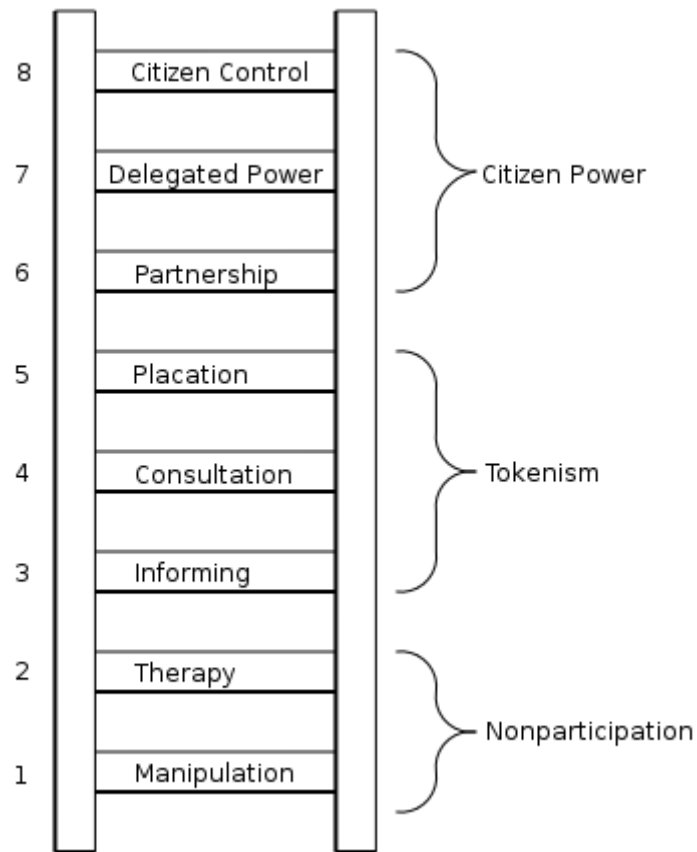


Figure 2.1 Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969)

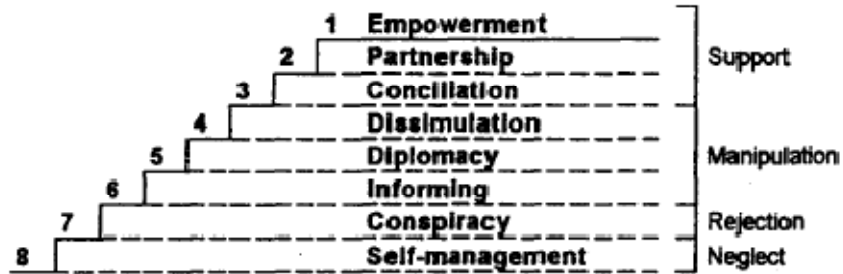


Figure 2.2 Ladder of community participation for underdeveloped countries

Form	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Function
Nominal	Legitimation	Inclusion	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency	Cost	Means
Representative	Sustainability	Leverage	Voice
Transformative	Empowerment	Empowerment	Means/End

Figure 2.3 Forms of and Interests in Participation (White S. , 1996)

Table 2.1 Key informant interview guidelines

Factor	Question Guidelines
Identification of stakeholder legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the stakeholder group was specifically invited to attend the recovery planning meetings • Whether stakeholder group was invited only after they themselves approached the recovery managers • Reasons why the stakeholder believed their presence in the recovery planning process was critical to the plan or its outcomes • Stakeholder group’s perception of their own standing in the process in relation to other stakeholder groups
Identification of stakeholder power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical standing of the stakeholder group in the village • Influence exerted by the stakeholder group in other program development or planning processes of the past. • Reasons for the stakeholder group’s belief that their presence was crucial to the process’s success • The stakeholder group’s interest in the plan outcomes • The resources (physical, social, and financial) that the stakeholder group brought to the process • Whether the stakeholder group’s contributions to the planning process was irreplaceable • The degree to which the stakeholder group’s actions or influence affected the planning process • Perception of the key informant’s independent decision-making capabilities, and the factors that inhibit or promote these
Identification of stakeholder trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder group’s prior experiences with development planning processes • Nature of the stakeholder group’s previous interaction with other stakeholders • Stakeholder groups’ perception of whether their values and needs were shared with other stakeholders • Whether and why the stakeholder group believed that their collaborative inclination would (or not) be reciprocated by other stakeholders • Stakeholder groups’ expectations of other stakeholders prior to entering the process and how that changed • Whether and why the stakeholder group believed that they had a responsibility to protect other stakeholders’ needs • Whether and why the stakeholder group felt that their communication with other stakeholder’s was (or not) free and frank
Identification of stakeholder urgency of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the stakeholder group felt that the recovery planning process represented their priorities in terms of importance • Whether the stakeholder group felt that the planning process reflected their priorities in terms of time sensitivity • Whether the stakeholder group felt at any time during the planning process that their recovery was being delayed due to the process, and if so, then what actions they took to counter it

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I have used a case study research approach for this study. According to Yin (2002, p. 13), case studies are “the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.” A common critique of the case study approach is that its findings may not be generalized outside of the study context. However, Yin (2002) counters these critiques by pointing out that unlike quantitative studies that aim for statistical generalizations, i.e. generalizing from ‘sample’ to ‘universal population’, case study research aims for analytical generalization i.e. from specific ‘result’ to broader ‘theory’. This theory is then tested in other contexts by logic of replication to test these theories in order to lend external validity to the results. I have used qualitative inquiry techniques for data collection and analysis also because they are particularly well-suited for collecting rich information about complex social problems and because they can situate research better within the local context (Neuman, 2003).

This dissertation study focuses on three case study villages in the Nagapattinam District located in the state of Tamil Nadu in India. The District of Nagapattinam was the worst affected part of India in the 2004 tsunami. I studied three stakeholder groups (government agencies, non-local non-governmental organizations, and community-based organizations) using qualitative inquiry methods such as in-depth interviewing, observation of community meetings, and examination of secondary source documentation, for data collection in the study. Key informant interviewing is advantageous because: (a) it helps gather data efficiently; (b) it helps the

researcher gain access to information unavailable otherwise; and, (c) it helps the researcher gain a particular understanding or interpretation of cultural information (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 75). Participant-observation techniques refer to a method of observation that involves researching a culture from within it, as opposed to objectively viewing as an outsider. This technique is particularly useful in understanding how the “activities and interactions of a setting give meaning to certain behaviors or beliefs” (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 48). Prolonged participant-observation can help put informants at ease and reduce likelihood of altered behavior as well as validate data gathered through interviewing. Review of secondary documentation helps further validate the data gathered through key informant interviews and the participant-observation method.

The research design for this study consisted of three steps as shown in Figure 3.1. The first step involved field preparation, conducted mainly in the United States and to some extent in Chennai, India. The second step involved fieldwork, first conducted at the regional-, and later at the village-level. The final step involved data analysis and reporting and was conducted in the United States.

3.1 FIELD PREPARATION

To prepare for the field, I first reviewed existing literatures on post-disaster recovery, participatory development, and collaborative planning to identify and justify my research questions. I then conducted background research to identify my case study regions, finalized my research methodology, created preliminary instruments for data collection and obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval.

3.2 FIELDWORK

I conducted fieldwork in two iterative steps for both case study regions. I arrived at the state capital of Tamil Nadu (Chennai) in early November 2007 and slowly began to contact and meet with state-level officials, non-local NGOs and regional scholars.⁴ For the next month and a half, I collected information on the policies and structures created for regional- and local-level recovery management and identified some key state, district and village-level players. I also collected information about community structures and social composition of coastal communities in Nagapattinam district, the impact of the tsunami on these structures, how decisions are usually made within these communities and the role of various social groups, civil society, private and public entities. I visited the Town of Nagapattinam (capital of the District of Nagapattinam) twice to build upon district-level contacts, arrange for local housing and transport, and familiarize myself with the case study region. At this time, I also refined my interview protocol and translated my consent letters and interview questions to better reflect local vocabulary and circumstance.

For the next step of fieldwork, I relocated to the Town of Nagapattinam (capital of the District of Nagapattinam). Once there, I approached a well-known consortium of NGOs (NGO-N) that had been working in the district ever since the tsunami.⁵ With their help, I was able to further refine my interview questions, identify my case study villages and build contacts in these villages. A list of the research tasks and questionnaire guide is provided in Appendix A.

⁴ The term “non-local” is used here to refer to entities/groups that are not based primarily out of a village or neighborhood. Most common examples of these would be NGOs with headquarters located outside the case study community.

⁵ There were only two NGOs having major presence in Nagapattinam district before the tsunami, and they created NGO-N to coordinate the actions of other NGOs during relief and recovery. The organization was highly successful in acting as a conduit between NGOs and the District Administration initially, and then later acting as a base for local information on recovery. Over time, it gained the respect of the District Administration and most NGOs, although some NGOs I spoke to resented their “superior attitude”. The image of NGO-N at the village-level was largely neutral (sometimes even positive), which was advantageous to me in terms of gaining the trust of local residents.

3.2.1 Case study selection

My initial criteria for selecting the case study sites were that: (1) the villages must have suffered extensive physical damage; (2) the villages must have had a somewhat diverse demographic composition (in terms of religion, caste and/or occupation) before the disaster; (3) the villages must have conducted, or participated in, one or more recovery planning processes after the disaster; and, (4) the village must have had a history of at least some community organizing before the disaster. The last criterion was important in three ways: firstly, it would help control for the influence of pre-disaster community organizing on the involvement of social groups; secondly, it would allow me to identify discrete interest groups in the villages; and finally, it would provide a deeper insight into why non-participation might occur despite the presence of this community organizing culture. Upon entering the field, I refined criteria #2 to require that the three villages exhibit different occupational profiles.⁶ In this region of south India, occupation is often related to caste, which in turn is related to settlement structure as well as village governance mechanisms. By choosing villages with specific occupational profiles, I was able to capture the type of decision-making structures operating within these villages. Accordingly, I selected one predominantly fishing village (“Fishing Village”), one predominantly farming village (“Farming Village”), and one village with equal number of fisher folk and farmers (“Mixed Village”).

⁶ Religion did not present itself as an issue in the case study villages. Majority populations were Hindu, with very few Christians or Muslim groups present. Most Christian informants, especially those who belonged to scheduled castes before converting to Christianity, related their post-disaster experience to their caste rather than their religion, despite the fact that caste system as a concept belongs to the Hindu religion. This indicates the prominence of caste relations in the rural south Indian community.

3.2.2 Identification of key informants

Next, I gained entry into the case study villages. Some of the staff members of NGO-N were residents of these villages, while others were well-recognized. I was able to capitalize on these connections to first gain permission to conduct my study from village ‘gatekeepers’ such as leaders of the traditional caste-based government (“caste panchāyat”) or the head of the village self-government (“Panchayati Raj Institution” or PRI). Through NGO-N, I also identified the other NGOs working within these villages and with their help identified potential stakeholder groups: government agencies, non-local NGOs, community-based and/or market groups.

It was hard to distinguish between community-based organizations and market groups in the field, for at least two reasons. First, there were few formal associations or groups formed around major local economic activities (fishing, farming and/or retail business). Second, even the few formal organizations formed for ‘market’ purposes actually aimed at promoting social activism and empowerment. For instance, it was difficult to categorize women-based micro-finance self-help groups (SHGs) strictly as a market group because their fundamental objective is women’s empowerment. Similarly, the only labor union identified (which was in the Fishing Village) had emerged as an activist response to perceived class discrimination. Again, it was difficult to classify this organization either as a market group or a community-based organization. To account for these peculiarities, I combined community-based and market groups to be one stakeholder group that now included traditional caste-based government bodies, micro-finance organizations, individual shop keepers, caste and/or gender-based self-help groups and labor unions. The final three stakeholder groups examined were: government agencies

(including, state-, district- and village-level administration), non-local NGOs (international and national and regional) and community-based organizations (including market groups).

3.2.3 Data Collection

Interview questions were semi-structured and open-ended and usually started with my asking the informant about their social standing and position within their family and their caste and village community, their past interaction with other castes and classes, their (continued) participation or non-participation in the relevant recovery program, their interactions with other stakeholders, and their feeling about having been included (or excluded) from the programs. Semi-structured interviews are useful in that they allow the researcher to capture a broad range of data, but in an efficient manner (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). The guideline I used for key informant interviews in this study (organized thematically) is provided in Appendix A. I reviewed and revised these constantly throughout the fieldwork to suit circumstances. I also took field notes wherever possible, usually after the interview to avoid distracting the informant. Wherever possible I selected informants to reflect the diversity even within each stakeholder category. In some cases, I reduced the number of interviews if no new information was being added to the data set.

To conduct interviews, I hired a local interpreter and used snowball sampling techniques to identify and contact key informants.⁷ Prior to each interview, I obtained either verbal or written consent from the informant. I explained to them what the study was about, that I had permission from the ‘gatekeepers’ and that participating in the study was voluntary. They were

⁷ I am ethnically from Tamil Nadu. While I understand Tamil (the local language) well, I am less skilled at speaking or writing in it. The first two interpreters I hired were nurses from a local hospital but they were not able to translate my questions from English to Tamil very accurately. As a result, I changed interpreters after the first few initial weeks. My next interpreter “Mrs. J” had previously worked with an NGO in the area and had better knowledge of the language.

also given a copy of the consent form in Tamil and/or English as per their request. I found it easy to identify and interview informants in the villages. Only one NGO in the Mixed Village refused to participate in the study because, as the project head informed me, they held “outsider” researchers in disdain.

In the communities that were more organized after the tsunami particularly, such as the *dalit* communities and fisher-folk of the Fishing Village, I found that informants had “ready” answers to my questions. This was because they had been either part of or aware of previous studies conducted by big multinational NGOs that they believed had increased the visibility of their village community and lead to more resources. At first, the informants I contacted believed the same of my study; one couple even asked me to help them adopt a child they had initially provided refuge to but who was now living in an orphanage. However, after I explained to them the purpose of my research, my lack of institutional association, and my financial limitations, they were still willing to participate in the study. Some said it was because they felt it contributed to their activism, while others said it was because I had approached them through trusted networks. To avoid ‘ready’ responses, I sometimes changed the question entirely or broke it down into smaller and less predictable parts. For instance, instead of directly asking about what they did to restore their livelihoods, I asked them to describe their livelihood processes and the inputs they usually used.

To the extent possible, I also tried to interview the less vocally active members of these village communities. In return for their cooperation, I raised notice to these cases, such as the adoption one, during my next interview with District Administration officials and other

prominent NGOs. However, I limited myself to advocating only non-political issues so as to not compromise my neutral image in the villages.

I also observed community meetings and communal life in the village and collected documents related to the various recovery activities and about the village communities. I audio-recorded all my interviews, video-recorded one community meeting, and took photographs of case study villages. I spent approximately three weeks in each case study village and interviewed between 3-4 informants within each stakeholder category for a total of 54 interviews in all. I completed all interviews by late March and relocated back to Chennai to collate the data and check for gaps. I then visited Nagapattinam once more to interview a senior District official I could not meet earlier. Table 3.1 shows the timeline of data collection per case study village and district.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

To analyze data, I used content analysis techniques. I used the indicators mentioned in the previous chapter to identify instances in the audio recordings of the interview where power, trust, legitimacy and urgency for action were in play and narratives that described the context in which these factors operated, such as the informant's communal history, social standing and prior interactions with these other stakeholders. I translated and transcribed these portions of the recordings into English. The results have been reported using "thick" narratives in the last chapter of this dissertation. To protect the identity of the informants all their names, names of their villages and/or organizational associations have been kept either anonymous or changed.

3.4 LIMITATIONS

The most obvious limitation of this research is the need to confirm the external validity of the findings from India. More in-depth comparative research will be required under other political-economic conditions to truly generalize the results of the study. A major limitation in data collection was that I was rarely able to interview my informants alone. The village and kinship dynamics were such in the case study region that informants either brought along their relatives or friends to sit in on the conversations so that the entire interview became a (small) group affair. The data collected under such circumstance has some advantages and disadvantages. While it is possible that certain 'issues' did not get aired because of the company, paradoxically informants also gained confidence from the presence of the others to say what they wanted. In data analysis, the most obvious limitation has been my moderate understanding of the Tamil language. Since I translated and transcribed the interviews myself, it is possible that I missed or misinterpreted some nuances in our conversations. Knowing this was a possibility, I would often ask my interpreters to translate some parts of the interview in more detail than others (which I knew I could translate). Apart from these, my 'outsider' status, time and monetary constraints, and my inability to access some key informants may have limited the number of interviews and/or biased data.

Table 3.1 Timeline of data collection in case study communities

Case Study Region	Case Study Village/District	Timeline	No. of Key Informant Interviews
District of Nagapattinam, India	Regional-level	November 5 th , 2007-March 30 th , 2008	4
	Fishing Village	January 1 st -January 25 th , 2008	15
	Farming Village	January 23 st -February 20 th , 2008	17
	Mixed Village	February 20 th -March 15 th , 2008	18

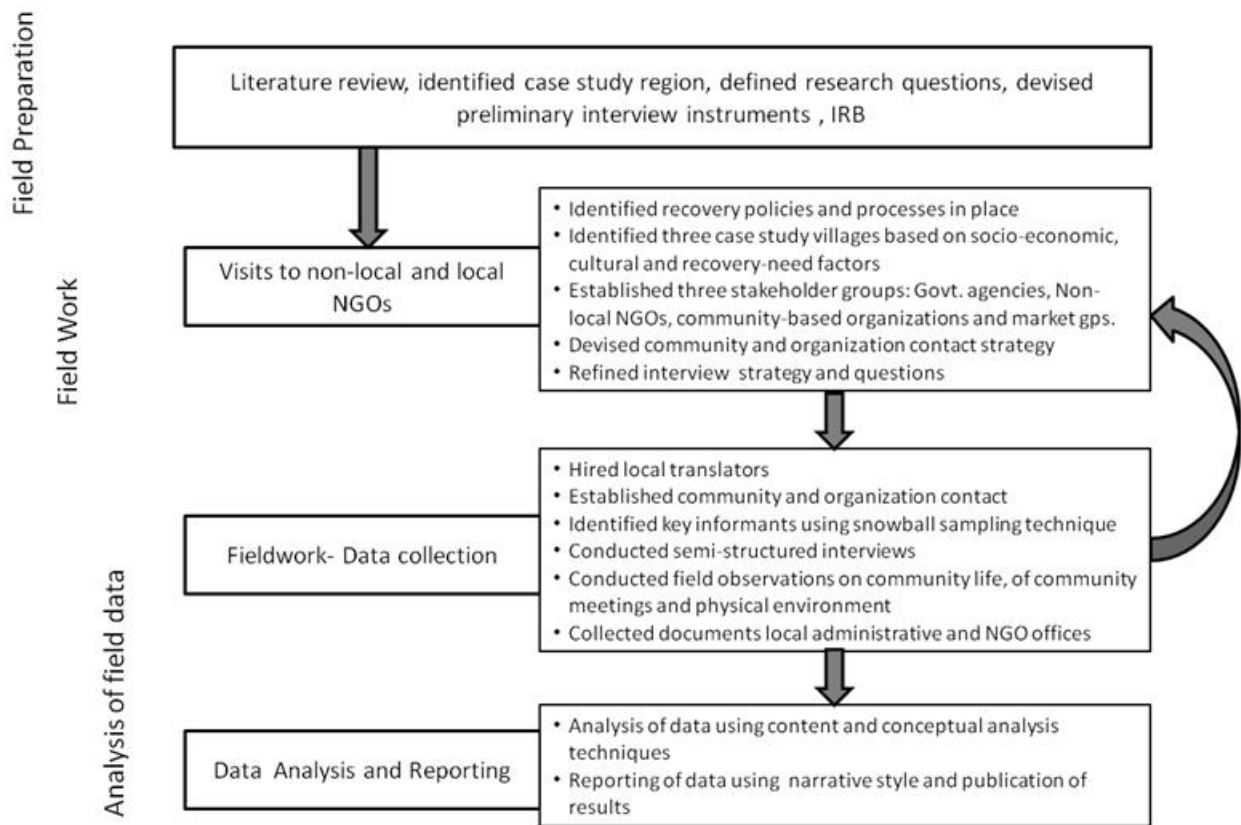


Figure 3.1 Research Design

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH SETTING

The following chapter lays out the research setting of the dissertation study. The first two sections describe the case study region and the impacts of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. The last section of this chapter focuses on development institutions, disaster management practices and recovery policies put in place before and immediately after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. This institutional and policy context had significant implications for who participated in post-disaster recovery and how, and it helped set the stage on which stakeholder participation occurred. Data for this chapter was collected through a combination of secondary documentation review, key informant interviews, and participant-observation methods.

4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE NAGAPATTINAM DISTRICT

The District of Nagapattinam lies in the State of Tamil Nadu, on the Bay of Bengal coast of Southern India (see Figure 4.1). It is flanked by the District of Cuddalore on the north, and the Districts of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur on the west. The existing Nagapattinam District was created out of the Thanjavur District in 1991, and comprises two parts divided by the District of Karaikkal which, in turn, is part of the Union Territory of Puducherry (previously called “Pondicherry”). The District of Nagapattinam has eleven panchayat unions or samitis, 3 municipalities, and 9 town panchayats (NCRC, 2007).⁸ The largest of these is the Town of Nagapattinam, located in the southern division of the district. In terms of revenue, the district

⁸ In India, for administrative and revenue purposes, states are divided into “districts” comprising of both urban and rural areas. The rural areas are further divided into *tehsils* or *taluks*. For development purposes, the *taluks/tehsils* are further divided into *blocks* which comprise of a certain number of villages each. Urban areas of the district are classified as “towns”, “municipalities” or “municipal corporations” according to the size of the urban population, “towns” being the smallest unit.

comprises two revenue divisions with 4 and 3 sub-divisions (or taluks) within each. There are eleven development blocks, 523 revenue villages and over 2,508 habitat settlements in the district. Before the tsunami, the district had a population of 1.5 million, and a total of 340,000 households (NCRC, 2007). Tamil is the primary language in the district.

The coastline of the district is 187 km long and the southernmost areas of the Nagapattinam District form part of the Vedaranyam salt swamp, which is the largest of its kind in the state. The swamp extends for 48 km along the coast, and 7 to 8 km inland, from Point Calimere (the southernmost settlement in the district), and it is one of the richest regions in terms of biodiversity in the country (NCRC, 2007).

Land in the district is mostly flat coastal land, except for occasional sand dunes along the coast, and it is gently inclined towards the inland. There are many rivers, the principal ones being the Cauvery and its offshoots. The coastal location of the region, coupled with the low-lying inland topography renders the District especially prone to flooding and inundation due to rain. In terms of hazard risk, the district usually experiences annual flooding during the northeast monsoon season (October-December), and is prone to severe damage once in every 3 or 4 years from cyclones originating in the Bay of Bengal.

4.2 INDIAN OCEAN TSUNAMI OF 2004

On 26th December 2004, an earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale hit the west coast of Northern Sumatra in Indonesia and set off a tsunami, which travelled across the Ocean causing devastation in eleven coastal countries. The total toll on human life in due to the disaster was 225,000. In India, 12,410 people lost their lives, 6,950 were injured, and a total of 647,600

persons were displaced from their original location. The disaster affected women and children in particular: 75 percent of the fatalities were women and children. 787 women were widowed and 530 children were orphaned (UNDP, ADB, World Bank, 2007). In India, the maximum loss to human life and property occurred in the District of Nagapattinam, in the State of Tamil Nadu. Around 75 villages of this district were affected and 6,100 people died, accounting for almost 50 percent of the damage in the entire country (NCRC, 2007). The three case study villages were selected from these villages based on the criteria described previously.

4.3 INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

This section describes the development institutions and disaster management policies in place in the case study region before and after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. The section is divided into four parts. The first part describes the role of different development actors at the state and regional level. The second and third parts describe policies and practices of disaster management at the time of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and those instituted for post-disaster recovery, particularly for housing reconstruction, infrastructure redevelopment, and agricultural rehabilitation.⁹ The last section summarizes the different ways in which recovery policies constrained and inhibited stakeholder participation in post-disaster recovery. Data for this section was collected using a combination of primary and secondary sources, including review of documents, primary key informant interviews and participant-observation methods. The information thus collected provides a deeper understanding of how these various institutions and practices were translated into action on the ground before and after the tsunami.

⁹ For the purposes of this chapter, the terms ‘rehabilitation’ and ‘recovery’ are used interchangeably and refer to all actions taken in the long-term to re-establish routines of daily life at the household level, unless it is part of a direct quotation from a secondary source. Also, the term ‘disaster management’ is used to describe all activities related to pre- and post-disaster mitigation, response and recovery.

4.3.1 Local development policies and practices

The biggest factor that has influenced local development practices in India has been the on-going decentralization of governance, at the heart of which is the *panchāyati raj* system predating the British colonial history.¹⁰ Under the decentralization effort, actors such as state governments, district administrations, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations are expected to operate around this core. The following section describes the evolution of the roles of these actors over time and the issues related to the decentralization activity. These roles, and their limitations, are important to understand, because some recovery policies instituted after the disaster, such as those for agricultural rehabilitation, depended upon these existing development institutions for facilitating recovery.

4.3.1.1 Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in India

Prior to British colonial rule, there existed two types of traditional *panchāyats* in the country: caste *panchāyats* and village *panchāyats*. Caste *panchāyats* were formed wholly from within a particular caste or sub-caste and dealt with matters of intra- and inter-caste transactions (*jajmani*), marriages, and other caste-specific rituals. Village *panchāyats* consisted of elders from prominent households in a village such as pioneers or land grantees (often of higher caste and with political patronage), and dealt with matters such as resolving civil disputes on land rights and criminal activity, and regulating the use of village commons such as use of grazing lands, woodlands, and water bodies. In most places, village *panchāyats* did not involve themselves in collection of taxes, though they did advise village residents on matters related to allegiance to

¹⁰ The panchāyati raj is a system of self-governance. Literally translated, the term '*panchāyat*' means an assembly ("yat") of five ("*panch*") persons, usually well-respected elders in a community who are popularly-elected (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003).

various authority groups, including tax collectors and landlords (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003).

Initially, under British colonial rule, several pieces of legislation were passed to ban the judiciary function of traditional panchāyats, and ‘Collectorates’ (tax collection offices) and courts supplanted these in establishing the rule of law. But, starting in the 1870s, the British administration attempted to decentralize its administrative functions, which led to the eventual reviving of village panchāyats to serve as “rational-legal institutions of representative government” based on principles of electoral majority and free of influence from the caste system (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003, p. 5).¹¹ However, even in this new avatar, village *panchāyats* tended to be financially deficient, with limited powers, and not fully representative (Misra & Dhaka, 2004). After Independence in 1947, the Constitution of India fully supported the revival of the village *panchāyats* as units of self-governance, but was ambiguous on how exactly these units would interact with the state governments or how public functions would be divided amongst them (Government of India, 2007). Over the years numerous pieces of legislation, programs and committees were created in an attempt to reconfigure local self-governments and decentralize rural governance. These included the Community Development Programme of 1952, the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957), the Ashok Mehta Committee 1977, the creation of District Rural Development Authorities (DRDAs) in 1978-79, and most recently, the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of 1992, which created a

¹¹ A more detailed description of these efforts is provided in Appendix B.

tiered system of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) at the village, block and district level.¹² The PRIs are the existing form of local self-government in villages across India.

However, these attempts to decentralize governance have yielded only superficial results, because they have been accompanied with a general increase in centrally-funded development programs and are prone to internal political factionalism. As a result, the capability of village PRIs to act as viable and responsive local self-government bodies continues to be in question (Misra & Dhaka, 2004, p. 13). Even the 73rd Amendment Act of 1992 which has been the most advanced decentralization effort to date is ridden with operational issues. First, the Amendment makes transfer of key planning and development functions to PRIs a discretionary, and not obligatory, function of the state governments. As a result, few states to date have enacted laws that actually transfer these functions (Mohanty, 2005). Second, the 73rd Amendment conceptualizes a governance system on the premise of strong, representative *grām sabhas* (i.e. publically held village council meetings) at its center. However, rural reality is that few *grām sabhas* actually convene, especially where the village-level PRI consists of more than one village. In such places, often only one composite *grām sabha* is convened for all villages instead of individual ones for each village and those that do convene are highly susceptible to existing caste, class and gender-based power structures (Misra & Dhaka, 2004; Human Development Resource Centre, 2003). Third, while the 73rd Amendment mandates the reservations of seats within elected bodies to women and lower castes, this has not been enough to ensure equal representation in communities where disempowerment occurs in ways other than simple lack of visibility. For instance, PRI meetings or critical decision forums are often attended by the husbands and/or close male relatives of the elected women, instead of the representatives

¹² Ibid.

themselves. Fourth, findings of this study show that bureaucratic control over the functions of the PRIs remains very strong in most states, with local PRI leaders often having to visit district and state governments for various approvals and permission (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003).¹³ Moreover, the 73rd Amendment neither specified how these functions should be divided among the various levels of PRIs, nor how the newly-formed PRIs and coterminous economic and social development agencies should interact with each other. Finally, despite it being a requirement under the 73rd Amendment, a majority of the states have still to constitute District Planning Committees, and many have actually experienced an increase in the number of centrally-funded projects since 1993 (Mohanty, 2005).

Tamil Nadu has been one of the states to pass and implement legislation in accordance with national policy over the years. In 1958, the Madras Panchāyat Act was passed in keeping with the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee. The Act created Village *Panchāyats* at the village-level, *Panchāyat* Unions at the block-level and a District Development Council at the district-level. The *Panchāyat* Unions were at the core of all developmental activity within the block, and comprised of the Presidents of the all Village Panchāyat, while the District Development Councils remained largely inactive and under the control of the District Collector (Ragupathy, 2004). Under the 1958 Act, *Panchāyat* Unions were given the power to deal with matters such as primary education, primary health, agriculture, animal husbandry, and minor irrigation. The 1958 Act also created the scope for transfer of six types of communal, or *poramboke*, lands in the Ryotwari tracts to Village *Panchāyats*, including grazing lands, threshing grounds, graveyards and burning grounds, cattle grounds, cart stands, and groves.¹⁴ The Village *Panchāyats* could

¹³ This is most evident in the infrastructure redevelopment programs (see further).

¹⁴ The term “Ryotwari” is inherited from colonial times, and refers to a tax system in which land revenue is imposed directly on an individual or community owning the estate. The alternative system during colonial times was the “Zamindari” system, where

regulate use of this land, charge using fees, and use that revenue for public purposes. However, not being obligated to do so by the 1958 Act, the state government only transferred usufruct rights to Village *Panchāyats* and retained ownership of *poramboke* lands (Ragupathy, 2004). This arrangement continues to be the status quo with regards to poramboke lands in Tamil Nadu (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2000).

Between 1960 and 1990, PRIs slowly became less and less active, held less regular elections, and came under greater control of government officials (Ragupathy, 2004). In 1994, in keeping with the national-level 73rd Amendment Act, the state of Tamil Nadu passed the Tamil Nadu Panchāyat Act of 1994. This Act created three levels of PRIs: Village *Panchāyat* at the village-level,¹⁵ the *Panchāyat* Union at the block-level and the District *Panchāyat* at the district-level. The Act also constituted the *Grām Sabhā* within each village, which must meet at least every six months, approve the village plan and budget, review program implementation, and elect representatives to the Village PRI through direct election. The members of the Panchāyat Union were to be directly elected from Union wards and, similarly, members of the District Panchāyat were to be directly elected from district panchāyat wards. Under this Act, the Village PRI was given the responsibility for roads and lighting, drainage, sanitation, waterworks, and maintenance of ponds and tanks. The Village PRIs could, by choice, also take up responsibility for maintaining local landscaping, opening and maintaining public markets, establishing public parks and playgrounds, and the “construction of [public works and facilities for] the safety, health, [and] convenience[...].” (Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994).

taxes were collected by a landlord, who then paid the Administration a prearranged percentage of the revenue. The “Zamindari” system was abolished in India through a country-wide land reform program implemented soon after independence.

¹⁵ In this study, I use the terms “village self-government” or “village PRI” to refer to the Village Panchāyat.

The provisions of the 1994 Act have many implications for local development and planning, some more problematic than others. For instance, by eliminating *ex-officio* representation from one tier in another, the 1994 Act effectively cut all organic linkage between them, thereby decreasing coordination between their activities (Ragupathy, 2004; Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, 2009). Second, the 1994 Act reaffirms a tradition where local planning is viewed largely as an exercise in physical planning, largely accomplished through independent development projects. The 1994 Act says very little on comprehensive village planning or on the role of Village PRIs in programs for health, education or livelihood, except in terms of creating physical infrastructure for them. However it does leave scope for Village PRIs to obtain loans from the state government for any scheme they wish to undertake, or raise a loan (from private sources) for calamity relief and response purposes. The Act also allows for the transfer of certain economic development schemes to the Panchāyat Unions, but in view of their ill-coordination with Village PRIs, the actual implementation of such devolution is doubtful.

Moreover, many of the provisions in the 1994 Act undermined the spirit of decentralization by granting greater control to state government over Village PRIs. First, the 1994 Act constituted an Inspector of Panchayats who could (with due notice) establish, modify or reconfigure village PRI boundaries and dispose of lands made available as well as re-direct taxes made ‘free’ through such reconfiguration; the State Government retained the rights to do the same for *Panchāyat* Unions and District *Panchāyats*. In most districts in the state, the District Collectors also act as the Inspector of Panchayats, giving them much control over Village PRI activities. The 1994 Act further allowed the State Government to appoint an “Executive Authority” to take over the all functions of a Village Panchāyat, and who could change village

resolutions without chance of appeal. The State Government also retained the right to take back lands previously granted to village PRIs (such as unreserved forests), even if the PRI had made improvements to it (such as clearing of land or irrigation) (Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994; Ragupathy, 2004).

In 1998, the Tamil Nadu state government implemented the Village Self-Sufficiency Scheme (Namakku Naame Thittam, or NNT) as an effort to directly involve communities in local development. Under this scheme, any rural or urban community could, on its own initiative, identify a development project that would benefit the community at large, and approach the District Collector or the District Rural Development Authority who would approve funding for 2/3rd of the project cost. The remaining 1/3rd was to be funded through “public contributions”, originating from any non-governmental source. If more than 50% of the project cost is provided through public contribution, the contributors could choose to also execute the project as per approved design and specifications. In case more applications are submitted than funds available at the district level, the District Collector/DRDA prioritizes the project providing “maximum benefit to the community”. Under the NNT, local communities may undertake “works” such as: construction of buildings for PRIs and certain government institutions such as hospitals, schools, libraries and livestock centres, construction and maintenance of “community assets” like drinking water sources, cement concrete roads and threshing floors, road infrastructure improvement and streetscape, and construction of parks and playgrounds. Land acquisition is not allowed under the NNT, and the contributors cannot claim ownership over the facility, or over the use of it. While the program has done much to devolve agenda-setting for development to the local level, it does not entirely address the continued financial dependency of local PRIs on district administrations.

As of present, the Act of 1994 continues to be in force, though the Government of Tamil Nadu has expressed an interest in creating better mechanisms of coordination between the three tiers of PRIs in the state (Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, 2009).

4.3.1.2 Role of the District Administration

In India, there also exists a parallel bureaucratic structure within each district, known as the District Administration. It is headed by a Deputy Commissioner or 'Collector', appointed by the State Governor, who is in turn appointed by the Central government. The role of the District Collector's office (also called 'District Collectorate') in rural administration and development has changed over the years. During the initial years of colonial rule, District Collectors were responsible primarily for revenue collection with a district, but were often also involved in various local judicial, administrative, and developmental matters. Through the Acts of 1919 and 1935, the powers of the District Collector were curtailed, and they were now required to share authority, first with centrally appointed officers and then later with elected ministers. During these times, the Collector's role was largely limited to judicial and revenue collection tasks, but remained a central and prominent figure in the administration of districts (Arora & Goyal, 1995).

Post-independence, with the revisualization of governance structures, the District Collector's role was also reevaluated. They were now recruited directly through the Indian Administrative Service, and were often young and enthusiastic idealists from minority castes owing to the spread of education and the new system of caste-based reservation in government jobs. Arora and Goyal (1995) argue that the potential presented by this now locally sensitized bureaucracy was undermined by many events that weakened their role in the districts. First, they claim that the Collector's role as the District Magistrate was diminished by Article 50 of the

Constitution which separates judiciary from the executive. Second, the emergence of political parties created new channels for communication between local residents and the governments, thus by-passing the Collector. Third, new technical, and fairly independent, departments such as agriculture and labor were created within the district administration, and new officers were recruited to head these. And finally, the strengthening of the PRIs through various central government initiatives and state legislatures has further curtailed their power in the state (Arora & Goyal, 1995). This is perhaps most evident in the complete lack of mention of the District Administration in the 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts and no role being assigned to it in the District Planning Committee.

Despite these factors, however, the District Collector remains as a central figure in local development decision processes, because s/he is the most important state functionary at the district level (Arora & Goyal, 1995). This District Administration still manages and oversees the implementation of a majority of state-funded development schemes in the country, and is actively involved in policy and agenda setting. The specific tasks of the District Administration vary in scale and proportion from region to region depending on the tasks assigned to it by the state legislature. In Nagapattinam, for instance, the District Administration oversees matters related to revenue, rural development, public works, forests, employment, social welfare, public health, education, agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, industries, and police. District Administrations also play an important role in land development and management within the districts. The District Collector is the chair of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), and the Collectorate keeps extensive records of land ownership; creates and updates property maps, acquires land for public uses; initiates and executes district-wide development projects on the behalf of the state government; and may even control land use and settlement growth within

the district. For example, in Tamil Nadu all ‘public commons’ or *poramboke* land, such as forest groves, grazing land, and watercourses are owned by District Administrations, with local communities having only usufruct rights. Any land use change desired by a community to this land must first obtain approval from the District Administrations, who also hold the right to remove encroachments as deemed necessary (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2000). In keeping with this, a Village Administration Officer (VAO) is assigned to each village PRI within the District of Nagapattinam to act as the community liaison on issues related to land management and development.

4.3.1.3 Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations

Voluntary, civic-minded organizations predate colonial times in India, but as socio-political entities they rose to prominence only during it. Kudva (1996) defines the development of the NGO sector in India in five phases: the *pre-independence phase*, which included the reformist and community building movements; the *second phase* (1947-60s), during which NGOs were seen as partners in a nationalist agenda; the *third phase* (late 1960s-early 1980s), during which there was a rise in state-led development and suppression of NGO activity; the *fourth phase* (late 1980s to early 1990s) when a change in government initiated governmental reform and saw a rise in the ‘professionalization’ of NGOs, and which she believes, has collapsed into the current *post-liberalization/new economic policies phase*. These last two phases, according to Kudva (1996), have involved the government actively and explicitly promoting the rhetoric of ‘NGOs as partners’ in development (Kudva, 1996, p. 5).

Pre-independence, voluntary organizations were focused mainly around reform movements, (Gandhi-inspired) local economic self-sufficiency programs, and Christian

Missionary work. The Societies Registration Act (SRA) of 1860 was legislated to register emerging voluntary organizations such as the Arya Samaj (1875), the National Council for Women in India (1875), and the Indian National Conference (1887). This 1860 Act is still in existence today, although different states have enacted amendments to it (Asian Development Bank, 2009). After Independence, the central government took on the lead role in social welfare, with civil society and non-governmental organizations assisting it. The government created the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) in 1953 which provided grants-in-aid to NGOs working with the National Extension Service in rural sectors (Asian Development Bank, 2009). The CSWB and SSWBs, in turn, were funded through the country's Five Year Plans. Also during this time, international NGO activities in India mainly revolved around disaster relief and aid, most significantly so during the droughts of 1965–1966 and 1966–1967 (Kudva, 1996).

Between 1965 and 1985, government control over development steadily increased, and NGO activity was heavily suppressed through legislation and regulations. This period was marked with the rise in voluntary activism and the emergence of grassroots organizations, both peaceful and militant. Major foreign Christian donors began to directly fund small missionary groups, and many large-scale support NGOs with local chapters cropped up. Another mark of this time was the increase in the number of 'professional' NGOs, which tended to be more 'technocratic' and 'managerial' in nature than 'awareness-oriented' (Kudva, 1996, p. 9).

Throughout this period, the CSWB continued to fund a number of NGOs involved in development and relief activities, but in a more limited capacity. The Foreign Contribution Regulations Act (FCRA) was passed in 1976 to increase governmental monitoring of foreign funding and required that all NGOs first obtain FCRA permission before receiving foreign monies (Kudva, 1996). After the change in political leadership in 1977, the central government

sought to increase private funding for NGOs, integrated successful NGO programs into governmental programs, and increased governmental funding to support non-governmental activity (Asian Development Bank, 2009; Kudva, 1996). However, this would not last: as the political leadership once again changed, governmental control over NGO-activity was re-established. During this time, hostility between NGOs and the government further increased as the latter targeted those of the former who had opposed it during its last rule (Kudva, 1996).

