

I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Due to poor visibility and complexity of the issue associated with organizational priorities, even the NGOs and INGOs have failed to notice the vulnerabilities of the non-ocean fishing communities resulting on these communities living a miserable life. It could well be the ignorance and / or negligence of these organizations, if not deliberate exclusion /discrimination; probing it further was not the purpose of the study. What was conceived to be the purpose of the study was to;

- ✿ Examine and bring it to limelight the impact of Tsunami on the lives of these communities, so that they do gain appropriate visibility in the eyes of the resource rich NGOs, INGOs and the State.
- ✿ While speaking aloud on the vulnerable conditions of these communities, the study will also inform the NGO community about the livelihood options that might best suit the needs of these communities, so that they could design their interventions quickly and with fewer difficulties, relatively.

II. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The horror of tsunami that struck India and a few other countries on December 26, 2004 caused unprecedented devastation in the coastal districts of the state of Tamil Nadu in India. It touched the hearts of the civil society- many world leaders, celebrities, non-governmental organizations and ordinary people responded overwhelmingly to the calamity. The immediate relief aid from People's Watch was in the forms of providing blankets and milk supplies for the infants and children, right from 27th followed by providing of family kit containing ration (sufficient for at least 15 days), vegetables, utensils, clothing, mats and stove to an approximate 20,000 families/1,00,000 individuals. Initially, it was thought that the relief work would last for only 2-3 weeks allowing the rehabilitation works to begin. However, things did not work out in the way it was contemplated. PW-TN had to continue its relief operations throughout January and February due to continuous receipt of relief requests from the marginalized communities, particularly the dalits who have been either discriminated or excluded in the state relief. Finally, a study on, "*Discrimination and Exclusion in State relief*" was carried out by PW-TN during 7th and 13th February 2005, which brought in many issues into the limelight and have provided a scope for PW-TN, not only to problematize the issue but also to help various actors to plan their interventions much focused, which in turn has necessitated PW-TN to initiate this study too.

As tsunami was a disaster related to the oceans, the coastal fishing communities have gained sole visibility in the eyes of the state as well as the NGOs and INGOs, in the post-tsunami context. What is bothering is the exclusivity in formulation of R&R policies of the state and designing of intervention programs by the INGOs. Although it is true to the extent that the non-ocean fishing

communities¹ had only relatively less physical losses, they have experienced an irrecoverable loss of their existing sources of livelihoods.

The ‘*Post – Tsunami Rapid Impact Assessment*’ study carried out by PW-TN during 5th and 7th January 2005 has revealed that for every ocean- fishing community there exist at least two non-ocean fishing communities, making the ratio of tsunami affected ocean-fishing and non-ocean fishing communities to 1:2. Where as the post-tsunami R&R processes of the State have excluded and / or discriminated a large majority of these communities for various reasons.

The ‘Right to ocean fishing’ has been the sole slogan of the fishing folk, resulting on the rest to only engage in support / Para fishing activities like loading & unloading of fish catches, marketing / retailing of the catches, back water fishing, inland fishing, shell collection, crab farming in the back water areas, salt pans, pearl collection, cattle rearing and all the other types of wage works / menial jobs. Even a large portion of agricultural lands are owned by the fishing folk which take the labor from the non-ocean fishing communities. The non-ocean fishing communities hardly owned any property, thus haven’t lost anything big, physically.

Preliminary level of field investigations carried out by PW-TN and its partners in various locations have brought to light the miserable conditions of these communities. Although, PW-TN could do some immediate relief and livelihood support activities for a few communities, the magnitude of the issue together with the huge population of these communities makes it impossible for any single organization to address the issue. For generations together these communities have been living in a hand-to-mouth condition hardly was making any surplus. While rehabilitation and reconstruction being the need for the ocean fishing communities, food relief and survival aid are the needs of the non-ocean fishing communities even today.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study will help the target communities gaining visibility at par with the ocean-fishing communities. This study is intended to make a prescription to the organizations involved in the Tsunami R & R, of the options and choices of the marginalized and vulnerable communities, who happened to be the non-ocean fishing communities in the Tsunami hit areas, as preferred by them in resuming their livelihoods sustainability. The study can also be used as an advocacy tool by TRRC and other Coordination’s / pressure groups to draw the attention and influence the government to come