In 1985, with a change in leadership within the ruling party and the advent of structural adjustments in the country, the government attitude towards the non-governmental sector also began to change. The Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90) devoted an entire section to the voluntary sector, and allocated an unprecedented amount to be disbursed through its Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART). The CAPART had been set up in 1986 to promote NGO activity in implementing rural development programs and still continues to be in existence (Asian Development Bank, 2009). This was supported by a series of meetings the government held with NGOs in an effort to co-create a 'code of conduct' for NGO activity in the country, and which resulted in the creation of an Action Plan in 1994. The Action Plan acknowledged the need for a partnership between NGOs and the government, but did not result in any formal or concrete policy formulation (Kudva, 1996).

Today, the CSWB focuses almost exclusively on programs for women's empowerment, child education and girl child protection. More central and state government departments coordinate with NGOs to create and implement programs in the socio-economic sector. International aid has also increased in the country since the 1990s, and international NGOs are now directly involved in rural development programs rather than only disaster relief. This

changing scenario has had significant implications for both, governmental action as well as the state of civil society, as will be shown in following sections. First, international aid is often routed through governments (such as in the case of Multi-Donor Funds, or MDFs), and this phenomenon greatly influences governmental policy on the scope and process of development. Second, local development is more ad-hoc than comprehensive, because most NGOs are concerned with delivering specific services through individual projects. Third, in the absence of well-established standards for process or outcome, there is a wide range of quality difference in the actions of NGOs on the ground. Finally, with the proliferation of large NGOs and the increased channeling of bilateral and multilateral aid through them, grassroots NGOs and community-based organizations have been pushed further into the background.

4.3.1.4 Role of Caste Panchāyats

Despite all efforts by different administrations to abolish them, caste *panchāyats* persist in most rural areas of India, though not all equally strong—their influence may differ according to caste hierarchy, region, economic power of member-residents, and historic suppression by outside entities. The exact interaction between caste *panchāyats* and village PRIs is highly context-dependent, but usually, the more homogenous the caste composition of a village, the more the influence of caste *panchāyats* over the PRIs. Caste *panchāyats* of today vary in function, ranging from dispensing criminal justice to leading local development, and lately, there is an increasing recognition of their local influence and representative quality, with more and more of them being formally invited to local decision forums. The exact role and influence of caste *panchāyats* in local (re)development processes within the three case study villages has been discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

4.3.2 Pre-2005 disaster management initiatives

A second factor that heavily influenced the nature of planning activity was the pre- and post-disaster recovery policy for the state. Disaster management in India was largely relief-centric during the colonial British rule and remained so for many decades after independence. To illustrate, neither disaster mitigation nor rehabilitation were mentioned in the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution, which lists the individual and joint public responsibilities of the central (federal) and state governments (Planning Commission of India, 2002). In case of a disaster, state governments were provided with funds for ‘calamity relief’ through individual and annual, Centrally-funded ‘calamity relief funds’, with the utilization of this funding based on guidelines issued by the (Central) Union Finance Ministry (Bhandari, 2006).

Significant changes to this approach occurred in the 1990s, mostly due to two factors. The first was an increased incidence in large scale disasters within the country: the 1993 Latur earthquake, which affected over 8 million people and damaged over 1 million homes; the 1999 Orissa ‘Super’ cyclone, which affected over 15 million people and destroyed over 2 million homes; and, the 2000 Gujarat (Bhuj) earthquake, which affected over 12 million people and damaged about 2 million homes. Between 1990 and 2000 alone, an average number of 30 million people were affected annually by disasters, and an average of 4344 lives were lost per year due to them (National Disaster Management Division, 2004; Krishnaraj, 1997; Chakrabarti, 2008). The second catalytic factor was an increased global awareness of disaster risk reduction and mitigation during this period. In 1989, the United Nations General Assembly declared 1990-2000 as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, “with the objective to reduce loss of lives and property and restrict socio-economic damage through concerted international

action, specially [sic] in developing countries” (National Disaster Management Division, 2004).

This global call for better disaster management was intensified by outcomes of events such as the 1992 Earth Summit held at Rio De Janeiro, the 1994 World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (where the ‘Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World’ was formulated), the initiation of the United Nations Center for Regional Development’s (UNCRD) Disaster Management Planning Hyogo Office (which widely began promoting community-based disaster management strategies), as well as by the launching of the International strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) by the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in 2000.

Over the years, the country’s approach to disasters has shifted away from relief alone to risk management. Four major efforts mark this shift in paradigms: (1) a national High Powered Committee (HPC) on disaster management (1999), created to review common response and preparedness mechanisms in the country and recommend financial and institutional solutions for disaster prevention, reduction, preparedness, and mitigation initiatives; (2) the (still on-going) Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Programme (2002) that aims to mainstream disaster risk management at all local levels; (3) the National Disaster Management Framework (2004), which addressed institutional mechanisms for vulnerability reduction, disaster prevention strategies, early warning systems, disaster mitigation, preparedness and response, and human resource development; and (4) the draft Disaster Management Policy (2004), based on the Framework, proposes to minimize disaster losses by promoting sustainable development and improving standards of living (National Disaster Management Division, 2004; National Disaster Management Division, 2003).

This escalating awareness of the value of mitigation, however, did not extend to post-disaster rehabilitation or recovery. Mitigation was seen as largely a pre-disaster activity, with much more emphasis given to integrating mitigation into existing development practices. Development plans were seen as instruments to facilitate mitigation, but not long-term rehabilitation, and few connections were made between grassroots capacity building and its contribution to the long-term rehabilitation process. For example, the DRM Programme proposed disaster management plans at all local self-government levels, but mentioned only vulnerability mapping, risk assessment and analysis, hazard zoning, resource inventory and response structures. The National Disaster Management Framework of 2004 mentions updating existing state and local Town and Country Planning Acts, land use zoning regulations, and development control regulations and building bylaws to include multi-hazard mitigation measures, and using disaster-resistant construction methods in rural development schemes. But it says nothing about how these codes and regulations will be used to guide rehabilitation. Finally, the draft Disaster Management Policy of 2004 specifically proposes that the State Relief Codes be redeveloped into disaster management codes or manuals “for institutionalizing the planning process with particular attention to mitigation and preparedness” (National Disaster Management Division, 2004, p. 11). Further, a parliamentary Estimates Committee, formed in 2002 to review existing institutional and economic provisions for relief and rehabilitation, found that there were no programs or schemes in place for long-term rehabilitation specifically and that most states provided for this activity through their existing Central and State Plan Schemes. Further, the Committee found that no records of expenditure on mitigation-related long-term rehabilitation measures or of the involvement of NGOs in it were being maintained at the state or national level (Estimates Committee, 2003).

Within Nagapattinam, there were reports of the existence of a district-level Contingency Plan in place at the time of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. An analysis of this Plan conducted by Prater et al (2006) showed, among other things, that it: (1) addressed only relief and response activity, with no attention given to long-term rehabilitation; (2) did not plan for different scenarios of response and recovery; and (3) did not recognize the different organizational needs of disaster and non-disaster situations (Prater, Peacock, Arlikatti, & Grover, 2006). There was no State Disaster Management Authority for Tamil Nadu or a Disaster Management Committee in the District of Nagapattinam prior to 2004. Instead, the District Revenue Office of the District Administration, which has traditionally played a central role in disaster relief and rehabilitation at the district level, led long-term disaster rehabilitation after the tsunami.¹⁶

4.3.3 Post-Tsunami Recovery Policy and Programs

After the tsunami, the Government of India was flooded by offers of aid from over 700-800 bilateral, multilateral and independent (international and national) non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for relief and rehabilitation. The State governments were given the responsibility to manage this resource opportunity and prepare a strategy for rehabilitation. This strategy had to consider both the needs of targeted communities (whether fishing or farming) as well as who was providing the funding and technical assistance (whether district and village governments, multi-donor organizations, and/or stand-alone NGO-donors). In the absence of pre-existing institutional mechanisms for this, the Government of Tamil Nadu issued a number of Government Orders (GOs) to guide land use recovery and rehabilitation in the state. Separate

¹⁶ Policy initiatives put in place before and after the tsunamis have been described in detail in the Appendix B.

GOs were issued for separate sectors--such as housing, infrastructure, agricultural rehabilitation, and social welfare--and implemented as projects according to the same categories.

All GOs were issued by the State Revenue Department, often in response to information from the District Administrations. The GOs typically described specific actions to be undertaken, primary actors, funding mechanisms, and standards for construction, project implementation, and monitoring. If an NGO was invited to take part in rehabilitation (such as for housing reconstruction), it would be authorized by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) defining responsibilities between the State and the NGO. Despite the top-down impression created, however, the GOs and MOU were highly dynamic policy instruments. For instance, when funding capabilities of non-governmental actors changed (decreased, in most cases), new GOs were issued to reflect the changing nature of activity. A senior District Official further explained that the State would change policies in response to feedback from District Administrations, which was in turn based on informal feedback from NGOs and local residents.

Similarly, the MoU underwent many revisions and had at least three amendments before being finally signed, not least because neither of the two signing parties was involved in its initial formulation. In this sense, while governmental policies appear to be dominant factors defining the institutional environment in post-tsunami Nagapattinam, they were heavily tempered by the emergence of new actors and their own expectations from involvement in recovery.

I have focused on three types of land use recovery and reconstruction activities in this study: housing reconstruction, infrastructure redevelopment and agricultural rehabilitation. Housing reconstruction was carried out in two phases. The first phase was funded and

implemented directly by NGOs and addressed all housing that was damaged directly by the tsunami wave or the subsequent flooding. The first phase of housing reconstruction ended in early 2008. The second phase was funded through the World Bank's Emergency Tsunami Relief Program (ERTP) and implemented by the District Administration. This phase replaces or relocates, as needed, all thatch or mud (kutchra) houses within 1000m of the high tide line as a mitigation measure. This phase also included all disaster-damaged housing not covered in the first phase and was in its beginning stages when fieldwork ended, with some villages just recently having compiled their beneficiary lists.

Infrastructure redevelopment was funded partly through the World Bank-funded Emergency Tsunami Relief Program ERTTP and partly through the Asian Development Bank-funded Tsunami Emergency Assistance Project (TEAP). The infrastructure program was implemented by the District Administration, in combination with the village self-governments (PRIs). The TEAP funds were already being put to use in the Farming and Mixed Villages at the time of fieldwork. These funds by default went to farming communities, because critical infrastructure in fishing villages was already being built as part of the housing reconstruction program.

Agricultural and horticultural rehabilitation programs consisted of two components. First was the provision of agricultural and horticultural inputs such as gypsum and seeds, which were funded and implemented by the State and District Administrations, respectively. Second was the provision of technical assistance for activities such as pond/water tank desalination and land reclamation, which was mostly funded and implemented by NGOs.

4.3.3.1 Housing reconstruction and settlement relocation

Initially after the disaster, the State and district governments discussed the idea of giving monetary compensation, as opposed to giving pre-constructed housing, to the affected populations. However, this idea was rejected after it came to light that many local community residents had squandered the money previously given for purchasing relief supplies on purchasing alcohol instead.¹⁷ A senior official in the Nagapattinam District Revenue Office interviewed during this study and who was part of these discussions mentioned how the government-run liquor shop in Karaikkal rose from being #19 in the sales rank before the tsunami to #1 after it. As a result of these considerations, the State government decided to pursue direct housing provision as opposed to money as part of disaster compensation (Senior Official, Nagapattinam District Revenue Office, 2008).

The same district official also explained the reasoning behind the construction of temporary housing: the state government had been aware that new permanent housing would take over a year to complete and that local residents would need temporary shelters close to their original location (Senior Official, Nagapattinam District Revenue Office, 2008). Accordingly, community residents initially housed in shelter and relief camps around the district were moved to temporary shelters built near their original locations. These shelters were built largely by NGOs and in accordance with the GO 10, issued on January 6, 2005. With regards to permanent shelter, initially, the government and NGOs were supposed to be simultaneously doing shelter

¹⁷ A study conducted by Community Development Organization Trust (C-DOT) for the Tamil Nadu Tsunami Resource Center (TNTRC) found that alcohol abuse in coastal communities in the Chennai district had decreased immediately after the disaster, but then increased once relief money was disbursed (Community Development Organization Trust, 2006). The TNTRC is a multi-organizational entity that was formed at the State level with the aim to bring together the various stakeholders in tsunami recovery, coordinate their activities, disseminate information, share best practices, provide an interface with the government, and provide policy support. The TNTRC also networked with individual 'district resource centers', either instituted by the TNTRC or by NGO collaborative (such as the Nagapattinam Tsunami Resource Center, or NCRC) within each of the affected districts (Community Development Organization Trust, 2006).

reconstruction. However, in consideration of the significant resource opportunity presented by interested NGOs, the State and District governments stepped back and allowed housing reconstruction to happen in two separate phases. The first phase that ended in early 2008 was almost entirely NGO-led, and addressed all housing damaged by the tsunami wave. Any ‘gaps’ in reconstruction needs, for example in communities where no NGO has expressed interest, were to be filled by the district administration. According to the senior officer in the Revenue Office, while the NGOs, especially those who had previously constructed housing after the Gujarat earthquake of 2000, had assured the government that all permanent housing could be constructed within six months of the disaster, the actual process was much delayed because of the long time it took for land acquisition (Senior Official, Nagapattinam District Revenue Office, 2008). The second phase (beginning 2008) is government-implemented, and involves reconstruction of all housing not covered in the first phase, reconstructing all thatch or mud (*kutcha*) dwellings within 1000m of the high tide line. This second phase had been designed specifically as a mitigation measure against future disasters.

Phase-I: The State Revenue Department kicked off the first phase of shelter reconstruction on January 13, 2005 by issuing GO 25, which laid out the framework of actions and actors. The GO 25 sets out the following:

- The size and cost criteria for reconstruction: minimum 50 families for Rupees 75 lakhs, (i.e. \$155,000)
- The need for comprehensive planning: including, “permanent housing, livelihood rehabilitation, community infrastructure such as roads, water supply, schools, health facilities, noon meal centre etc”

- The cost distribution of housing reconstruction and settlement relocation: land was to be provided by district administration, 1/3rd of total cost to be used for housing (@ Rs. 50,000 or \$1,034 per house), 1/3rd for “infrastructure [including] good roads preferably cement roads with side drains with RWH [Rain Water Harvesting] facility, good water supply, sanitation, schools, noon meal centers, solid waste disposal facilities, street lights [sic]”, and another 1/3rd for “livelihood restoration [...] [meaning, to] restore/replace boats and nets [,] inputs which will enable improvement of family income [,] marketing of fish and fish products [and/or] value addition [for] better income.” Livelihood restoration was geared towards fishing, because most settlements directly affected by the tsunami housed fishing communities.
- Project approval process: NGOs would submit their proposal with details on “rehabilitation package, cost estimates, engineering details etc”, and the project would be approved by a “committee at the district level comprising of the District Collector as the Chairman, the Project Officer, DRDA and the Executive Engineer of the Public Works Department (Buildings) will approve the project.” Housing design would also need to be approved by the District Collector
- Need for a MoU and technical guidelines for construction: based on a “model memorandum of understanding, type design of the houses, and eligibility guidelines [...] finalized separately by the [state-level] Special Commissioner and Commissioner for Revenue Administration.”

(G.O.Ms.No.25, 2005)

On the same day , the State Revenue Department also issued the GO 26 which allowed NGOs or other private organizations to undertake “specific projects like construction of Schools,

Child welfare Centres, Hospitals, Primary Health Centres, Community Centres, Vocational Training Centres etc” for a minimum total cost of Rs. 50 lakhs (or \$103,304) (G.O.Ms.No.26, 2005). The implication of the GO 26 is that it opened up the possibility for settlement reconstruction to not be “comprehensive”, in the sense that it could be undertaken in parts by different organizations, and not necessarily at the same time. However, it also implied that NGOs who could not invest Rs 50 lakhs in reconstruction could not participate in this program.

The two GOs formally initiated NGO involvement in shelter reconstruction. NGOs began to approach the District Administration with their credentials and information on their individual capacities and interests. The District Administration allocated villages to NGOs based on their resource capacity and housing damage estimates of the village. Once allocated villages, NGOs visited them to introduce themselves as well as collect settlement information through surveys and on-site meetings. If a village community was unhappy with a particular NGO, or was interested in working with another, it could approach the District Administration and get them changed. This same mechanism worked for village complaints regarding project detail, implementation or any other similar issue throughout the reconstruction process. While this was happening, the District Administration was also involved in finalizing the beneficiary lists in consultation with the village communities. Some of the major participatory issues emerge from this list-creation process. Fieldwork revealed many instances where the caste panchāyat of a higher order essentially co-opted this process, thereby excluding or underreporting lower castes and single parent families as well as the elderly. While certain NGOs did administer separate surveys to cross-check the list, these did not always reveal discrepancies. Most NGOs, on the other hand, simply took the beneficiary lists given to them at their word.

On February 10, 2005, the State Revenue Department issued GO 75, which outlined the acquisition of land for shelter reconstruction. The GO 75 devolved the responsibility of land acquisition and deciding compensation for this land to the ‘District Level Negotiation Committees’ formed in 1996, and headed by the District Collector, to fix land values for government land acquisitions in districts. This was done in response to a request made by the District Collector of another district to speed up the usually lengthy and time-consuming land acquisition process. The GO 75 allows the District Level Negotiation Committees to “[...] purchase lands through private negotiations up to a maximum of 200% of the Market value or guidelines value whichever is lower [sic][...]” as a special circumstance for “housing Tsunami victims alone”. In all other cases, acquisitions were to revert back to the usual mechanism for land purchase (G.O.Ms.No.75, 2005). The GO 75 was reaffirmed in May 2005 with GO 257, which also allocated exact funds for land acquisition in various districts (Rs. 10 crores—or \$2 million—for Nagapattinam) (G.O.Ms.No.257, 2005).

At this same time, the NGOs and the District Administration were negotiating over the specifications of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for housing reconstruction. The final document redressed complaints previously made by NGOs, including: that the document read as if “the Government [was] sub-contracting the construction of the houses to the NGOs [which did not reflect a] spirit of partnership [...]”; that NGOs were not included in its formulation from the start; that it was unclear as to “who is responsible for infrastructure and for common provisions (such as sanitation) in the habitats and to what extent”; that there was a lack of clear milestones that would help NGOs coordinate their activity with that of the government; that there was need for more transparency on the part of the government; and, that there was no provision for addressing comments regarding the state-issued technical guidelines (NCRC,

2005). The MoU document that was finally signed laid out the rights and responsibilities of the NGOs, District Collector and indirectly, local communities. These rights and responsibilities are organized in Table 4.1, into three categories (activities, process, and resources) based on what implication they had for shelter reconstruction (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2005).

On March 30, 2005, the government issued the GO 172 which set housing reconstruction standards and relocation site guidelines, and established both tenure rights and ownership of vacated lands. The GO 172 took into consideration the existing environmental laws such as the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notifications, which was subject to much debate and controversy of its own (see Appendix C). The GO 172 put the entire cost of the reconstruction programme (phases I and II included) at Rupees 1,950 crores (or \$403 million) with “substantial” funding assistance funds from the World Bank to pay for it (G.O.Ms.No.172, 2005). Major components of the GO were as follows:

- Housing reconstruction: envisaged construction of 130,000 concrete houses with 300-325 sq ft built-up area and with disaster-resistant features, for an approx. cost of Rs. 1.5 lakhs (\$3103) each; all homes to conform to technical guidelines issues by state (described further on)
- Site planning: Each relocation/reconstruction site would have “adequate infrastructure facilities like water supply, streetlights, roads, rainwater harvesting structures, drains, community centre, Noon-meal centre etc”
- Guidelines for location of reconstruction site:
 - For houses within 0-200m of High Tide Line (HTL): no new construction permitted within this zone; all homeowners with houses (damaged or otherwise)

in this zone would be given the choice of relocating to sites beyond 200m and provided with a free home (based on preceding guidelines; all homeowners who choose to not relocate may rebuild their houses, but will not be provided with any governmental assistance. This was supposedly in accordance with “the Coastal Regulation Zone notifications, [by which] only repair of structures authorized prior to 1991 is permissible and no new construction is possible” within this zone.

- For houses between 200-500m of HTL: homeowners of damaged pucca (i.e. brick/cement) houses, or fully/partly damaged kutcha (thatch/mud) houses would be given the choice of a free and new house either in their current location, or at a location beyond 500m of HTL; all owners of partially damaged pucca houses would be given a grant for repairs, based on government assessments of damage to the structure; and,
 - For houses beyond 500m of HTL: homeowners in this belt were given the same options as those living between 200-500m of HTL, except that here the in-situ construction would imply construction beyond 500m of HTL.
- Purchase of land to be done by the State Government, but in reality conducted by District Administrations.
 - Priority to utilization of non-state funds: funding from NGOs and other non-public actors would be utilized first for housing reconstruction. (This provision set the NGO and public ‘nature’ of the first and second phases for reconstruction.)
 - ‘Gap filling’: in locations where no NGO expressed interest to work, the homeowners were allowed to rebuild their own homes with governmental assistance, and in keeping

with all technical and location requirements. If this is not possible, the state government would build the houses for these homeowners.

- Insurance: all new houses would be insured for 10 years, and cost would be borne by the “executing agency [as] part of the project cost”.
- Tenure rights: new house titles would be jointly held by wife and husband, or in case of single parent households, in the name of the surviving parent and the eldest child. Newly constructed houses could not be left unoccupied, mortgaged or sold for ten years.
- Vacated lands: If a homeowner receives a new home, they would relinquish ownership of the old site and house to the state government through a “legally acceptable document” facilitated by District Administrations. The vacated lands would be added to the “Prohibitory Order book” and “maintained for public purposes”. Fisher folk were permitted to “keep boats, nets etc. in these areas [and temporary] sheds, locker rooms etc. may be put up in these locations by Government/NGOs as per CRZ guidelines”.
- Changes and modifications: District Collectors could make changes depending on “local conditions and the wishes of the people [and in consultation with] village level Tsunami Rehabilitation Supervisory Committees already constituted [and as long as] changes should be applied uniformly to all the new houses in the habitation.”

(G.O.Ms.No.172, 2005)

At the same time as the GO 172, the state government also released a two-part document called the “Guidelines for Reconstruction of Houses Affected by Tsunami in Tamil Nadu” which mostly provided structural specifications and best practices for construction of disaster-resistant housing. The Guidelines, however, also specified that new sites should: avoid areas likely to be submerged, be at least 500m from the shore and at least +5m above Mean Sea Level, and be

preferably within 1000m of the old settlement so as to facilitate fishing-related economic activity. In reality, however, most new sites were prone to flooding during the rainy season, mostly due to the low-lying deltaic nature of much of the land in the district (TRInet, 2005). The Guidelines also provided two house design options, prepared respectively by UNDP-Orissa and the Public Works Department, which executing NGOs could choose to model the new houses. These “model” designs became the starting point for discussions on house design in most case study communities examined here.

In view of the low-lying character of the region, the District Collector of Nagapattinam requested the State government to exempt Districts from having to go through the lengthy approval process usually required to purchase ‘wet lands’. In response, the State Revenue Department issued the GO 326 on May 26, 2005, which gave powers to the District Collector to acquire wetlands for shelter reconstruction without having to obtain prior permission from the state government to do so, contingent upon the fact that there was no other more suitable (i.e. not low-lying) land available to purchase.¹⁸ District officials interviewed claimed that site selection for relocation and/or reconstruction was done in consultation with the village communities. For most fishing villages this meant that the leaders of the community (usually members of the *meenavar panchāyat*) would be invited to the District Collectorate to discuss potential locations for sites for relocation and would then visit the potential sites with the District Commissioner for Recovery and other district officials (Senior Official, Nagapattinam District Revenue Office, 2008). For farming villages, where shelter construction only happened in small pockets, community representation was provided either by leaders of the traditional *panchāyats* of the caste group that lived there, or the Village PRI representative for the village. A second senior

¹⁸ A senior district official mentioned that the immediate need for land overrode concerns about the risk of seasonal flooding in these low-lying areas during seasonal rains and cyclones.

district officer involved in this decision process described community representatives as rushing into the process, trying to “maximize [...] possible [gains], rather than [further] their true interests”. He also described how , "the priorities of NGOs and officials were: #1 getting maximum number of houses, #2 getting maximum land area, #3 functionality of design, #4 maximum amenities", and expressed wryness at the fact that functionality of the space and design was third on their priority for long-term rehabilitation, whereas they should perhaps have been first on the list (Senior Official, Nagapattinam District Administration, 2007).

The last critical GO directed at shelter reconstruction, issued on May 31, 2005 was the GO 342, which redefined the scope of activities that could be undertaken by NGOs in view of their resource capacity. The GO was issued in response to a situation in which many NGOs were willing to invest in housing reconstruction projects, but with investment amounts lower than the minimum amounts set by GOs 25 and 26 (Rs 75lakhs for housing reconstruction and Rs 50 lakhs for individual community facility projects). To address these cases, the GO 342 allowed NGOs to conduct smaller scope reconstruction activities as part of a pre-disaster development scheme called the Village Self Sufficiency Scheme (or locally, “*Namakku Naame Thittam*”), except that in these cases all funds would come from non-governmental sources instead of the usual 1/3rd. The implications of this GO were that where previous policies pushed towards a more comprehensive model of village development, this allowed the scope for it to eventually become more project-based.

As of April 2008, few if any of the study informants had actually moved out of their old homes into new ones, despite many of them having ‘officially’ signed documents stating that they would. Reasons stated for this included: increase in distance from sea (for fisher folk), poor

construction quality of the housing structure, poor/incomplete infrastructure provision in new locations, advantages seen in having two properties, and fear that leaving their current locations would encourage new developments that would limit fisher folk access to the sea. This last reason was owing to widely-prevalent rumors about how vacated land would be allocated for developing hotels and resorts, thus restricting traditional fishing rights for fisher folk. These rumors were not founded in the provisions under GO 172 itself, but rather in prior experiences of activist NGOs with laxity in implementation of the CRZ Notifications as well as with non-address of violations (see Appendix C). On being asked about forced evacuation from the old homes, district officials and NGOs expressed doubt as to whether any such measures would ever be undertaken. As of July 31, 2009, out of the targeted 19,736 houses for Nagapattinam district in phase-I, 18,333 houses had been constructed and 18,128 already handed over to new owners. Of these constructed units, 17,701 had been built by NGOs (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2009).

Phase-II: At the time of fieldwork, the second phase of housing reconstruction was still in its initial stages of planning and implementation. The objectives for housing reconstruction during this phase were to fill all housing gaps from the previous phase and to replace all vulnerable housing between 200m and 1000m of the HTL as a disaster mitigation measure. While the first phase had focused almost entirely on fishing settlements, this second phase extended focus into farming communities.

The program was largely funded by the World Bank through its Emergency Tsunami Relief Program (ERTP), and largely implemented by the District Administration. The ERTP was put into force with the GO 384 on July 1, 2005, and had five components: housing reconstruction, livelihood restoration, repair and restoration of public infrastructure, technical

assistance and training and capacity building, and implementation support. The various components of the E RTP, along with the exact tasks, implementing agency, and funding allocations are shown in Table 4.2.

The housing component of the E RTP included the construction of approximately 140,000 houses in Tamil Nadu with “related facilities and amenities”, as well as provision of transit shelters for the duration of construction. Houses were to be constructed in-situ to the extent possible, further made possible by the fact that targeted housing lay outside the CRZs. As per GO 384, District Collectors (through the District Rural Development Authorities, or DRDAs) were made responsible for executing housing reconstruction in rural areas. A Project Information Document prepared for E RTP in March 2005, states that, “[p]roject implementation will be the responsibility of the states and will be carried out by the concerned departments/agencies at the state and district level”, and that, “the district collector in consultation with the Revenue Department will decide on the use of offers of assistance from donors and NGOs” (World Bank, 2005). The state government claims to have utilized this opportunity, and states on its website that,

“[...] most housing construction will be carried out by the beneficiaries either through individual effort which is the case in Pondicherry or through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) as is the case in Tamil Nadu [with] allowance [...] made for public-private partnerships and direct contracting by the public departments/agencies to respond to particular situations where such approaches may be more effective [...]” (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2009).

The Project Information Document further states that, “[v]illage-level committees assisted by local NGOs, will function as the first information node and grievance redress tier [and] a second-tier will operate at the sub-district or regional level”. This was validated by GO 774 released late in 2007 (see further). On ground, there were reports of village-level

committees having already been organized at the time of fieldwork, but it was not clear whether these were particular to the ERTTP or relics from the previous programs on shelter construction, and whether they were functional or not. Moreover, none of the informants interviewed as part of the study mentioned their being part of such a committee. At the state-level, the ERTTP was to be managed by a Project Management Unit to plan, co-ordinate, review and monitor ERTTP projects; a State Level Steering Committee to deal with policy issues, co-ordination and advice; and a state-level Empowered Committee to deal with the sanction of sub-projects, monitoring and implementation.

In late 2006, the state government conducted a household surveys in twelve coastal districts to identify all “vulnerable” houses in the state. The term “vulnerable” here, referred to: (1) fully thatched houses; (2) houses with thatched roof with any kind of wall like mud, brick, etc.; (3) houses with mud walls with any kind of roof structure; (4) houses with brick walls and mud mortar with any kind of roof structure; and (5) houses built through previous government-financed programs which were at least 10 years old as of January 1, 2006. The survey found that there were such 52,569 “vulnerable” houses which needed reconstructing in about 10 districts, including Nagapattinam. The state government first targeted all housing that lay within 0-200m of the HTL and government-financed housing within 1000m of HTL through its Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme, funded by the central government. As of December 2007, the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department and Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board were in the process of constructing 22,000 houses under this Programme throughout the state (G.O. Ms. No.774, 2007).

For the remaining “vulnerable” housing, the State Revenue Department issued a housing policy in December 2007, via the GO 774. The salient features of GO 774 were as follows:

- Definition of “vulnerable”: area within 1000m of the HTL and 200m on either side of backwaters, and establishments which fell into one or more category mentioned above.
- Eligibility criteria and relocation choices for beneficiaries:
 - Owners of vulnerable houses with clear titles would be considered for 'in-situ' reconstruction;
 - Owners of vulnerable houses without full or proper titles would be considered for 'in-situ' reconstruction, provided there is no dispute over the title;
 - Tenants of vulnerable housing, to whom owner refuses to give the title would be eligible for new houses in the 'relocated' sites;
 - Vulnerable housing occupied by “‘Super Structure owner occupant’ (or) ‘tenant occupant’” which lie on 'Objectionable poramboke’”, i.e. illegal squatters, would be eligible for new houses in the 'relocated' sites;
 - Vulnerable houses occupied by “‘Super Structure owner occupant’ (or) ‘tenant occupant’” which lie on 'Un-objectionable' poramboke will be eligible for new in-situ reconstruction, but the owner of the super-structure would only get compensation for the depreciated value of the structure;
 - Only one house per person, regardless of how many “vulnerable” houses a person owned;
 - Occupants of “vulnerable” houses built on the lands belonging to religious institutions would be considered for in-situ reconstruction, if the institution gave written permission to do so;

- Shops and commercial establishments lying within “vulnerable” areas would not be taken up for reconstruction. For mixed use buildings, only the housing portion of the unit would be rebuilt;
- Occupants and owners of homes built through previous government-financed schemes, for which no title was needed.
- Validation of beneficiary lists: to be done by NGOs appointed by District Collectors. List was to also be published in the local government offices and Grām Sabhās
- Design specifications: houses would be 325 sq ft in size, cost Rs.2.38 lakhs (\$5,736) and be provided with “suitable electrification and sanitation arrangements”.
- Land acquisition: District Level Negotiation Committee be empowered to purchase through private negotiations
- NGO involvement: NGOs could be involved as design consultants; for social mobilization, information and education and social auditing; and, to act as the “interface between the Government/[World] Bank, contractors and the beneficiaries”. These NGOs would be selected by the respective District Collectors based on the “already defined criteria for such selection”
- Construction process:
 - The beneficiary, the District Collector and the contractor would enter into a tripartite agreement after initial interaction by NGOs;
 - Habitat planning, design finalization and procurement of contractors would be done by the District Implementation Unit of the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department

- Construction would be done by contractors hired by the Government through an open tender process, and with the “active involvement and supervision of the beneficiary at all stages”
- House designs would be finalized in consultation with beneficiaries with the help of NGOs appointed by the District Collector. Beneficiaries could ask for changes to house design and structure as long as the size and cost remained the same
- Temporary arrangement would be made for housing the beneficiary for the duration of construction
- Relocation site criteria: no relocation was allowed onto sites that,
 - were notified as water bodies, eco-sensitive areas or reserve forests and under plantation
 - were irrigated agriculture lands and sites nearer to water bodies
- Tenure rights: House titles in relocated sites would be given in the joint name of both spouses. Beneficiaries could not sell or transfer the title of the house for ten years after construction
- Insurance: each house would be insured for Rs. 1,000 (\$24), for a period of 10 years against different types of hazards including tsunamis
- Grievance redress: a two-tiered mechanism was to be formed:
 - District Collectors at the district-level
 - Village / Ward Level Grievance Redressal Committee: consisting of PRI representatives, NGO representatives, Village Administration Officer, and representatives from the District Implementing Units created for ERTF
- Project Monitoring:

- State Level Monitoring Committee (same as the State Level Steering Committee)
- District Level Monitoring Committee: consisting of various district officials

(G.O. Ms. No.774, 2007)

Two of the three case study communities were in the process of finalizing their list of beneficiaries for ERTTP housing at the time of fieldwork. Despite the provisions made for this in the GO 774, the exact process of list compilation and verification varied on the ground. In the Farming Village, some informant households had been visited by the Village Administrative Officer (VAO, the District Administration liaison at the village level), who noted down their household details and told them that they would be built a new *pucca* structure in the same location. On the other hand, in the Mixed Village a Grām Sabhā meeting was held for residents to collectively go over and verify the beneficiary list. On being asked whether they knew what type or design of house they would get, informants from the Farming Village reported being told that it would be a *pucca* house, but nothing further. Figure 4.2 shows the timeline of policies released for housing reconstruction after the tsunami in both phases.

4.3.3.2 Infrastructure redevelopment

Most infrastructure redevelopment activity was implemented through the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded Tsunami Emergency Assistance Project (TEAP). The Project was brought into effect on June 27, 2005 with the issuing of the GO 379, which focused solely on infrastructure redevelopment. The objective of the TEAP was to “support the efforts of the Government of Tamil Nadu to accelerate economic growth and poverty alleviation in the Tsunami affected areas of the State by assisting in the restoration of livelihoods, especially of the poor and complementary rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged public infrastructure

[sic]” (G.O.Ms.No.379, 2005). The major focuses of the TEAP were: livelihood, transportation, rural and municipal infrastructure, and capacity building and implementation assistance. The various components, sub-components, implementing agency, and funding allocations are shown in Table 4.3.

By early 2007, TEAP funds had already been put to use in at least two of the case study villages. At the time, TEAP funds were being mostly used in farming villages, because critical infrastructure in fishing villages was being built as part of the shelter reconstruction program. It was not immediately clear how process-related goals would be translated into action on the ground. An ADB report on the project dated April 2005, assures that the Government of Tamil Nadu would ensure that implementing agencies,

“[...] seek the participation of government and nongovernment organizations and communities, particularly women, in the selection, design, implementation, and monitoring of [the livelihood component]. Community based dispute resolution mechanisms will be established to address disputes [and] NGOs and communities will maintain proper records and information about their activities and use of funds [and be] subject to audit [...]” (ADB, 2005)

The 2005 ADB report also mentions that district and village monitoring committees would be formed, but apart from these, no other guidelines on the process of planning and implementation could be found in any of the policy document of the state government (ADB, 2005). At higher levels, the TEAP was managed by the same Project Management Unit, State Level Steering Committee and Empowered Committee that managed the ERTTP, and the two projects shared one Project Director created at the state-level to implement them. In addition, a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) at the state-level, and a District Implementation Unit (DIU) at the district level were created through GO 119 in August 2005. The two agencies were to be staffed by a number of specialists in areas such as micro-credit finance, and environmental eco-

sanitation, but neither had outlined positions particular to community engagement or outreach, or for local PRI representatives (G.O.Ms.No.659, 2005).

On the ground, study informants in the Farming Village reported that new access roads had been laid in their hamlets around mid-2007, but they were not aware of how these were prioritized or exactly who funded them. The Farming Village PRI representatives reported that they were first contacted by the District Administration through a letter stating that ADB money had been allotted to their village and asking them which projects they would like implemented. With help from the Village Administrative Officer (VAO), the PRI representatives then prioritized projects based on what they had heard through informal conversations with their constituents. The PRI representatives and VAO drew up the plans for the selected project and submitted them to the District Administration for approval. The District Administration then sanctioned the funds, and hired a contractor to implement the project. All TEAP-funded projects in the Farming Village were monitored by a committee formed for this specific purpose within the District Administration. There were no village-level monitoring committees formed. Once completed, the projects were handed over to the PRI to maintain.

4.3.3.3 Agricultural Rehabilitation

Whereas numerous policy directives were issued for housing reconstruction and infrastructure redevelopment, only two were issued for agricultural rehabilitation: one for agricultural lands and the other for horticultural lands. The first, G.O. 124 was released on February 23, 2005, and it defined the area to be reclaimed in Nagapattinam district (23640.8 acres), set the cost of reclamation (\$1,217/acre), and issued an input subsidy amount per beneficiary (\$258.2). The remaining costs were to be borne by the beneficiary either by

themselves or with help of other NGOs. Activities to be undertaken as part of land reclamation were: soil testing, removal of salt, lands surface leveling, gypsum application, sowing of seeds, ploughing and cultivation of crops. In addition, premiums for the state-operated insurance program and a subsistence allowance were to be paid to affected farmers every season for two and three more years, respectively (G.O. Ms. No. 124, 2005).

The G.O. 203 was released on April 12, 2005 to guide reclamation of horticultural lands. The area of horticulture land to be reclaimed in Nagapattinam district was set at 1,129 acres, cost of reclamation was set at \$637.9/acre, with an input subsidy amount of \$258.2 per beneficiary (G.O. Ms. No. 203, 2005). The reclamation activities and provision of subsistence allowance, as well as insurance premiums were the same as those provided under G.O.124.

Under both G.O.s, the monetary benefits were to be deposited directly into the bank accounts of each beneficiary, while the district-level Agriculture and Horticulture Departments were made responsible for the distribution of materials like gypsum and seeds. However, there were no guidelines provided for this distribution process or checks and balances to ensure equity.

In the Farming Village, the President of the PRI and the Village Administrative Officer (VAO) first created a list of beneficiaries, which was sent to the District Department of Agriculture for approval. The beneficiaries on the final list were then asked to self-organize into groups of five and select a group leader. Seed, farming implements, and money were then transferred to bank accounts created exclusively for these 'self-help' groups. The material and money was then distributed between group members by the group leader based on land size. However, this process was highly prone to class dynamics and cooptation. Large and medium-level farmers tended to form groups within themselves, and where the groups were mixed, the

leader was usually someone of a higher landholding size. This resulted in some inequities during the distribution of materials. Some marginal and subsistence farming informants in the Farming village said they did not receive certain agricultural implements or money through their groups, and others reported that they were never part of a group at all. Having no alternate mechanism to represent their needs or register complaints for redress, and lacking the capacity to mobilize to gain attention at the district level, these informants ultimately resorted to borrowing high-interest loans from local money lenders.

In a parallel effort, NGOs provided technical expertise and aid to individual farming households for removing deposits of clay and sand from the fields, from irrigation ponds and water tanks, and in the de-silting of canals. Some of these programs operated on a “work for cash” basis and provided steady employment to the farmers in the face of their crop and income loss. In the Farming Village, this process involved the NGOs making small groups of 10-15 farmers each, based on adjacency of land, and providing technical assistance to these groups. Eventually, one NGO used these small groups to educate farmers on soil management practices and sustainable farming. These NGOs were required to contact the District Administration and then assigned geographic areas for intervention.

At first, NGO involvement in farming communities was minimal because damage to agricultural land was less visible than that to the housing in fishing villages. This was despite the fact that land reclamation takes many planting seasons to achieve and that an early start is critical to quick agricultural rehabilitation. The few NGOs that did work in the agricultural sector only focused on a selected number of villages based on their resource capacity. Even the programs that were finally implemented had problems. A study conducted on agronomic rehabilitation and

livelihood restoration in Nagapattinam district found that government recommendations for land reclamation were not based on a rigorous survey and analyses of the damage incurred and that neither the government nor NGOs adequately consulted farmers in evolving and implementing the programs. The study also found that the government had provided no guidance on medium to long-term strategies for large scale agricultural rehabilitation (Thamizoli, Rengalakshmi, Senthil Kumar, & Selvaraju, 2006).

Despite their late start, agricultural rehabilitation programs were quicker to implement on the ground. This was because of the household scale of the activity (as opposed to the settlement scale of housing reconstruction) and because of the State and District Administrations' prior, albeit limited, experience with land and water salination.

4.3.4 Impact of recovery policies on stakeholder participation

Recovery policies set the stage for stakeholder participation in recovery in three different ways. First, policies did not clearly define beneficiaries of the program, which led to only certain caste groups receiving the benefits of some recovery activities, regardless of actual recovery need. For example, the G.O. 25 stated that new housing was needed for all “families [that] have been rendered homeless”, but then went on to include language implying that program beneficiaries were “mostly fishermen” (G.O.Ms.No.25, 2005). As a result, Phase-I housing was perceived on the ground as being for only fishing communities (and castes), who had advocated so vociferously for new NGO-housing that non-fishing castes needing new housing were often completely ignored. This was most evident in the Mixed Village, which had a small, nadar community located adjacent to the main fishing hamlet and approximately the same distance from the sea. Many families in this hamlet engage in small-scale fishing in addition to

horticulture and had lost their houses, boats and nets in the tsunami. When they approached the NGO that was constructing houses for the fishing hamlet nearby, they were refused on the basis that they were not “fishing” communities. The following is an excerpt from an interview conducted with a middle-aged nadar woman (Mrs. S) still living in the nadar hamlet. Her house had obvious signs of renovation, but still had a thatch roof, which indicated that it was not built by an NGO since those were required to be brick and mortar. She described her community’s experience with the NGO-K that was building housing:

D.C. (me): “Can you tell me how you rebuilt this house?”

Mrs. S (aged 32, housewife, also does subsistence farming): “Our house was completely flooded in the tsunami...the walls on the (east) section had come down and so had the roof...we heard about the [fisher-folk] getting new housing...we thought we would get one too..”

D.C.: “Did you get a house?”

Mrs. S: “No, we waited for them to come to us...but they didn’t come. So, [the caste panchāyat leaders] went to speak to the [project supervisor] of NGO-K. That man said we were not [fishing caste] so we don’t qualify...”

D.C.: “What did you do then? Did you complain at the [District Administration head quarters]?”

Mrs. S: “No, we didn’t ... our [extended family] from other villages gave help and money and we rebuilt this house... that’s how it always is for us nadars...”

Second, policies empowered certain actors over others through their rules on organizational capacity. For example, Phase-I housing reconstruction was assigned to NGOs, while Phase-II housing, infrastructure redevelopment, and agricultural rehabilitation was assigned to the District Administration. Moreover, only certain NGOs could participate in the housing reconstruction, based on a minimum investment level specified by recovery policy. As per policy, Rupees 75 lakhs (i.e. \$155,000) was set as the minimum investment amount for housing reconstruction projects (covering a minimum of 50 families each) and Rs. 50 lakhs (or \$103,304) for community facilities such as schools and hospitals (G.O.Ms.No.25, 2005;

G.O.Ms.No.26, 2005).¹⁹ Those NGOs that met the investment amounts were allowed under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to hire local NGOs and CBOs to facilitate community involvement, but this was left to the discretion of the larger NGO. As a result, local NGOs and CBOs, which usually have familiarity with local communities, were not provided with consistent roles in recovery and reconstruction.

A secondary effect of these policies was that program delivery mechanisms varied based on who was leading. Programs led by NGOs placed more emphasis on ‘grass-root’ participation. In contrast, programs led by the District Administration tended to depend on pre-existing decision structures for development, which are more prone to caste, gender and class discrimination (Chandrasekhar D. , 2009).

Lastly, policies for reconstruction planning and design did not provide clear guidelines for how to facilitate community participation. They lacked standards for the public involvement process and provided no direction on how to avoid the inequities resulting from local caste dynamics inherent to these coastal communities. For instance, Phase-I housing policies had no requirement for consistent community input throughout the planning process. Housing reconstruction policies only required local communities to “accept the partnership” with NGOs and then “approve” the final housing and site design. The local community was given the “right” to “transparent and participative” reconstruction processes without any idea about the mechanisms by which this participation could easily occur (G.O.Ms.No.25, 2005; Government of Tamil Nadu, 2005). This resulted in a broad range of ‘participatory planning’ techniques being

¹⁹ Eventually, and in response to interest expressed by small NGOs in reconstruction, and the inability of some others to follow through with their original commitments, the State Government issued the GO 342 on May 31, 2005. The GO 342 allowed NGOs to undertake small investment reconstruction activities as an extension of a pre-disaster development scheme called the Village Self Sufficiency Scheme.

used on the ground, ranging from minimal community consultation to more intensive community engagement. For instance, during Phase-I housing reconstruction, children of one hamlet in the Farming Village were asked by their NGO partner to draw a “house of their dreams,” which was then used to create the new housing layouts and then consistently consulted throughout the design process. In sharp contrast, residents of a different hamlet community within the same village, but assigned to a different NGO-partner, were presented with two options for house design and asked for their inputs on modifications. These designs were first created and later finalized at the headquarters of the NGO (located elsewhere).²⁰

In summary, the pre- and post-disaster development institutions and policies helped create the context within stakeholder participation in recovery was facilitated (or constrained). Recommendations for how to improve recovery policies, especially in the case of catastrophic disasters have been provided in Chapter 6.

²⁰ Early and consistent involvement of local communities, from agenda setting to planning, design and implementation of projects have been shown to improve the effectiveness of project outcomes (Davidson, Johnson, Lizarralde, Dikmen, & Sliwinski, 2007).

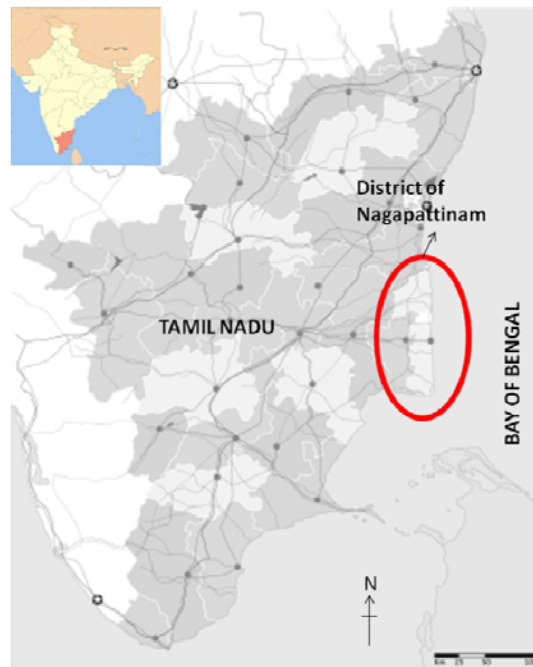


Figure 4.1 Location map of case study region

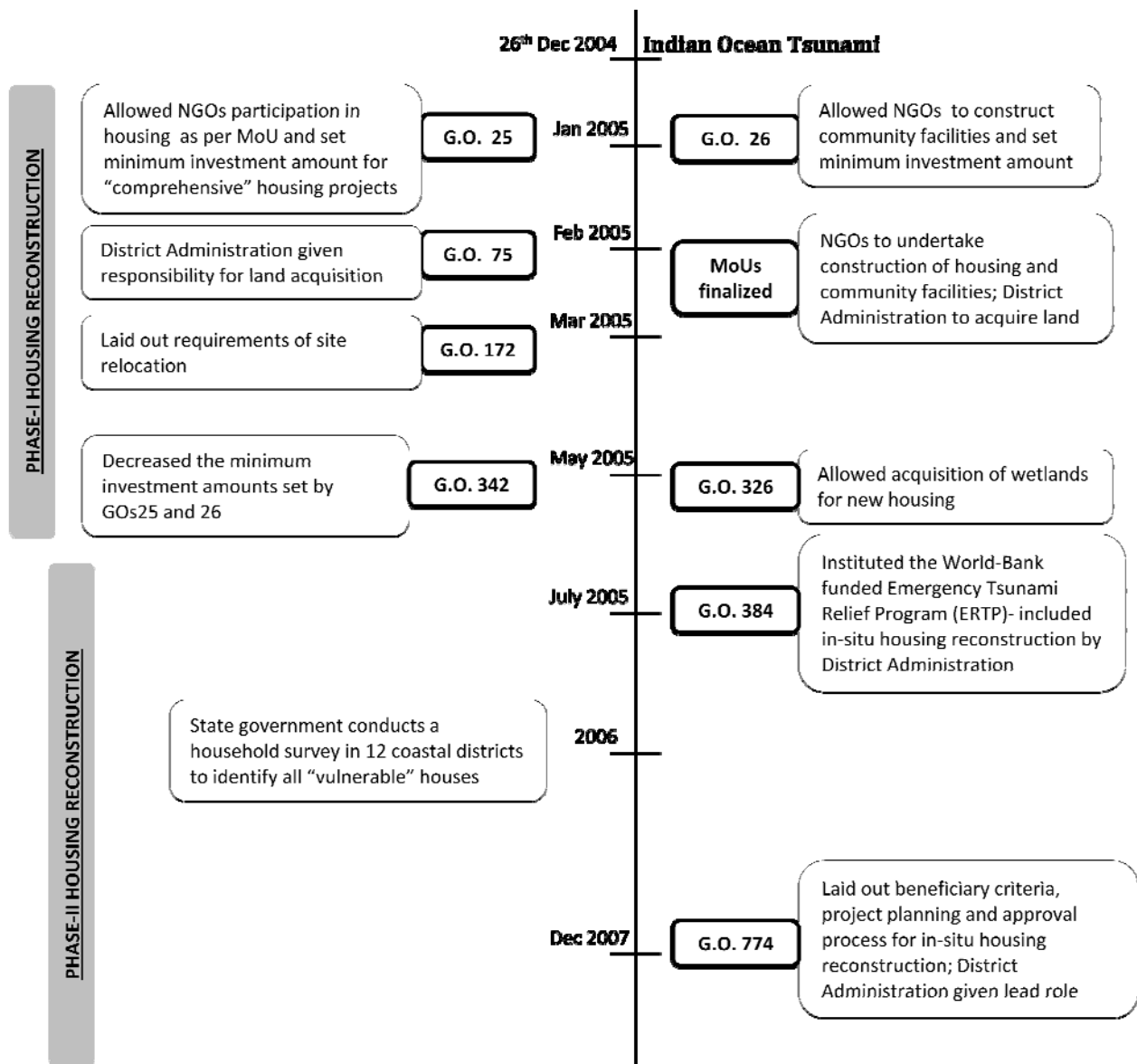


Figure 4.2 Timeline of policies released for housing reconstruction (phases I and II)

Table 4.1 Distribution of Rights and Responsibilities as per MoU (Revised Draft, dated February 16, 2005)

NGO	District Administration	Communities
<p>Activities/Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construct permanent houses “and/or associated infrastructural facilities such as water supply, sanitation, wastewater/solid waste management, rain water harvesting facilities, other ecological features, roads, community centres, school buildings, fish and farm produce market yards, village information/communication centres...” as per approved layout or building plan ▪ Site clean-up after project is complete <p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit a “schedule of plan of activities” with project starting date and milestones to District Administration (may be modified later as needed) ▪ Involve “local beneficiaries in [construction] programme and make use of locally available materials to the extent feasible” ▪ Not discriminate based on “caste, community, creed, religion, language” ▪ Change contractors based on complaints from community or the government <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invest amount required to undertake housing construction and provision of infrastructure facilities as per rules laid out in GO 25 or GO 26, and be prepared for audits. ▪ Engage other civil society organizations with prior experience in social work or community engagement to aid in construction ▪ Engage organizations with expertise in livelihood issues and disaster-resistant construction for “technical support” and to train “beneficiaries to undertake [future] repairs”. 	<p>Activities/Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify beneficiaries in consultation with NGOs and local Panchāyat or other community body; reserves the right of final say in matter ▪ Provide lands for house construction and associated infrastructure free of cost ▪ Provide “water, power and other utility connections [...] up to the periphery of the habitats as per the existing rules and regulations in force” ▪ Take over task from NGOs in case of non-completion and ‘blacklist’ it from working anywhere in the country <p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Link homeowners to specific sites early, so they participate in housing construction ▪ Approve site layouts, building plans and “schedule of plan of activities” ▪ Provide all official clearances as required for the project ▪ Inspect the work of NGOs, independently, as a joint review with them, or through a jointly hired “Technical Consultant” ▪ Inform NGOs of complaints regarding sub-contractors on the quality of work, delays, lack of coordination, or “any activities which affect public interest” such as religious proselytizing ▪ Right to amend or modify MoU in consultation with NGOs <p>Right to own the land, and “transfer the ownership [...] to victims in such manner and at such time as it deems fit.”</p>	<p>Activity/Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aid in the preparation of beneficiary lists for new housing ▪ Engage in “housing construction activity” ▪ Provide local materials for construction if needed <p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Right to “transparent and participative” reconstruction processes ▪ Right to “equal treatment” ▪ Village PRI representative to be present during the “signing” over of completed project from NGO to government

Table 4.2 Components, Tasks, Implementing Agencies and Resources under the Emergency Tsunami Relief Programme (ERTP)

Components	Tasks	Implementing Agency	Funding (USD in millions)	Other enabling GOs (w/ issue date)
Housing Reconstruction	Construction of permanent housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District Administration (as per GO); ▪ community Self-Help Groups or SHGs (according to ETRP website) 	596.8	GO 158 (03.01.2006); GO 531 (08.14.2006)
	Provision of “related facilities and amenities”			
	Provision of transit shelter for duration of construction			
Restoration of Livelihood	Restoration of damaged fisheries infrastructure such as harbors, patrol boats and, aquaculture infrastructure	Departments of Fisheries, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Public Works Department (Buildings)	25.5 (fisheries)	GO 590 (10.21.2005); GO 603 (10.25.2005)
	Reestablishing ‘safety at sea’ systems			
	Restoration of damaged agricultural and horticultural lands, farm ponds, and wells		10.9 (agriculture and related)	GO 137 (02.24.2006); GO 138 (02.24.2006)
	Repair and upgrading of veterinary services and infrastructure			
	Promoting sustainable management of coastal land and water resources			
Repair and Reconstruction (of public infrastructure)	Repair, reconstruction and upgrading of hospitals, public health centers, educational institutions, cyclone shelters and other public buildings and works in affected areas	Public Works Department (Buildings) and Water Resources Organization and the District Rural Development Agencies	19.5	GO 592 (10.21.2005); GO 604 (10.25.05)
	Restoration of damaged river and drain banks, and plantation or re-plantation of mangrove and shelter belts	Department of Environment and Forests		GO 589 (10.21.2005)

Table 4.2 (cont.)

Components	Tasks	Implementing Agency	Funding (USD in millions)	Other enabling GOs (w/ issue date)
Technical Assistance and Training	Strengthen the institutional capacity of State Government and other “entities” for implementation	(For housing component) Project Management Units, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board and District Rural Development Agencies	11.1	
	Technical assistance and capacity building for “preparation of detailed project reports, land management, resettlement planning and land use zoning and demarcation and the training of masons”			GO 591 (10.21.2005)
	Engaging communities, especially the most vulnerable groups in “[...] planning, deciding and implementing [reconstruction and restoration] programmes”			
	Developing and strengthening mechanisms for communication, transparency and grievance redress			
	Capacity building at state-level for preparing social and environmental management plans, and for updating CZMPs	(For livelihood component) Departments of Animal Husbandry & Fisheries, Agriculture, Environment and Forest		GO 591 (10.21.2005)
	Assessment of vulnerabilities, long term issues and needs associated with coastal zone protection and hazard risk management, especially for Nagapattinam district			
	Conducting research for developing fisheries policy, identifying new alternatives for livelihood support in coastal villages, and conducting training for these			
Implementation Support	Technical and financial audits, quality assurance reviews and continuous environmental and social assessment	Project Management Units	12.0	GO 418 (07.20.2005); GO 580 (10.19.2005)
	Human resources and staffing			GO434 (07.29.2005)

Source: (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2009; G.O.Ms.No.384, 2005)

Table 4.3 Components, Tasks, Implementing Agencies and Resources under the Tsunami Emergency Assistance Project (TEAP)

Components	Tasks	Implementing Agency	Funding (USD in millions)	Other enabling GOs (w/ issue date)
Livelihoods (grant-financed)	Capacity building, establishment and enterprise training of existing self-help groups	Rural Development Department	49.9	GO 654 (12.05.2005); GO 684 (12.15.2005); GO 724 (12.26.2005); GO 781 (12.30.2005)
	Micro enterprise training, and establishment support to new male and female SHGs			
	Replacement of productive assets (excluding housing)			
	Skills upgrading			
	Risk mitigation through group, life and asset insurance			
	Reconstruction of tsunami-affected community-based infrastructure			
	Technical support for implementation, monitoring and impact assessment of livelihood component			
Transportation (Loan Financed)	<p>Roads and Bridges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rehabilitation of damaged State roads, except village and municipal roads ▪ Rehabilitation of damaged drainage structures ▪ Rehabilitation of bridges in Kanniyakumari and Cuddalore districts ▪ Creation of bridge connections for un-bridged crossings, replace temporary crossing arrangements 	Highways Department	26.8	GO 783 (12.30.2005); GO 132 (02.23.2006)
	<p>Ports and Harbors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dredging for ports, harbor basins and approach channels ▪ Rehabilitation of breakwater for ports and fishing harbors ▪ Rehabilitation of fishing harbor facilities ▪ Rehabilitation of roads and ports facilities ▪ Equipment for dredging, environmental facilities and navigational aids 	Tamil Nadu Maritime Board and Fisheries Departments		GO 602 (10.25.2005); GO 650 (11.30.2005); GO 581 (10.10.2005); GO 146 (02.07.2006); GO 668 (10.10.2006)

Table 4.3 (cont.)

Components	Tasks	Implementing Agency	Funding (USD in millions)	Other enabling GOs (w/ issue date)
Rural and Municipal Infrastructure	<p>Water Supply and Sanitation (Grant Financed):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restoration and upgrading of damaged water supply systems ▪ Upgrading of affected water supply systems into multi-village systems with more reliable source development ▪ Rehabilitation and upgrading of sanitary complex and solid waste management facilities ▪ Sanitation and environmental awareness campaign ▪ Institutional support for damage assessment surveys, aquifer and hydrology study, disaster resistant design, construction quality control, and community participation 	Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board, Rural Development Department and the individual municipalities	23.0	GO 784 (12.30.2005); GO 832 (12.19.2006)
	<p>Other Rural and Municipal Infrastructure (Loan Financed);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rehabilitation or upgrading of municipal roads; drainage canals; public buildings such as small-scale common fish landing, processing, marketing facilities and community centers; and municipal and rural damaged electricity line network and distribution transformers ▪ Rehabilitation or upgrading of village roads; drainage canals; and public buildings such as PRI offices 	Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board, Rural Development Department, Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, and individual municipalities	40.7	GO 833 (12.19.2006)
Capacity Building and Implementation Assistance (Grant-Financed)	Design and construction, supervision and technical support consultancy		3.2	

Source: (Government of Tamil Nadu, 2009; G.O.Ms.No.384, 2005)

CHAPTER 5

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN CASE STUDY VILLAGES

In this chapter I examine stakeholder participation in the recovery of the three case study villages. I have used narratives and interview excerpts to tell the story of how different recovery activities were conducted in each village, how different stakeholder groups participated in these activities, and why. To provide context, each section begins with the description of general demography in the village, the caste and occupation structures, the systems of village governance, the spatial layout of the village and the physical damage experienced. Not all villages had statistical data available for them, but I have included as many as I could find from documents of NGOs that had worked in these villages. To keep village names confidential I have referenced the available statistics to district level sources. Also, to aid in content analysis of the interview excerpts, I have highlighted all the instances where power, legitimacy, trust and urgency for action are in play. To enhance readability, a separate glossary of all actors and organizations in each village is provided in Appendix D.

The last section of this chapter summarizes the different forms of participation and non-participation seen in the village and their relationship with the four factors, power, legitimacy, trust and urgency of action.

5.1 THE STORY OF “FISHING VILLAGE”

Local legend traces back the history of the Fishing Village back 1200 years to a time when a prominent south Indian sage lived and died there. Later (around 400 years back), a prominent king was said to have gifted the village to a local fisherman in appreciation of his seafaring skills. Over time, Fishing Village grew and gained local prominence in that region.

Today, it is one of the larger fishing settlements in the area and has held the position of “head village” among fishing communities of the region.²¹ The Fishing Village is administratively classified as a ‘ward’ of a municipal town (“Town M”) and elects a village representative (‘municipal councilor’) to the Municipal Council.²²

Fishing Village is a coastal village, and most of its residents are involved in the fishing industry. According to sources at Town M, the village population was 2,626 (1330 males and 1296 females) in 2001. Population figures after the tsunami varied widely among different sources. Based on information from local residents, district records placed total population at 6,000 (3200 males and 2800 females), but other NGOs reported population figures as up to 8,000 persons. Approximately 96% of the population belongs to fishing castes (“*meenavars*”). Only 36 households belong to the *dalit* castes.²³ Almost all the *meenavars* are Hindu of religion, while the *dalits* were equally divided into Christians (Orthodox and Catholic) and Hindus. Caste, not religion was the key to village dynamics, however. None of the informants even mentioned religion as being a key feature of their lives, whereas everyone talked about the implications of their caste on their daily lives. Bearing this in mind, I selected my informants based on caste, as opposed to religion.

²¹ The “head village” leads a network of 64 villages along the coast of Nagapattinam and Karaikal Districts. The network operates as a system of 32, 16 and 8 villages and the role of the “head panchāyat” is to resolve conflicts and manage inter-village affairs. They cannot interfere in the internal decisions of individual villages, however.

²² Similar to the provisions of the 73rd Amendment Act of 1992, the 74th Amendment Act of 1993 decentralized urban governance by creating a system of directly elected municipalities for small, large and transitional urban areas. The second lowest rung of this system are Municipal Councils formed for small towns (Bhandari, 2006). These are comprised up of individual ‘wards’ each of which elects a ‘councilor’ to represent it.

²³ The Government of India maintains three (stratified) lists of castes based on their low socio-economic status: Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Class (OBC which includes the “Most Backward Class” groups or MBCs). Groups included in these lists are eligible for affirmative action programs in government employment, electoral governance and higher education. Dalit castes are listed as SC while *meenavar* castes are listed under MBC. Traditionally, however, *meenavar* castes are considered to be ‘higher’ than the *dalits*.

The discrepancies in post-tsunami figures may be owed to inadequate survey coverage and methods and/or the merging or creation of new households after the tsunami (Praxis, 2005). However, I could not find an adequate explanation for the large discrepancy between pre- and post-tsunami population figures. It is as likely that the pre-tsunami figures were highly inaccurate as it is possible that local residents exaggerated their numbers after the tsunami to angle for more relief aid. Official district figures state that the village lost 243 people to the tsunami (32 adult men, 86 adult women and 125 children), though only 92 bodies were recovered (NCRC, 2005; Praxis, 2005). Most women interviewed said that either they had gone to school themselves (elementary or middle) or that they send their children (girls included) to school. Some families had even sent their children to college in other towns around the state. One family reported having sent their daughter to engineering school so that she would attract a better marriage alliance (she was not expected to work as an engineer, however).

5.1.1 Caste, occupation and local economy

There were two distinguishable caste groups in the Fishing Village based on occupation: the *meenavar* (“fishing folk”) who hold the traditional right to fish in the sea and the *dalits* who are historically associated with menial tasks and labor. The terms “*meenavar*” and “*dalit*” both refer to a set of castes as opposed to a single one, though the *meenavar* castes pride themselves on their overall cohesiveness more than the *dalit*. The *meenavars* and the *dalits* are both ‘low’ in the caste hierarchy, though the *meenavars* are ‘higher’ than the *dalits*. Residents of both communities have strong kinship ties within their local caste group and it is common for neighbors to be related by blood or marriage.

Almost all *meenavars* in the village are involved in either investment fishing (using big trawler boats) or livelihood fishing (using smaller traditional wooden or contemporary fiberglass boats). Trawling operates out of the harbor at Nagapattinam Town and is conducted only between June 1st and April 14th because of a government ban on trawling during the fish breeding season. The trawlers, nets and engines are owned by individual ‘owners’ who hire local residents (only *meenavar*) to crew fishing expeditions. The crew helps catch fish, load/unload the boat, and repair the nets upon return. At the harbor, all large fish are auctioned for profit by wives of the trawler owners and crew members (*eylam* ladies) to ‘commission agents’ (also *meenavar*) who in turn sell them to regional and national companies. The commission agents hire local labor (men and women of *meenavar* and *dalit* castes) to clean, pack and load/unload the fish for regional transportation. The companies that buy the fish from commission agents usually maintain local offices at harbors such as that of Nagapattinam Town for this specific purpose. In return for their services, *eylam* ladies are paid a small amount from the profit, either as cash or produce of the same value. The cash or produce is then divided among all the *eylam* ladies. The remainder is shared between the trawler owner (78%) and the boat crew (22%). The cost of ice for the expedition, fuel, taxes, repair, and salary for a watchman to guard the boat at nighttime are borne by the trawler owner.²⁴ Small fish caught during the trawler operations are unloaded by *dalit* laborers who are paid in cash or kind, and the fish is sold by the *eylam* ladies to small vendors for the local market.

²⁴ In some places, the profit is shared after deducting the cost of repairs fuel, etc, which in other places the crew is paid a commonly agreed-upon wage. Earlier, trawler owners of Fishing Village would deduct operating costs before sharing profit (as 60:40), but after negotiations in 1995, this was changed to the current system of owner bearing operating costs (and to 78:22). Also, previously only trawler owners’ wives would do *eylam* at the harbor, but after crew members protested, their wives were also allowed. All these changes pre-date the tsunami.

The trawler owner-crew labor relationship has always been tense in the village, though the first labor union was formed only after the tsunami. Before the disaster, there were around 80 trawler owners, between 400-500 trawler crew-laborers and a handful of commission agents in the village. Many trawler owners lost their boats in the tsunami and were waiting on insurance and government compensation to rebuild their business. Some owners even worked as laborers for other trawler owners in the interim.

Meenavar of Fishing Village are also involved in livelihood fishing which is done using either mechanized or hand-operated *kattumarams* (a traditional, multi-hulled wooden boat) or *maruti* boats (made of fiberglass) for a smaller, more local market. *Kattumarams* are either hand operated or use engines to propel them and travel shorter distance into the sea than *maruti* boats which are all engine powered and can go farther into the sea. Hand-operated *kattumarams* are less expensive than engine-powered ones, which in turn are less expensive than *maruti* boats. Livelihood fishing is seasonal based on the nature of the catch. For example, prawns are best fished in April/May and *sura* (shark fish) between June and September.

Livelihood fishing in Fishing Village operates from the beach off of the village settlement. The boats and nets are stored on the beach, and small thatch shelters are built to store the nets and for fishermen to watch the sea. Operations typically begin early in the morning (around 3 AM) when the boat owners and crew members (2-4 to a boat) collect on the beach. In Fishing Village, most crew members on *kattumaram* operations belong to the same family, while on *maruti* boat operations they may be hired for the purpose, though also from within the village. Fishing is usually complete by mid-morning when the catch is brought back to the beach. There the crew and other hired labor (*meenavar* and *dalit*) to unload the fish. The catch is sold to an

agent in bulk, sometimes in advance. The agent hires *eylam* ladies to auction the fish to local fish vendors. Local fish vendors, whether in the trawler operations or livelihood fishing, are predominantly women from both *meenavar* and *dalit* communities. These women vendors travel from these beach locations to other villages and towns using local transport, such as autorickshaws and buses. Most women are also members of one or more micro-finance self-help groups.

Like investment fishing, livelihood fishing also follows a profit-share model. The catch is divided equally between crew members and the boat owner, with one share kept aside for each, boat, engine and net repair (done by the boat owner). Fuel and ice (only in *maruti* boat operations) are paid for by the boat owner. The *eylam* ladies are paid by the agent, in cash or kind (i.e. fish). There were no available records for pre-tsunami livelihood fishing activity. Official figures used for disaster compensation state that 346 *kattumarams* and *maruti* boats were damaged (fully or partially) in addition to the loss of 110 nets and 72 engines (Praxis, 2005).

In this village only men go out to sea to fish while women do most of the cleaning and vending. Most active fishing is complete by mid-morning, and the men idle around for the remainder of the day. A common complaint was of rampant alcoholism and gambling among the men after the boats have docked. Women of the household auctioned and/or vended the fish, then returned to the house to do housework and take care of children, which involved much travel between the beach, local markets and back to the house. Some women from lower income families also reported cleaning the fish after trawler operations, vending street food within the village and some operated small petty shops.²⁵ Most women I spoke with said that regardless of

²⁵After the tsunami, some NGOs gave boats to women to own and operate, but with few exceptions crew members were still men.

how much they contributed to household income, they could not take unilateral decisions about expenditure. While the men-folk in their families had not taken unilateral decisions either, the women acknowledged that it could happen in the future.

It is also common in this region for male members of *meenavar* families to go to Singapore or Malaysia and work as temporary labor in the shipping industry. These men usually stay abroad for a couple of years, earn capital and return to invest it in fishing here. Few men actually move abroad permanently.

The *dalits* of the village belong to the *pallar* caste which is traditionally associated with land leveling for agricultural lands. In earlier times, the *dalits* would work on fields in the surrounding village. Only one family eventually bought their own piece of land near to the existing hamlet to grow vegetables on small-scale. As urbanization occurred around the hamlet, most *dalit* families were forced to pursue alternative livelihoods such as masonry and construction labor, fruit and vegetable vending, keeping small petty shops, and driving autorickshaws. Only a few *dalit* men had worked as labor on *maruti* boat operations before the tsunami and even they had taken up other occupations after the disaster. The *dalit* labor involved in the fishing activities of the *meenavar* of Fishing Village come from other villages and towns and get paid a daily wage.

None of the *dalit* women I met worked outside of the home. But, all were members of one or more micro-finance self-help groups and added to their household income in that way. Some women said that they had been given sewing machines by an NGO (stored in the community center in the Fishing Village) but had not yet been trained on how to use them. They

were still waiting to hear back from the NGO about the training.²⁶ Similar to the *meenavar* women, most *dalit* women said that they also did not make independent decisions about household whereas the men possibly could. However, most were confident that their husbands would consult them in any future decisions.

5.1.2 Village governance

Each caste has a traditional panchāyat (self-governing body) which attends to matters of communal interest in the village. For fishing communities, all *meenavar* castes in the village have a unified *meenavar* panchāyat. The *meenavar* panchāyat is the most powerful community group in most fishing villages. Owing to its regional prominence, the *meenavar* panchāyat of Fishing Village is regarded as being even more powerful than other fishing villages. The *meenavar* panchāyat dictates social norms in the village, issues punishment and fines for social offenses, resolves conflicts between families and is the guiding force behind development agendas for their entire village. It levies a per day tax on all fishing operations and uses the funds for communal events, most specifically for temple repairs and renovations and for seasonal fairs.

Meenavar panchāyats are popularly elected and consists only of men of *meenavar* caste. Women are neither allowed to stand for elections nor attend meetings on a regular basis. Women whom I interviewed said that they were invited to the panchāyat meetings if the panchāyat

²⁶ In my conversations with some NGOs in the area, I was told that some women-oriented livelihood programs had changed family dynamics. Fishing did not resume in many villages for almost six months after the disaster (due to fear of the sea) and *meenavar* men were essentially unemployed. Women on the other hand, were given alternative employment, such as basket weaving through NGO schemes. These women would sometimes go to work at these alternate worksites for the entire day and the men would be left in charge of the household. In terms of power structure, this tipped the balance more towards the women who became more active in the decision-making process at the household levels. One NGO found the fishermen doing tasks traditionally done by women, such as taking care of children returning from school, and fetching water in one village. These men were said to have appeared extremely embarrassed about their current situation and refused to speak about it to the NGO team members. In other villages, the women were also said to have gained more political power as their social status improved and have become more vocal and active in community decision-making. This was not the case in the villages I observed, however.

wanted specific information from them or if the matter was considered as a “women’s issue”, i.e. related to children’s education or health. Widow women-headed households (particularly the elderly) have a more ambiguous standing in *meenavar* communities. While they are the least represented demographic in traditional panchāyat meetings (which only men attend), they can approach other male relatives to represent their interests. The widowed women who do not have such relatives are considered a communal responsibility and are given either food or a stipend by the *meenavar* panchāyat to support themselves when they are unable to do so themselves.

Election to the *meenavar* panchāyat is highly contentious, and by some accounts the panchāyat had been dissolved and reelected six times since the tsunami. Because presenting a cohesive and unified front to outsiders is extremely important to the *meenavars* few informants were willing to talk in detail about why this happened. Eventually, however, I was told by one informant that the panchāyat members were changed once because of their inability to get the maximum aid from government and NGO sources. (The panchāyat members I met in 2008 were all middle aged men who had been to high school and owned their own boats.) Later, I also found out from sources outside the village that the *meenavar* community had split into two groups immediately after the tsunami because of internal differences on where to relocate. Each group formed its own *meenavar* panchāyat, and one group even relocated to a site outside the settlement and away from the eventual relocation site for Fishing Village. However, the two groups eventually reconciled, and when I visited the village, they once again had a single unified panchāyat. As a result, while they participated in elections for the *meenavar* panchāyat of Fishing Village, they voted for a different ward during municipal elections.

Dalits in the community also had their own traditional panchāyat, but it was much less influential than the *meenavar* one. The *dalit* panchāyat had not been truly functional until after the disaster when the community made a concentrated effort to organize and advocate for their interests. Despite this, however, *dalit* informants said they were still struggling to gain foothold in the larger politics of Fishing Village. Elections and functioning of the *dalit* panchāyat was much the same as the fishing village, though to a lesser degree. The women of the community said that they went to panchāyat meetings if they had complaints to air, but attending these on a regular basis, an informant said, "...is [just] not done". Despite this, however, most women I spoke with felt that they had more direct access to *dalit* panchāyat members and that their concerns would be heard. The elderly and/or widowed women were generally supported by relatives and those that were not vended vegetables and food for a living.

Relations between the *dalit* and *meenavar* panchāyat were always uneasy, as evident from the following excerpts from interviews of the *dalit* and *meenavar* panchāyats:

“Setting: Interview with three (male) panchāyat members of *dalit* community: “MK”, “MR” (the head) and “IY”. I had asked to interview one panchāyat member, but my primary contact in the community (wife of MR, “VMR”) brought two along. Soon, there were three men, one of whom was a panchāyat member from 2005. He was old and often incoherent, however. VMR sat in the doorway listening throughout the interview while also seeing to her baby. We were occasionally joined by one or more women I had previously interviewed. These women would insert a comment or two during the conversation, but were largely spectators. The interpreters and I were treated with much respect and offered tea more than once. The interview was held at the new housing site for Farming Village. The house I was sitting in appeared to be complete except for the toilet. Roads and draining/sewer systems were still being constructed.

DC (me): What is your relationship with the *meenavar* community?

MR: Well, they are alright with us face-to-face but they talk about us behind our backs. People have that feeling about our community...not just in Tamil Nadu, but all over India. **They speak**

with us nicely to our face, but behind our backs they speak about us insultingly because they have those feelings against dalits.

DC: But, as a panchāyat member, does the *meenavar* panchāyat treat you with more importance?

IY: No, they don't. **They never invite us to discuss anything and we don't go to them. If we want to get something, we have to do it on our own...they are not bothered [about us].**

MR: It is because we work as coolies for them, and we are *dalits*. So they don't give us respect...even if we are panchāyat members for our community. Now our only relationship with them is through the issue of ration cards [for the PDS shop].²⁷ For everything else, we have our own things and they have their own..."

[Emphasis added]

The *meenavars* on the other hand, blamed the *dalit* panchāyat for not wanting to reconcile differences. The following is an interview with the panchāyat members of the *meenavar* village:

“Setting: Interview with meenavar panchāyat members: “LN” and “AM”. I wanted to hold the interview in the absence of my primary NGO contact (“M”, who was also a meenavar from the village) to increase LA and AM’s confidence, but M ignored all my hints to leave. In retrospect, this was probably because M wanted to make sure I did not ask uncomfortable questions and get him into trouble with his panchāyatars. I had previously avoided having NGO contacts present in interviews by getting introduced to informants on one day and returning for the actual interview on another day. But these panchāyatars were hard to get hold of and in the end, M stayed on throughout the interview. Fortunately for me, because M was a younger member of the meenavar community, the (older) panchāyatars appeared less intimidated by him than he of them. The interview was conducted in the renovated community hall located on the edge of the meenavar hamlet. The hall was mostly empty except for a table laden with papers and a number of sewing machines stacked in one corner.

DC (me): How are your relations with the dalit community?

LN: We are fine. **It's they who don't want to cooperate with us.** We always call them when there are important things to discuss, but **they always create unnecessary problems** for us.

²⁷ The Public Distribution System (PDS) shops, commonly known as Ration Shops, are government subsidized grocery stores for people of lower income households. These shops usually provide rice, sugar, kerosene for fuel, and other similar provisions.

AM: Yes...it is hard with them. We always reach out, but **they don't want to be with us**. We have always been nice to them. **We think they are part of our community but they don't want to be with us...**"

[Emphasis added]

Evidently, the *dalit* panchāyat believed that the *meenavars* did not share their values and had not lived up to expectations in the past. In turn, the *meenavar* panchāyat felt that their efforts to collaborate with the *dalits* were not reciprocated. Lack of shared values, expected behavior, and reciprocity are indicative of lack of trust between the two community-based organizations.

Apart from the traditional panchāyats, the Fishing Village also elects one municipal councilor to the Municipal Council of the Town M. The role of the councilor is to advocate for local development interests at the town-level and obtain resources for local projects. The councilor elected from this ward has always been a *meenavar* and almost always a man. The few times that there has been a woman in the position, she has always been the wife of a prominent community leader.²⁸ Previously, the municipal councilor held an important position in the village because s/he was the major liaison between the *meenavar* panchāyat and Municipal and District Administrations. There was some conflicting information about whether or not the *dalit* hamlet belonged to the same ward as the *meenavar* settlement and, consequently, whether they participated in the same ward-level elections. Some NGO documents said that the two hamlets belonged to different wards, but residents of the *dalit* community said they belonged to the same ward as the *meenavar* hamlet. The two hamlets shared one Public Distribution System shop and were treated as one entity for disaster compensation and for the housing reconstruction program.

²⁸ While law required that one-third of all Municipal Council (town-level) seats be reserved for people of Scheduled Castes and Tribes (and one-third of these for women), there is no such rule for ward level election where only one representative is elected. Also, as the experience of Farming Village shows, even when women hold such posts officially, they are visibly represented by their men-folk in all important decision-making arenas.

Prior to the disaster, there were only two NGOs working in the village (NGO-A and NGO-F), both with the *meenavar* community. NGO-F was involved in fishermen cooperatives while NGO-A worked on women's empowerment schemes. Neither NGO had much contact with the *dalits* of Fishing Village, though they were each aware of the other's existence.

5.1.3 Spatial structure and physical development

Settlement structures of fishing villages reflect the caste structure of the village. Prior to the tsunami, the *meenavars* lived in a highly dense hamlet located along the beach while the *dalits* lived on the inland side in a peripheral hamlet. Figure 5.1 illustrates the layout of Fishing Village. Location near to the sea is extremely important for *meenavar* communities, particularly livelihood fisher-folk because they need to protect their boats, nets and engines that are stored on the beach overnight, and because they auction the catch from the beach. Location is not as important to trawler owners or *dalit* residents because their livelihoods are not tied to the local beach.

Traditionally, there is also no concept of private land ownership in fishing settlements. Houses that were already built were simply passed onto the next generation as inheritance, and all communal lands were managed by the *meenavar* and *dalit* panchāyats. However, once the Coastal Zone Regulations were put in place in 1991, new construction was disallowed within 200m of the high tide line while existing structures were 'regularized'. At this time, the District Administration encouraged local residents to get formal titles for their traditional properties and land (called "*patta*"). However, few residents actually applied for these. Most *meenavar* residents had no need to do so, because conflicts regarding inheritance were adequately resolved by traditional panchāyats without need for such official proof. Besides, all previous cyclone

disasters had only temporarily displaced village residents. Before the tsunami, houses in the *meenavar* hamlet were mostly made of brick and mortar housing with terraced roof (“*pucca*” houses) or thatched roof (“*kuchcha*” houses). Few houses were complete thatch/shack structures (also called *kuchcha* houses). Having a toilet in the house is against the culture in *meenavar* communities, so most houses in the hamlet do not have toilets. Over the years many initiatives have been undertaken in *meenavar* communities of this region to discourage locals from using the beach for sanitation purposes. However, these have not been very successful and to date the practice persists.²⁹

None of the houses in the *dalit* hamlet had property titles (*patta*). In the past, the residents used to live and work on agricultural lands owned by farmers from adjacent villages. But as these lands were slowly sold off to the government and private developers for urban housing, *dalit* families were forced to move onto adjacent *poramboke* (government owned) lands. Inheritance conflicts were not an issue because of the illegal status of the homes anyway, and new residents would just build wherever they wished. All but one house in the *dalit* hamlet were *kuchcha* houses and were entirely destroyed by the tsunami wave.