¹ Our field experiences revealed that the non-ocean fishing communities largely fall under a few categories based on their occupations, all across the coastal districts in Tamil Nadu. They are:

- ? Backwater fishing (prawn fishing, crab catch, crab farming, fish vending, etc.)
- ? Inland fishing (fishing, crab catch & farming, fish vending, etc.)
- ? Para-fishing (shell collection, pearl collection, Algae collection, lime powder production, ornamental shell manufacturing, crafts, etc.)
- ? Coastal Agriculture (Seasonal agriculture)
- ? Non-fishing (petty trades, wage works, labour, services, etc.)

out with appropriate rehabilitation and support measures to include these communities in the main stream R & R processes.

IV. GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF THE STUDY

PW-TN’s study on, “*Discrimination and Exclusion in State Relief*” forms the basis for the selection of areas for this study. Although, the government of TamilNadu has declared 13 districts as affected by Tsunami, it was only 7 districts that have been badly affected. Hence this study was carried out in the 6 districts. However, among these districts, Chennai was excluded from the study for the heterogeneous nature of its communities; therefore, the study was only conducted in the following 6 districts:

- ? Thiruvallur
- ? Kancheepuram
- ? Cuddalore
- ? Nagapattinam
- ? Thoothukudi
- ? Kanyakumari

All non-ocean fishing communities, whose livelihoods have been affected by Tsunami, were the target group for the study. All the non-ocean fishing communities within a selected village were covered. The study has identified a total of 346 non-ocean fishing hamlets / villages wherein the livelihoods of the living communities have been severely affected by Tsunami, but were not accounted for rehabilitation support both by the state and as well by the NGO community. They are,

S. No	Name of the District	No. of non-ocean fishing communities affected by tsunami, but have been excluded for rehabilitation
1.	Kanyakumari	11
2.	Thoothukudi	36
3.	Cuddalore	69
4.	Kancheepuram	45
5.	Thiruvallur	34
6.	Nagapattinam	151
TOTAL		346

V. APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a two prong approach of participatory as well as scientific approach at the field level. While the initial assessment and information collection were carried out through participatory methodologies, these have been consolidated and recorded through a questionnaire based survey. This helped in minimizing the risk of losing sight in the process of participatory methodologies which are highly process oriented. Target communities, who were the primary source

of information, were accessed through the local NGOs and these local NGOs were the ones who anchored the study in their respective area.

Data Collection: Efforts made to identify the non-ocean fishing hamlets and villages through secondary sources did not yield positive results since such information was not available even with the respective district administrations, reiterating the problem perceived by the study. Therefore, the research team was compelled to create data by spending an approximate 80 person days in total to arrive at the sampling universe. The primary data collected by the study team has enumerated 346 non-ocean fishing hamlets and villages '*affected*' by Tsunami as against the 334 fishing hamlets and villages '*hit*' by Tsunami as listed by the state and as accepted by a large no. of NGOs and INGOs.

Questionnaire based survey: Questionnaire designed to cull out quantitative data and data which could easily be triangulated was pre-tested with the communities during the pilot study. Questionnaires were applied in all the villages / hamlets included for the study. A separate team of field investigators were assigned to do the questionnaire part of the study, while another group of PRA experts doing the PRA.

PLA techniques: Having chosen to adopt participatory approach and methodologies, following PLA tools and techniques were used in general with location specific variations in applying:

1. **Transect Walk:** This tool has helped to have an initial understanding about the physical setting of the communities in general and the housing pattern, common property resources, Water and sanitation in particular.
2. **Social Mapping:** This tool has helped in gaining an overview and understanding about the social setting of the community including various dimensions like, how different religious and caste groups are arranged within the same community. This tool also helped in identifying the social capital of the community concerned.
3. **Resource Mapping:** This tool has helped in gaining knowledge about the availability of various resources within the community. A comparative study of the findings of this tool in combination with the social mapping tool helped to understand the distribution of resources across caste groups, within the community.
4. **Livelihood mapping:** This tool has helped in enlisting various occupational groups in a community. A comparative study in combination with the resource mapping and social mapping was of great help in understanding the resource exploitation by different occupational and caste groups, in addition to helping identify the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the community.

5. **Venn diagram:** This tool has helped identifying the occupational dependency of the marginalized and vulnerable communities when it is applied in conjunction with the livelihood mapping.
6. **Change Scoring:** This tool helped in gaining a comprehensive knowledge about the changes that occurred over two different timelines. In this study, this tool was applied to study the changes in the livelihoods of the Marginalized and Vulnerable communities in the pre & post tsunami context.

Cross checking of the information collected by using the listed above tools was done through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and / or Semi-structured Interviews, as required.

Pilot study :

Prior to implementing, a pilot study was carried out during 1st and 3rd July 2005, in 5 select villages to test the applicability and effectiveness of the tools planned, questionnaire, data / information targeted and the readiness of the communities. Samples for the pilot study were drawn by 'Convenient sampling method', the spirit of which is the convenience of the researcher, since the purpose was only to test the methodology and tools. Suggestion given by an expert during the preliminary consultation on 23rd June to include questions to the effect of drawing information / data on income /earnings of the communities was honored by including it in the questionnaire. However, this had to be downplayed after the pilot study since the respondents felt embarrassed and the responses were not satisfactory. However, the PRA team was able to draw this information through the PLA.

Sampling Universe:

All the 346 non-ocean fishing communities in the worst hit 6 districts, namely, Thiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thoothukudi and Kanayakumari were the sampling universe of this study.

Sampling Unit:

Hamlet or village, as the case may be, of the non-ocean fishing communities was the sampling unit for the study. Although preliminary consultation with an expert group recommended family as a unit, it would have taken a considerable period of time, and hence, the objective to make rehabilitation benefits available to the target groups would have been defeated. Therefore hamlet was considered as a unit. Although, this study intended only for 20% sampling, it has covered 22% sample, i.e., 75 villages.

Systematic Random Sampling :

Samples were drawn by using the 'systematic random sampling method' that has helped ensuring fair and equal representation of the Sampling Universe. Considering the magnitude of the areas and similarities in issues, samples were structured by 1/5, i.e., 20%. This was done by enlisting all the sample units in alphabetical order within the district and taking every 5th unit as the sample beginning from the 'o' unit.

Initiation phase:

As part of the Initiating process, the proposal for this study was discussed among a group of experts, who were drawn from various forums, including academic / development research institutions, experts from NGOs and INGOs. This helped in sharpening the idea of the study and making the best possible study design. The expert consultation on the study design held at Asha Nivas, Chennai on 23rd June 2005.

Planning phase (June 2005):

With regard to the number of Tsunami affected villages and hamlets wherein the non-ocean fishing communities live, originally it was planned to collect from secondary sources, like the government departments, NGOs / INGOs and other bodies. However, since the data were inadequate and for want of accuracy, field teams were designated for each study district to enumerate the non-ocean fishing communities in their respective district by direct filed visits. Based on the data, sampling was done and the field teams were constituted in proportion to the samples. In the planning phase, an orientation session and consultation were organized for the filed investigators and PRA practitioners along with the research team on 16th and 18th July 2005, at PW-TN, Madurai.

What is worth mentioning here is that the initial planning as regards the methodology was only to adapt participatory approach, leaving a little scope for the questionnaire based survey? But, the consultation process through electronic mail which went beyond the Chennai meeting has brought in more clarity thus providing for questionnaire based survey too.

Implementing phase (15 – 31 July 2005): When it came to carrying out the study, location specific teams comprising of PRA practitioners hand picked from various NGOs undertook this study in their respective districts. Seven field investigating teams were constituted for all the six districts (Two teams for Nagai) each comprising of 2 Research Assistants, 2 field staff from the local NGO and 3 PRA practitioners. Completed questionnaires and PRA reports were sent to the Research Coordinator at Madurai on a daily basis.

Verification of the completed questionnaires and PRA reports for adequacy, accuracy, clarity and completeness was done on a daily basis and appropriate clarifications have been sought from the field team on a daily basis.

Tabulation, Analysis & Reporting phases (August 2005): Once the field operations were over, an eight member team comprising of select members of the field team and experts in data compilation and analysis carried out the tabulation, compilation, analysis, report writing etc. This process involved external resource persons for the purposes of providing guidance and advice suitably.