The *meenavar* panchāyat has always had a key role in the planning and development of Fishing Village. The typical process was that the *meenavar* panchāyat would identify ‘suitable’ projects based on discussions held at the panchāyat meetings. The municipal councilor would then pursue this agenda at the town level. If the *dalit* community wished for something, they would contact the *meenavar* panchāyat. However, the *dalits* had little trust in the *meenavars* or

²⁹ Interestingly, most *meenavars* insisted on having toilets in the new housing units constructed after the disaster, but with an entrance from outside the house (this was a major source of disagreement in some *meenavar* communities). It was unclear whether they intended to use the toilets or wanted it to increase the resale value of the new houses. In villages where the construction was complete, I found *meenavars* using the toilets for storage purposes.

the District Administration regarding representation of their interests. For instance, in 2002, the *meenavar* panchāyat, through the then municipal councilor applied to the District Administration for new, brick and mortar housing under a new state-funded scheme targeting fishing communities. Fishing Village was eventually granted some houses on the south-side called “line housing”) and had just been completed when the tsunami destroyed them. The *dalit* panchāyatar MR, MK and wife of MR (VMR), narrated the *dalit* community’s experience with this scheme:

“DC (me): what happened with the 2002 housing scheme?

MR: When the government came here five years ago to build line houses, the *meenavars* told the government that they wanted them. We told the *meenavars* that we also wanted houses, but only *meenavars* got them.

VMR: **[The meenavars] assured the government that we would be given some of those houses, but then they distributed the houses amongst themselves...**

DC: So, what did you do?

MR: We still tried to contact the District Collector...**but we could not pursue it there...we are only [laborers] and we did not have the contacts to make it happen.**

DC: Who amongst you went to ask him?

VMR: First the men went, but nothing happened. Later, we women went. We said that we were also living in tough circumstances like the *meenavar* and that we would also like houses, but [the District Administration] told us that they would build us houses later at another time. That did not happen and the *meenavar* line houses also got destroyed.

DC: So, if the government was to give Fishing Village 1 lakh [100,000] rupee, for you and the *meenavars*, do you believe the *meenavars* will ask you what you want?

MR: **No, no, they won’t ask. They’ve not done so. Even the District Collector did not hear us...we don’t go to them if we can help it...**”

[Emphasis added]

The *meenavar* panchāyat members had little to say about the issue. They confirmed that line houses had been built on the south side just before the tsunami and that the *dalits* had asked

for housing as well. But they claimed that they had no control over who got the housing in the end, and that the scheme was only meant for fishing families anyway.

The line housing incident is illustrative of the lack of trust (indicated by the lack of expected behavior) and lack of power (indicated by the inability to influence outcomes) on the part of the *dalit* panchāyat. But it is also illustrative of how legitimacy can be gained. When usual means failed, the *dalits* strategically sent their women folk to generate more sympathy towards their cause. In return, women were acknowledged as important members of the community and more actively represented in communal decisions than ever before.

Overall, 604 homes were fully damaged and 566 were partially damaged in the Fishing Village (see Table 5.1). These included *kuchcha* and *pucca* structures belonging to both, the *meenavar* and *dalit* communities. As a result, the biggest recovery need in Fishing Village was for housing. Village residents were given new (free) *pucca* housing under the housing reconstruction program. The villagers (*dalits* and *meenavar*) also opted to relocate the entire settlement to a site one kilometer inland under the first phase of the housing reconstruction program. The design and construction process was led by NGO-V using its own funds. The new site included housing, a community center, an elementary school and a children's park. Spaces were also provided for public infrastructure in the future. The layout of this new site is shown in Figure 5.2. Construction at the new site was mostly complete by March 2008, but none of the *meenavar* families I visited were planning to move into the new housing. Only the 36 *dalit* families had moved into the new housing, and they did so even before the houses were complete for occupation. The next section describes the process of housing reconstruction in Fishing

Village, and the participation of the two caste panchayats, the NGO-partner and women of the two communities in the program.

5.1.4 The relocation of Fishing Village

When the tsunami hit the village, all surviving residents moved into local schools and community buildings of Town M. The *meenavar* and *dalit* caste community each moved to different emergency shelters. NGO-V and NGO-SS soon approached the *meenavar* caste community with an offer to build temporary shelters until more permanent housing could be constructed. The *meenavars* were first allocated temporary shelters at a location adjacent to their old hamlet, but they rejected it because of its proximity to the sea and because they feared another tsunami. Later however, the *meenavars* heard a rumor that those who did not stay in the originally allocated shelters would not get permanent housing, and so about 200 *meenavar* families moved into these shelters. The remaining shelters were allocated to residents of other surrounding villages. When the *dalits* returned to the village after a week they found that they had not been included in the count for temporary shelters. They held street protests and staged sit-ins, and were eventually allocated temporary shelters in a different location.

During the monsoon season (i.e. fall season) of 2005, both the *dalit* and *meenavar* temporary shelters got heavily flooded. Then, NGO-A gave *meenavar* residents, their target client group from before the tsunami, small grants to repair their homes in the old settlement. The grants were given to only those residents who had thatch-roof houses before the tsunami. Using these funds, most *meenavar* residents repaired their homes and moved back into the original hamlet. By this time, the fear of another tsunami had also dissipated and these residents

were more willing to move back into their original homes. The *dalit* panchāyat member MK said he too had approached NGO-A for these grants in 2005:

“DC (me): What did you do when your tent [i.e. temporary shelter housing] flooded in ’05?

MK: We heard that there was this organization called “NGO-A” and that they gave money to *meenavars* to build their houses. But they only gave money to [meenavars]...

D: Who told you that they would only give money to *meenavars*?

MK: I went and asked them personally. **They said that they were giving aid to only fishermen.** I asked if this was rule for only Town-M and Fishing Village or everywhere...because they have given money to dalits in [another village]...

D: What did they say?

MK: They said the rule was for Fishing Village only...**I asked a couple of times, and they still refused, so I let it go...**”

[Emphasis added]

Having been refused the grants, the *dalit* residents stayed in the temporary shelters through 2005 and 2006. I was unable to meet anyone from NGO-A during all my time in the field. They are small, but were very active in all recovery programs in the district owing to their pre-disaster presence in the region. As a result, they were very busy; my phone calls to their office were not returned and my visits to the offices proved fruitless. Later however, I heard a second-hand account of NGO-A’s role and stance in the matter. I was told that NGO-A had been advocating against settlement relocation because of rumors that the vacated coastal land would be sold off to private developers, thus restricting access to beaches.³⁰ When the temporary shelters flooded in 2005 and the *meenavars* came to them for help, NGO-A used the opportunity to both help their long-standing clients as well as encourage reoccupation of the old settlement. Doing so would have effectively thwarted any plans of private sale of this land. But, NGO-A

³⁰ This was an unfounded rumor and is not supported by the Government Orders. Relocation policy states that all vacated land would be given to the government and would be preserved as ‘public spaces’. Traditional rights of *meenavar* were to be preserved. Moreover, the CRZ regulations ban new construction within 200m of the high tide line.

refused the grants to the *dalits* because they were not convinced that the *dalit* hamlet was actually part of Fishing Village. Besides, I was told, NGO-A thought the *dalits* had grossly exaggerated their numbers to them. My source for this second-hand account was a researcher who had interviewed NGO-A workers on their opinions with regard to large-scale relocation, and so the account was probably veracious. In that case, the lack of recognition by the NGO-A was an indication of the lack of legitimacy for the *dalit* community in Fishing Village.

While this was happening, permanent housing reconstruction was underway in Fishing Village. Three months after the disaster, the District Administration established a committee to review each NGO's profile report (including audit statements, annual reports, etc) to build permanent houses under Phase-I of the housing reconstruction program. After review, NGO-V was selected to construct permanent housing for Fishing Village. I asked "SR", from NGO-V to tell me what role they played in the project planning and design process:

"Setting: Interview with "SR", a member of the team from NGO-V which constructed housing for Fishing Village. NGO-V is an international NGO and a prominent actor in disaster relief and recovery programs around the world. "SR" had been part of many NGO-V projects for relief and temporary shelter in Nagapattinam, including those in Fishing Village. He was 30-ish, college-educated and spoke in English to me. He said he was an experienced project consultant and had been with NGO-V for many years. The interview was held in a quiet corner of the lobby of NGO-V headquarters in Chennai. Since the project was almost complete, most of the project team members had returned to Chennai, and only a small field office operated on-site in Nagapattinam.

DC: Can you describe how NGO-V went about the project?

SR: Once we were selected, we went to the village, **met with the *panchāyat*...that was important because they represent the villagers.**

DC: Which *panchāyat* did you meet?

SR: We called both *meenavar* and *dalit* to one meeting. I think they both attended...

DC: What happened in that meeting?

SR: Well, the first time, we just met and told the villagers about what we planned to do... build new houses...

DC: Had you discussed where the houses were going to be built...in the same place or somewhere else?

SR: Our NGO was not involved in that. The District Collector called the *panchāyat* members separately to the Collectorate [District headquarters] to discuss the new sites with them...

DC: How long did that take?

SR: Many months, almost six, I think. They didn't find a site big enough for all the villagers. Meanwhile we went to the Collectorate and got the beneficiary list from them. Then we went to the village and did a survey. We went to each household and asked about their life, family and details about their old house. We took pictures of them with their old houses.

DC: *Dalits* too?

SR: Yes...the *meenavar* and the *dalit* people had decided to relocate together... as one project, so we had to build houses for all...we didn't treat the *dalits* differently...

DC: So, what happened after the survey?

SR: The government had issued these technical guidelines with different house designs. **We went to the community, held meetings and showed them the models and asked for their input**...about what they wanted in their new house.

DC: Who came to these meetings?

SR: Everyone came. Women came...we have pictures of the meeting. Even one video...³¹

DC: What kind of input did they give?

SR: Yes, they told us about changing the toilets—they wanted them outside the house. No connection from inside...it is not done culturally here. We changed the house design accordingly.

DC: What about the site layout?

SR: That we had to wait until the new site was selected. We needed to know how much acreage we would get...the community finally chose one site near [locality name]. That was adequate. **We held meetings in the village about what the villagers wanted in the new site...we have built a school, community center, even a children's park.** All this was based on what they said they wanted. After it was final, we got the *panchāyat* members to sign the plan...we have photos of that also...then we submitted the plan to the Collector and they approved it. Then we hired a contractor and started construction. Whenever the community had a problem with the contractor, they came to us. We even changed the contractor once because of community complaints.

³¹ I saw the pictures SR mentioned at the site office in Town M—the pictures showed the *meenavar* men with some women in the background. None of the *dalits* I met were there.

DC: Who came to you with complaints- the *dalits* or the *meenavar*?

SR: I'm not sure...

[Emphasis added]

Next, I asked SR about how NGO-V had come to be involved in the project in the first place and how they designed the planning process:

“DC: Can you describe how you came to be involved with building houses in Fishing Village?

SR: Well, all NGOs that wanted to build houses were asked to submit their profile report to the District Committee for a review...

DC: Why did your organization want to be involved? What was the result of the review?

SR: **NGO-V is big and well-respected. We have done work like this** in other countries... It was not difficult for us to be selected. **We have audit statements and annual reports already prepared** so it was all normal for us...we just had to put it down in the format needed by the District Administration. Then they selected us very soon for [housing reconstruction in] Fishing Village...within three months of the disaster! We signed the MoU with them...

DC: Had you worked in Nagapattinam before?

SR: Not before the tsunami, but we worked elsewhere in India. We also came to Nagapattinam [district] within 3 days of the tsunami...gave relief aid, built almost 2000 temporary shelters...

DC: How was your relationship with the District Administration?

SR: They were very good about emergency and all. They had done excellent planning for relief. **We used to meet with the District Collector every evening in the beginning**...all of us NGOs...it was [a] very novel idea. **We shared lot of experiences from field** and corrected mistakes...it was very good, you know?

DC: And what about the *panchāyats* at Fishing Village?

SR: **We knew them well also because we built temporary shelters for Fishing Village** residents in January [2005]. We met with the community, then held meetings...

DC: Did you meet the *dalits* and the *meenavar*?

SR: Not for temporary shelter...the *dalits* [of Fishing Village] had some temporary shelter issue first, but even they got [shelter] later from another NGO. Later, we met with the *meenavar* panchāyat and they told us that they had a good understanding with the *dalits* over new housing.

DC: How did they come to an understanding? Who told you about it?

SR: They decided to move together to one location...I think the [*meenavar* and *dalit*] panchāyat members had talked to the each other and came to an agreement. The *meenavars* told us about it during a meeting. There was a representative from the *dalit* panchāyat there and he agreed.

DC: So, when you needed to consult the villagers, who did you contact? Who decided when meetings should be held?

SR: Mostly it was [NGO-V]. **We called a meeting when we needed community input.** We went to the local *panchāyat*...

DC: The *meenavar* or the *dalit*?

SR: We went to *meenavar* people and asked them to hold a meeting with everyone. They would inform others...

DC: How did you decide when to call the meetings?

SR: **Based on need**...we wanted to be fully participatory. **We consulted the community for all major decisions.** We called many meetings over time...for giving out information about us, when we were doing house design, and then about the plan....”

DC: Where were the meetings held?

SR: Initially in the temporary shelters, but later we had them in the park in the old settlement..

DC: Did you also hold informal conversations?

SR: oh yes. All the time...community would come to us all the time with requests...

[Emphasis added]

Their well-established reputation legitimized NGO-V as a major player in the recovery process for Fishing Village, and their expertise and high resource capacity, both indicative of power, ensured that they would design the entire “community consultation” process. Their legitimacy was further affirmed by the MoU that they signed with the District Administration. But a more interesting aspect of my conversation with SR was how often he lumped together the *dalit* and *meenavars*. He used the term “community” and “villagers” as a generic term for anyone who had lived in the village and based his assumption of an amicable “understanding” existing between the two caste groups to relocate together. But my impression of relations between the two caste communities did not validate such amicability. So, I asked KY, a *meenavar* panchāyat member from 2005 about the relocation process and how this “understanding” came to be:

“Situation: Interview with KY an ex-panchāyat member from 2005, male, 50 years old or more. He is a trawler owner and an important person in the community. He was involved in all the initial decision-making regarding relocation and reconstruction, but was deposed at the end of 2005. But he feels that his importance has not reduced in his caste community. He was very concerned about whether or not I had obtained permission from the existing panchāyat members. He spoke at length about how the new District Collector was completely unsympathetic towards their village. My contact arranged for this interview at his (my contact’s) house, which was very convenient except for the fact that my contact’s brother is an existing, albeit younger panchāyat member. The brother would occasionally come in and listen in on our conversation which might have compromised what KY said.

DC: “Tell me about the *meenavar* panchāyat and what you do...

KY: We [panchāyat members] make decisions for the good of the community...for what we want built, resolving disputes, for the temple...**[local] fishermen have selected us for this [purpose]**...all NGOs must come to us first because we know what is good for the community...**[local fisher folk] always listen to our advice.**

DC: What happens if they don’t listen?

KY: That never happens. **We can charge them fines or make them pay in kind. They must conform to the rules to stay with us.** That is how it is done.

DC Was the *panchāyat* involved in making decisions about the new housing? What kind of decisions did you take part in?

KY: Yes, yes. We are the panchāyat. We were consulted for everything- the new site, the house design, whether we wanted a new community center...

DC: Who all was involved in the decision to move the village to [inland] site?

KY: We were called to the Collectorate to discuss [potential] sites for new housing..

DC: You and the *dalit* people?

KY: No, no. Someone called us *meenavar* asked us to come to the Collectorate for a meeting. We met with the DRO [District Revenue Office] and they asked about this relocation idea. When we came back, **we called the *dalit* panchāyat head over and explained to him that we wanted to**

move and that we wanted them [the dalits] to be part of our housing project. They agreed. It took many months to identify the new site. We went to the Collectorate many times.

DC: Did the *dalit* people go with you at any time?

KY: No, they **[the District Administration] called us, so only we went.**

DC: Did the *dalit* people ask to go with you to the Collectorate?

KY: No they didn't ask also. **We were working for them too,** so why would they?

DC: So, how did you communicate with the *dalits* about the new site?

KY: When had told them that the new project would be constructed elsewhere and when the site was decided we told them where it will be.

DC: What did they say?

KY: They said okay.”

[Emphasis added]

The *meenavar* panchāyat exercised great influence over the planning process. They were seen as the historic representatives of the *meenavar* people and the planning process could not proceed without their consent. The extent of their influence on the *meenavar* people, their importance in the survival of the process, and their historic standing indicate the power of the *meenavar* panchāyat over the housing reconstruction process.

To corroborate the *meenavar* panchāyat's account of the relocation process, I asked MR, MK and IY, the panchāyat members of the *dalit* community about how and why they decided to relocate:

“DC: How did you find out that you will be getting new houses?

MR: We were living in the tents. They called us and said that they will be building us houses.

DC: Who called you?

MR: NGO-V. They took out a list [of names] and held a big meeting.

IY: They [NGO-V] called us, and they called them [*meenavars*], and said that we will be getting houses and that we 36 [*dalits*] families should join them [the *meenavars*].

DC: Was this okay by you?

MR: We said that we were just glad to be getting permanent houses, since **living in the tents was very hard. ‘Just build us a house somewhere’,** we said.

DC: So, about the location of the new houses, did they ask you before they finalized it?

MK: They had told us before they constructed the houses...

DC: Who told you?

MR: NGO-V

DC: Did NGO-V or the government give you options about the new location?

MK: No. Not about the location.

DC: Do you know how this site was chosen?

MR: The *meenavars* did that with the District Collector.

DC: Did any of you go with them to the Collectorate?

MR: **No, we didn’t know when they went. They don’t tell us these things...**

DC: Would you have wanted to go to the meetings at the Collectorate about this new site?

MR: We have been lucky with this location. It is closer to our work place and the schools. So it is okay that we did not go to the meetings. But, if it had been somewhere else, I would have wanted to be there. But then also, **I don’t think they would have listened to us even if we had said anything. We are not as strong as the meenavar.** Thankfully, this is a good location...”

[Emphasis added]

It is evident that an ‘understanding’ did exist between the *dalits* and the *meenavars* about moving together into one new location. But according to the *dalits*, the combined move was presented to them as *fait accompli*, to which they agreed anyway because of their dire need for housing. But while the *meenavars* and NGO-V assumed that the *dalit* community went along with relocation plans based on trust, the latter participated only because of their urgency for action.

This urgency for action cropped up again when the temporary shelters where the *dalits* were staying flooded once more in 2006. By this time, most of the *meenavars* had moved into their original homes using the small grants provided by NGO-A. When the shelter flooded, the *dalit* community decided to take action:

“Setting: Interview with MR, MK and IY (*dalit* panchāyat member). MR’s wife, MNR is also present.

DC: So, what happened when the temporary shelter flooded in 2006?

IY: We were living in the tents, and when it rained the whole place flooded to this much [shows a height of about a foot and half by gesture]. Our original thatch houses had been completely washed away in the tsunami and we did not get the money from NGO-A to build our houses back. First we went to the NGO-V to ask them to let us move into the houses, but they said they would only give us housing with the *meenavars*. So our panchāyat members went and told the District Collector about the flooding. We even showed him the waterlogged tents...told him about how **the children were falling ill and couldn’t live [in temporary shelters] anymore**. Then after that they gave us 36 houses from the project and allowed us to move in early. **The houses were not even complete then, but we needed it immediately**. But now what they are saying is that they will change the house for us.

DC: What does ‘change the house’ mean?

VMR: And ever since we got these houses, the *meenavar* have been objecting saying, ‘how can they get houses before us?’. They are going to be given houses very soon and they now want us to vacate these houses. They’re saying that they will give us houses on the other side of the project.

MR: This is a caste issue. **Because we are *dalit* and they do not want to live next to us. We would have liked to stay together with them, but that is not how they feel.**

VMR: Umm...they’re not speaking nicely to us anymore. They can’t look in our faces as they cross the street, they say. After all, we are living at the entrance of the settlement; you have to come this way to go to the remaining houses.

DC: Who has asked you to move?

MR: The Collector. He called us and spoke with us; told us that the rest of the settlement is also equally good and asked if we’d be willing to move. We told him that for our caste, this location is a very safe place. See, the [*meenavars*] already give us trouble us even when stay in close proximity with our community. If we were to move apart it would be worse. We told him that he was the one who gave us these houses and asked why he wanted to take them away again. We told him that we will not move and will stay where we are.

DC: So you will fight this?

MR: Yes, **we are ready to fight this. We will not move from here.**

DC: Are you fighting with them (*meenavar*) now?

MK: No, it's not that we are fighting with them. They don't speak with us properly. If we go that side, they speak badly to us.

DC: Do you go to their side of the settlement often?

MK: No, but they keep creating trouble for us. They tell us that they'll beat us...but we have decided that whatever happens, **we will not move...this house was given to us by the Collector.**

VMR: When we women go to the [PDS] Shop, they taunt us saying, 'look, the new terrace-house owners are here, we should serve them first.'

DC: So, who will go to protest against moving...the panchāyat?

VMR: No, all the people will go. **We will protest together and then they will have to listen.**

DC: Women too?

VMR: Yes, **all women will go too, like before.**

DC: If there is another program in the future, do you think you will collaborate with the *meenavar*?

MK: After this? **Absolutely not! We will not make that mistake again.** Let them try [to move us] but we will fight back.

Their urgent need for housing compelled the *dalit* community to exit the formal planning process to pursue an alternative agenda from outside of it. They organized themselves by reviving their panchāyat and used this collective power to get houses allocated to them earlier than others. This is particularly significant, because the community had been unable to exert a similar influence before the tsunami with respect to the line housing. This new power status was also reflected in the community's willingness to actively oppose any future change to their agenda in the future, which they expect to happen because they do not trust the *meenavars* anymore. Another noticeable aspect was the increased acceptance of women as legitimate representatives of the *dalit* community. Prior to this tsunami, the women would not have been seen in arenas of interaction with outsiders.

The experience of *meenavar* women was not the same, however. I interviewed women-based self-help groups in the *meenavar* community. SHGs often aim at empowering women by

making them financially independent (Mayoux, 2002). They had been in existence in the region since the 1960s, but their numbers increased dramatically after the tsunami with the new influx of NGOs. Most SHGs I came across were micro-finance groups where an NGO would deposit a small amount of money in the joint bank account of a small group of women (usually 5- 10 per group). The group members would be ‘loaned’ the money one at a time to be repaid with a low interest. The money is returned and the principal amount grows over time. Most women I met were part of one SHG or more and used the money towards household expenses. Fishing Village housed the head of a network of 54 *meenavar* SHGs throughout the region.³² Given the prominent position of this woman in all the *meenavar* SHGs, the long history of SHGs in this region, the overall empowerment goal of such SHGs, I was curious to see how active TA had been in decisions on relocation. This was important because SHGs represent women’s interests, and *meenavar* women, who do the most traveling in the fishing industry, would have been significantly impacted by relocation. I asked TA about her and her SHG’s role in physical development matters of the community, particularly the relocation:

“Setting: Interview with “TA”, President of all *meenavar* SHGs belonging to 54 *meenavar* communities, female, 47 years old, though she looked older. An old, male member was watching TV inside the house, facing slightly away from us. He would be able to see us talking if he turned, though it is not clear if he could hear us (he showed no indication of being able to do so). This was my second attempt at meeting with TA. My interpreter and I had briefly visited her the previous day with my (male) NGO contact to get introduced. We held off on the interview then because she was busy, which worked for me because the NGO contact was not present. We were warmly welcomed both times. We also met the daughter-in-law [“DL”] of the house. She was nursing a small baby and was present in the room for most of the interview. She would occasionally get up to do some work before rejoining the conversation. It was not hard to believe that A was the head of all SHGs in the *meenavar* settlements. She was quite confident of herself,

³² This might have been related to the “head panchāyat” status of Fishing Village.

and seemed to lead a very busy life. She was quite well dressed (i.e. wearing a nice-looking sari and jewelry) as was DL. We met in the screened part of her front porch. The size of the house, its *pucca* construction and their clothing, all indicated that she and her family were of a higher income class within the village. She first explained about her interaction with the SHG network and with the *meenavar* panchāyat. Then she spoke about the role of her SHG in physical development issues.

DC: What is your role in your SHG? In your village?

TA: If there is a problem between some SHGs and I have to go to resolve it. If I go in the afternoons, it can take even up to the evening. **They will only listen if I go**, otherwise they will fight. I will have to get them together and say that we all have to stick together and that we shouldn't fight now. Wherever there is a meeting, I need to go. They have a big combined meeting where all 54 SHGs collect, and I have to attend that too.

DC: What about your relationship with the panchāyat?

TA: If there is any problem where women have to be consulted, I am the one called to attend. They [the *meenavar* panchayat] will call me, and say that **only I can collect everyone**, and that I should go and tell everyone. So, I have always got work. That is why...I get a lot of respect. Wherever I go, they give me a lot of respect, and so I give a lot of respect to people also.

DC: What about when they were selecting the new housing site? Did they consult you then?

TA: Hmmm. No, but for that they don't have to. It is not a women's issue, so why will they?

DC: What 'women's issues' are you usually contacted for?

TA: Well...when they wanted to clean the streets, they contacted our SHG for help. They also consult us when it a children's welfare matter...like school or health...

DC: What about things like building new roads? [I point to a newly laid road outside her house] What about that road? Did they consult you while building it?

TA: This one? **I was not asked because it's not a women's issue**. But I heard from my husband that they were going to build it though ...he comes home from the panchāyat meeting and always tells me about it.

DC: What about when they were selecting the new housing site? The one which is a kilometer away?

TA: No. Not for that also....we are not going to move there though. It is too far for our livelihoods.

DC: How would it affect you?

TA: Well, our boats and nets are stored on the beach. They won't be safe at night...we can't drag our boats everyday in the morning, can we?

DC: So, do you think your SHG should be invited to the panchāyat meeting when things like building roads and houses are being discussed?

TA: No, I don't see why we should be there."

[Emphasis added]

As the example of TA shows, simply forming SHGs need not lead to women's empowerment. The financial empowerment of women did not result in increased involvement of women in community matters, particularly physical development. The framing of physical development as a matter not related to women excluded the legitimate claims of women in planning. The fact that it was the President of all *meenavar* SHGs in the region who held this position was even more illustrative of the hegemonic notion that women's interests in physical development was somehow irrelevant. Even more startling was that, instead of talking about how much more she and women like her would have to travel because of relocation, TA only spoke about the safety of boats and nets, which primarily the men use and monitor. This trend of mentioning concern for boats and nets as the primary reason for not relocating was repeated again and again in every interview I held with the *meenavar* women. Their own issue with the extra travel distance was always mentioned last and, even then, reluctantly. The reason for this trend was not clear, but it is possible that the women were simply adopting the larger stance of the *meenavar* community against me, an outsider.

Despite all the money spent to build around 900 new houses for Fishing Village, only 36 families (the *dalits*) actually planned to move to the new site. Even though many *meenavar* residents had 'signed off' their properties to the District Administration as per housing reconstruction program policy, they all uniformly told me that they would not move out of their

existing homes, thereby ‘opting out’ of the relocation program in the last stages. Most looked at the new housing as an additional asset or as a place to take shelter in during the next cyclone. I asked the ex-panchāyat member, KY about what happened and why:

DC: Can you tell me about the community’s decision to relocate?

KY: Yes. You see, just after the tsunami, our [caste] community was much traumatized. We were afraid of another tsunami coming here and all we could think of was to get far away. We didn’t even fish for the first four months, which is remarkable for us... We looked at sites more inland and even finalized the new site. But now, so many years have passed and we have started fishing again. **We are not so afraid now and our people are finding it difficult to pursue our livelihoods because the new site is too far away.** We are fishermen and we need to be near the beach. It would be better if the government gives us houses closer to the beach...we cannot bring the beach to the new houses [laughs]!

[Emphasis added]

One *meenavar* labor couple I interviewed gave a different reason for dropping out of the relocation project:

Setting: Interview with a couple (“VK” and “CP”) about the new housing being constructed by NGO-V. Both husband and wife are fishing laborers (not boat owners). They are also key leaders of a newly formed labor union, which is unprecedented in the village and a recent source of disharmony between the boat owners and the laborers. The group was formed because laborers felt that the government compensation programs were more focused on boat replacement, which effectively left out the laborers who don’t own any. I met with the couple in their old house in the original settlement where they are still living. The house showed obvious signs of repair on the roof and walls.

DC: Did you go to the meetings held by NGO-V for the new housing?

CP: No. At first we went, but not later.

DC: Why did you stop going?

VK: It was not helping to attend. We got busy with finding employment...fishing didn’t start for so long and we need to earn. **I didn’t have the time to go.**

CP: The **panchāyat members were also not the same with us...**

DC: So what did you do for housing?

VK: We took loans from family, NGO-A and money lenders to repair this house...it took a lot of money. **We don't have the money or the compensation like the boat owners have to help us.**

DC: Do you have a house allocated to you on the new site?

VK: I think we do, but we have not gone to confirm it.

DC: Why did you not wait to move into the new, free house instead?

CP: They are taking so much time to build...two-three years...**we couldn't wait for the new houses.** We need a stable home life before looking for employment.

DC: Will you move in now?

VK: What is the point? **We needed the house more back then...**

[Emphasis added]

Both excerpts are highly illustrative of how changing senses of urgency can change the participation of stakeholders in recovery programs. In the KY excerpt, the changing priorities of the *meenavar* community over time (from safety to livelihood) resulted in the residents rejecting the idea of relocation. The second excerpt shows how affordability of delays affects participation. CP and VK could not afford to wait out the three years required for the construction of new housing. They neither had enough government compensation nor big savings to support them through such a long wait. In the end, they just gave up on the relocation program, thus 'opting out' of it.

With the *meenavar* community refusing to relocate to the new housing, the effectiveness of planning for the reconstruction program has been brought into question. I asked one District Administration official if the government would force the *meenavar* community to relocate now that they hold many of the house *pattas* (deeds). He thought it highly unlikely, not least because he acknowledged (unofficially, of course) that relocation would hamper the livelihood of *meenavar*.

5.2 THE STORY OF “FARMING VILLAGE”

Farming Village has a significant place in the local folklore of Nagapattinam District. It is said that Lord Rama, of the Hindu epic “Ramayana” and a significant Hindu deity, came to the forests around this village while he was in exile from his kingdom. The village is known for its ponds, that some claim Rama dug while others say were dug by regional elites of the past. I did not see many. At the present, however, the village’s main claim to fame is a regionally-famous temple.

Farming Village is a coastal village located between two small towns in the district, one of which is a port town. According to district records, the village population before the disaster was around 5,000 (2,300 males and 2,700 females). There were a total of 1150 families of which about 300 were Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (SC/SCT) families. The village is composed of seven hamlets, of which five are farming caste hamlets and two are *dalit* hamlets. Over 60 percent of the total population engages in agricultural activities, 25% in commercial and business activities, and about 15% go abroad to earn their income (NCRC, 2005).

Most men (young and old) I met in the village said that they had received some form of formal education (elementary, middle or high school). Most young women said they had gone to at least elementary school, but older women reported not having received any formal education. However, all families I met with said that they send their children (boys and girls) to middle school at least. Some families reported sending their sons to local college (more than their daughters), but these families were mostly big and medium-level farmers. Most families expected their sons to either join the family business (farming or otherwise) or gain formal

employment in nearby towns (or abroad). The same was not expected of their daughters, however.

The tsunami affected four hamlets in the village: two farmer caste and two *dalit* settlements. A total of 39 people died in the tsunami in the village, and over 400 acres of agricultural land was inundated with sea water (NCRC, 2005). Fresh water irrigation ponds and canals were also filled with mud and sea water.

5.2.1 Caste, occupation and local economy

There are two types of agriculture groups in the village: landed farmers, tenant farmers, and landless laborers. The majority of the land is owned by two farming castes: the *pillai* (big landlords) and the *vanniyar* (small and medium landlords). These are also the castes that hold the traditional right to do agriculture. Most *pillai* landlords 'lease' their land out to the *vanniyars* who invest in farming rice, groundnut and vegetables, and keep the profits. In return, all produce from trees (such as mangoes, cashew, tamarind, coconut, and jasmine flowers) are given to the *pillai* landlords. There is also a small number of *nadars* living in the village who traditionally tap palm and coconut trees for sap to make toddy (an alcoholic beverage). All three caste groups are listed under the Other Backward Class list by the Government of Tamil Nadu. In addition to these three castes, a handful of *dalit* families also do farming but on a very small scale (they usually own less than 3 acres of land). The *dalit* entry into farming in the village corresponds with the lessening influence of farming caste panchāyats in the village (see next section) and general upward mobility experienced by the *dalit* community since independence.

Landed (tenant and owner) farmers can be divided into big (> 7 acres), medium (3-7 acres) and small (<3 acres). Small farmers include subsistence farmers, i.e. those who do agriculture for food purposes alone. Most farmers in the village are medium and small farmers and belong to the *vanniyar* (and to a smaller extent, *dalit*) castes. Almost all big farmers belong to either the *pillai* or *vanniyar* castes (the latter are tenants, not owners). Big farmers usually grow rice, groundnut and assorted vegetables on the same land, but during different seasons. On the other hand, most medium and small farmers grow (different) vegetables and groundnut all year round. Many small and subsistence farmers also work as labor on other farms to supplement their income. Few women hold land titles in their name, though reforms in inheritance law have made this possible in recent years. Those women who do hold the titles to their land were small or subsistence farmers. Irrespective of tenure rights, however, all women worked on their farm in some capacity. Landless farm laborers belong to the *vanniyar* as well as *dalits* castes. Both men and women work as farm labor for a daily wage that is set to adhere to government prescribed minimum wages and according to wages paid in other villages. Women laborers are paid less than the males (Rs. 80, or \$1.70, for men and Rs. 50, or \$1, for women).

The crops are grown according to the topography of the land. Vegetables are grown on higher land to avoid possibility of water logging. Rice (locally known as “paddy”) and groundnut are grown (often together) in lowlands nearer to the sea shore. Farmers depend on monsoon rains to wash away the salt from the water, thus making it ideal for agriculture. Monsoon rains also irrigate land and deposit new mud that enriches the soil. Prior to the tsunami, groundwater along the shore was saline only below the depth of 8-10 feet, which was acceptable because farmers did not dig beyond that depth anyway. After the tsunami however, saline water rose to within 5-6 feet of the top soil, which was problematic for cultivation. Jasmine flowers, coconut and

casuarina trees are also grown near the sea shore. When grown on leased farmland, profits from the produce of these trees are given to the landowners.

Rice is cultivated from March/April to mid-January. The land is ploughed and prepared for cultivation either with tractors or bullock-pulled tills. Tractors are usually owned by big landowners who rent it out to medium and small farmers. Labor for operating the tractors are hired on a daily wage. Six days after first ploughing, the land is ploughed and leveled for a second time. Seeds are sprinkled along with pesticides, protein powder and diammonium phosphate (DAP) mixed in with urea. In some farms, paddy seedlings are transplanted into the prepared field. This task is traditionally done by women of the community who pass on this skill to the next generation. Weeding is done at regular intervals throughout the growing season by women hired on a daily wage basis.

Rice crops are harvested in the month of January. Women do the harvesting and then later winnowing of chaff. Men collect the crop after harvesting and do threshing. Left over crop waste is used as cattle fodder. Most of the rice cultivated is used within the village for local consumption, though excess rice is also sold to buyers in major towns according to rates published in the newspaper. The costs of all inputs and labor are borne by the cultivator who also keeps the profits, if any.

Vegetables grown in the village include cucumber, eggplant, okra, a variety of gourds (such as bitter gourd, snake gourd, ash gourd, and ridge gourd), pumpkins, tomatoes, cluster beans and a variety of greens. Different vegetables are grown during different times of the year. For instance, cucumbers are grown from January to July, while pumpkins are grown only between September and December. To grow vegetables, the land is ploughed in much the same

way as for paddy. Men are hired on a daily wage basis to plant the saplings in the field, spread DAP and manure, and dig small rings around the plants for watering purposes. Watering is done by the farmer. Vegetables usually begin to grow within 20 days of planting and continue to yield until the plant dies (up to six months after planting). Usually farmers are able to pluck 5-10 kg (11-22 lbs) of vegetables daily. The produce is then taken to a market about 6 km away by bicycle, autorickshaw and buses for marketing. The vegetables are sold by the farmers themselves to local vendors who are often women. Women of small farms sometimes directly vend their own produce. There are no agents involved in vegetable farming (Praxis, 2005).

Small ponds dug on the farm are the most common source for irrigation of farmland, though occasionally farmers also use communal water tanks. All farmers were able to equally access the tanks and I heard no complaints about discrimination in this regard. Medium farmers usually have irrigation pump sets for watering the crops, while small and subsistence farmers use mud or clay pots to do so.

Non-farming occupations in the village include carpentry, blacksmithing, and masonry, pursued mostly by *dalits* in the village. The *dalits* also work as laborers on construction sites within the village and adjacent towns. Some women farmers, particularly the widows, also travel to other towns to sell street food (*idlis*). For these women, such vending was an important source of income. A number of *pillai* families that lease out their land also own businesses and shops in the village. One such family even owned a big hotel in the nearby port town. These business owning families are the richest of the village. A significant number of families (from all castes) also sent their men to Singapore and Malaysia to work as unskilled labor. The income thus generated was used to supplement or increase household income.

Household gender dynamics in both the *dalit* and the farming castes were the same as those in Fishing Village, except here women interacted less with people from other villages. In fact, the higher the household income, the lesser this interaction. However, *dalit* women of this village were more vocal than those of Fishing Village. I also noticed a large number of young widows in the village, particularly small and subsistence farmers. I asked an experienced NGO worker about this curious state of affairs and she told me that the suicide rate among farmers is very high for south Indian states. One reason has been the inability of small and subsistence farmers to adapt to a changing (urbanizing) economy and their falling further and further into debt (Nagaraj, 2008).

The tsunami inundated over 400 acres of agricultural land in the village, depositing salt and sand onto the fields and changing the fertility and chemical composition of the soil. Standing crops were lost and fresh water irrigation ponds were filled with sand and clay. The monsoon rains of 2005 helped leach some of the salinity from the fields, but it was not enough to restore the soil quality to pre-tsunami levels. Therefore, for Farming Village, land reclamation and water desalination were the most important recovery need. Land reclamation particularly is a long-term enterprise and usually takes between three to five years to accomplish entirely.

5.2.2 Village governance

Farming villages are much less homogenized and have less powerful traditional panchāyats than the *meenavars*. Each farming caste has its own caste panchāyat which is responsible for social control and resolving conflicts between families. The two *dalit* settlements each had their own *dalit* panchāyat which served the same functions as the farming ones. Caste panchāyat are popularly elected and do not include women or people of other castes. Women are

called to attend the meeting if they are an affected party or witnesses of the conflict. The different caste panchāyats rarely interact with each other unless the problem is a conflict between individuals of two different castes.

The less cohesive nature of the traditional farming castes has made it possible for the elected Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) to become more influential in village governance and development decisions. Since the PRI is required by law to have 1/3rd representation from Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) populations as well as 1/3rd representation from women, these groups are more visible in the community-level decision-making. However, their influence is debatable owing to the patriarchal nature of general society and the long history of *dalit* marginalization. The prominence of the PRI in village matters also ensures that the PRI President and the Village Administration Office (village-level liaison of the District Administration) hold prominent places in the village.

The *dalits* and the farming castes have had an amicable relationship for the most part. Differences are usually related to electoral politics of the state—the two groups usually vote for different parties—and usually emerge during election season. Disagreements on internal village matters are discussed and resolved by the Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) representatives in the presence of both parties.

5.2.3 Spatial structure and physical development

The village is surrounded by the Bay of Bengal on the east side and a river on the north side. Settlement structure follows caste hierarchy. There are seven hamlets in the village, two of which are inhabited only by *dalits*. Homes of big farmers (*pillai* and *vanniyar*) are located along

the main street running north-south through the village. Behind these houses, on either side of the road are the farmlands. Farm fields on the east side of the road extend up to the sea shore. The tenant *vanniyar* families live on feeder streets extending into these fields. These streets are paved up to a point, after which they become mud paths. The two *dalit* communities live in two pockets close to the river on the north side. Houses along the major street are mostly *pucca* (terraced, brick and mortar) structures, while the houses of the small and medium farmers and the *dalits* are *kuchcha* (mud houses with thatch roofs) structures. The village has a Primary Health Centre, an elementary and middle school, a day care, a cyclone shelter and a community center. The layout of Farming Village is shown in Figure 5.3.

The village PRI also plays a central role in planning and development. Usually, the Village Administrative Officer (VAO) and the PRI representatives identify suitable development projects to be implemented in the community based on what they hear during the bi-annual *grām sabhā* (village council) meetings or through informal conversations with their constituents. The list of projects is discussed in the next village council meeting and advertised in the village PRI office. The PRI then submits the project for funding to the block-level PRI (“Panchāyat Union”) which forwards the projects to the District Rural Development Authority (DRDA). The DRDA, in conjunction with the relevant department at the District Administration, approves the project and releases funds. The project design and planning is usually done by the district department, though occasionally the PRI develops a design before approaching the District Administration. The construction is done either by the District Department or a contractor hired by them for the purpose.