VI. ASSUMPTIONS / LIMITATIONS

However, reasonable level of care was taken to reduce the risks like de-linking the female respondents from the male members and cross verifying the information with different sources, the study still has the following limitations which are potential of influencing the findings, if they proved to be wrong;

1. It was assumed that the problems perceived and findings of the study in 75 villages across 6 districts shall stand good for the total 436 villages in these districts and as well for the non-ocean fishing communities in the remaining 7 districts in Tamil Nadu.
2. It was assumed and observed that the families engaged in inland fishing are relatively in small numbers as compared to other non-ocean fishing occupational groups like back water fishing and Para fishing and non-fishing.
3. It was understood that the income data as given by the respondents have included their income both from the main occupation and from the supplementary occupation like seasonal agriculture and represented the non-monetary incomes as well and were reliable.
4. It was assumed that the debt data as given by the respondents were reliable.
5. It was assumed that the female respondents spoken for themselves and that they were not influenced by the male members in their family /community.
6. Loss of livelihood opportunities was calculated on the basis of number of employment days lost and the gender wise standard wage per day. The income data was taken as the base line to compute the value for lost opportunities. However, it does not include opportunities could hardly be monetized.
7. In situations of people wanting to resume their existing occupations, it was assumed that resuming shall be possible and that the prospects of resuming were not examined except for oral reconciliation with similar kind of samples.

VII. MAJOR FINDINGS:

The study was undertaken in 7 hamlets in Kancheepuram district, 8 in Thiruvallur, 15 in Cuddalore, 9 in Kanyakumari, 6 in Tuticorin and 30 in Nagapattinam. In total, 75 hamlets were studied which included 5178 families of the non-ocean fishing communities. As mentioned earlier, the study was carried out by two methodologies; one by PRA to draw qualitative information and the other by questionnaire based survey primarily for quantitative data. The following are the findings of the study largely derived from the questionnaire based survey, with key observations at the bottom of each finding as the result of triangulation of quantitative data and PLA learning.

1. Social scenario:

Looking into the social data of all the hamlets studied, it is revealed that Scheduled Caste constitutes the majority (62.66%) of the total population (21028) in all these 436 hamlets / villages. On the basis of gender, the data reveal that among adult population, the number of female is more than male (1045 females per 1000 males). However, in the children group, male has outnumbered the females (973 females per 1000 males). The Most Backward Caste occupies the second position followed by Backward Caste and Scheduled Tribes in the third and fourth positions respectively. There is no representation of Most Backward Caste in the districts of Kancheepuram, Thiruvallur and Tuticorin. The population of various hamlets in the districts comprise of both homogeneous and heterogeneous communities. Caste Discrimination does not only prevail among the Fishing community but also within and among the Non-ocean Fishing Communities like Dalits and Tribes.

Even with a population almost confining to the lower strata of the society, caste discrimination is prevalent among the various Non-ocean Fishing Communities.

2. Status of Dropouts in School-going Children:

Tsunami had no impact on the formal education of the children of the districts as the study reflects that there is only a single drop out in the district of Kanyakumari². In spite of the fact that tsunami had a devastating impact on almost every individual's life and the basic needs and there has been inadequate support from the government,³ people of these affected places have still managed to send their children to schools. This shows the consciousness among the people regarding education of their children. If the literacy rates of the districts are compared, Cuddalore maintains a higher rate compared to other districts.

Thus, it may be inferred that so far as education is concerned, it remained unaffected even after the disaster.

² It has been found that the single drop out is not due to impact of tsunami.

³ For details, see the table of Compensation.

3. Impact of tsunami on housing:

The data on housing gives a picture of the nature of and extent to which the houses have been damaged in the districts. It reveals that among the total number of 5236 houses (majority of which were owned by Scheduled Caste population), a total number of 323 houses of different types were fully damaged and 657 were partially damaged. The highest numbers of houses affected both fully and partially by tsunami were found in Nagapattinam(156 fully damaged and 456 partially damaged). Tuticorin was the least affected district in terms of damages to the houses (3 partially damaged houses), but none of those houses are registered with the government for compensation. In Nagapattinam, among the total number of 612 affected houses, 497 houses are registered with the government for compensation, whereas the rest 115 are not registered. In case of Kancheepuram and Kanyakumari, the unregistered affected houses have outnumbered the registered ones.

On the whole, data reveal that 29.18% of the affected houses are not registered with the government. Looking at the statistics on housing, the extent of damage could be assessed and it could also be made out that a considerable number of affected houses were excluded from the eligibility to receive compensation.

4. Effect on occupation:

Our field experiences reveal that the non-ocean fishing communities largely fall under a few categories based on their occupations, all across the coastal districts in Tamilnadu. They are,

- ? Backwater fishing (prawn fishing, crab catch, crab farming, fish vending, etc.,)
- ? Inland fishing (Pond fishing, crab catch & farming, etc.,)
- ? Para-fishing (shell collection, pearl collection, Algae collection, lime powder production, ornamental shell manufacturing, crafts, fish vending, etc.,)
- ? Coastal Agriculture (Seasonal agriculture-land owning & coolies, etc.,)
- ? Non-fishing (petty trades, wage works, labour, services,craft works, etc.,)

The impact of Tsunami on these sectors was almost similar across districts, except for minor deviations. The main occupational activities of the non-ocean fishing communities prior to tsunami include back water fishing, inland fishing, para fishing (shell collection),⁴ coastal agriculture and non-fishing activities⁵ etc.⁶ Most of the hamlets in the districts have agricultural land, palm trees, coconut trees, waste land, common land. For this reason, many people, who were working as agricultural

⁴ Women were engaged in this activity to a large extent.

⁵ These include coir yarn making, cattle rearing, petty trade, salt pan coolie, Kadambai loading and arranging them in pits, construction work, nylon rope making, carpentry and coconut leaf thatching.

⁶ Apart from these, a few people work as government employees, some as plumbers, tailors, some are involved in running petty shops and selling fruits and tender coconut. People in some hamlets are also involved in artistic work or, carve design and making bead malai. In some of the tourist places in the district, people prefer to work as coolie. In Kancheepuram, some people belonging to a particular community works as car driver.

coolies, had to discontinue with their work as agricultural lands have got damaged after tsunami. Same was the fate of the salt pan coolies. In case of the other activities, many people were directly or indirectly dependent on the activities of the ocean fishing communities. Since most of the activities were involved with fishing, tsunami had a great impact on almost all these occupational activities of the non-fishing communities. Even comparing the pre and post tsunami occupational activities of the people indicates that there is a major loss of opportunities in terms of various occupational activities. In the district of Kancheepuram, people have lost more than 78% of opportunities in backwater fishing. In para fishing, people of Nagapattinam have incurred 100% loss of opportunities. Similarly, Cuddalore and Tuticorin have been the most affected districts (100%) in terms of loss of opportunities in coastal agriculture occupation.⁷ Compared to all the other occupations, the non-fishing occupational activities have incurred lesser degree of loss (46.12%). However, some of the non-fishing activities suffered to a huge extent which is not reflected directly through the aggregate. Thousands of cattle were washed away, hence, activities related to cattle and milch animals suffered a loss of 54.74% and 66.59% respectively. Looking into the other occupations, the extent of loss varies from district to district. The overall lost opportunity in all these districts is 57.92%. So far as the individual occupations are concerned, as been already said that the agricultural activities suffered due to tsunami, coastal agriculture suffered the most (loss of 85.85%) followed by para fishing (81.94%) and back water fishing (61.12%). The most affected district in terms of loss of opportunities in all the occupations is Cuddalore (73.76%) followed by Nagapattinam (68.07%) and Kancheepuram (55.03%). The least affected district is Thiruvallur (7.92%). As reflected in the post-tsunami scenario, it may be said that tsunami has brought changes in the livelihood activities of the people. The number of unemployed people has increased to a great extent. People in these districts engaged in various occupational activities prior to tsunami are vulnerable to situations arising from unemployment leading to insecurity of life. This would definitely have a negative impact on the economic conditions of the people. Apart from the representation through the numerical figures of the loss of the occupational activities, the other side of the story is – though people continued to carry on certain activities, they were forced to work at a meager wage as livelihood options became less and the existing livelihood which they were engaged in also suffered massive losses.

Thus, it can be concluded that although tsunami did not lead to a huge loss of lives among the Non-ocean Fishing Communities as compared to the fishing communities, the Non-ocean Fishing communities suffered irreparable loss in terms of their occupational activities.

5. Change in the economic status :

As tsunami had an adverse effect on the livelihoods of the people, there is a sharp decrease in the higher income groups of the affected hamlets. The income of all 145 families in the range of

⁷ However, it can be mentioned that the scope of coastal agriculture in Cuddalore was much higher compared to Tuticorin.