In recent years, Farming Village has also participated in the state-funded Village Self-Sufficiency Scheme (Namakku Naame Thittam or NNT). Under this scheme any rural or urban community can, on its own initiative, identify a development project that would benefit the village at large and submit it to the District Collector or the District Rural Development Authority (DRDA) for plan and funding approval for 2/3rd of the project cost. The remaining 1/3rd must be funded through public contributions and may originate from any non-governmental source. If more than 50% of the project cost is provided through public contribution, the contributors can choose to also execute the project as per the design and specifications approved by the DRDA and District Administration. In case more applications are submitted than the funds available at the district level, the District Collector or DRDA prioritizes the projects providing ‘maximum benefit to the community’. Under the NNT, local villages may undertake “works” such as: construction of buildings for PRIs and certain government institutions such as hospitals, schools, libraries and livestock centres, construction and maintenance of ‘community assets’ like drinking water sources, cement concrete roads and threshing floors, road infrastructure improvement and streetscape, and construction of parks and playgrounds. Land acquisition is not allowed under the NNT, and the contributors cannot claim ownership over the facility or over its use. Farming Village had used the NNT program a year or so before the tsunami to repair its school infrastructure.

Only four hamlets were affected in the disaster. Since most houses in the village were located away from the shore, housing damage was limited. River water, propelled by the tsunami wave, entered the hamlets towards the north of the village. The exact housing damage in the two *dalit* hamlets, located here, was much debated upon. While the *dalits* claimed that their houses had been destroyed completely, some district-level officials questioned the veracity of the claim.

While I was visiting one *dalit* hamlet (“*dalit* settlement-1”) a local worker of NGO-N came to speak with the residents and jokingly suggested that they had faked their housing damage. Thereupon an argument ensued between the women of the community and the NGO worker, who remained cynical. Regardless of the doubts however, these two *dalit* hamlets were included under the first phase of housing reconstruction and were given new houses by NGO-AS (for *dalit* settlement-1) and NGO-PR (for “*dalit* settlement-2”). Residents of *dalit* settlement-1 opted to relocate to elsewhere within the village, whereas the *dalit* settlement-2 was reconstructed in-situ. In addition, houses that had been inundated along the main street were also repaired under the housing reconstruction program, while road and other community facilities were rebuilt under the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded Tsunami Emergency Assistance Project (TEAP).

5.2.4 Agricultural rehabilitation in Farming Village

Despite the fact that most housing in the village was not affected, almost everyone in the village moved into local temples and schools for emergency shelter. The uncertainty and fear of another tsunami, strengthened by rumors, kept most residents away for many days. Houses on the north side of the village had been inundated and the *dalit* housing had reportedly been washed away. These residents moved into temporary shelters constructed for them at different sites within the village by NGOs; most *dalit* and *nadar* hamlets moved as one.

After a week or so, farmers in the village began to clear the major items of debris from their fields and ponds with the help of their extended families and neighbors. Only one NGO (‘NGO-M’) focused specifically on farmers during the relief phase. Big and medium farmers said that they spent the first month or so making rounds of the District Administration to get more information on rehabilitation programs and have them visit the villages. Small farmers said

that they depended on handouts from NGO-M working in the Village to survive until they had more information from the government on rehabilitation programs. Some complained that they were initially not listed as eligible for emergency relief, cash and aid and had to take high-interest loans from local money lenders to make ends meet.

In response to the visits by farmers, the District Administration sent its officials to conduct a damage assessment of crops, soil and water. An evaluative study on agricultural rehabilitation found that many of these assessments were not very rigorous, however, and this affected the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs proposed eventually (Thamizoli, Rengalakshmi, Senthil Kumar, & Selvaraju, 2006). The initial lack of NGO attention to this sector was because damage to agricultural fields was less dramatic and visible than that to housing in fishing villages (Rodriguez, 2007).

The first Government Order (GO) for agricultural rehabilitation was released in late February 2005, almost two months after the disaster. Under the policy, the District Administration had been given the responsibility to design the rehabilitation programs. I spoke with a senior official in the District Administration about their role in the programs:

“Setting: Interview with senior official in the District Revenue Office (DRO), “YK”. He is a relatively young official in the Civil Service. Before the tsunami, he was working as a deputy District Revenue Officer in another district, but was brought in to help coordinate relief and response activities in Nagapattinam after the tsunami. In 2007, he was promoted to a senior position in the District Revenue Office in the Nagapattinam District Administration. He was college-educated and spoke in English. The interview was conducted in his office at the District Administration headquarters. He was very courteous and eager to be part of my research. He also helped me get some documents from other departments in the Administration.

DC: Can you tell me what role the District Revenue Office played in agricultural rehabilitation?

YK: We were the central [relief management agency]. We played a major role...designed the program, implement it...

DC: How did the DRO come to be involved?

YK: This is not new. The [District Revenue Office] is the oldest department in the District Administration. **We keep revenue records and decide on funding... for agriculture sector improvement.** We work closely with the Agricultural Department. See, we have the most historic standing in the Administration- since the British times! **We play central role in all disaster response and rehabilitation...** floods, cyclone...we are ones to do all disaster relief and response, especially in agricultural sector. After the tsunami, we had the most number of networks and so we were chosen to do this job. **We have deep connections in agricultural community for many years.**

DC: Have these connections helped you in your work?

YK: Yes, of course. The communities come to us when they need something. They listen to us and we also know them. So **it is a good relationship between us.**

DC: What happens if the community refuses your advice?

YK: We try to convince the community to the best possible extent. Anyway, it is in their benefit to listen. **If they don't participate, they will not get the benefit.** Still, we take into consideration the community's convenience also.

DC: Who selected the DRO to lead the agricultural rehabilitation?

YK: The Government Orders by the state government. **Since we are the core [responders], we were the given the responsibility.** Initially not so many NGOs were interested in agricultural rehabilitation and we needed to do something for these communities. So, we took the lead part.”
[Emphasis added]

The historic influence of the DRO in matters of agricultural development and disaster management and the legitimacy granted by recovery policies both worked to make the District Revenue Office a central player in matters of agricultural rehabilitation. The fact that most of the funding for this sector also came from the national and state government, of which the District Administration is part, only reaffirmed this dominant role.

The programs finally designed by the District Administration related to two specific activities: land reclamation and pond desalination. Agricultural inputs (such as organic matter,

gypsum, and seeds), implements (such as power tiller and pump sets) and cash amounts for carrying out these activities were provided by the District Administration based on a model of self-organized, small-group formation. However, because they lacked the technical expertise and manpower to execute land reclamation this large a scale, the Administration invited NGOs to participate in land reclamation and water desalination programs. Interested NGOs were required to sign MoUs for participating in agricultural rehabilitation and were assigned a certain geographic area within the village.³³ Farming Village had two NGOs working on land reclamation and water desalination: NGO-M and NGO-VW. Neither of the two NGOs was previously known to village residents, though NGO-M worked in nearby villages before, and then eventually stayed on to train local farmers on sustainable agricultural practices. I spoke with the representatives of NGO-M about their involvement in land reclamation:

“Setting: Interview with “HR”, employee of NGO-M (male, middle aged). HR has worked in Farming Village since a few months after the tsunami. He leads their current program on sustainable agriculture. NGO-M has a significant regional presence in agricultural communities of Tamil Nadu and is well-connected with other similar agro-based NGOs around the world. The organization is headquartered in another district of Tamil Nadu. HR spoke mainly in Tamil with an occasional smattering of English. We held the interview in their local office in a nearby town. This office was located less than six kilometers from Farming Village.

DC: Can you tell me what NGO-M did in Farming Village? How did you come to be involved?

HR: We were working in [a nearby village] before the tsunami. When the tsunami came, we were one of the first NGOs to respond. The government totally neglected the farmers at the beginning...we were the only ones here for a long time. We were talking to farmers about how they can remove the sand and salt content from the fields and helping them with soil testing kits. We would also go to the District Collectorate often to find out what programs were happening...local people would ask us to find out. Then, when the government policy [GO124]

³³ I was unable to find a sample of this MoU, however.

came out, we were asked to come to the Collectorate to sign the MoU. We were asked to do land reclamation and removing salt from ponds and water sources...

DC: Who assigned you the task? Did you ask for it or did the government ask you?

HR: It was both...**we knew how to do the work- we had been working in the nearby village.** The government also wanted help. Of course, we could not do [all the village land], so the government divided up the village into two parts and gave us responsibility for the lands between [Street Name] and [Street Name]...the other part went to NGO-VW. Then we ourselves divided up our portion into smaller groups...10-15 farmers to a small group. It would not have been possible to do this on individual farmer basis. We had to form the groups to do the work faster. We taught each group to do land reclamation activity and helped with removing the salt and sand from ponds. We dug out canals too.

DC: How did you form these groups? Were there some criteria?

HR: We just took the land assigned to us and divided it up into smaller parts, so neighboring farms would be in the same group.

DC: So, would small farmers be in the same group as the big farmers?

HR: Yes, if their lands were next to each other. We included everyone.

DC: What about tenants and landowners...the *vanniyars* and *pillai*?

HR: Yes. We visited the lands and if the tenant was doing farming, we would include them [and] not landowner. So, only when the *pillai* were doing self-farming, then they were part of the group. Most of the groups were of *vanniyars*, small, medium and big

DC: Did you find any difference in how small and big farmers participated in your program?

HR: No, not much because our job was technical assistance. Sometimes small farmers did not have the implements to do the work...that was a problem. The government did not distribute enough materials in the village...

DC: What about the landless laborers? Did you involve them also?

HR: Well, not directly in the land reclamation program, but we had this cash-for-work program and many laborers came to work in that.

DC: How is your relationship with the community? Has it changed since you came here?

HR: Oh, very good! See, **at first, these people had to depend on us. There was no other option** for them because we were the only ones helping [at first]. Now **they want to work with us because they have respect for us.** We don't face any problems in the village and our sustainable agriculture program and the micro-finance credit SHGs are very successful..."

[Emphasis added]

Regardless of land size, all the farmers I spoke with had a favorable opinion of NGO-M's work in the village. Many agreed that while at first they had no other choice but to take help from NGO-M, now they did so because the NGO had stayed on even after all the others had left. So, while NGO-M's expertise in the agricultural sector (indicating legitimacy) paved its way as a participant in agricultural rehabilitation, its continued participation was based on the trust it has gained within the community over the years.

The more stark differences with regard to participation emerged in the distribution of agricultural inputs, implements and cash among beneficiaries. While not being a land use process in itself, the distribution of these inputs and implements was critical to land use recovery, because successful reclamation takes over three years to accomplish, and an early start implies quicker recovery. Also, the cost of inputs such as gypsum and agricultural implements is quite high in the region and otherwise unaffordable to most of the small and sustenance farmers. So, the recovery of individual farmers depended to a large extent on what they received through this process.

The process of distribution of inputs, implements and cash was designed by the District Administration and implemented through the Village PRIs. The Village PRI President and the Village Administrative Office described the distribution process as follows:

Setting: Interview with the Village Administrative Office (VAO) "NB" of Farming Village. He helped execute the agricultural rehabilitation program in the village in 2005. He had worked in the village for many years and was very knowledgeable about the political dynamics within the village. We had the conversation in the renovated Village PRI Office. There was one other person working in a corner, though it was not clear who exactly that was. Twice a PRI representative came into the office. However, he did not stay for more than a few minutes at a stretch. While VAO was very clear about his position as the District Administration liaison in the village, he still

referred to the District Administration as “them” through most of our conversation. He is a middle aged man and spoke to me in Tamil.

DC: Can you tell me how the gypsum, seeds and implements were distributed in the village?

NB: We had a very good process for it. **The government had very little direct involvement and we let the people do most of it...it was meant to increase transparency.**

DC: Meaning?

NB: First the PRI President and I made a list [of beneficiaries] that we submitted to the [district-level] Department of Agriculture for approval. Then we asked those on that list to form themselves into groups of 5-7 farmers. Each group was supposed to have one leader and we gave the material to these groups in bulk. They would distribute it amongst themselves based on their land size. The money was also given in the same way, but for that these groups had to open [an] account in [a local bank].

DC: How did you know how much material to give to the groups?

NB: We knew who was in the group and their land holding size, so we calculated how much they would all need. The leader collected the materials from us and gave it to the others based on how much land they had...same for [the] money.

DC: How did you create the beneficiary lists?

NB: From the land records for the village. We have them.

DC: Does it show who has leased which land and from whom?

NB: Yes, we keep records of that too.

DC: So in your list, did you have the tenant farmers or their landowners?

NB: That was not a problem at all. Even when the list had land owners names, it was the tenants who were forming groups. Landowners had no interest in the material because they don't farm themselves.

DC: How were the group members chosen for the small group? Was there some criteria?

NB: No, no. We didn't have any criteria. They formed it themselves. There was no need for us to do it.

DC: So, would small and big farmers be in the same group?

NB: Yes, yes.

[Emphasis added]

On the ground, the distribution process was not as smooth as the VAO had assured me it was. I asked one medium and two small farmers about their participation in the program:

“Setting: Interview with “IR”, a medium farmer in the Farming Village. He owns 5 acres of land and cultivates it himself. He grows mainly vegetables and groundnut and does the marketing himself. I caught him at his field along one of the newly paved feeder streets. As we spoke, he would point out different vegetables in his field to me. It was quite fascinating. He had lost his entire crop in the disaster, and this was the first year since that he had had pre-disaster production levels. Overall, he seemed quite satisfied with the government programs and the training he had received from NGO-M. He was well-educated and said that he had been to Singapore on a short stint the year before the tsunami. He used the money he earned there to invest further in the farm and build an additional house in the nearby town. He plans to move there with his family eventually and commute daily to the field. He has his own bicycle, which he also uses to take the produce to the markets. He is 30-ish, has a high school degree and seems to know much about the growing market for organic produce. He aspires to convert to organic farming eventually.

DC: How did you manage your lands after the tsunami?

IR: It was not easy at first. There was no [NGO] to help us like in the [nearby fishing settlement]. Here, there was nobody. I was visiting the Collectorate daily to ask about what the government was going to do. **Sometimes I would go with the PRI representative from this area. I know him for many years.** When the government [implemented] its program, he told me about it.

DC: What was the government program?

IR: At least two months later, they had this program- gave us gypsum, seeds, plough and pump sets...also power tillers. They gave money for three years after.

DC: How did you get these things? Did you have to go and collect them?

IR: See, this is how it was: the [PRI] President and VAO made this list of people whose land was damaged. Then they told us to form groups of 5 and then gave us the gypsum and seeds and the money. I was selected leader and so I distributed it. I was asked to come to the PRI office to collect the gypsum and things.

DC: How did you form the groups?

IR: My brothers and cousins live in the village also, so I just formed a group with them.

DC: Were there any small farmers in your group?

IR: No...not in my group. **I only wanted people I knew [in my group]. They were family...they would not cheat me.**

DC: Do you know of any other group which had a mix of big, medium or small farmers?

IR [thinks]: Hmm...I heard of one...over on [street name].

DC: Were you happy with the government program? Will you participate in the next one?

IR: Yes, I'm happy with how things went. I got the materials. **I'm sure the government will do the same the next time also.**"

[Emphasis added]

Next, I asked the same questions of one small tenant farmer further along the same feeder street:

"Setting: Interview with "RU". He is a tenant farmer and farms approximately 3 acres of land. The land owner has a house along the main street of the village. Before the tsunami, RU used to grow paddy, but since then he has moved into sustenance-level vegetable farming. He was disabled in the disaster (he cannot walk now) and has to depend on his wife, "AP" to do most of the work. We conducted the interview at his house, located adjacent to their field; you could see it from the back of the house. His wife kept coming and going throughout the interview. She mostly listened and made a few occasional comments. Of all the farmers I met in the village, their house was the smallest and entirely *kuccha*. They had no children and both were more than 50 years of age. An old rusted plough was lying in front yard as if a relic of the past. RU appeared almost amused by the 'naivety' of my questions and he laughed quite cynically for many of them. To me, that was quite saddening.

DC: Can you tell me what happened to you after the tsunami?

RU [laughs cynically]: Everything! I was at the fish market at [nearby town] when the wave hit. I was in the hospital for three months, couldn't much walk after that. The land was damaged- we had about this much [shows height of about a foot] of salt water. The ponds went bad, the soil was bad...at least the house was spared.

DC: How did you manage?

RU: My wife, she sold *idlis* [street food] first ...worked in the NGO-M [cash-for-work] program. **Nobody was helping us so we took loans from the money-lender** in [nearby village].

DC: How much interest do you pay on it?

RU: 110%.

AP: 105%

DC: What about the money that the government gave along with the gypsum?

RU: We didn't get anything...

[Turns to his wife to ask]

RU: AP, did we get any money?

AP: No, we didn't. The [landowner] went to the PRI and got the money and the gypsum and everything. He gave us the gypsum and seeds, but he kept the money.

DC: Did you hear about the small groups they formed for these things?

RU: Yes, I heard about it. **Our landowner went for our lands...he was on the [beneficiary] list.**

DC: Do you know what all was given by the government and for how long?

AP: Well, they gave money...the gypsum and seeds, and the [organic matter]. I'm not sure for how long.

DC: Did you get any farming implements?

AP: A few ploughs, I think. That is all I can remember. We had to get a loan for the pump set...

DC: What did you do when you realized you did not have enough things?

RU: What can we do?! **It is not like [takes name of neighboring big farmer] who has his brother in the PRI. We are nothing in this community.** We just changed what we grew. Now we only do vegetables and we only sell when we have extra. We are just making ends meet.

DC: Do you think you can depend on the District Collectorate or the PRI to help you out next time?

RU: [laughs cynically] **The government [refers to the District Collectorate] is the government. It will do what it wants to do and when it gives, we will take. That is always how it has been and that is how it will be.**"

[Emphasis added]

Finally, I asked a small woman farmer along another feeder street about how she had recovered from the disaster:

"Setting: Interview with "MT", female, widow, reported age 45. She owns 2 acres of land and farms it with the help of her two sons (both under 18 years). Women landowners are rare in the village—most widows have their lands in the name of their nearest male relatives. MT and her sons grow paddy during one season and then vegetables during another. The house was *kuchcha*, but sturdy and colorful. She had a chicken coop and two goats tied to a post in the front yard. I could see a bicycle pump lying in one corner indicating that they may own one. Like most of my other informants, MT also offered me sweetened black coffee with ginger. We held the conversation seated on the steps of her home. The front yard gates were open; a neighbor, "BG", saw us and sat through most of the conversation, speaking when asked a question. She was a young widow—her husband committed suicide two years before the tsunami. She owns less than

one acre of land (it is in her name) and grows vegetables on it for self-consumption. Her land was not directly affected in the tsunami. BG sells *idlis* in the nearby town to support herself and her 15-year old daughter. MT's son, NN joined us towards the end of the conversation, and then took me to their field, located less than half a mile away towards the seashore. There was a water pond adjacent to the field which NN said they shared with one of their neighbors (also a small farmer).

DC: Can you tell me what you did after the tsunami?

MT: Well, we had lost the crop—all of it—we also lost our ploughs, power tillers, pump sets...most of our machines. They are so expensive...

DC: What did you do then?

MT: Well, at first, we had NGO-M help us. They were giving us the food, soap and things like that- for the first month or so. There was some money to buy rations also...we stood in a line at the PRI office to get that. Then later, I was part of the [micro-finance] SHG created by NGO-M, so I used that money to buy my own implements and seeds. I also took some loans from the money-lender...that is still getting repaid...

DC: What about the government? Did the District Administration give you anything?

MT: Um...the government gave us [names an amount] for the first six months or so [refer to the relief package offered by the District Administration]

DC: What about for reclaiming your land? Did the government create any small groups to give you gypsum or seeds?

MT: Do you mean the SHGs we formed?

DC: What kind of SHG was that? Who was in it?

MT: It was a women's group formed by the Agricultural department. But that was from before the tsunami...under the [names a prominent District-wide, women's empowerment scheme].

DC: So, you did not get gypsum or implements in this group?

MT: No. The gypsum [names a neighboring medium farmer] gave...I bought the implements myself. I still have not bought everything I need.

DC: Where did [Medium Farmer] get the gypsum?

MT: I am not sure...

[BG joins us]

MT: BG, do you know where the [Medium Farmer] got the gypsum?

BG: I heard they had a program.

MT: [asks me] They gave implements?

BG: [Medium Farmer] kept your share!

MT: Oh, I didn't get any implements...

DC: So, what are you going to do now?

MT: Now? I'm not sure....

DC: Will you talk to the PRI representative from here, or ask about it at the [village council meeting]? Do you know any representatives at the PRI?

MT: Me?! No, no, **I don't go to the [village council meetings]**. Well, I don't know the representative personally, but I recognize him. No...I don't think I will go, **I have other more important things now. Anyway they're not likely to listen to [women] like us.**

DC: What do you mean?

MT: I went to the PRI once for getting the land title, but they spoke more with my [male] cousin than with me. Maybe I'll ask him again..."

[Emphasis added]

It seemed to me that MT was in a group but was unaware of how the process was designed or operated. This was corroborated by the fact that her name was on the list of landowners that I saw at the PRI office (which was the basis for the beneficiary list) and the fact that she got some gypsum and seed eventually. I also asked at the PRI office if there was a women-only small group formed for distribution, but there were none.

There are many themes that emerge from the narrative of IR, RU and MT. First, having connections in the Village PRI guaranteed more information about the rehabilitation programs and increased the likelihood of direct participation in the programs. Second, the small groups, unlike what the VAO said, were formed based on familiarity and mutual trust. Most groups were homogeneous in land size, some landowners attended the group meetings instead of the tenants, and some small farmers were even unaware that they were part of a group! Further, as the case of MT shows, being on the beneficiary list and in a small group (both of which implying some level of legitimacy), did not result in equal participation because small farmers lacked the avenues to exercise their rights and felt powerless to redress their complaints. Third, where relations with

the government had been good, there was more trust in future programs and therefore, more likelihood of direct participation. Most revealingly, while both IR the medium farmer and RU the small farmer wanted to participate in government programs, the former did so because he trusted the government while the latter did so because of the lack of any other option. Fourth, urgency for action, coupled with the cooptation of the distribution process, meant the small farmers took loans to cover their cost. But while MT could at least partly take advantage of the low-interest micro-finance programs, RU and his wife had to resort to taking high-interest loans to meet their cost and downgrade their economic activity. Considering the endemic problem of debt trapping in this region, and the related suicide trends, this was particularly worrying. Lastly, women land owners were less involved in the distribution process. MT confused the distribution process with the micro-credit programs executed by the government and NGO-M in the village, and it was obvious she had no idea what I was asking about. Her method of redressing the discrepancy was also revealing—she had no faith that she would be heard unless she approached the PRI through a male relative. On a more positive note, however, MT had the safety net provided by micro-finance initiatives in her village and used it to recover from the disaster, albeit slowly.

5.2.5 Infrastructure redevelopment in Farming Village

Infrastructure redevelopment in Farming Village was done through the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded Tsunami Emergency Assistance Project (TEAP). The village had repaved the main street and all feeder streets, constructed a new PRI office and community center, renovated their old cyclone shelter, made embankments for two communal water tanks, and was in the process of constructing a new health clinic at the time of fieldwork.

The first policy regarding the TEAP came out in June 2005, and, similar to agricultural rehabilitation, the District Administration designed the program and implemented it through Village PRIs using the ‘regular’ decision structures. To begin, I asked the Village PRI President to describe how the TEAP monies had been used in the Farming Village:

“Setting: Interview with “VY”, President of Village PRI of Farming Village. He is a seasoned politician. He was directly involved in many of the decisions regarding the TEAP. Initially, VY hesitated to tell me his caste or land holding size, perhaps because he wanted to maintain his ‘representativeness’ of the village. But from the large size of his house, its *pucca* construction, and its location along the main street in the village, I conjectured that his family must be of some affluence and influence. The house was located not far from the Village PRI office, and during our conversation he was interrupted more than once by people coming straight from there to him. I listened in on one such interruption; a man had come to complain about how his neighbor was blocking access to his land. VY promised to meet up with the neighbor and sort it all out and asked him to come back in a few days. Before I left, I realized I had forgotten to ask VY’s full name, but when I did, he almost took offense! He had expected me to know it before I came to meet him. However, he agreed to do so after I explained that I was new to the region and that I intended to keep the names confidential.

DC: How did you go about rebuilding the roads, the community center?

VY: Well, sometime in late 2005 the District Collector sent us a letter saying that we had money available to construct roads and infrastructure in the village. It asked us what projects we wanted to do.

DC: Why was the PRI asked to do this?

VY: That is because we are elected representatives of the village. This is our role. Always, the District Collector contacts us for anything official. We make the decisions for the community, we hold the [village council meetings], we make sure that all problems are solved...[the PRI] is very important.

DC: So, once you were contacted, what did you do?

VY: I sat with the other PRI representatives and the [Village Administrative Officer, VAO] to create a list of projects we wanted to do. Then we assigned a rank to them and sent it to the Collectorate.

DC: How did you know which ones to rank?

VY: We hear from our constituents what they need...when we go into the community. Daily someone would come and say, we want this, we want that. So, all the representatives sat down and arranged the ranks accordingly.

DC: Did all the representatives come for the meeting...even the *dalits* and the women? Did they have anything in particular to say?

VY: We are very equal here. The *dalit* representative was here...I'm sure he said something. The [woman PRI representative] was also there...I mean, she wouldn't come to the meetings herself, but her son would attend always. So, she was also there.

DC: So once you had the list, what did you do?

VY: We sent the list to the Collectorate and they have a committee there to do the approval. They asked us if we wanted them to design the roads and community center, and all that. We said yes, so then they made the design. Then they asked us if we wanted to do the construction or hire our own contractors. For the roads we told the Collectorate to do it, but we hired our own contractors for the other things.

DC: Are all the contractors from the village?

VY: Yes. We have worked with many of them before in the Village Self-Sufficiency program... [names a few people including the son of the woman PRI representative].

DC: How did you monitor the project?

VY: We could see what they were doing right or wrong. We complained to the government if there was a problem.

DC: Did you form any Village Monitoring Committees?

VY: Um, no.

DC: What happened once the project was done?

VY: We manage it now....the repair and upkeep.”

[Emphasis added]

When I asked the *dalit* PRI representative of the village whether he had spoken in the PRI meeting about TEAP, he said he rarely said anything in this group format. If he wanted to get something done, he would approach the President separately and ask for it. He said he got more things done that way because individually the other representatives were more amenable. I also wanted to interview the woman PRI representative in the village, but unfortunately she had passed away only a few months back. I met with her son, who confirmed that it was always he

who attended these meetings on behalf of his mother. I was told that she only attended the village council meetings held twice a year and that this was a common thing to do for most women representatives in the village.

Having heard about the process of project selection, I asked IR the (male) medium farmer and MT, the small woman farmer, about infrastructure redevelopment projects in the village. Both their fields lay along the same feeder road that appeared as newly repaved. I was curious to see whether they had been involved in the constituent-based, informal information gathering that the VY talked about:

“Setting: Interview with IR, medium farmer, male.

DC: When was this road rebuilt [I pointed to the street adjacent to his field]?

IR: This one? It was just last year...August? No, July...well sometime in the middle of last year [2007].

DC: Do you know how this road came to be built? Who built it and why?

IR: Well, I knew that the road was going to be built. My friend at the PRI had told me about it. He said that there was some program and that they could do things like this and that this road had been selected for construction. But I don't know who paid for it... my friend will know surely.

DC: Did you ask for the road to be rebuilt?

IR: No, I didn't ask for it...they did it on their own, but I am very happy about it. I can ride my bicycle to the market more easily now.

DC: So, if you had wanted something else instead, say an irrigation supply line, what would you have done then?

IR: I would have told my PRI friend. But I didn't have to because I also wanted the road. **We [the friend and IR] have the same needs...we do the same kind of farming, so I know he will do what right by me.** I don't often have to go to the PRI Office usually or even the [village council meetings] because he is there and he takes care of things...”

[Emphasis added]

On the other hand, MT had the following to say about the construction of the road in front of her house. The same street eventually also led to her field:

“Setting: Interview with MT, small woman farmer. BG, her neighbor was sitting with us.

DC: Do you know when this road was rebuilt? [I pointed to the street in front of her house]

MT: Last year [2007] September.

DC: How was it built? Who did it?

MT: I don't know that. The construction people came last year and built it and went.

DC: Did you ask for the road to be built?

MT: Asked whom?

DC: Did you ask your PRI representative?

MT: No, I didn't ask him.

BG: No,

DC: Did the PRI representative ask you before they built the road?

MT: No.

BG: No.

DC: Did you know about the road, from any means, before it was built?

MT: **I didn't know anything about it....they just turned up one day to do the work.**

DC: Is that a common thing to happen?

BG: Yes, the PRI makes all those decisions.

DC: How does it do that?

MT: They have the [village council meetings] and people can go and ask for things.

DC: Have you attended one before?

MT: Once in a while, I go.

DC: What did you do there? Did you speak up?

MT: I listened to what they were saying mostly. I didn't say anything. **There were so many men, and I'm not sure they would have listened.** So I don't go anymore.

DC: So, what do you do if you want something done?

MT: I take my cousin. They will listen to him at the PRI office. Once my sons are grown, maybe I won't need to do that.

DC: So, if you could have chosen to build anything else instead of this road, what would it have been?

MT: Water supply tap...for drinking. We really need that.

BG: More street lights. People always get bitten by snakes at night while walking home.”
[Emphasis added]

The themes that emerge from these narratives are very similar to the ones from agricultural rehabilitation, but in many ways are more illustrative of development structures in Farming Village. The central roles in project identification and prioritization were played by the most well-established and powerful institutions: the district administration and the Village PRIs. Within the PRI decision structure itself, the *dalits* and the women had constitutional right (implying legitimacy) to participate, but did not have enough power to exercise these rights. With respect to the average resident, the cases of the medium and small farmers provided an interesting contrast. Neither IR nor MT regularly attended the village council meetings. But the reason why IR does not go is because he has trust in the PRI representative and feels adequately represented. In contrast, MT doesn't attend the meetings because she feels that she had no influence over the process. The fact that infrastructure redevelopment program met IR's priorities (i.e. the road) over the priorities of MT and BG (i.e. drinking water and street lighting) further reaffirms the extent to which they were eventually represented in the program.

5.3 THE STORY OF “MIXED VILLAGE”

Having examined participatory behavior in villages where there was a clear dominant interest group, I was interested in knowing what would happen if there were more than one dominant interest groups present in the village. The housing reconstruction program in the Mixed Village best captures this dynamic, and so I have chosen to focus only on this program in this case study.

Mixed Village is a coastal, rural village located 15 kilometers away from the district capital and around five kilometers from the nearest town. The village has religious significance for Hindus of this region. It houses a famous temple devoted to Lord Shiva, and residents from other villages come here during moonless nights of the spring and summer months to take a ‘holy’ dip in the sea. Folklore suggests that a sage’s ashes turned into flowers while his disciples were carrying it through the village, thus giving it its religious significance. At present, the village consists of a total of six hamlets, of which one is predominantly fishing, three are predominantly farming with scattered *dalit* pockets, and one is predominantly *dalit* and *nadar*. According to a reconstruction plan made by an NGO for the village before the disaster, the village had a total of 5,300 persons (2600 men and 2700 women) and 1,600 households, of which approximately 80 are *nadar* and 200 are *dalits* (NCRC, 2005). Most of the residents of the village are Hindus by religion, with the exception of the *nadārs* who are almost all Christian (Catholics) and a handful of *dalits* who are Muslims. None of the informants picked up religion as a matter of contention in the village.

Of all three case studies, Mixed Village was the most developed in terms of services and infrastructure. The first elementary school was established in 1965 and today the village has four elementary schools and a high school. It was fully electrified in 1965 and has had drinking water supply since 1985. The literacy rate is high: 40 percent of the total population has had some formal education (21 percent of total men and 11 percent of total women). Eighty percent of the village households have sanitary facilities and the village has won regional awards for ‘cleanliness and beautification’.

Of all hamlets, only two, the predominantly fishing and one predominantly farming hamlets were affected in the tsunami. A total of sixty one people lost their lives in the tsunami, including children, and 300 acres of cultivable land was affected in the tsunami (NCRC, 2005).

5.3.1 Caste, occupation and local economy

Mixed Village has a similar combination of the caste and economic structure seen in Fishing Village and Farming Village. The *meenavar* people from the fishing hamlet belong mainly to the *pattinavar* caste and practice livelihood fishing. There were no trawler owners in the hamlet. According to the village reconstruction plan, of the 210 households in the hamlet, 90 owned *kattamarams* and 60 owned *maruti* boats. The remaining households acted as crew labor or on boat and net repair. There were no big commission agents in the village, but only small ones who bought the bulk catch from the fishermen and auctioned it off (with the help of *eylam* ladies) to individual vendors. An auction center was built along the beach in early 2000s for this purpose. As was the case of Fishing Village, profit from the catch was shared among the crew, with a separate portion kept aside for boat, net and engine repair, and the *eylam* ladies got to keep some of the fish in return for their services. Vendors who purchased the catch were women from the same *meenavar* hamlet and they mostly took it to the town five kilometers away to sell. The predominant modes of travel were autorickshaws and local buses. All 150 boats were damaged in the tsunami either partly or fully, in addition to the loss of 56 nets and 24 engines. Only men do the actual fishing and act as crew. The women do the cleaning, auctioning and vending. Alcoholism was not as rampant in this hamlet as it was in the Fishing Village. While traditionally only the *meenavar* engage in fishing, in this village some residents of the *nadār* community also do sustenance fishing in addition to their traditional tree sap-tapping activities.

These people live in a small hamlet close to the *meenavar* hamlet. Very few *dalit* people work as labor exclusively in the fishing industry—most double as agricultural and other non-fishing laborers.

With relation to agriculture, the majority of farmers in the village are small (<3 acres) and medium (3-7 acres) farmers and with only a small percentage owning more than 7 acres of land. Small farmers include subsistence farmers who do agriculture for self-consumption. Most farmers belong to the *vanniyar* castes with only a handful of families from the (higher) *pillai* caste. The percentage of *dalit* landowners is low; they are mostly small farmers, and tend to be located towards the west of the village than near to the shore. Land tenancy is also low, and most farmers cultivate their own land, either with the help of their family members or by hiring laborers on a daily wage basis. The landless populations of the village belong to the *dalit*, *nadār* and *vanniyar* caste groups and work on a daily wage basis. Men are paid more than women, though the difference here was less than that in Farming Village (Rs. 85, or \$1.90, for men and Rs. 65, or \$1.40, for women). Big and medium farmers in the village alternate between rice, groundnut and assorted vegetables during the year. Some also grow casuarina, mango, cashew, tamarind and coconut trees as well as flowers. They keep the profit from these trees as well as their paddy and vegetable crops. Small farmers either grow paddy alternated with vegetables or vegetables and greens throughout the year. The typical vegetables grown were eggplant, okra, a variety of gourds (such as bitter gourd, snake gourd, ash gourd, and ridge gourd), and greens. Some small and subsistence farmers also work as labor on other farms to substitute their income. Land ownership by women is low, and those who do are small or subsistence farmers. Crops are grown according to the topography of the land. The area immediately adjoining the sea is used to do tree planting. Land further inland (i.e. westward) of this is suitable for paddy, and the land

even further inland is ideal for vegetable cultivation. Rain is the major source of irrigation and is supplemented with water channeled from a major river in the region. The village also has over 70 communal water tanks for irrigation. Farmers use sprinkler systems, drip-irrigation systems and clay pots to irrigate the land. Prior to the tsunami, farmers said that fresh groundwater was found up to a depth of 26 meters, but that afterwards this depth had reduced. Produce from the farms is transported by individual farmers to markets in the nearby town as well as to a major market located near the district capital. The major mode of transport is two-wheelers (scooters and motorcycles), bicycles, autorickshaws and local buses. Women and men do vending equally.

Non-farming occupations in the village include brick-making and masonry, done mostly by the *dalits* in the village. Some widowed women farmers sell street food (*idlis*) within the village as well as in adjacent villages, and this is often their only source of income. A significant number of men from fishing and farming families also went to south-east Asian countries to work as unskilled labor and earn extra money. I met one medium farmer who had been born in Burma (Myanmar) while his father worked as a soldier in the British Army, but returned after the military coup there.

Gender dynamics within households were the same as in Fishing Village and Farming Village: women believed they could not take unilateral decisions about household matters, but felt that the men had the liberty to do so. But unlike the women of Farming Village, the women in Mixed Village were more likely to interact with outsiders.

5.3.2 Village governance

The governance system in Mixed Village is a delicate balance of respectful distance and mutual dependence. The *meenavar* hamlet has its own traditional caste panchāyat which is highly influential in matters of social governance within its hamlet. However, for development purposes, it has to collaborate with the Village PRI because state funds are allocated at the village-, and not hamlet-level. Only one PRI representative is elected from the ward (electoral subdivision of the village) to which the fishing hamlet belongs. When the representative is from the fishing hamlet, s/he works to make sure that interests of the *meenavar* panchāyat and ergo the *meenavar* community, are not ignored at the village level. When the PRI representative is from other hamlets in the ward, the head or another member of the *meenavar* panchāyat pursues their interests through this representative or directly with the PRI President. They also attend the village council meetings regularly and are quite vocal there. At the time of the tsunami, the PRI representative from this ward was not a *meenavar*: it was a *dalit* woman who has since been reelected. The dynamic between the *meenavar* panchāyat and the Village PRI is heavily dependent on their mutual trust in each other, and before the tsunami the relationship between the two was very good. For instance, I was told about the auction center built by the PRI specifically at the request of the *meenavar* panchāyat for the fishing hamlet and to the satisfaction of both organizations.

Outside of the fishing hamlet, the Village PRI was the most influential governance and development body. The village has re-elected the same PRI President since 2001, and all informants, regardless of caste or occupation, held him in great respect. The President, in turn, said his success was owing to his adherence to the communist ideologies of his political party.

He claimed a particular interest in advancing the cause of women in the village and said that he encouraged them to come to the village council meetings and to the PRI. My own observations on women's participation was somewhat mixed. I often met the two women PRI representatives at the PRI office, but found that they were less vocal in a large group format. For instance, I was able to observe a village council meeting, and the following are my observation notes from the meeting:

Field Note (FN): Village Council Meeting held to verify the beneficiary list for the second (mitigation) phase of housing reconstruction in the village. The meeting is conducted on the front porch of the village high school. Women and the men sit in two separate groups flanking either sides of the President, who sits in the center of the porch. The attending men are at least twice in number than women. The two women PRI members sit right at the front of the women's "section" and mostly listening to the men's conversation. The President reads out the names on the list one by one, and makes changes whenever someone raises an issue.

Personal Note (PN): Interestingly, the chatter from the men's side is deafening as compared to the low murmur from the women's side. Their communication style is also greatly different. The men just shout out what they want to say, while the women have a 'pass on the message' system—one woman passes on what she has to say to the next one, who then passes it on to the next one and so on until it reaches the two women PRI representatives. These two then pass on the message directly to the President in a low voice.

FN: One old woman right at the back of the room appears agitated. I saw her 'sending the message' to the President through the 'chain' but he hasn't addressed her yet. She waits for about 15 minutes, growing more and more agitated. Then she just gets up and leaves.

PN: Was she trying to find out whether she was on the list? I am curious about whether the President did not say anything to her because it was unimportant or because he was simply distracted by the shouting men. Also, I don't know how many of these men and women are *dalit*. None of the *dalit* and *nadār* informants I have met as yet are here in this meeting."

Later, I found out that one of the men who attended the meeting was from the *nadār* hamlet located near the fishing village. He had been sent as the collective representative of the *nadār* caste community to see if they had been given houses in the second phase (they had). I

was also told that the woman who had walked away was a widow from the *meenavar* hamlet who had lost her only son in the tsunami. She had wanted to know whether she could get a home on her own in the second phase. It appears that the *meenavar* panchāyat had excluded her from the beneficiary list of the first phase citing her advanced age and lack of a living descendent as reasons. I tried later to meet this woman during the days I visited the fishing hamlet, but was unable to locate her.

Within the fishing hamlet, the *meenavar* panchāyat is the most powerful governing body. It is popularly elected by the men of the hamlet and from amongst themselves. Women do not stand for elections and do not attend panchāyat meetings unless invited to do so. The *meenavar* panchāyat performed the same functions as that of Fishing Village: it dictates social norms for the *meenavars*, issues punishment and fines for social offenses, resolves internal conflicts and sets the development agenda for the hamlet. Caste panchāyats of *dalit*, *nadār* and farming caste communities were not as strong as the *meenavar* and they mostly governed over matters of dispute within their caste community.

5.3.3 Spatial structure and physical development

The spatial structure of the fishing and farming hamlets of Mixed Village are different. The fishing hamlet is a compact, dense settlement, located along the beach on the northeast corner of the village (the layouts of Mixed Village and fishing hamlet are shown in Figure 5.4 and Figure 5.5, respectively). The beach is used to store boats, nets and engines, and there is an auction center to sell the catch for the day. Prior to the disaster, the hamlet had its own community center, temple, small shops, elementary school and a common public space (all these have been rebuilt). The fishing hamlet had about 200 houses before the tsunami, a majority of

which were made of mud or brick with thatch roofs. The tsunami completely washed away 70 houses and partially damaged the others. The number and types of houses damaged in the fishing hamlet are shown in Table 5.2. Community facilities such as the school and community center also received significant structural damage and needed reconstruction. Being dense, the hamlet takes up only a small portion of the total village area. The major recovery need in the fishing hamlet was housing reconstruction.

The remainder of the village is used for farming. The hamlets nearer to the coast have casuarina and other tree groves along the sea shore. The land adjacent to that is used for paddy and vegetable cultivation. There is no single major street in the village, but arterial streets connect the village to the next villages on the north, south and east. Houses of big, medium and small farmers were mostly located along feeder roads. Small shops, community facilities such as schools, water tanks, village community center, and cyclone shelter are located along the arterial streets. The tsunami affected about 300 acres of cultivable land (agricultural and horticultural) adjacent to the sea and deposited sand, clay and salt deposits in the water tanks near there. The tsunami also substantially damaged the health center located close to the fishing hamlet. The major recovery need in the farming hamlet, therefore, was land reclamation and water source desalination and the reconstruction of the health center.

The *dalit* and *nadār* caste communities live in small pockets throughout the village, but are mostly concentrated in areas to the west and away from the sea shore. A small hamlet located close to the sea and just south of the fishing hamlet has a mix of *dalits* and *nadars*. The *nadars* who do sustenance fishing along with tree-tapping, are located closer to the sea than the *dalits* who work as labor in farming and the construction industry. Prior to the tsunami, the houses in

the hamlet were *kuccha* (mud with thatch roofs). There was no record of the exact number of housing damaged in this hamlet, though informants here said that some roofs and walls had collapsed and that all homes were flooded. After the disaster, the *dalit* houses were rebuilt by an international NGO during the first phase of housing reconstruction, but houses of the *nadars* were not. The experience of this *nadār* community is reported in Chapter 4.

Planning and development in the village is a mix of the systems followed in Fishing Village and Farming Village. The *meenavar* panchāyat plays a major role in setting the development agenda for the fishing hamlet, while the PRI does the same for the remainder of the village. The main mechanism for direct citizen input in planning are the village council meetings held four times a year on preset dates. Typically, the process begins with the PRI representatives setting the agenda for what will be discussed in the next village council meeting (such as decisions to build the auction center). If the representatives or the President have already heard from certain constituents, such as the *meenavar* panchāyat, which usually communicates directly with the PRI President, then those are also included in the agenda. All residents (fishing, farming and *dalit/nadār*) are informed of the upcoming meeting through a public address system (usually a person who goes about announcing the date, time, venue and major agenda over a megaphone). During the meeting, the PRI's agenda is discussed and resident opinion is asked. Attendance at the meetings is higher than that of other villages, largely because of the active role of PRI representatives within their constituencies. Informants seemed to be more aware of their local representatives and were more willing to contact them in case of an issue, than in the Fishing Village and Farming Village.

More revealingly, women informants also seemed more confident about being able to approach their local representatives or at least the President directly, if they wanted something done. But only some had actually done so in the past. My observations of the village council meetings were that women were in attendance, but that they spoke little and, when they did, were not heard as often as the men. However, this was still an improvement over reports of other villages where women are less likely to attend village council meetings, or as was in the case of Farming Village, where women PRI representatives themselves were represented by their male relatives.

At the end of the village council meeting, the different development projects are prioritized and final decisions are sent to the block-level PRI (“Panchāyat Union”), which forwards them to the District Rural Development Authority (DRDA). The DRDA consults with the relevant departments of the District Administration and approves the projects for final funding. The decision is notified to the block-level PRI, which in turn notifies the Village PRI. Once the project is approved, the PRI or the relevant district department creates a project design, which is approved by the latter. The construction is either done by the department itself or by a contractor hired by the Village PRI, depending on the wishes of the latter. Once complete, the project is maintained by the Village PRI. In recent years, the Mixed Village has used state funding made available through the Village Self-Sufficiency Scheme (Namakku Naame Thittam or NNT) to upgrade their high school and build one elementary school.

5.3.4 Reconstruction of fishing hamlet in Mixed Village

When the tsunami hit the fishing hamlet, all *meenavars* moved together into local schools and community buildings in other parts of the village. They stayed there for approximately two

weeks, after which they moved into temporary shelters constructed for them by the District Administration close to their original settlement. Within the next few weeks, the *meenavar* panchāyat was contacted by NGO-K and NGO-C to construct new housing for the hamlet. I asked the head of the *meenavar* panchāyat about how they came to be involved in the first phase of the housing reconstruction program:

“Setting: Interview with “NS” head of the *meenavar* panchāyat of the fishing hamlet in the Mixed Village. We spoke about the panchāyat’s involvement in the new housing project being constructed for their hamlet. He came along with four other panchāyat members, who listened in on the conversation, but said little. We met at the temple in the hamlet.

DC: Tell me about your panchāyat and what you do...

NS: We [panchāyat members] make decisions for the good of the community...for what we want built, resolving disputes, for the temple...[local] **fishermen have selected us for this** [purpose]...all NGOs must come to us first because we know what is good for the community...**[local fisher folk] always listen to our advice...**

DC: How was your panchāyat involved in the new housing project?

NS: First, when we were living in the [temporary] shelter, the [Village Administrative Officer] came with a list [of residents of fishing hamlet]. [The panchāyat] corrected it for him. Then, after some time, two people from NGO-K and NGO-C came to ask us if we wanted new houses...we said yes, so then they came back another day, went from house to house to ask questions about what we did for livelihood and whether we wanted things like school or community center...

DC: Did they have a list for how many people to build houses for?

NS: Yes, they had the list with them.

DC: So what happened next?

NS: Then the VAO came to tell us that the Collector wanted to meet us about the new location for houses. We went to see him at Nagapattinam Town.

DC: Who went to meet the Collector? Did the VAO or the PRI President go with you?

NS: No, only the *meenavar* panchāyat went. **They had only called us...**

DC: What happened at the Collectorate?

NS: At first, the Collector wanted us to select a place more away from the sea. He even showed some sites, but that was too far away. So, then we came back and went on our own to [names two

farmers]—they own lands next to our [hamlet]. We asked them if they would sell their land. It was difficult ...first one of them refused, but then later both of them agreed. So, then we went to the Collector and told him we had found our own land...

DC: What did he have to say about that?

NS: He had to say yes...**he was the one who called us [to discuss it] after all**...he had to buy that land for us.

DC: So what happened after that?

SN: That whole site finding part took 2-3 months...so by then the NGO-K and NGO-C had divided up the houses between themselves...NGO-K built most of the houses—from [street name to street name] and NGO-C built only some houses, right here [points to just outside the temple]. They showed us some design [for the house] and asked if we wanted something...

DC: How did they do that? Did they hold meetings? Both the NGOs?

NS: Yes, they held a meeting for that...each had a separate one. Both wanted us to bring the women also. Then they showed us these [layout diagrams] and asked us if we liked it.

DC: Did the women come?

NS: Yes, many of them came.

DC: Was the PRI President or representative there?

NS: No, **they were not called**...

DC: So, did you like the house design the NGOs showed?

NS: The NGO-C ones were good—they had toilets outside the house. The NGO-K ones were **not what we wanted**. First they did not put any toilets, so we asked them to do that. Then later when they were constructing the houses, we saw that the houses were this [raises his hand to approximately four feet] high and they didn't build any stairs for the back door! But then, **they were nice people** anyway...

DC: What do you mean?

NS: They accused us of stealing construction material. It was very insulting and not true at all! It was just some children playing with the stones [gravel]. But they called the police. So, we asked them to get out of the village. It was a big problem.

DC: What did NGO-K do?

NS: They just stopped work in half and simply left!

DC: What did you do then?

NS: Then we went to the PRI President.”

[Emphasis added]

I asked the PRI President from that ward about the matter and he spoke how he had felt let down by the *meenavars*:

“Setting: Interview with PRI President “SK” of Mixed Village. The fishing hamlet in the village was being reconstructed under the first phase of housing reconstruction. We conducted the interview in the PRI Office. It was quite busy and the two women PRI representatives could be seen speaking to some women in the other end of the room. Before starting the interview, the President showed me the award for ‘cleanliness and beautification’ that the village had received the previous year. He was also quite proud of the fact that the village had 80 percent sanitation and that the women found it comfortable to come into the office for things they wanted to address. He also spoke at length about his political affiliation with the local communist party and how that had influenced his administrative style. Being the head of the elected PRI and such a highly respected member of the village community, I had expected him to have played a central role in the program. But, as the interview shows, this was not the case.

DC: Can you tell me how the PRI was involved in the housing reconstruction program for the fishing hamlet?

SK: [cynically] Such a complicated process. They could have done it better.

DC: What happened?

SK: See, first everything was going fine. The Collector asked the VAO and PRI to compile the beneficiary list, so we did it. The VAO even went to the *meenavar* panchāyat to confirm the list—we were trying to consider them. But they just left us behind after that. They wanted to do everything on their own. When they found the new land or when they were checking the design for the houses... **they had no use for us. Only when they got into really bad trouble, then they came to me to ask help!** [laughs]

DC: What was the problem?

SK: See, there was this NGO-K, and they went straight to the *meenavar* panchāyat to talk about the new houses. Then when they started to build, some construction material just disappeared. NGO-K said that the *meenavar* stole the material and the *meenavar* said that was not true. Instead of bringing the matter to me, they started arguing amongst themselves and NGO-K brought the police. **The NGO-K people said that they were not feeling safe in the [fishing hamlet] and that they could not trust the *meenavars*.** So they just left everything and went away. Now, the houses were not even finished and the *meenavar* did not know how to get a new NGO to do the work. So only then SN [*meenavar* panchāyat head] came to see me. Only after all that! **I know**

people in the Collectorate, in the DRDA, so when they needed my help they came. I told SN [head of *meenavar* panchāyat] that he should have involved me from before. **They used to come before so I had expected them to do it, but they didn't. It was not how they should have behaved.**

DC: Did you help them eventually?

SK: First, I thought that I should not because of how they had behaved. But then, they really needed help and they are our people also, so I went with SN to the DRO [District Revenue Office] and we asked the Collector to change the NGO. The Collector said he would start looking for another NGO...later NGO-G did the remaining work.

DC: How did they find NGO-G?

SK: The *meenavar* people found them eventually.

DC: Was that okay with you that they did it on their own?

SK: Yes, because after that, they call me or at least the PRI representative to all their meetings. Even the NGO-G comes to the PRI more often than the other one. **But now I also keep my eyes open. We will see if they do it again...**"

[Emphasis added]

This is what NS from the *meenavar* panchāyat had to say about their interaction with the Village PRI:

“Setting: Interview with SN, head of *meenavar* panchāyat.

DC: What happened when you went to the President to get NGO-K removed?

NS: Well, we spoke and then we went to the Collectorate to change the NGO.

DC: Was he willing to help you?

NS: Yes. I mean, he was upset that we had not included him before..that we were doing things on our own with NGO-K.

DC: Do you usually involve him in such matters?

NS: Yes. Actually, **before, we were always very friendly. He helped us build that auction center—has always been helpful.** But...[looks uncomfortable]...See, NGO-K came straight to us, so we just spoke with them. Maybe it was not a good thing to do. He was right in being upset with us. Look how much he helped later! **We did not do the right thing....**

DC: Are things better now?

NS: Yes, yes, things are back to how they used to be. **When we found NGO-G, the first thing we did was to tell him because we did not want to leave him out again.** We even told NGO-G to visit him. SK [PRI President] helped us tell the Collector to give us NGO-G.

DC: Do you like the new NGO more? Is it better?

NS: Yes, yes. They are so much better. We like them—they actually listen to what we have to say.

DC: How did you find NGO-G?

NS: Actually, the women told us about them. Then they came to us and we went to the PRI President.

[Emphasis added]

I had wanted to interview some from NGO-K about their experiences in Mixed Village, but by the time of my visit, they had relocated back to their headquarters located outside of Tamil Nadu. I then visited NGO-G's office to ask how they came to be involved:

“Setting: Interview with “PA”, CEO of the district office of NGO-G. He is an older man, college-educated and spoke with me in English. The NGO has a strong presence in social welfare schemes all over Tamil Nadu, and focuses primarily on women, children and people of lower caste. It also built houses in some villages after the tsunami. The NGO has been working with the *meenavar* women of Mixed Village on alternate livelihood programs, particularly sewing and design of children's clothing. The *meenavar* women of Mixed Village travel every few days to the district office, where they are given training along with women from other villages, of both *meenavar* and other castes. When I visited the office, there were women from Mixed Village working on sewing machines. PA took obvious pride in the work of these women and showed me samples of the clothes the women had made. I even purchased some baby clothes made by these women. The profit, I was told, is shared between the women who made that batch of clothes.

DC: How did NGO-G get involved in the housing program at Mixed Village?

PA: It was quite by accident. We were not actively looking to do housing for them, but we were working with the *meenavar* women there. So, when they heard that we were building houses elsewhere, they came to ask us if we could do the same for them. They told us that they were having some problems with NGO-K and that they were looking for some new NGO. I think **we were a good option for them because they know us...** I have met their [*meenavar*] panchāyat

before and the women come here so often. Besides, **we are experienced. We have done this housing thing before** and even prior to that, we were working in other districts of Tamil Nadu. So, all this was a benefit.

DC: Who came from Mixed Village [to ask]?

PA: First you know, the women asked us. They work here, and they had heard from other women about our houses. So, some [*meenavar* women of Mixed Village] came to me and asked if we would be willing to make houses. Then they told their panchāyat to contact us and they did. After that, we went to the PRI President there. Once everything was agreed between us and I had permission from our headquarters, I went to the Collectorate and told them NGO-G was willing to take up where the other NGO had left. They agreed and we signed the MoU.

DC: Why did you go to the PRI President?

PA: Well, the *meenavar* panchāyat told us that we should and that **[the PRI President] was an important person in the community. And that is how it should be anyway**, so now whenever we go to the [hamlet] we also make sure to visit the PRI office. That way we keep in touch and they also feel like they are part of the program.

DC: What all have you done in the [hamlet]?

PA: Well, there were some more houses to be built. We took the same design that NGO-K had and changed it with what the *meenavar* people wanted. There were toilets to be added, some steps, the community center and the [day care]...we also built a fishing auction center.

DC: How has your experience been working with them?

PA: We have no problem at all! **We were already working there. Not in housing but other programs, so we have a good relationship.** Besides, NGO-K made a foolish mistake—you have to build trust in the community, not call police on them!

[Emphasis added]

While at NGO-G's office, I also got the chance to speak with the *meenavar* women who had been instrumental in NGO-G's involvement in housing for their hamlet. This was particularly interesting because women had played a very minimal role in housing decisions in the other case study villages. I was curious to see whether their increased role in this project has changed the way the women thought about their role in their community:

Setting: Interview with “LA” (31 yrs, married) and “AA” (18 yrs, single) from the *meenavar* hamlet of Mixed Village. These women participate in NGO-G’s livelihood program. I found them working there on sewing machines when I visited the office to meet PA. It was he who had pointed them out to me. I introduced myself and asked if they could tell me about how they had brought NGO-G to their village. They agreed and we went out into the porch to sit and speak. While there, more women (probably from other villages) came and joined us, though they mostly listened and did not say anything. LA was less vocal about her opinions than AA, who radiated optimism. The conversation lasted for about an hour, during which I could see some of the other women either nod in agreement or shake their heads in disagreement to what was being said. When I got up to leave, they asked LA and AA if they really had really played that role and a raucous debate ensued on whether or not a similar strategy would work in their own villages. I could almost see the wheels turning in some of their minds. It was most fascinating.

DC: I heard you had a lot to do with getting NGO-G to build houses in your [hamlet]...

AA: Oh yes, it was us who did it all, really. We made it happen.

LA: Yes, actually we played a big role.

DC: How?

LA: Well, some of us had gone to [another village] to attend their ceremony for handing over the houses to the people. NGO-G had made those houses and the women from that village invited us to come and attend the ceremony. When we went there, we saw the houses too and we really liked them.

AA: Yes, they were really good! They had toilets and the steps...very nice construction.

LA: So, we came back and asked PA if he could do the same for us. We told him how NGO-K had misbehaved with us and that they had not completed the houses for us. We knew that the *meenavar* panchāyat was looking for someone to build the houses

AA: I remembered that my father had told me that the panchāyat had not found one yet, so we thought why not NGO-G?

DC: What did PA say?

LA: He asked me to bring details about what we wanted done so he could ask at the headquarters. So, some of us women went to SN [head of *meenavar* panchāyat] and told him that there was this NGO and that they were willing to build us the houses. We told him that we had seen the houses in the other village and that they were very nice—and that **we wanted this NGO**.

DC: What did SN say?

AA: He said that he would send someone to NGO-G to talk with PA.

DC: Did he?

AA: Yes, and we went **with him**—because it is we who actually know PA and it was our idea **in the first place**. We came [to the NGO-G office] and the men talked with each other. Then after that SN went to the Collectorate to tell them that we had found an NGO.

DC: Was this your experience before also? Did you ever go with the *meenavar* panchāyat to NGO-K's office?

LA: [laughs] No, no. That is not how it usually works...**NGO-K met with the panchāyat and women don't attend**...this was the first time we had done this.

DC: What did it feel like, being so involved?

AA: Oh wonderful! I was very involved in NGO-G's housing project after that—I always went to all their meeting, and when there was a panchāyat meeting, I always asked my father what was being said.

DC: This was not usual?

AA: No, **before, I didn't think it was important. But now, I saw how much we [women] could do, so now I am going to go more often.**

LA: I used to ask my husband, but now I go myself.

DC: What if they were going to build roads in the village? Would you go to that meeting? Will you be involved in the same way for that?

AA: Oh yes. Now I know what I can do.

LA: Probably. It depends on what my husband says. But he might agree more now.

DC: And if you did go, do you think they will listen to what you have to say?

LA: They may. I'm not sure, but I think it will happen more than it used to.

AA: Absolutely yes. **They will have to listen to us. We have shown them that we were right this time**, haven't we?

[Emphasis added]

The story of reconstruction of the fishing hamlet in Mixed Village provides interesting insights into the interaction between traditional and constitutional governance bodies and how this delicate game is played between the two entities. On the ground, the first phase of housing reconstruction had become so highly synonymous with fishing caste communities that NGOs often interacted directly and exclusively with them and ignored the Village PRIs. This model of operation was repeated in all the three case study villages: in Fishing Village, the municipal

councilor from the village was not invited to deliberate reconstruction decisions, in the Farming Village the PRI President was particularly bitter about NGOs not involving them in the housing projects for the two *dalit* hamlets, and it was the same case here until things came to a head.

At first glance, there appears to be little problem with this model: Village PRIs and Town Municipalities are known to be prone to elite biases, and direct access to the beneficiaries appears to circumvent this problem. But it is in the long-run, and after all the NGOs have left, that the model is truly tested. Since the maintenance, continued upkeep and future expansion of these housing projects requires active help from the Village PRIs and Municipalities, it was not a good long-term strategy to not recognize these organizations as stakeholders in the planning process. As the PRI President of the Farming Village said to me, “they [the NGO and the *dalits*] forgot that responsibility of the new houses will come to our [the PRI’s] heads anyway eventually.”

In Mixed Village, the Village PRI was not recognized initially as a stakeholder, which prevented it from actively participating in the reconstruction program. This was despite the resources they could bring to the table through their institutional connections. It was not until the PRI’s resource became critical to the housing project that the organization was granted this legitimacy to participate in the process and exercise influence. But by then, the relationship between the Village PRIs and the *meenavar* panchāyat had taken a toll. The initial exclusion went against what the PRI had expected of the *meenavar* panchāyat and eventually resulted in the loss of trust on the part of the PRI, indicated by the President’s intention to be more wary now. The long-term implications of this on how the village prioritizes future development decisions remain to be seen.

A second theme that emerges from the case of Mixed Village is how important trust is to the continued participation of even powerful stakeholders. The conflict between NGO-K and the *meenavar* panchāyat, the accusations of theft and eventual calling of police all led to a complete breakdown of the relationship between the two stakeholders. Calling the police, in particular, is highly significant because *meenavar* communities pride themselves on being able to resolve conflicts internally. NGO-K's eventually leaving the program was a result of the *meenavar* panchāyat exercising its power combined with the NGO-K's uncertainty about how they would be treated in the future (indicated by their fear of being attacked). So, despite the fact that the NGO-K had the financial resources to construct the housing (indicating power) and were legally contracted to do the work through a MoU (indicating legitimacy), they still had to exit the housing reconstruction program in Mixed Village because they could not establish trust.

Lastly, the case of Mixed Village shows how certain marginalized groups emerge as potential stakeholders in crisis situations and how that experience in turn, shapes their perception of their own stake in the community. The role of the *meenavar* women of Mixed Village in bringing NGO-G to the village showed not only that the women can bring resources to the table that were not available otherwise (such as connections to “trustworthy” NGOs), but changed how the women thought about their own roles in the community. Both AA and LA were more willing to actively involve themselves in matters that a woman in the Fishing Village had called “not a women’s issue” (like deciding which roads to build). More importantly, these women felt that, having shown success in this matter, they had gained the trust of the other community members and had more agency to influence future community matters.

5.4 FORMS OF PARTICIPATION AND NON-PARTICIPATION

The cases of Fishing Village, Farming Village, and Mixed Village show that stakeholder participation or non-participation in post-tsunami recovery programs depended on their power, legitimacy, trust, or urgency for action. These stakeholder characteristics, in turn, were sourced from three ‘context-factors’: (1) the variations in stakeholders’ disaster impacts, recovery needs, and capacities; (2) the decision structures for development in place and recovery policies instituted by the State government; and (3) the socio-economic conditions of the community. Finally, the case studies also show that as stakeholder power, trust, legitimacy and urgency changed, their participation or non-participation also changed.

In all, participatory behavior of stakeholders in the case study villages ranged from ‘high-impact presence’ to ‘non-impact absence’. Stakeholders lying on the former end of this range may be considered as participants (owing to their visible presence and impact on the decision process) while those lying on the latter end may be considered as non-participants (due to their complete absence as well as low impact on the decision process). Outside of this range lay stakeholders who did not have a presence in the decision process, but can continue to influence it by actively opposing it. Table 5.3 lists eight different forms of stakeholder participation, modified from White (1996), and three forms of non-participation observed in case study communities arranged according to decreasing presence. One of the important findings of this research is that presence alone cannot explain the different forms of stakeholder behavior found on the ground. Current development practices, which evaluate participation based solely on stakeholders’ presence in the decision forums, oversimplify the dynamics of participation.

This classification is intended as an analytical tool to help planners understand the various reasons why participatory planning fails in its objectives. It is important that recovery managers understand that on the ground, participation and non-participation occur in numerous other and much more nuanced ways. Forms of participatory and non-participatory behaviors observed in case study villages were as follows:

Transformative participation: Two stakeholders were involved in all aspects of the post-tsunami recovery programs, from agenda setting to implementation—the District Administration, and the international NGOs. The Administration wielded a great amount of institutional power, while international NGOs had immense financial resources to offer and both stakeholders were granted legitimacy, either through policies (MoU and Government Orders) or pre-existing development structures. The priorities of these stakeholders (to begin recovery as soon as possible) were adequately served by the programs and they had some degree of trust in each other as well as other stakeholder groups (measured, for instance, by their each living up to the other's expectations). As a result, these stakeholders had the highest impact presence in post-tsunami recovery.

Representative participation: The participation of the two *meenavar* panchāyats in housing reconstruction and of the Farming Village PRI in infrastructure development comes closest to representative participation. These stakeholders were involved in some aspects of the recovery programs, their participation was critical to the survival of the program, and, in turn, they used the programs to gain their own particular ends. The two panchāyats had the social power to influence the outcomes of recovery, and particularly the participation of other stakeholders, such as women and the *dalits*. They were invited

to participate in the process, thus giving them legitimacy; and for the most part, the panchāyats had their respective communities' trust and shared their priorities regarding time and content. When differences in priorities or problems of trust emerged, as seen in the case of Fishing Village, the *meenavar* panchāyat leadership was changed. The Farming Village PRI on the other hand, gained its power through the control of access to state resources and its legitimacy through the electoral process. Some representatives had the trust of their constituents depending on their mutual backgrounds, and some even reflected their constituents' immediate priorities (see delegate-based non-participation).

Instrumental participation: Women of all three case studies, but particularly *meenavar* caste communities, typified instrumental participation. Most women were invited to participate in only particular aspects of the decision-making process, such as in discussions of house design or where schools and day care centers should be located. Beyond these decisions, these women had no influence over the recovery decision process and no recognition of the resource base they represent. Further, gender dynamics in place were such that women had no choice but to trust that the men-folk shared their values and that their immediate priorities would be accounted for. This is best illustrated by the fact that the *meenavar* panchāyat chose to relocate Fishing Village despite the increased travel distance for their women. The fact that the women complained of this increased travel distance only after mentioning all other encumbrance reflects the different ways in which the men and women thought about their importance in their 'community'.

Nominal participation: The *dalits* of Fishing Village were invited to participate in the relocation program, but had little or no influence on the decision process behind it. Much of this was attributed to their lack of social power relative to that of the *meenavars*. They agreed to work with the *meenavars* not because they believed that the latter shared their values or based on their previous interaction (i.e. based on trust), but because of their more urgent and overriding need for any action (in this case, for housing). When this urgency was not served through the process, they went outside of it to do so (see discontinued non-participation).

Delegate-based non-participation: The willingness of the medium farmer in Farming Village, to be represented by another stakeholder or person (in his case, the friend in the PRI), exemplifies this form of non-participation. In this case, the farmer did not attend meetings on infrastructure development, but because he had connections in the influential PRI, because he shared values and priorities with his friend, and because he had an informal understanding with this friend to watch out for each other. The fact that what he needed most, i.e. the building of the road, was accomplished without his attending any of the decision forums, makes his participation impactful but without visible presence. [Some of the *meenavar* and *dalit* women also mentioned that their men-folk acted as ‘delegates’ in decision processes of the traditional panchāyats. When the women needed something addressed they could ask their men-folk to raise it in the meetings. However, it was unclear as to how successful such delegation had been in the past and it would have been more successful if the women had represented themselves.

Discontinued non-participation: Stakeholders were most likely to discontinue participation when the program priorities lost relevance for their own urgent recovery needs. For instance, the *dalits* of Fishing Village began by willingly participating in the housing reconstruction program, but found later that the priorities of the NGO and the *meenavars* (to move in together as one) did not match those of their own (to move in immediately).

When the NGOs and the *meenavars* were unresponsive to the *dalits*' urgent priorities, the latter organized themselves and arranged for early move-ins through the District Administration. This move resulted in the breaking down of trust between the *dalits* and the *meenavars*. Their organized effort also increased the agency of the *dalits*, which may have consequences for their future influence in village matters.

A second example of discontinued non-participation was that of the labor union couple in Fishing Village. In their case, their deteriorating trust relationship with the rest of the *meenavar* community, and their uncertainty regarding future influence on or acceptance in decision forums, coupled with the mismatched program priorities made them exit the relocation program altogether. The fact that they refuse to move even if the houses are completed soon shows the continued irrelevance of the relocation program to their lives.

Marginalized non-participation: The complete absence of small farmers of Farming Village from all matters related to the distribution of agricultural inputs, from setting the agenda for what will be distributed to the actual distribution itself exemplifies marginalized non-participation. In the case of the tenant farmer, his not being included on the beneficiary list along with the landowner, coupled with his lack of connections in the

PRI, meant he neither had presence nor impact on the distribution of the agricultural inputs. Furthermore, his willingness to participate in future government programs was not because he trusted the government to live up to his expectations, but because he felt he had no alternative options to meet his needs.

The case of the small woman farmer was even more drastic, because she was not even aware of the existence of a distribution process or what was distributed. Her lack of connections in the PRI, her feeling of disempowerment and lack of recognition owing to her gender, and her inability to devote time for redress when she had other urgent matters to attend to, all combined to marginalize her from the distribution process. Unable to meet their urgent needs through the government run agricultural rehabilitation program, both farmers resorted to taking loans from informal sources, further sinking into a debt trap.

A second, somewhat paradoxical, example was that of the Mixed Village PRI. While PRIs are usually a complete antithesis of what is seen as “marginalized”, in fact the PRI here had no presence or impact on the housing project for the *meenavar* hamlet at first. It was not until their resource became critical to the survival of the process that they were given legitimacy and they could participate. However, the difference between the small farmers and the PRI is that the farmers were more likely to stay marginalized, as opposed to the PRI, which would have made its presence felt eventually.

Active opposition: There were few examples of active opposition in the Tamil Nadu case studies. Those stakeholders that did actively oppose recovery programs did so after discontinuing their participation. For instance, the refusal of the *dalits* in Fishing Village

to cooperate any further with the *meenavars* may derail the plans of the latter two to move in at the same time. This shows that even when the *dalits* have willingly absented themselves from any further decision forums, they can still continue to have their impact felt. However, to be able to continue to actively oppose the recovery program a stakeholder must have the requisite power to do so, either through social or institutional means, or through organizing.

An important feature of stakeholder behavior was that as power, trust, legitimacy and urgency changed, participatory behavior also changed. The change in stakeholder urgency, in particular, is inherent to the post-disaster context. For instance, as the fear of another tsunami reduced, the *meenavars* of Fishing Village were less and less willing to participate in relocation. Similarly, the small farmers felt no urgency to participate in the government program three years later after the fact, because it had not been timely for them, and they had used other, less efficient methods to cope.

Changing urgency however, can also lead certain stakeholders to seek new forms of power, such as through activism or community organizing, and move to more impactful forms of participation. For example, while the *dalits* of Fishing Village may have discontinued their participation in the relocation program, their community organizing efforts may change how relocation happens in the future. Another impact of changing urgency was on the emergence of new legitimate actors in decision processes. For instance, when crisis hit the housing reconstruction program in Mixed Village, the resources presented by the Village PRI and the *meenavar* women became critical for the continuation of the program. Owing to this, both were more likely to be invited to decision forums than before. While for the PRI this meant

reestablishment of a trust relationship, for the women, it meant that they would have a greater impact on future decision-making processes.

Table 5.1 Number and types of houses damaged in Fishing Village (NCRC, 2005)

Type of house	Distance from sea (meters)	Fully damaged	Partly damaged
Kuccha Houses	0-200	384	238
	200-500	86	72
	>500	39	0
Pucca Houses	0-200	68	118
	200-500	27	138
	>500	0	0

Table 5.2 Number and types of houses damaged in fishing hamlet of Mixed Village (NCRC, 2005)

Type of house	Distance from sea (meters)	Fully damaged	Partly damaged
Kuccha Houses	0-200	77	1
	200-500	7	30
	>500	0	1
Pucca Houses	0-200	0	3
	200-500	0	65
	>500	0	0

Table 5.3 Forms of participation and non-participation observed in case study villages

Stakeholder behavior	Forms of behavior (in decreasing order of presence)	Description
Participation [modified from White (1996)]	Transformative participation	Where the stakeholder was involved in all steps of decision-making, starting from design to maintenance of recovery program
	Representative participation	Where the stakeholder was involved in some aspects of the design and implementation of the program, and where the motive of program managers to facilitate participation was project survival and the motivation of stakeholder to participate was to gain leverage
	Instrumental participation	Where the stakeholder's view of their own impact through participation did not extend beyond the immediate recovery program, and where their involvement was viewed primarily an efficiency measure towards an outcome by program managers
	Nominal participation	Where the stakeholder was visible in the decision process but had little or no impact
Non-participation	Delegate-based non-participation	Where the stakeholder was voluntarily absent from most decision processes because they believed that their interests were being adequately represented by a delegate from their own or another stakeholder group
	Discontinued non-participation	Where the stakeholder would drop out of a recovery program due to increasing differences in substantive and/or time-related priorities.
	Marginalized non-participation	Where the stakeholder was unable to or unwilling to be involved in the decision process because they were either not invited to do so, were unaware of their right to participate, or because they believed they would have no impact on the decision outcome. These stakeholders were absent from recovery programs both, in terms of visibility as well as impact
Active opposition		Where the stakeholder identified themselves as being non-participants, due to their opposition to either the agenda or the design of the program decision process. These opponents could still make their presence felt by externally pressurizing participant stakeholders to make changes to the decision process or change the decision outcome