Rs.1101 and above per week in the Kancheepuram district were reduced. Reduction in income has been witnessed in all other income groups. However, 80% of the families in Nagapattinam district in the range of Rs. 900 – 1100/- week category were able to retain their position even after the disaster. Most of the people in the districts belonged to the income category of Rs. 301 – 500/ week followed by Rs. 501 – 700/ week before tsunami. But in the post-tsunami period, the decreases in those two categories have been 66.43% and 93.3% respectively even there is a possibility that some families belonging to the higher income groups have added up to these categories. The reduction in the fiscal status of those higher income groups have increased the number in the lower income groups as we see a whopping increase of 251.5% in the range of Rs. 300 and below/ week.

Through this data it can be inferred that as the economic security of the people became fragile, they became more vulnerable.

6. Debt burden:

Due to the loss of income and occupational opportunities, people became more dependent on other sources for survival and one of the most common and chief sources is the dependency on debts. The dependency on the debts was existent before the tsunami too but after the calamity it increased as people began taking lump sum amount of money as debts. This conclusion can be easily drawn from the fact that the number of families owing more amount of money as debts increased sharply while on the other hand, people taking lesser amount decreased. In the range of below Rs. 1000 and Rs. 1001 – 5000, there was a decrease while the higher groups show a steady increase. The highest increase was in the range of Rs. 10001 – 15000 as 1414 families came under this head in the post-tsunami time compared to mere 15 in the pre-tsunami period (increase of 9326.66%). The next increase (of 615.78%) is witnessed in the range of Rs. 15001 – 20000. The analysis of the data of Kanyakumari district reveal that people of the affected hamlets in this district were not familiar in running into high debts before tsunami, but after the disaster the picture has changed to a larger extent as many families belonging high debt groups have come into existence. The same can be said about the Cuddalore district. Though people in Nagapattinam and Tuticorin districts had a tradition of incurring debts, but certainly the burden increased after tsunami. Even in some places people had to pledge their jewellery to run their families.⁸

Finally, it can be easily inferred that if such financial insecurity continues, debt burden will be on a rise, making the villagers more vulnerable and in turn will expose them to various exploitations.

7. Occupational dependency:

Employment outside the native / residing village has been a practice in many villages even prior to tsunami, as many people used to move out of their hamlets in search of employment as they could not find opportunities in their own hamlet. In other words, many people depended on other

⁸ In Chothalalai hamlet of Kanyakumari district.

villages for their occupational activities. Considering the Table representing occupational dependency, it has been found that among the adult population, Cuddalore held the highest percentage (29%) of dependency in terms of people being employed outside their own hamlets, whereas the dependency percentage in Thiruvallur was nil. Apart from these, rest of the districts had the dependency percentage between 15-27%. On an average, 22% of the total adult population was dependent on other hamlets for their employment. So far as the hamlets providing occupations to this section of the adult population are concerned, 58.5% are fishing villages and others constitute 41.5%. Among such villages providing employment to the people of Cuddalore, 78% were fishing villages followed by 69% in case of people of Kancheepuram. This gives an idea that people were dependent more on fishing villages rather than others. However, most of these fishing villages were affected by tsunami, which consequently had an adverse impact on the livelihood of those dependent people. It may also be mentioned that people employed within their hamlets did not have independent source of income and had to depend on other people for their livelihood.

It can thus be concluded that those people who were already vulnerable due to lack of occupational opportunities within or outside their hamlets, have been compelled to live a more miserable life after tsunami.

8. Nature of compensation:

In terms of compensation to the affected families, the data indicates that the government has excluded considerable number of non-ocean fishing families from the sphere of receiving compensation though they were eligible for the same. Available data reveal that 32.93% families were excluded from compensation of Rs. 2000 in cash, 31.41% families from Rs. 4000 in cash & kind, 16.97% from Rs. 1000 in cash for maintenance, 22.72% for death, 95.84% from compensation for catamaran, 69.6% for educational assistance, 83.9% for land replenishment, 84.6% for veterinary hospital assistance, 92.9% for boat and 100% for petty trade. Thus excluded families belong to all the categories of compensation.

From the above information, it can be inferred that more number of people were excluded from the categories of compensation such as catamaran, boat, petty trade etc, which would help them in pursuing their livelihood activities. The nature of compensation provided to the affected people seems to be more of a kind of temporary measure rather than assistance for a sustainable livelihood.