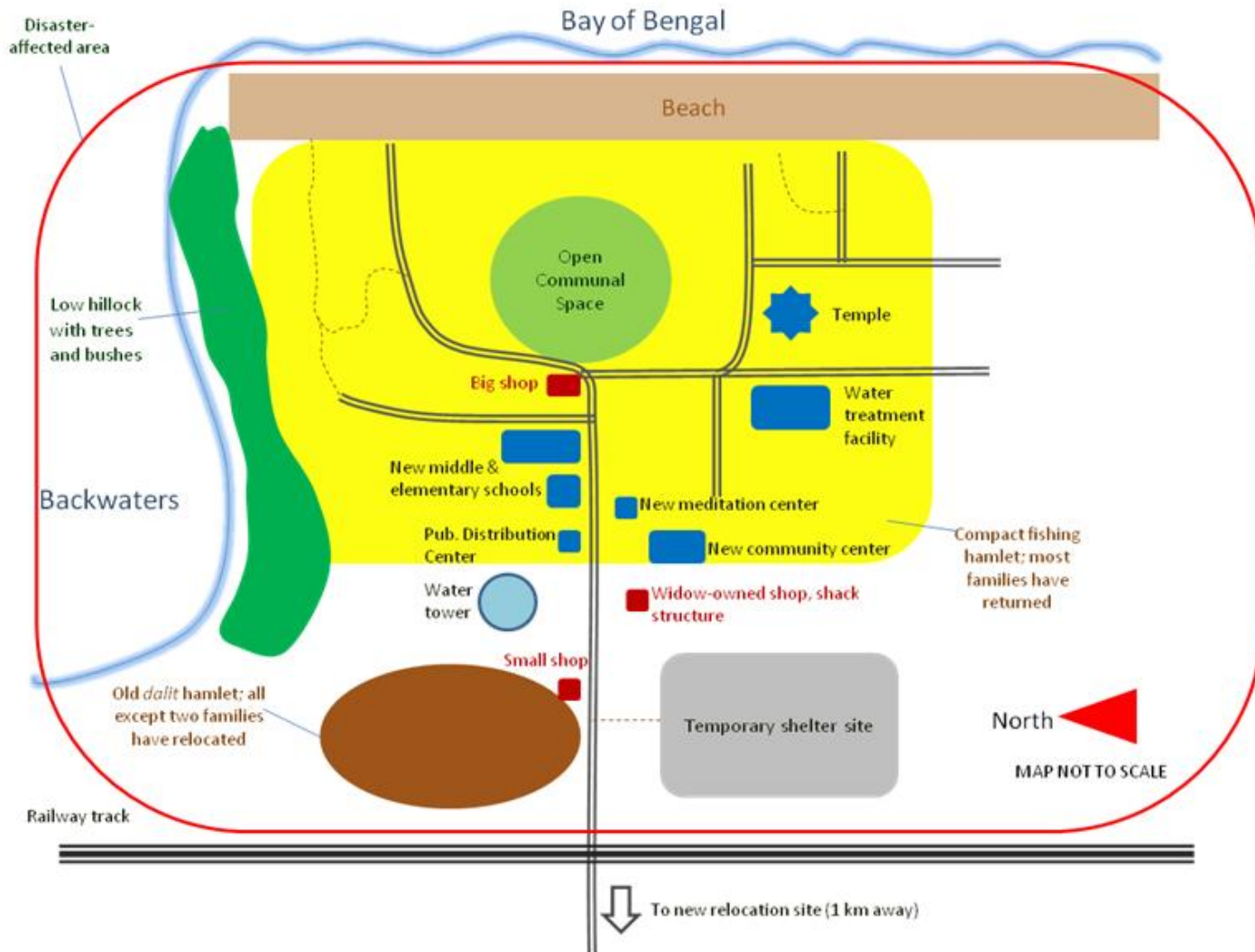


Figure 5.1 Layout of original Fishing Village

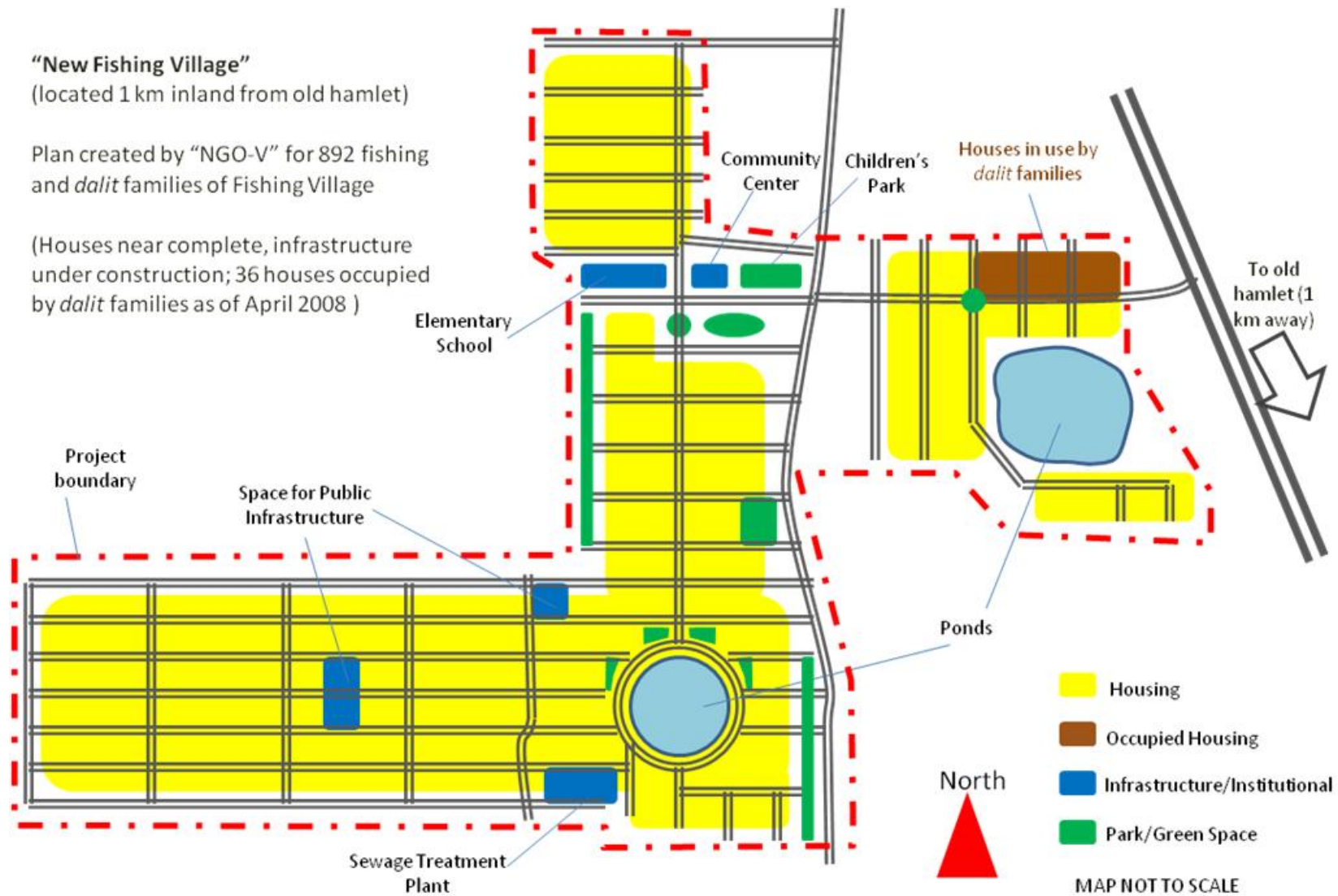


Figure 5.2 Layout of new Fishing Village

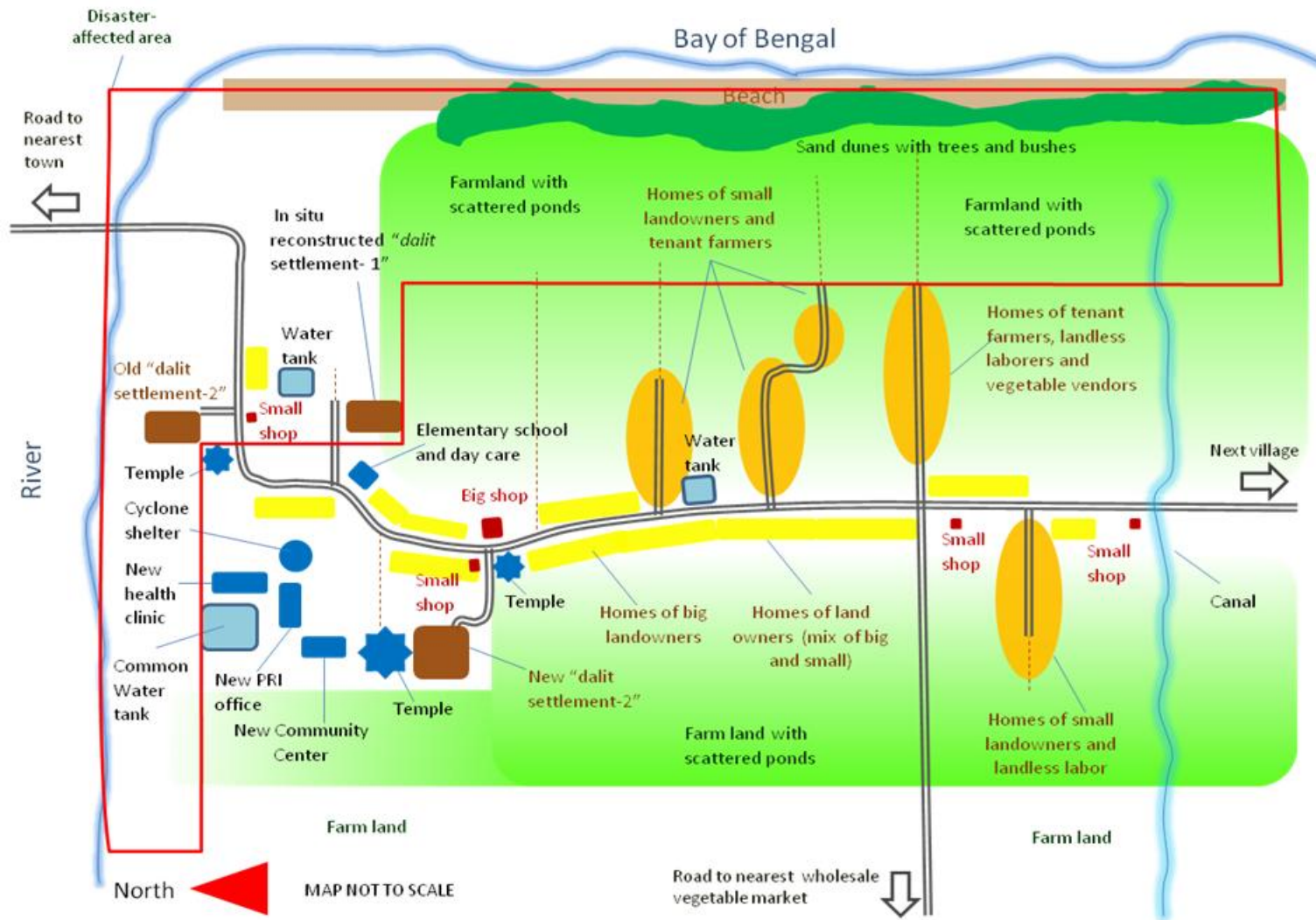


Figure 5.3 Layout of Farming Village

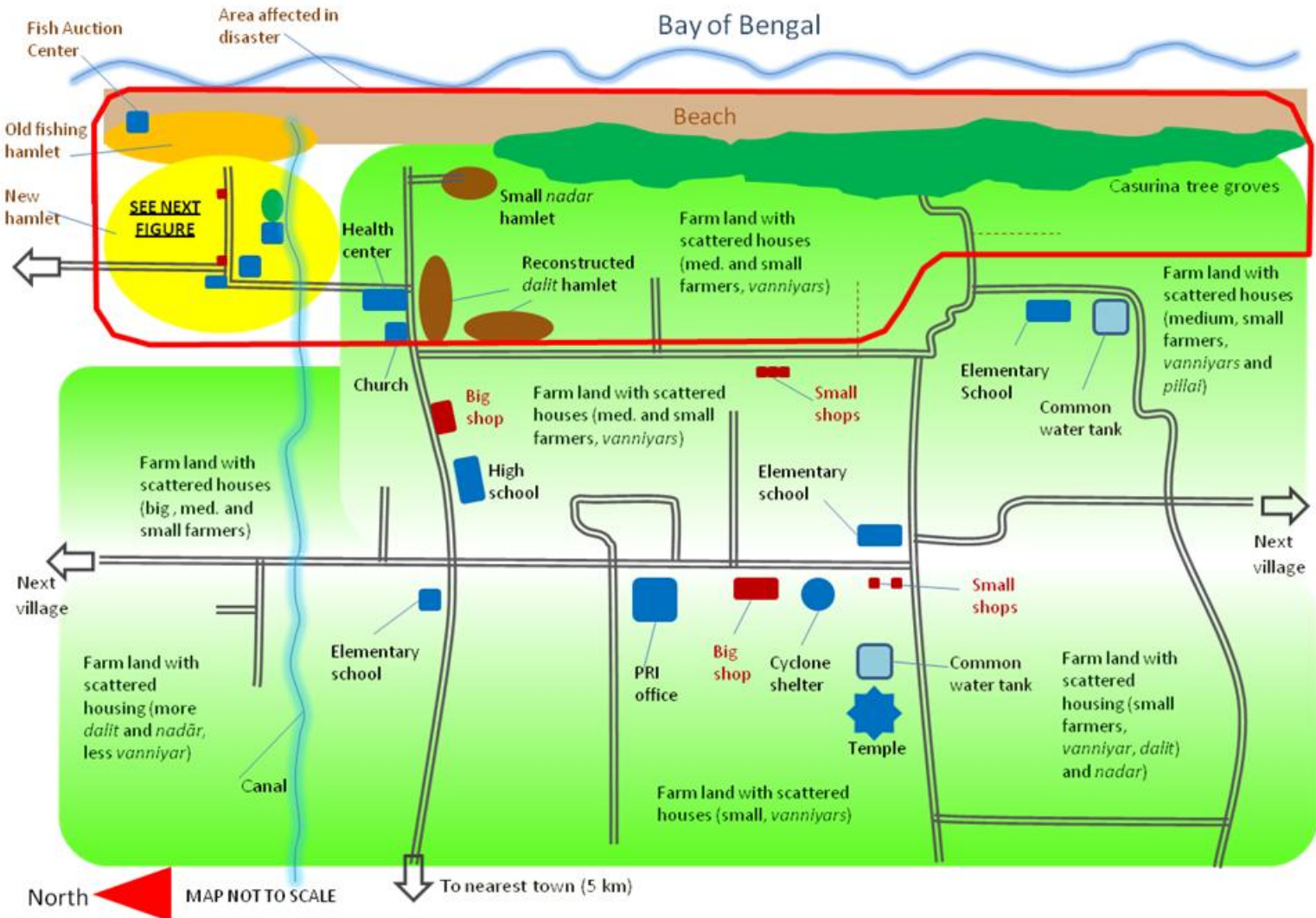


Figure 5.4 Layout of Mixed Village

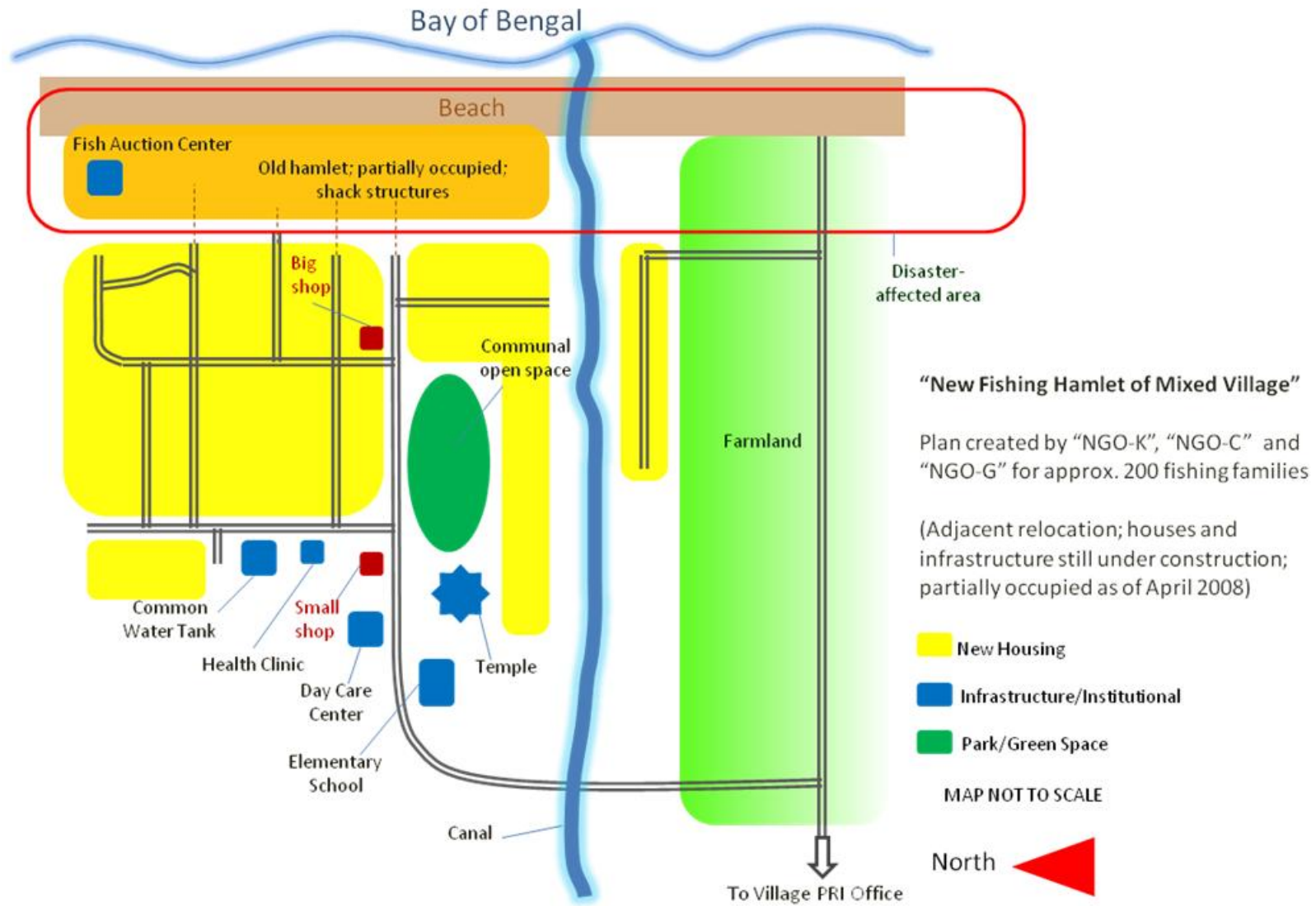


Figure 5.5 Layout of old and new fishing hamlet

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

Stakeholder participation is a critical component to equitable and effective post-disaster recovery. But the existing literature says little about how stakeholder participation occurs under the time-constrained and constantly changing conditions of post-disaster recovery, nor how planning managers can facilitate participation in planning under such circumstances.

This study has attempted to fill this research gap by examining the recovery of coastal communities in post-tsunami Nagapattinam, India. The preceding chapters have shown that several factors combine to lead stakeholders to participate or not participate in post-disaster recovery. They also show that the nature of participation and non-participation changes over the course of recovery, as local conditions and a stakeholder's recovery needs and/or capacities change. And finally, they show that, while some barriers to participation can be addressed in the short-term, others need long-term intervention on the part of recovery managers. Together, these insights provide a more analytical understanding of how participation in post-disaster recovery planning occurs and how to facilitate stakeholder participation in future recovery situations.

The first section of this chapter expands on the major findings of this study, while the second provides some short- and long-term strategies that recovery managers can use to facilitate stakeholder participation. The insights from this research are intended to help inform researchers following other disaster events—often in political-economic conditions significantly different

than those in this case—about participatory planning for post-disaster recovery, and to help them build upon these findings in the future.

Conclusion #1: Participation and non-participation are complex functions of both stakeholder presence and impact

Much has already been written about participation in planning and decision-making. Arnstein (1969), Choguill (1996), White (1996) and Bishop and Davis (2002) have well-described the different forms of participation that occur in developed and developing countries, and from the citizen as well as the public administration perspectives. All of the forms of participation as described by White, for instance, were validated on the ground in this study—including, transformative, representative, instrumental and nominal participation. However, these relate only to participation that is visible, that is, where the stakeholders are present in the decision forums. They do not adequately account for the more subtle forms of participatory behavior found on the ground: for example, current literature makes no distinction between non-impactful but visible participation, impactful but non-visible participation, and complete exclusion.

This research has shown that stakeholders who are absent from decision forums can still have an impact on decision outcomes: through delegation or through active opposition. In some cases, these stakeholders had an equivalent impact on the decision outcomes as with some of the more “visible” forms of participation as described by White (1996) or Arnstein (1969), such as representative or nominal participation. Furthermore, a distinction must be made between absent but impactful stakeholders and other stakeholders who are not only absent from decision forums but who also have no impact on the outcome for reasons of historic marginalization or

disempowerment through development policy and practice. These distinctions are even more significant to make during planning for post-disaster recovery. Due to the time constraints posed by recovery, it is a challenge to identify and involve all critical stakeholders in recovery planning. But by putting the focus on stakeholder impact in addition to stakeholder presence, recovery managers can concentrate their resources on facilitating participation of stakeholders who are truly marginalized as opposed to those who may superficially appear to be so, but who actually already have an impact.

In view of this, framing different stakeholder behaviors in terms of only stakeholder presence or stakeholder impact is not enough to capture their subtle forms. For instance, when stakeholder behavior is organized in terms of presence or absence alone there is little distinction made between marginalized non-participants (who are absent and have no impact) and delegate-based non-participants (who are also absent but have impact). These behaviors are conceptually illustrated in Figure 6.1.

On the other hand, organizing stakeholder behavior based on impact alone can bring out more nuances of participatory behavior. Figure 6.2 shows a conceptual representation of this. But doing so still does not adequately distinguish between transformative participants (who have presence and impact) and active opposers (who are absent and have an impact), and tends to group together absent stakeholders who exercise impact from outside the decision process (active opposers) with those who exercise impact from within it (delegate-based non-participants).

The more useful way of understanding these behaviors is by expressing them in terms of both presence and impact simultaneously, as shown in Figure 6.3. This conceptualization not only captures the differences between stakeholders who have presence and impact

(transformative participants) and those who are absent but also have impact (active opposers), but it also distinguishes between the latter and those that are both absent and who have no impact (marginalized non-participants). The difference between this conceptualization and those of White, Arnstein and Choguill is that it is able to more successfully capture nuanced behaviors of stakeholders who are present in decision forums along with those who are not. It also provides a better means of comparing these behaviors and allows conjecture on what is needed to change stakeholder behavior from non-participation to participation. But in order to truly facilitate such change, it is important to understand what causes stakeholders to have presence and impact in decision forums and how these are negotiated throughout the recovery process.

Conclusion #2: Participation and non-participation occur through a complex mix of stakeholder power, legitimacy, trust, and urgency for action

This research has shown that stakeholder participation or non-participation is negotiated through at least four different dynamics: (1) the changing *urgency* of stakeholders and the continued relevance of recovery planning to them; (2) stakeholders having or not having *legitimacy*, or gaining or losing it over time; (3) stakeholders having or not having *power*, and their exercise of it; and (4) the building or breaking down of *trust* between stakeholders. The dynamics in turn are affected by three ‘context-factors’, namely, the *socio-economic conditions* of the place, the different recovery *needs and capacities of stakeholders*, and the pre-existing *development practices* as well as *post-disaster recovery policies and practices* put in place. For example, stakeholders may have influence over decision outcomes based on the dominance of their caste or gender or because of their institutional clout; stakeholders may feel different urgencies based on how they were affected in the disaster and what would help them to recover;

or, prior experience with development planning may have led stakeholders to distrust other stakeholders or decision structures.

Stakeholder power, legitimacy, trust, and urgency of action influence participatory behavior both separately and in combination with one another. Stakeholders with institutional or social power, such as national or state governments, may be more likely to be present and impactful in decision forums than those lacking power, such as historically marginalized social groups. Similarly, stakeholders who have or gain legitimacy more easily, such as financially resourceful international NGOs or culturally dominant social groups, are also more likely to be present and impactful in decision forums than those that lack legitimacy. When stakeholders' recovery priorities are not met by the recovery decision process, or if they do not trust other stakeholders, they may choose not to participate in recovery.

Furthermore, these factors do not operate in isolation from one other. Simply having legitimacy can lead a stakeholder to be present in decision forums, but combining legitimacy with the building of trust can change stakeholder behavior from nominal to representative or even transformative participation. Conversely, if trust breaks down, even legitimate stakeholders may choose to be less actively involved or even discontinue their participation. In contrast, when legitimacy is denied, even apparently influential stakeholders have less impact on the immediate decision process, as in the case of local village self-governments in the case study region. But not recognizing these influential stakeholders can disrupt their existing trust relations with other community-based organizations and may have consequences for how development planning is carried out in the community in the future.

The implication here is that in order for stakeholders to have transformative participation in post-disaster recovery, all four factors must work *simultaneously and in enabling ways*. In other words, stakeholders who are explicitly recognized as being legitimate, those who have more influence over decision processes, those who trust the decision process or other stakeholders, *and* whose time or content priorities match those of the decision process are most likely to be present and most impactful in decision forums.

A second implication is that stakeholder behavior can and does often change over the course of recovery, and so participation needs to be consistently facilitated over time. But, in order to do so, it is first necessary to identify the particular challenges posed by post-disaster recovery to stakeholder participation.

Conclusion #3: Time-constrained and constantly changing conditions of recovery affect stakeholder legitimacy, power, trust, and urgency

Participatory behavior changes constantly over the course of recovery. Stakeholder power, legitimacy, trust, and urgency change over time as relationships between stakeholders evolve, their emotional trauma fades, and as the physical, economic and political conditions of the place change. In post-disaster recovery, these conditions are likely to change more rapidly and therefore, stakeholder power, legitimacy, trust, and urgency can differ markedly within a short period of time. Furthermore, these factors are highly susceptible to the time constraints posed by recovery and the constantly changing interests of stakeholders.

For instance, stakeholder legitimacy may be compromised in favor of urgency if influential stakeholders push for quicker decision-making before all possible stakeholders are

identified. Similarly, existing institutional structures for recovery planning are often used to speed up decision-making, but if there are pre-existing imbalances of power in these structures, certain stakeholders will be even more marginalized than they were before the disaster. These challenges are particularly obvious under the current model of international aid for post-disaster recovery, which favors large and financially wealthy non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and higher levels of government over small, but locally entrenched community-based organizations (CBOs). Where CBOs are involved, those with higher visibility are more likely to be invited to decision forums, because they are quickly identifiable. Often these groups become ‘community representatives’ despite the fact that there is more than one local interest to be identified, thus causing already powerless groups to be further marginalized.

Identifying stakeholders is even more challenging when old interests are changing and new interests are constantly emerging. If recovery processes are unable to effectively capture this changing urgency or nature of stakeholder interests, they are unable to sustain stakeholder participation. In response, some stakeholders discontinue their participation, while others resolve to more actively oppose it, depending on how effectively they can mobilize and exercise their power. At the same time, such crisis points may also create opportunities for marginalized stakeholders to rediscover or redefine their participation in the recovery process.

And finally, it is possible that stakeholders who do not usually participate in development planning—because they do not trust existing structures— may do so after disasters, because they urgently need to utilize the resources that suddenly become available. Redressing this mistrust is not possible within the short time frame of recovery, but recognizing and actively engaging

stakeholders can increase their confidence in the process and ensure the continued survival of the recovery program.

The challenge for recovery managers following disasters, therefore, is to facilitate stakeholder participation in a context of changing urgency, disparate power, intentional or inadvertent exclusion of stakeholders, and persistent mistrust. Further, some of these challenges can be addressed within the short time frame of recovery, but others are matters of long-term intervention.

6.2 STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN POST-DISASTER RECOVERY

This section outlines three short-term and one long-term strategy for recovery managers to use to facilitate more effective stakeholder participation in post-disaster recovery. In the short-term, making recovery policies that are more facilitative, creating institutional forums of local information exchange and representation and using key stakeholder analysis can help address issues with stakeholder legitimacy and power, and capture changing stakeholder interest and urgency. These measures have the additional benefit of increasing stakeholder confidence in the recovery planning process. But these measures need to be backed up with longer term initiatives to resolve persistent issues of trust and help previously marginalized stakeholders come to the fore. Small group interactions, such as through project planning or small visioning exercises, can help capture interests that are newly emergent, allow stakeholders to familiarize with each other and explore common or shared values and interests. Doing so during non-disaster times, particularly, can help facilitate more effective stakeholder participation in recovery from future disasters. These short- and long-term strategies need not be independent of each other:

institutional forums at the local level and small-group interaction can serve to improve the monitoring of policy implementation. Key stakeholder analysis, on the other hand, can help ensure that policies remain relevant to local recovery needs and identify stakeholders to bring to the table during small-group interactions. These strategies are intended to point recovery managers in the right direction with regard to stakeholder participation and need to be implemented according to local conditions and scale of disaster.

6.2.1 Improving Recovery Policy

As seen in Nagapattinam, recovery policy can set the stage for stakeholder participation in recovery. There are three ways in which recovery policy can be made more facilitative, as opposed to constraining. First, recovery policy should avoid the use of ambiguous terms and conditions that render recovery processes prone to cooptation by groups with more social or institutional power. This is particularly true for places where societies are highly stratified or culturally diverse. In such places, policies must explicitly acknowledge that local communities may be fractured, that they may include marginalized groups, and -- most important -- that these groups may lack the capacity to actively seek deserved redress. The checks and balances put into policy to ensure community engagement must therefore squarely place the responsibility on the implementing agencies to seek out groups for possible complaints rather than expecting these groups to come to them. This would involve more proactive outreach on the part of recovery managers, changing grievance and appeal procedures to make them more accessible to marginalized social groups and by continuous monitoring and evaluation of NGO activity.

Second, recovery policies must recognize that an actor's capacity to promote effective recovery is reflected not only in their access to financial resources, but also through their local

networks, their trustworthiness and their legitimacy in local communities. Therefore, recovery policy must create timely opportunities for long-standing local NGOs and CBOs to be actively and consistently involved throughout the project, so that their local knowledge and networks can be harnessed positively.

Third, while acknowledging that different actors approach participatory development in different ways, recovery policies must also set minimum standards for public involvement. Although a diversity of actors provides greater flexibility in delivering recovery actions, it also makes project outcomes and effectiveness difficult to predict. Policies must therefore set at least minimal standards in order for these approaches to succeed while still retaining the advantages of using diverse approaches. Such standards however, must maintain a delicate balance between creating a structure for the community consultation process and still retaining the flexibility to adapt to local circumstance. For instance, recovery policy could require that the implementing agency conduct key stakeholder analyses to identify all potential community partners, hold a minimum number of community meetings at regular and timely intervals, and hold small-group meetings in areas where the most marginalized sections of society live. Local governments and/or other local community-based organizations should be made signing partners in legal contracts (such as the MoU in Nagapattinam), instead of simply identified as beneficiaries. This would increase the legitimacy of local community groups within the planning process and provide them with legal recourse in case of discrimination. Measures such as these can increase the accountability of dominant actors like the state and national government or large NGOs to local communities and can increase the possibility that previously unheard voices are included in recovery. Further, doing so can increase stakeholder confidence in the recovery process and pay off in other development arenas.

The lessons drawn from the Nagapattinam case are applicable to any location that faces a catastrophic disaster but lacks the policy precedent to deal with it. Having standards of practice is particularly important to places that have a heavy international presence in post-disaster recovery, because recovery practices may differ among actors. The presence of large international NGOs also increases the likelihood that smaller actors with better social networks may be overlooked during recovery. And finally, these lessons are useful in places where established development decision structures have weak participation mechanisms. The use of established decision structures is advantageous in that it increases the efficiency of the recovery process (Inam, 2005). But where existing institutional structures are dysfunctional, doing this can inadvertently reaffirm inequalities in decision-making. Lastly, decreasing ambiguity in language, redefining the notion of actor capacity to beyond financial capacity, and having standards for community consultation offer short-term solutions to effective policymaking in the time-constrained, recovery context.

6.2.2 Creating institutions for coordination of recovery

Local or sub-regional institutions for coordinating recovery activity help increase visibility of stakeholders in the short-term and provide effective means of grievance redress. They help disseminate information on recovery policy and programs, map all the stakeholders and their capacities as well as spatial and sector gaps in assistance, and allow stakeholders working in the same activity sector to collaborate, share resources and standardize their efforts. For instance, to aid in the recovery of the City of Banda Aceh, Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami, the United Nations Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias (UNORC) created institutions at the sub-city (“sub-district”) level called the ‘Sub-District Coordination Mechanisms’ or SDCMs.

The purpose of these institutions was to improve information sharing, transparency and accountability between public, private and non-governmental actors; identifying gaps and overlaps in recovery; and, for generating ideas for resolving these (UNORC, 2006). The mechanisms were operated as meetings chaired by sub-district administrative heads and included district officials, sub-district officials, village headmen and other agencies or individuals working in the sub-district. One of the main outputs of each SDCM meeting was a matrix termed “Who is doing What Where (WdWW)” which recorded each attending organization or individual’s activity sector, geographic coverage, time line and progress. Each organization or individual in the SDCM was required to fill the WdWW matrix, and it was made available to all other actors in that sub-district level. In addition, the SDCM also maintained and circulated a contact list of all actors and higher-level authorities for that sub-district. In one sub-district, agencies even formed an online group to better coordinate with each other (UNORC, 2006).

The SDCMs were also advantageous to stakeholder groups less formally defined than NGOs. They can act as forums and can be arenas where local member-actors can voice their concerns, resolve conflicts, or clear misunderstandings. For instance, at an SDCM meeting that I personally attended in June 2006, the representative of one international NGO complained that the permanent housing units built by them earlier that year had been pulled down by local residents. Some of these residents were also present in the meeting, and they explained that the timber that had been used for the construction of these housing units was prone to termite attacks, and therefore the houses had to be torn down. This claim was backed up by the government officials present in the room.

Coordinating institutions need not be created anew, however. In the Nagapattinam case study region, some NGO actors organized themselves to form the NGO Coordination Resource Center (NCRC). The organization had similar goals as the Sub-district Coordination Mechanisms in Banda Aceh, but was aimed specifically at providing information about local communities and government policies to other NGOs. Also similar, but more resident-driven is the Neighborhood Planning Network (NPN) in New Orleans, USA. The NPN is a self-organized group of neighborhood associations that formed after Hurricane Katrina to mobilize neighborhoods to trade information as they planned for their recovery (Reichard, 2006). Since then, the organization has evolved into a major forum to share information about city-level recovery efforts and to build networks. The NPN organizes a regular Festival of Neighborhoods where different neighborhood organizations in New Orleans can showcase their recovery and planning initiatives, exchange ideas with other neighborhoods, and network with non-profits organizations and government bodies.

Institutions for coordinating recovery provide a forum for stakeholders to share information about the policy environment, familiarize with each other, identify areas of collaboration, resolve conflicts and represent their interests directly. The closer these forums are to the grassroots, the more accessible they will be to small, transient or marginalized interest groups, which are often ignored at higher scales. At this scale, these institutions can also act as effective forums for direct monitoring and evaluation of recovery activity by local residents and increase accountability of implementing agencies to them. Doing so may also pay off in the long-term by building trust among stakeholders and in the recovery planning process. For these reasons, recovery managers should either create or engage existing, local-level coordinating institutions in recovery planning to facilitate stakeholder participation in the short-term.

6.2.3 Using Key Stakeholder Analysis

One of the ways to address legitimacy issues in the short-term is by conducting key stakeholder analysis. Often, planners and recovery managers attempt to have as broad representation in planning processes as possible, which is time consuming. On the other hand, studies have shown that when the interests and information held by key stakeholders was ignored, decisions processes tended to fail, i.e. that is they were not carried through to implementation (Bryson J. M., 2004). Therefore, one of the ways to reduce time taken for planning, while still ensuring that plans stay effective is to focus on the participation of key stakeholders, as opposed to broad representation. According to Brody (2003, p. 414), a “key” stakeholder is one whose interests, are “aligned with the plan evaluation criteria” and whose participation can “increase the quality and performance of the adopted plan”. However, this definition assumes that the key stakeholders are identified from those who have already participated in plan-making, as opposed to those who are “nominally powerless” to do so (Bryson J. M., 2004, p. 22). Taken together, key stakeholders are those entities that are either critical to the implementation of the plan, or those that will be directly affected by its implementation and outcomes.

Even though the involvement of key stakeholders limits the overall *number* of participating groups, it actually *broadens* representation through the inclusion of ‘key voices’ in the planning process. Thus, key stakeholder participation improves the *quality* of plan formulation and implementation, because it approaches planning from an outcome-based and implementation point of view (Brody, 2003).

Key stakeholder analysis has a special significance for disaster recovery planning because of the time constraints faced by the process. Engaging fewer but ‘key’ stakeholders in recovery planning reduces the time needed to formulate the plan, and still ensures that the needs of social groups most likely to be either impacted or involved in plan implementation are met. However, selecting key stakeholders is inherently political, has ethical consequences and involves judgment. Recovery managers would need to ensure that those interests which are traditionally marginalized, but that are particularly pertinent to the decision at hand are involved in recovery planning (Harwood & Zapata, 2006). Key stakeholder analysis may be approached through a series of steps in which first a small planning group begins the effort and later, others are added as their need becomes apparent (Bryson J. M., 2004, p. 27). Recovery managers could repeat this analysis at different times over the course of recovery planning to capture changing or newly emergent interests. Doing so could maintain or increase the relevance of the process in the eyes of the existing or emergent key stakeholders as well as increase their confidence in both the process as well as other stakeholders. Arguably, engaging only key and strategic stakeholders in the initial stages of recovery planning may reduce the number of conflicts and disputes and make consensus quicker to achieve. At the same time, involving key stakeholders would also ensure that the interest groups most relevant to the decision agenda are represented in the process.³⁴

6.2.4 Facilitating Small-Group Interactions

Facilitating small group interactions is a long-term strategy that builds trust and key strategic relationships between stakeholders and provides them with opportunities to gain influence in decision structures over time. While it cannot address long-standing issues of trust

³⁴ Bryson (2004) offers fifteen different techniques for conducting stakeholder analyses targeted at four basic agendas: organizing participation; creating ideas for strategic interventions; building a winning coalition around proposal development, review and adoption; and implementing, monitoring and evaluating strategic interventions.

and disempowerment in the short-time frame of recovery itself, facilitating small-group interactions in non-disaster times can yield very positive benefits for the next disaster recovery process. For this reason, it should be particularly useful in places that are highly prone to disasters and have a long history of social division.

Small group interactions can help different stakeholders gain familiarity and appreciation of perspectives outside of their own. In a scenario planning project held in Monteverde, Costa Rica, Harwood and Zapata (2006, p. 8) found that conducting face-to-face small group scenario planning exercises allowed various viewpoints to surface, subtly influence planning work, allowed stakeholders to “build trust and shift positions, [...] understand alternative positions [and] humanize competing factions”. With particular reference to contexts of uncertainty and societal division, Umemoto and Suryanata (2006) recommend that planning managers identify and facilitate “informal social contracts” through small group interactions. Informal social contracts are agreements that stakeholders strike outside of the regulatory (i.e. “formal”) process on what actions they would or would not take under given circumstances. These contracts can become important complements to formal planning processes which are conducted under high uncertainty, or in places where historic events, differing values, and incomplete information have previously fomented distrust among the various stakeholders (Umemoto and Suryanata, 2006).

Small group interactions lead to building of trust and informal relationships which are both associated with increased collaboration in planning (Booher and Innes, 1999, 2002). Repeated interaction and shared experience can also lead to more cooperation in future decision-making, and in small groups this commitment to an agreement is likely to be higher because of familiarity between members (Hopkins, 2001). In India, for instance, project planning under

Village Self-Sufficiency Schemes or small-group farmer schools on sustainable agricultural practices provide the opportunity for face-to-face small group interaction. Because these are issue-based activities (one project or learning about crop suitability) of limited duration, key stakeholders are more easily identified and they are more likely to collaborate with each other. When repeated successfully over time, these small-group activities may serve to encourage key stakeholders to participate in bigger or other decision forums outside of the small group. Recovery managers need not wait till the recovery planning is over to facilitate small group interactions. These can be done as recovery planning proceeds to better define decision problems in the larger recovery planning process and generate creative solutions for them, and can continue on much after recovery is complete.

6.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

There is a need for more research on the characteristics that make post-disaster recovery a unique condition to plan in and on how these conditions then affect planning process that follows. This research has examined the different ways in which the unique conditions of recovery can affect stakeholder participation in recovery planning. But in doing so, it has also provided a deeper understanding of stakeholder participation in planning in general. Therefore, findings of this are useful not only to recovery managers who seek to plan under unique recovery conditions, but also to planning managers who seek to facilitate participatory development in general.

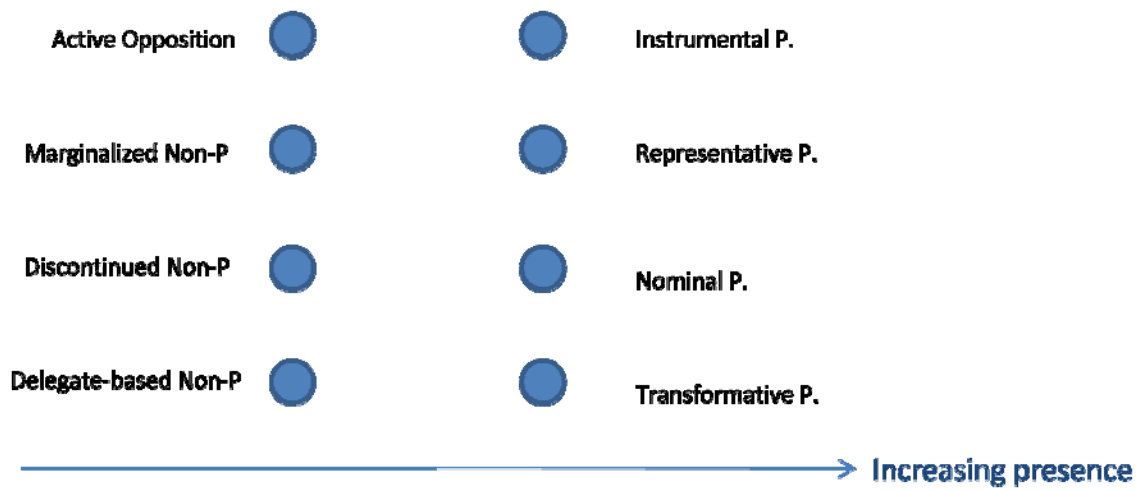


Figure 6.1 Conceptual illustration of participatory behavior based on stakeholder presence (not to scale)

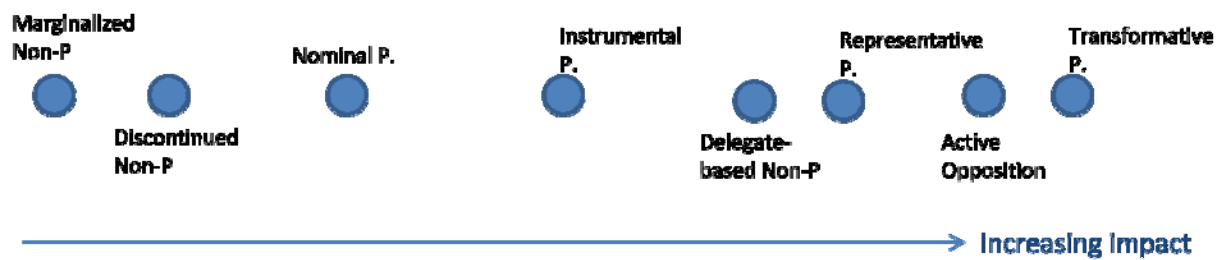


Figure 6.2 Conceptual illustration of participatory behavior based on stakeholder impact (not to scale)

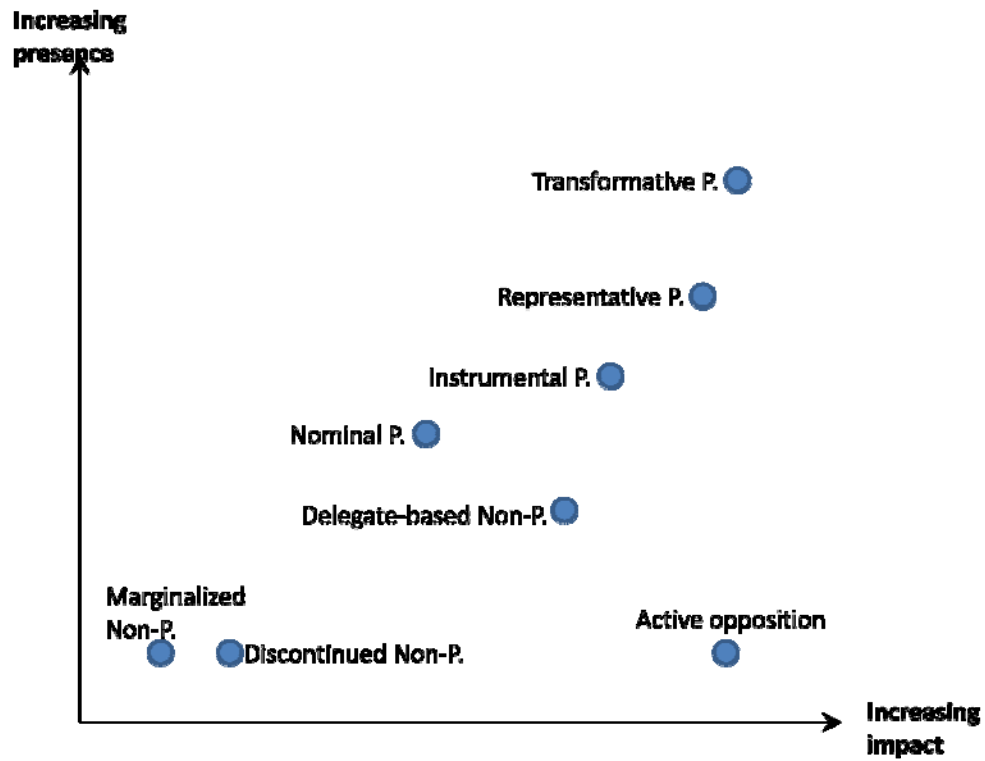


Figure 6.3 Conceptual illustration of participatory behavior based on stakeholder presence and impact (not to scale)

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH TASKS AND INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Table A.1 Research tasks and interview guidelines by informant

Informant	Purpose	Information sought/ interview guide
NGO workers and public officials in Chennai	Identifying case study villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations on villages that would fit the four criteria (mentioned in the main text) • Names and contact address/phone numbers of their own workers in those villages
	Identifying other organizations present in the four villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names and addresses of other organizations that were working in the four villages before the disaster • Names and addresses of other organizations directly responsible for recovery planning in the four villages. • Recovery-related activities the organization participated in; including program details and evaluations.
	Identifying recovery planning processes and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery plans/programs conducted by public agencies, private sector groups, or by local civil society organizations • Step-by-step detail of planning process • Envisioned role of citizen participation • Process used to identify stakeholders and promote participation
	Identifying stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of pre-disaster social groups in the case study villages and their linkages. Includes: traditional societal sub-groups (village elders, caste-based groups, gender-based groups, occupation-based groups, etc), local resident organizations, market associations, labor unions, citizen groups organized for particular social causes, local and international NGOs, public agencies, and planning managers. • Changes to the pre-existent community structures and new emergent groups, and the linkages between them
	Questionnaire Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of interview questions (see below) • Recommendation on other alternate questions • Translation into Tamil of interview questions in a manner that best captures the essence of the questions

Table A.1 (cont.)

Informant	Purpose	Information sought/ interview guide
	Verification of recovery planning processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-by-step detail of planning process in case study village • Process used to identify stakeholders and promote participation • Actual participation status of the various stakeholder groups • Final plans or other documents prepared for the villages
Local NGO Workers and public officials in each case study village	Verification of different stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of pre-disaster social groups in the case study village and their linkages. Includes: traditional societal sub-groups (village elders, caste-based groups, gender-based groups, occupation-based groups, etc), local resident organizations, market associations, labor unions, and groups organized for particular social causes. • Changes to the pre-disaster community structures and new emergent groups, and the linkages between them.
	Refining of interview questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconfirming the relevance of interview questions (see below) • Recommendations on additional or alternative questions • Refining translation of interview questions into Tamil

Table A.1 (cont.)

Informant	Purpose	Information sought/ interview guide
Key informants and interviewees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping informant’s social standing in community and position within their family • Mapping informant’s traditional role in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and address of informant • Informant’s caste and religion; and their personal and family’s experiences related to these • Number of years they and their family have lived in the village • Informant’s pre- and post-disaster experiences with family and community life • Responsibilities assigned to informant within the family, and in the community before and after the disaster; and repercussions in case they fail • Accountability of the informant to other family and community members • Flexibility either allowed or gained by the informant in their independent decision-making capabilities (before and after the disaster) • Informant’s perception of their social standing within their family and their community; and how might have changed since the disaster • Informant’s membership in formally or informally recognized stakeholder groups and experiences within them
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying informant’s level of participation in the planning processes conducted in their village • Impact of the plan and its outcomes on the informant and their reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informant’s participation status in the planning process: active involvement, passive involvement, indirect influence, passive non-participation, active opposition to the plan • Whether and how the plan’s outcomes have affected the informant’s or their stakeholder group’s daily life • Whether the informant or their stakeholder group believe that a change in their participation (or non-participation) would have changed this impact

Table A.1 (cont.)

Informant	Purpose	Information sought/ interview guide
Key informants and interviewees	Identification of stakeholder legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the informant or their stakeholder group knew of the existence of the plan • Whether the informant, or their stakeholder group, was specifically invited to meetings • Whether the informant, or their stakeholder group, were invited only after they themselves approached the organization conducting the planning process • The nature of the informant's or their stakeholder group's interaction with the planning agency when they gained entry into the process • Reasons why the informant or their stakeholder group believed their presence in the planning process was essential to the plan and its outcomes • Informant's or their stakeholder group's perception of their standing in the process in relation to other stakeholder groups • Informant or their stakeholder group's perceived repercussions from other stakeholders or social groups if they had made an effort to participate in the process
	Identification of stakeholder power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical standing of informant or their stakeholder group in the village • Influence exerted by informant or their stakeholder group in other program development or planning processes of the past. • Reasons for the informant's or their stakeholder group's belief that their presence was crucial to the process's success • Informant's or their stakeholder group's interest in the plan outcomes • The resources (physical, social, and financial) that the informant brought to the process • Whether the informant's or their stakeholder group's contributions to the planning process was irreplaceable by another stakeholder group • The degree to which informant's or their stakeholder group's actions or influence affected the manner in which planning was conducted (overtly or subversively) • Informant's own or their stakeholder group's perception of their independent decision-making capabilities, and the factors that inhibit or promote these • Efforts on the part of planners that the informant or their stakeholder group felt would have ensured their active participation in the process

Table A.1 (cont.)

Informant	Purpose	Information sought/ interview guide
Key informants and interviewees	Identification of stakeholder trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informant’s or their stakeholder group’s previous experiences with other program development processes or planning processes in the past • Whether the informant or their stakeholder group had worked previously with other stakeholder groups on past projects, and the nature of these relationships and interactions • Informant’s or their social group’s perception of whether their values and needs were shared with other stakeholders • Whether and why the informant or their stakeholder group believed that their collaborative inclination on the plan would (or not) be reciprocated by other stakeholders when the former entered the process. • What expectations did the informant or their stakeholder group have of other stakeholders before the plan began, and if, and how, that changed • Whether and why the informant or their stakeholder believed that they had a responsibility to protect other stakeholder’s needs • Whether and why the informant or their stakeholder group felt that their communication with other stakeholders and planning managers was free and frank • Whether the informant or their stakeholder groups thought they could trust other participating stakeholders and how this changed
	Identification of stakeholder urgency of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the informant or their stakeholder group felt that the planning process represented their priorities in terms of importance • Whether the informant or stakeholder felt that the planning process reflected their priorities in terms of time sensitivity • Whether the informant or their stakeholder group felt at any time during the planning process that their recovery was being delayed due to the process, and if so, then what actions they took to counter it • Whether, and why, the informant or their stakeholder group felt their own recovery-related activities were more effective

APPENDIX B: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

PRACTICES IN INDIA

B.1 PANCHAYATI RAJ IN INDIA

Prior to British colonial rule, there existed two types of traditional *panchāyats* in the country: caste *panchāyats* and village *panchāyats*. Caste *panchāyats* were formed wholly from within a particular caste or sub-caste and dealt with matters of intra- and inter-caste transactions (*jajmani*), marriages, and other caste-specific rituals. Village *panchāyats* consisted of elders from prominent households in a village such as pioneers or land grantees (often of higher caste and with political patronage), and dealt with matters such as resolving civil disputes on land rights and criminal activity, and regulating the use of village commons such as use of grazing lands, woodlands, and water bodies. In most places, village *panchāyats* did not involve themselves in collection of taxes, though they did advise village residents on matters related to allegiance to various authority groups, including tax collectors and landlords (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003).

During the initial period of British colonial rule, many legislations were passed to ban the judiciary function of traditional *panchāyats*, and ‘collectorates’ (tax collection offices) and courts supplanted these in establishing the rule of law. However starting in the 1870s, many arguments were raised in favor decentralizing administrative functions, which ended in the eventual reviving of village *panchāyats* to serve as “rational-legal institutions of representative government” (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003, p. 5). Most prominent of these efforts was Lord Ripon’s Resolution of 1880, which recommended that locally elected boards be

created at the smallest administrative levels, the block or *tehsil* at the time, and to utilize the human capital presented by a “‘rapidly growing’ class of ‘intelligent’ and ‘public-spirited men’” to operate them (Misra & Dhaka, 2004, p. 8). The 1880 Resolution also argued for increasing budgetary freedom to local bodies for carrying out development functions, and resulted in the creation of numerous local and district boards within the country. However, a review of these boards conducted by the Royal Commission on Decentralisation of 1909, declared that this model of administration was flawed because the boards lacked adequate power and due representation. Instead, it recommended that electoral boards be created at village levels, consisting of members of the village *panchāyats* and including nominations from minorities. The Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1918, the Government of India’s Resolution of 1918, and the Government of India Act of 1919, all furthered the revival of village *panchāyats* as units of local administration based on principles of electoral majority and free of influence from the caste system (Misra & Dhaka, 2004). However, the village *panchāyats* in this new avatar tended to be financially deficient, with limited powers, and not fully representative (Curtis, 1920; Misra & Dhaka, 2004). This new form of village *panchāyats* persisted for the remainder of the colonial era. The only noteworthy change was brought about by the Government of India Act of 1935 through which provincial governments gained power to enact legislation on local self-government, and many voted on acts that vested powers of administration, sometimes including criminal justice, with the *panchāyats*.

After Independence (gained in 1947), the Constitution of India fully supported the revival of the village *panchāyats* as units of self-governance, but was ambiguous on how exactly these units would interact with the state governments or how public functions would be divided amongst them (Government of India, 2007). In 1952, a Community Development Programme was launched which stressed on the importance of local agencies, especially at the block level, in

leading rural development, and on the need to ensure community representation in these agencies. The years following the Community Development Programme saw at least two different committees instituted for the purpose of revitalizing *panchāyati raj*, and laid the foundation for the currently existing, constitutionally-mandated *panchāyat* bodies (also referred to as Panchāyati Raj Institutions, or PRIs).

The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee of 1957 proposed a three-tiered PRI system for governance, formed through indirect elections with equal representation from minority and women. The three PRIs proposed were: *grām panchāyat* at the village level, *panchāyat samiti* at the block level, and *zilā parishad* at the district level. The aim here was to bring development decision processes as close to local citizenry as possible through the devolution of power and authority, and to redefine the PRIs as the development arm of the state government. Following Committee recommendations, many states enacted ‘Panchāyati Raj’ legislations, but the actual implementation of these varied between states depending on the strength of existing institutions at the three tiers and the electoral system actually followed (Misra & Dhaka, 2004). Moreover, mindful of the need to abolish land-based discrimination and advance local land reforms, as well in keeping with centralist sentiments of the time, many of these legislations supported a greater role for the state governmental (through the District Collector) in their Panchāyati Raj systems. This, in combination with the emergence of parallel agencies for implementation of agricultural and rural development programs, the absorption of the Ministry for Community Development into the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and the simultaneous drying up of Community Development Programme funds, rendered PRIs largely inactive for through the 1960s and 70s (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003; Kudva, 1996).

In 1977, the Ashok Mehta Committee was constituted to once again review the ineffectual functioning of the Panchāyati Raj Institutions. The Committee recommended replacing the three-tiered system proposed in 1957 with a two-tiered system: a *zilā parishad* at the district level and *mandal panchāyats* for groups of ten villages each. There was no provision for PRIs such as the *panchāyat samitis* and *grām panchāyats* of 1957, because blocks were considered to be too large to ensure appropriate participation, while villages were considered as unviable units for facilitating development programs (Misra & Dhaka, 2004). The objective behind decentralization here was, to devolve the governance function as a whole, and not just the physical development function, to local levels. However, these recommendations did not find favor with many of the states as they would have had to drastically change their existing, albeit dysfunctional, governance structures. Where this new, two-tiered system was implemented, elections either did not take place or lacked representation from minority castes and women. In dissent with the Committee recommendations, one of its own members pointed out an inherent bureaucratic bias in using administrative units instead of more locally-embedded corporate units to constitute *panchāyats* (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003, p. 7).

In 1978-79, District Rural Development Authorities (DRDAs) were registered for each district in all the states under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. The creation of DRDAs directly addressed lack of functioning district and sub-district level development institutions, and served to provide funding through means outside of state budgetary procedures and as implementing agencies for centrally-funded poverty alleviation programs (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003, p. 7). Over time, similar organizations emerged in many districts, all aimed at implementing development programs for sectors such as industries, fisheries, primary and adult education, and women's emancipation (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003,

p. 7). The decreased role of PRIs in governance, in combination with their internal political factionalism with regards to developmental activity and the general increase in centrally-funded development programs, all worked to reduce the capability of village PRIs to act as viable and responsive local self-government bodies for another decade to come (Misra & Dhaka, 2004, p. 13).

The 1990s mark the beginning of structural adjustment reforms in the country, and as was with the disaster management, the rhetoric of decentralized governance gained significant momentum. Under new political leadership, the central government believed that prior efforts towards decentralization had been ineffective because they provided no constitutional backing for creating PRIs or devolving power to them, and because state governments had been unwilling to do so voluntarily at the cost of their own authority. To address this, the Government of India passed the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts in 1992 and 1993, respectively. The most significant contribution of the Amendments to decentralization was that it changed the constitutionally-mandated government system from a two-tiered (center-state) to a three-tiered one (center-state-local). The Amendments also provided for the continuity of these local bodies by constituting an election process for them and listing a set of functions that they may undertake through the Eleventh and Twelfth Schedules.

The 73rd Amendment addressed rural governance issues, and mandated the creation of PRIs at the village, intermediate and district levels. The Amendment mandated that each village constitute a *grām sabha* (literally, “village assembly”) which would consist of all residents of that village registered in the electoral rolls (i.e. above 18 years of age). The *grām sabha* would in turn elect a *grām panchāyat*, which would act as the local representative body for the village.

Above the village-level, the Amendments provided for directly elected intermediate- and district-level PRIs. The exact delineation of the intermediate PRI area was left to the discretion of the state government, and for states with small populations, their creation was waived altogether. The exact composition of the *panchāyats* was also left to the discretion of the state law, but the PRIs were required to: (1) reserve seats for minority castes and tribes (officially classified under a list of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes—SC/ST) proportionate to their population in the area of jurisdiction; (2) ensure that no less than 1/3rd of all reserved SC/ST seats were reserved for SC/ST women; and, (3) that no less than 1/3rd of all seats in a PRI were reserved for women. A State commission would be responsible for conducting elections for all PRIs.

Importantly, the 73rd Amendment allowed states to pass legislature which would endow PRIs with,

“powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government, [and devolve] powers and responsibilities [...] at the appropriate level [...] with respect to [...] the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice [and] the implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice [...] as may be entrusted to them including those [...] listed in the Eleventh Schedule.”

(Government of India, 2007, p. 134)

Responsibilities listed under the Eleventh schedule included land improvement, land reforms, soil conservation, rural housing, rural electrification, education, public distribution system and maintenance of community assets.

In addition to constituting the PRIs, the 73rd Amendment also made provisions to assess and improve their financial position. States could pass legislation that would: (a) assign taxes, duties, tolls and fees to PRIs; (b) authorize PRIs to collect these themselves; (c) create grants-in-aid to PRIs from the state government's Consolidated Fund; and, (d) constitute a 'Fund' where all such monies could be credited to and withdrawn from. The Amendment also mandated that each state create a Finance Commission within a year which would assess the financial position of each PRI and make recommendations for each of the actions mentioned above as well as on how to distribute the net proceeds from taxes, duties, tolls, and fees between the state and PRIs.

The 74th Amendment targeted decentralization of urban governance, through creation of a system of directly elected municipalities for small and large urban and transitional areas. It lays out requirements of adequate representation in these local bodies, and like for the PRIs, provides for their financial viability. In keeping with the Twelfth Schedule, this Amendment allows states to transfer functions such as town planning, regulations of land use and construction of buildings, planning for economic and social development, public health, sanitation, fire services, slum improvement and upgradation of slums from the state to municipalities, or newly constituted Metropolitan Committees (Bhandari, 2006).

The 74th Amendment also mandated that a District Planning Committees (DPC) be created within each district to guide rural and urban development at the district level. These DPCs would, "consolidate the plans prepared by the Panchāyats and the Municipalities in the district and to prepare a draft development plan for the district as a whole" (Government of India, 2007, p. 141). The draft plan would address matters of common interest between the PRIs and the municipalities including "spatial planning, sharing of water and other physical and

natural resources, the integrated development of infrastructure and environmental conservation” as well as address financial and other resources available in the district (Government of India, 2007, p. 147). The 74th Amendment mandates that majority of the members of the DPC be directly elected from within, and by, the elected members of the various municipalities and PRIs in the district in direct proportion to the rural and urban population.

While the 73rd and 74th Amendments provided the legal backing necessary to empower PRIs, their impact has been diminished due to numerous operational problems. First, the Amendments made the transfer of key planning and development functions to PRIs and municipalities a discretionary, not obligatory function of the states governments. As a result, few states to date have enacted laws that actually transfer these functions (Mohanty, 2005).

Second, the 73rd Amendment conceptualizes a governance system on the premise of strong, representative *grām sabhas* at its center. However, rural reality is that few *grām sabhas* actually convene, especially where the village-level PRI consists of more than one village. In such places, often only one composite *grām sabha* is convened for all villages instead of individual ones for each village. Moreover, those *grām sabhas* that do convene are highly susceptible to existing caste, class and gender-based power structures (Misra & Dhaka, 2004; Human Development Resource Centre, 2003).

Third, mandating the reservations of seats within elected bodies has not been enough to ensure equal representation in communities where disempowerment occurs in ways other than simple lack of visibility. In many cases, for instance, PRI meetings or critical decision forums are often attended by the husbands and/or close male relatives of the elected women, instead of the representatives themselves.

Fourth, evidence suggests that bureaucratic control over the functions of the PRIs remains very strong in most states, with local PRI leaders often having to visit district and state governments for various approvals and permission (Human Development Resource Centre, 2003). Moreover, the Amendments neither specified how these functions should be divided among the various levels of PRIs, nor how the newly-formed PRIs and coterminous (pre-existing) economic and social development agencies should interact with each other.

Finally, despite it being a requirement under the 73rd Amendment, a majority of the states have still to constitute District Planning Committees, and many have actually experience an increase in the number of centrally-funded projects since 1993 (Mohanty, 2005).

B.2 NATIONAL APPROACH TO DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Prior to independence, management of disasters in India was mostly ad-hoc in nature, and targeted towards specific disaster events. The first such effort can be traced back to the Scarcity Relief Division of 1878 which was created under the Agriculture Ministry by the colonial British Administration, to deal with food scarcity in the country. This was followed by a Famine Commission in 1880 and the very first Famine Code in 1883, created most likely in response to the Great Famine of 1876-78 during which 5.25 million people died (Bhandari, 2006; Hunter, Meyer, Burn, Cotton, & Risley, 1907). The Code was published by the Secretary of State, and both it and the Commission dealt with matters of famine relief, placing great importance on reducing “indiscriminate state charity” and local dependency on government aid (Hunter, Meyer, Burn, Cotton, & Risley, 1907, p. 478). Two more Famine Commissions were formed in India after this initial effort—one in 1898 and another in 1901—along the same lines as the 1880

Commission, but which also included measures dealing with public health issues such as epidemics.

This focus on famine and public health issues continued for the remainder of the colonial rule, which ended in 1947, and stayed so for the first few decades under the new administration. For example, neither disaster mitigation nor rehabilitation were mentioned in the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution which lists the individual and joint public responsibilities of the central (federal) and state governments (Planning Commission of India, 2002). In case of a disaster, state governments were provided with funds for ‘calamity relief’ through individual and annual, Centrally-funded ‘calamity relief funds’. The utilization of these funds was based on guidelines issued by the (Central) Union Finance Ministry (Bhandari, 2006). Further, different ministries were assigned the responsibility of responding to different disasters, for example, the Ministry of Home Affairs was assigned responsibility for civil strife; Ministry of Civil Aviation for air accidents; Ministry of Railways for railway accidents; Ministry of Environment & Forest for chemical disasters; Ministry of Health for biological disasters; and the Department of Atomic Energy for nuclear accidents (Swami, 2001). Natural disasters, as a composite, were assigned to the Ministry of Agriculture, arguably due to the primacy of agricultural economies in the country at the time as well as a continued influence from the colonial era.

Significant changes to this approach occurred in the 1990s, mostly due to two factors. The first was an increased incidence in large scale disasters within the country: the 1993 Latur earthquake which affected over 8 million people and damaged over 1 million homes; the 1999 Orissa ‘Super’ cyclone which affected over 15 million people and destroyed over 2 million homes; and, the 2000 Gujarat (Bhuj) earthquake which affected over 12 million people and

damaged about 2 million homes. Between 1990 and 2000 alone, an average number of 30 million people were affected annually by disasters, and an average of 4344 lives lost per year due to them (National Disaster Management Division, 2004; Krishnaraj, 1997; Chakrabarti, 2008).

The second catalytic factor was the increased global awareness on disaster risk reduction and mitigation during this period. In 1989, the United Nations General Assembly declared 1990-2000 as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction by in 1989, “with the objective to reduce loss of lives and property and restrict socio-economic damage through concerted international action, specially [sic] in developing countries” (National Disaster Management Division, 2004). This global call for better disaster management was intensified by outcomes of events such as the 1992 Earth Summit held at Rio De Janeiro, the 1994 World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (where the ‘Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World’ was formulated), the initiation of the United Nations Center for Regional Development’s (UNCRD) Disaster Management Planning Hyogo Office (which widely began promoting community-based disaster management strategies), as well as by the launching of the International strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) by the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in 2000.

The first evidence of a shift away from response-centric approaches to disaster management is found in the creation of district-level disaster management plans for the State of Maharashtra after the 1993 Latur earthquake, and further emphasized by the creation of an autonomous Orissa State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) after the ‘Super’ Cyclone of 1999 in that state (UNCRD, 2003). But the most significant evidence of this shift is seen in the creation of the national High Powered Committee (HPC) on disaster management in August

1999. The Committee was mandated to review common response and preparedness mechanisms within the country through consultations with governmental, non-governmental, national, and international agencies, as well as media organizations. The Committee Report, released in 2001, listed over three dozen different types of disasters that the country must prepare for, categorized under five headings: water and climate related disasters, geological disasters, chemical, industrial and nuclear disasters, accidents, and biological disasters. Of these, earthquakes, floods, cyclones and landslides were ranked as the most 'feared' disasters in India (Planning Commission of India, 2002). Among other things, the HPC recommended the: setting aside funds from the Five Year plans (10 percent) for national, state and district levels schemes on disaster prevention, reduction, preparedness, and mitigation; and creation of new national organizations specifically for disaster management, including a separate ministry, a cabinet committee, and national council, and a National Institute for Disaster Management. In addition, the 2001 report also included a draft copy of a National Disaster Management Act (Bhandari, 2006; Planning Commission of India, 2002; Gupta, 2009, upcoming).

Despite these efforts however, the country's first comprehensive disaster management policy was in fact legislated in the state of Gujarat in response to the 2001 Gujarat (Bhuj) Earthquake. This Gujarat Disaster Management Act of 2001 mandated that all citizens assist the State Commissioner of Relief, the District Collector, or any other person charged with the responsibility of disaster management in "[...] prevention [,] response [,] warning [,] emergency operation [,] evacuation, and [...] recovery [of/after disasters]" (Gupta, 2009, upcoming).

At the national-level, there were three responses to the 2001 Gujarat (Bhuj) earthquake: first, disaster management as a function was transferred from the Ministry of Agriculture to the

Ministry of Home Affairs; second, a national disaster management scheme was implemented in 2002; and finally, a National Disaster Management Committee was set up under chairmanship of the Prime Minister and a National Disaster Management Framework created in August 2004. In addition, a parliamentary Estimates Committee was formed in 2002 to review existing institutional and economic provisions for relief and rehabilitation measures for natural disasters. The Committee found that there were no programs or schemes in place that targeted long-term rehabilitation specifically, and that most states provided for this activity through their existing Central and State Plan Schemes; that no records of expenditure on mitigation-related long-term rehabilitation measures or of the involvement of NGOs in it were being maintained; and, that due to a weakness in the existing calamity relief programs, no funds were being provided for infrastructure redevelopment in affected states (Estimates Committee, 2003).

B.2.1 Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Programme (2002-2009)

This program was initiated in March 2002 with funding from the Government of India–UNDP Country Cooperation Framework. The Programme initially targeted 12 states and 125 “most hazard prone districts” with a six-year timeline (2002-2007) and \$27 million budget, but was later expanded to include a total of 17 states and 176 districts, and for a cost of \$41 million with additional support from the European Commission, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Government of Japan through the UN Trust Fund, and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid) (National Disaster Management Division, 2003). Documents reveal that the Programme was first expected to be complete by June 2008, but was later extended to June 2009. It is unclear as to when exactly new districts were added to the original 125 “hazard prone districts” list, but considering that the District of

Nagapattinam was not part of the original 125, it is likely this occurred after the 2004 Tsunami (National Disaster Management Division, 2003).

The objective of the DRM Programme is to, “[...] demonstrate a sustainable model for mainstreaming of disaster risk management at all levels with a focus on district and community level activities, based on which the Government of India would replicate the approach and process in the remaining hazard-prone districts in the country [...]” (National Disaster Management Division, 2003, p. 1). The Programme focused on strengthening the capacity of local communities, local self-governments and district administrations for disaster response, preparedness and mitigation in the target districts. At the national level, it aimed to support the Ministry of Home Affairs in its efforts towards preparing a National Disaster Management Framework for disaster preparedness, response, prevention and mitigation. The Programme was designed in two phases. Phase I (2002-2004) targeted three states and 28 districts, while Phase II (2004-2007) targeted the remaining states and districts. The entire project was expected to cost \$27 million over a period of 6 years, and the UNDP had committed a total of \$7 million to this project by March 2003 (National Disaster Management Division, 2003). Among other things, the Programme proposed to:

- Develop disaster management plans at district, block, municipality, grām panchāyat, village/ward levels, and involve women and disabled persons, socially marginalized sections in the plan preparation activity. Plans would involve vulnerability mapping, risk assessment and analysis, hazard zoning, resource inventory, response structure
- Promote partnerships with academic institutions and private sector in development of disaster risk management plans.

- Create Disaster Management Teams (DMT) at all administrative levels for the “dissemination of accurate warning, search and rescue operations, first aid, water & sanitation, shelter management, counseling and damage assessment for early response and recovery, proper utilization and better coordination of relief materials”
- Form state, district, block, grām panchāyat, village/ward Disaster Management Committees (DMC), which would include all concerned public agencies, non-governmental organizations, local elected representatives, community-based organizations, and existing local defense organizations created under national schemes (such National Cadet Corps), and other civil society response groups, and have equal representation of women, schoolteachers, disabled persons, village volunteers and “members of isolated hamlets”
- Conduct capacity building activities for all stakeholders including civil society organizations in the rescue, relief and restoration in disaster situations
- Strengthen disaster management information centers in identified states and districts to improve communication of early warning and flow of information for “preparedness and recovery operations”;
- Disseminate cost effective alternate technologies for hazard resistant housing, including retrofitting/roof top rainwater harvesting features as long-term mitigation measures;
- Develop vulnerability and risk indices and annual Vulnerability and Risk Reduction Reports to further create criteria for the evaluating disaster risk management (National Disaster Management Division, 2003, pp. 7-10)

At the time of writing, this Programme was still in place, and as of February 2009, disaster management and mitigation plans had been developed for seven states, 169 districts,

1,302 blocks, 25,779 local governance bodies and 135,548 villages (UNDP, 2009). However, a recent study of the region notes that many of the village-level disaster management task forces have disbanded because of either decreased enthusiasm or members having moved away, and that many of the district and village disaster management plans prepared after 2004 have now become outdated and defunct (BEDROC-Oxfam, 2009).

B.2.2 Disaster Management Framework (2004)

The National Disaster Management Framework was created in 2004 to act as “a strategic roadmap [...] for reducing the country’s vulnerability to disasters” (National Disaster Management Division, 2004). The Framework covered institutional mechanisms, disaster prevention strategy, early warning system, disaster mitigation, preparedness and response and human resource development. There were many elements from the DRM Programme of 2002 proposed in the Framework, including creation disaster management plans and disaster management committees at various levels and the conducting vulnerability and risk assessments. In addition, the framework also proposed:

- Creating a National Emergency Management Authority at the national-level, and disaster management authorities at the state-level, which would be responsible for coordinating disaster response, relief and rehabilitation, creating policies for mitigation and preparedness, coordinating efforts of other agencies, ensuring preparedness at all levels of government, introducing and monitoring efforts to integrate disaster mitigation into development plans and projects

- Restructuring of state-level Departments of Relief & Rehabilitation into Departments of Disaster Management and reconstituting existing District Coordination and Relief Committees into Disaster Management Committees
- Enactment of a Disaster Management Act
- Conversion of existing state-level Relief Codes into Disaster Management Codes, based on a model drafted by the National Institute of Disaster Management.
- Mainstreaming mitigation into development planning by updating existing state and local Town and Country Planning Acts, land use zoning regulations, and development control regulations and building bylaws to include multi-hazard mitigation measures; by using disaster-resistant construction methods in rural development schemes

The National Emergency Management Authority and the state disaster management authorities were supposed to comprise of representatives from multiple ministries and departments, including environment and forest, water resources, urban employment and poverty alleviation, and rural development. In addition, the State authorities were to include representatives from its urban development department.

B.2.3 Draft Disaster Management Policy (2004)

By August 2004, the National Disaster Management Division in had also prepared a draft Disaster Management Policy, and was undertaking a consultation process for it. The broad objective of the policy was to, “minimize the loss of lives and social, private and community assets because of natural or man-made disasters and contribute to sustainable development and better standards of living for all, more specifically for the poor and vulnerable section by ensuring that the developments gains are not lost through natural calamities/ disaster” (National

Disaster Management Division, 2004, p. 10). The policy places the responsibility of “disaster management including prevention and mitigation” firmly with the State governments, with the Central government providing “assistance where necessary as per the norms laid down from time to time” and ensuring that “coordination mechanism is laid down through an appropriate chain of command so that mobilization of resources is facilitated” (National Disaster Management Division, 2004, p. 10). In keeping with the 2004 Framework, the policy suggested that:

- Disaster management adopt, “a holistic and pro-active approach towards prevention, mitigation and preparedness” (p.10)
- Adequate funds be allocated all administrative levels for projects aimed at reducing vulnerabilities and preparedness
- Mitigation projects be prioritized over others, and mitigation be integrated into other development schemes and projects
- “Community involvement and awareness generation, particularly that of the vulnerable segments of population and women [be] emphasized as necessary for sustainable disaster risk reduction... This is a critical component of the policy since communities are the first responders to disasters and, therefore, unless they are empowered and made capable of managing disasters, any amount of external support cannot lead to optimal results” (p.11)
- Inculcate a “culture of planning and preparedness” as a capacity building measure (p.11)
- Disaster management plans be prepared for all levels of administration
- Construction be done according to national building standards
- Retro-fit “lifeline” buildings in seismic zones (p.11)

- State Relief Codes be redeveloped into disaster management codes or manuals “for institutionalizing the planning process with particular attention to mitigation and preparedness” (p.11)
(National Disaster Management Division, 2004)

According to the UNDP, by August 2004, ten states and union territories including Tamil Nadu had created state disaster management authorities; eleven states had constituted new Departments of Disaster Management; and, 256 districts had created Disaster Management Committees (National Disaster Management Division, 2003).

While there are pre-2004 reports of DRM Programme activities (mostly vulnerability assessments and emergency response exercises) having been conducted in the adjoining District of Cuddalore, which was one of the original 125 ‘most’ hazard prone districts, there are no such reports for the case study region, District of Nagapattinam (UNDP, n.d.). However, reports suggest that Nagapattinam did have a district-level Contingency Plan in place at the time of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. An analysis of this Plan conducted by Prater et al (2006) showed that it: (1) addressed only on relief and response activity, with no attention given to long-term rehabilitation; (2) was overly focused on complying with statutory requirements rather than quality of content or plan process; (3) did not address commonalities between different disaster events; (4) did not plan for different scenarios of response and recovery; (5) was based on a model of command-and-control, instead of emergent resource coordination; (6) made no differentiation between the crisis planning and disaster management; (7) did not recognize the different organizational needs of disaster and non-disaster situations; (8) did not analyze the anticipate or deal with problems in implementation; and, (9) lacked horizontal and vertical

integration (Prater, Peacock, Arlikatti, & Grover, 2006). Fieldwork did not validate the existence a State Disaster Management Authority for Tamil Nadu, or a Disaster Management Committee in the District of Nagapattinam, or in any of the case study villages prior to 2004. Instead, it was found that in Nagapattinam the district administration as a whole took the lead on post-disaster response, with the District Revenue Office carrying out long-term disaster rehabilitation activities in the case study region.

B.2.4 Post-2005 Disaster Management Policy Initiatives

In December 2005, India enacted a Disaster Management Act (DMA) which borrowed heavily from the 2004 Framework and Draft Disaster Management Policy. The objective of the legislation was to lay down an institutional and coordination mechanism for “effective management of disaster” at the national, state, and district levels, where ‘disaster management’ is understood to be “...a continuous and integrated process of planning, organizing, coordinating and implementing measures”, which include disaster threat prevention, mitigation or reduction of risk, capacity building, preparedness, prompt response, impact assessment, evacuation and relief, and rehabilitation and reconstruction (Government of India, 2005, p. 2). The main differences between the DMA 2005 and the two prior initiatives in 2004 were that it included some additional institutional elements and that it was more legally binding. The DMA 2005 created a three-tiered institutional framework for disaster management in the country: a National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) which would set national policies and creates guidelines for states to follow; the State Disaster Management Agencies (SDMAs) which would create state disaster management plans, guide the integration of mitigation into development projects, and make adequate funding provisions; and the District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs)

which would create district disaster management plans, manage all early warning and post-disaster relief and response activities within the district, and ensure the involvement of NGOs and voluntary organizations in these activities. Overall, the DMA 2005 granted the state governments the responsibility to funds for different disaster management activities, and the local governments the responsibility to carry out rehabilitation and reconstruction activity in accordance with state and district plans. In addition to the organizational framework, the DMA 2005 also mandated the creation of national, state and district disaster management plans. The national plan was to be more policy-oriented than the state- or district-level plans that would be increasingly more action-oriented. All plans were to be heavily focused on mitigation, integrating it into development projects, and capacity building to facilitate this integration. Plans at the state- and district-levels were to also include vulnerability assessments within their geographic jurisdictions, while those at the district-level were to additionally address post-disaster relief and response mechanisms, information dissemination and procurement of resources (Government of India, 2005).

In a similar vein, the Government of Tamil Nadu also passed a state policy for disaster management in 2005 and has created a state-level Disaster Management Authority since then. Meanwhile, efforts to create District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs) within the various districts, including the District of Nagapattinam, are still underway. But since these acts and policies were created after the 2004 Tsunami, they did not have any significant impact on the immediate land use recovery and reconstruction process following it.

APPENDIX C: COASTAL ZONE REGULATION NOTIFICATIONS AND SETTLEMENT RECONSTRUCTION

In 1991, the national Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) issued the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification to direct land use along the coastal stretches of the state, including bays, estuaries, creeks, rivers and backwaters that are affected by tidal action. The objective of the CRZ is to conserve coastal ecologies and limit environmental pollution through developmental activity, and it restricts the use of land for certain purposes within the 500 m of the High Tide Line (HTL) as well as between the HTL and the Low Tide Line (LTL). The CRZ divides the land within 500m of the HTL into four zones:

- i. CRZ –I, which included areas are were, ecologically sensitive, rich in genetic-diversity, likely to be inundated due to rise in sea level, areas of aesthetic or historic value, and all land between the HTL and the LTL;
- ii. CRZ-II, which included areas had already been developed ‘up to or close to the shoreline’ which was defined as any area under municipal limits or designated as urban and already provided with physical infrastructure;
- iii. CRZ-III, which included areas were relatively undisturbed such as developed and undeveloped coastal-rural lands, less developed urban lands, and areas not included in CRZ-I and CRZ-I; and.,
- iv. CRZ-IV, which included all coastal lands in island states and territories that were not already included in the first three zones

The Notification also outlined uses that were prohibited or restricted within these zones. Broadly, it prohibited activities such as setting up of new and expansion of existing industries,

activities involving hazardous substances, fish processing units, disposal of wastes and effluents, and mining. It permitted activities that required water front and foreshore facilities, activities related to defense, constructions for ports and harbors, and construction of hotels and resorts in specified areas. These uses were listed with the understanding that each state would create a Coastal Zone Management Plan or CZMP implemented through newly constituted State Coastal Zone Management Authorities, or SCZMAs). The CZMPs would delineate the exact CRZs regions within each state, and be responsible for the implementation of the CRZs, including approval of developments proposed within the CRZs prior to implementation. However, the Tamil Nadu CZMP was not completely approved at the time of the tsunami. Only 10 out of 31 CRZ maps had been created, and over HTL and LTL lines had not been marked on ground for much of the coastline. To add to this, the Tamil Nadu CZMA's term expired in January 2005 and it remained non-functional for most of that year (Sridhar, 2005). In the absence of an approved state CZMP, the government relied on the CRZ Notification to guide reconstruction criteria. However, the CRZ Notification itself had undergone numerous revisions since 1991, each revision rendering it more diluted and open to interpretation (Menon, Rodriguez, & Sridhar, 2007). The last such effort was the M.S. Swaminathan Committee, established in July 2004 to once more review the Notification. Its report, released in January 2005, drew much criticism from the NGO and local communities who claimed that it favored industrial uses over traditional rights of coastal communities (Menon, Rodriguez, & Sridhar, 2007). This last report may not have much impact on the reconstruction policy of the government itself (released in March 2005 with GO 172), but it has become the basis for a new Coastal Zone Management Notification that was released in 2007 and is currently under review.

Sridhar (2005) notes following implications of the last revised Notification on reconstruction:

- i. For CRZ-I, it prohibits any “new construction”, but is silent on the topic of “reconstruction” of pre-existent dwellings. Some legal analysts interpret this to mean that reconstruction within CRZ-I is allowed as long as the new unit remains the same size and design as the old one. In contrast, the GO 172 interpreted this to mean that no construction could happen within the first 200m of HTL.
- ii. For CRZ-II, new construction is allowed if it is built on the landward side of existing roads or of its nearest authorized structure, is compliant with town planning regulations for the area, is part of a housing scheme approved prior to February 19th 1991, or is reconstruction of an existing dwellings in CRZ-II as long as it is for the same use and of the same size.
- iii. For CRZ-III, it delineates a “No Development Zone” (NDZ) up to 200m, where no development may take place, unless repair of existing authorized structures of the same size and density. Activities permitted in the NDZ include: agriculture, horticulture, gardens, pastures, parks, play fields, forestry, weather radars and the mining of rare minerals, construction of community facilities and infrastructure for the local inhabitants. The GO 172 interprets this also to mean no construction within the first 200m.
- iv. For CRZ-III, between 200-500m, it allows construction of hotels and resorts and community facilities for local populations, construction or reconstruction of dwelling units provided they are within the scope of traditional rights and

customary uses, are not more than doubled in number, comply with certain (defined) building specifications

- v. Lastly, it allows only “authorized” structures to be (re) constructed within the CRZs, which in light of the fact that many fisher folk in the area were not in possession of land titles to their houses, could mean forced relocation to outside of the CRZ for these populations. (Sridhar, 2005)

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY

D.1 LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB: Asian Development Bank

AusAid: Australian Agency for International Development

CAPART: Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology

CBO: Community-Based Organization

CRZ Notification: Coastal Regulation Zone Notifications

CSWB: Central Social Welfare Board

CZMP: Coastal Zone Management Plan

DDMA; District Disaster Management Authorities

DIU: District Implementation Unit

DMA 2005: Disaster Management Act of 2005

DMC: Disaster Management Committees

DMT: Disaster Management Teams

DRDA: District Rural Development Authority

DRM Programme: Disaster Risk Management Programme

DRO: District Revenue Officer; head of District Revenue Department in the District Administration

ERTP: Emergency Tsunami Relief Program; funded by World Bank

FCRA: Foreign Contribution Regulations Act of 1976

GO: Government Order; policy document

HPC: High Powered Committee

HTL: High tide line

IRB: Institutional Review Board

ISDR: International strategy for Disaster Reduction

LTL: Low Tide Line

MDF: Multi-Donor Fund

MoEF: Ministry of Environment and Forests of India

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

NCRC: NGO Coordination and Resource Center

NDMA: National Disaster Management Agency

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NNT: “Namakku Naame Thittam” or Village Self-Sufficiency Scheme

NPN: Neighborhood Planning Network

OSDMA: Orissa State Disaster Management Authority

PIU: Project Implementation Unit

PRI: Panchayati Raj Institution; constitutionally mandated elected form of self-government

SCZMA: State Coastal Zone Management Authorities

SDCM: Sub-District Coordination Mechanisms

SDMA: State Disaster Management Agencies

SHG: Self-Help Group

SRA: Societies Registration Act of 1960

SSWB: State Social Welfare Boards

TEAP: Tsunami Emergency Assistance Project; funded by the Asian Development Bank

UN: United Nations

UNCRD: United Nations Center for Regional Development

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNORC: United Nations Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

VAO: Village Administration Officer; office of the District Administration posted in each village

WdWW: “Who is doing What Where” Matrix

D.2 LIST OF ACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN CASE STUDIES

District-wide:

Caste or Traditional Panchāyat: traditional and informal caste-based form of self-government; popularly-elected

Panchāyati Raj Institutions (PRI): Constitutionally required, elected self-governance bodies for rural areas

Municipal Council: constitutionally required, elected self-governance bodies for urban areas

Grām sabhā: village council meeting mandated to be held by the Constitution of India

Ward: electoral unit of Municipal Council/PRI

Collectorate/District Administration: District-level arm of the state government

District Collector: Top bureaucrat in the District Administration

NGO-N: Prominent NGO coordination body, self-organized, works for the entire district

Fishing Village:

Dalit: set of the lowest castes, constitutionally listed under Schedule Castes

Meenavar/fisher-folk: Set of fishing castes, constitutionally listed under Most Backward Castes; higher than *dalits*

NGO-V: International NGO, involved in the first phase of housing reconstruction

NGO-SS: Regional NGO, built temporary shelters

NGO-A: Regional NGO with pre-disaster presence in village, works with *meenavars* only

NGO-F: Regional NGO with pre-disaster presence in village, works with *meenavars* only

MR: Head of *dalit* panchāyat

MK: Member of *dalit* panchāyat

IY: Member of *dalit* panchāyat

VMR: Wife of MR

MA: Self-Help Group (SHG) facilitator and member

LK: Member of *meenavar* panchāyat

AM: Member of *meenavar* panchāyat

SR: Team leader of NGO-VW

KY: Member of *meenavar* panchāyat in 2005

TA: Head of all *meenavar* women's SHGs

Farming village:

NGO-AS: International NGO, involved in the first phase of housing reconstruction

NGO-PR: International NGO, involved in the first phase of housing reconstruction

YK: District Revenue Officer

NGO-M: Regional NGO, did land reclamation and water desalination programs

HR: Employee with NGO-M

NB: Village Administrative Officer

IR: Medium farmer, field is located along a newly paved street

RU: Small tenant farmer, field is located on the same street at IR

MT: Woman small landowner-farmer, field was located along a feeder street

BG: Neighbor of MU, a suicide-widow who sells street food and does sustenance vegetable farming

VY: Village PRI President

Mixed Village:

NGO-K: National NGO, involved in the first phase of housing reconstruction, left midway

NGO-C: Regional NGO, involved in the first phase of housing reconstruction

NGO-G: Regional NGO, involved in the first phase of housing reconstruction, took up after NGO-K

SK: President of Village, PRI

NS: Head of *meenavar* panchāyat

PA: Head of NGO-G, local office

LA: *meenavar* women, 31 yrs, married, works with NGO-G

AA: *meenavar* women, 18 yrs, single, works with NGO-G

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