9. Relief support :

After this devastating act of nature, various organizations, both national and international, and the government came forward to offer their helping hands to those who were in need of relief. The data

indicates that almost 98% of the total affected population in all these districts received relief from one or the other providers. One major observation made out of the study is the co-existing of over supply and undersupply of relief materials across locations, communities and families. In many cases, particularly where the fisher folks reside, people were supplied with relief materials which were more than their requirement and whereas in areas where non-ocean fishing communities reside, many people were deprived of their basic needs. In other cases the types of relief materials provided were of no use to the people affected. This shows that there was no uniformity in relief operation carried out by the government as well as the external agencies.

This clearly indicates the marginalization of the non-ocean fishing communities. It also points towards the fact that there was no coordination among these relief suppliers and hence puts question mark on their responsibilities towards these ill-fated people. The over all representation put forward a sorry state of uneven and inefficient relief supports.

10. Common Facility support:

The picture of the common facility support (like, drinking water, toilets, access roads, etc..) is not at all encouraging as the relief one. Many families were excluded from the facility support. No prominent government support is noticed in Tuticorin district. Even the presence of the NGOs is also negligible. Few hamlets have received a small support from a local NGO.⁹ It also draws attention towards a significant development that while many organizations as well as the government gave overwhelming support instantly after the disaster but they did not continue their role afterwards, especially towards the rehabilitation process and left these people struggling alone with their own destiny.

It can be easily said that a comprehensive approach to rebuilding of a community was replaced by the creed of giving and the zeal of providing planned development support dried down in the initial stages itself.

10. Rehabilitation drive:

In the process of rehabilitation, the data reveals that out of the total 5178 families studied, 3390 families prefer only to resume their existing activities and that 3127 families have asked for only financial support for resuming such activities. They voiced confidence in their skills and only asked for financial help to resume their activities. Remaining 1788 families expressed their willingness to venture into any sort of home based new activities which could help them managing the present crisis in addition to helping to complement their income from the existing sources on resuming. Such new activities include tailoring, pickle making, papad making etc. Some of them came up with the idea to form a cooperative society if an investment support is available, so that they could take up various

⁹ In Karikulam colony of this district, complaints have also been given to the collectors, chairman and councilor but no steps have been taken to provide any sort of relief assistance.

activities and manage within their own communities. Those families willing to venture in new activities, majority of them (54.94%) asked for only financial assistance.

The study makes one point very clear that whether it is to carry on the existing activities or to venture into new activities, financial assistance is the priority for the people.

VIII. QUALITATIVE OBSERVATIONS MADE THROUGH PRA:

Kancheepuram:

PRA exercises carried out among the non-ocean fishing communities of Kancheepuram district reveal that;

People belonging to backward class, Scheduled Class and Scheduled Tribes are the most commonly seen caste groups in all the 45 hamlets. Amongst them, Dalits form the majority followed by Tribes and Backward classes. There has been regular caste based clashes within and amongst the caste groups belonging to a same hamlet, while seldom any clashes with the fishing communities until Tsunami alter their relations.

Most of the hamlets in the district have schools, church, temples, water tanks, toilets etc. Many villages also comprise of agricultural lands. The occurrence of tsunami had a great impact on the livelihood activities of the people of the district. Prior to tsunami, people in the district were engaged in various kinds of activities. The main occupations of the people in the district were fishing, crab and prawn catching in backwater, coolie / wage works for fishermen communities, shell collection etc. Apart from these, there are a few government employees, some as plumbers, tailors and some are involved in running petty shops and selling fruits and tender coconut. People in some hamlets are also involved in artistic work or, stone carving and making bead malai.

However, after tsunami, many of these livelihood options are no longer available to them. The most highly affected activities are fishing in backwater, crab and prawn catching and activities for which the people had to depend on the ocean fishing communities.

Looking at the post tsunami scenario with regard to livelihood security of the people, it is found that many people are left without jobs as they used to depend mostly on backwater fishing and also working as coolie for the fishing communities. From the study, it could be found that many of them are willing to work as coolie. Some of them wish to work in agricultural land although most of them have been damaged by tsunami. A few people are going outside their hamlets for work being unable to find any job opportunities in their place. In one of the hamlets in the district an NGO has extended help to the affected tribal communities by giving them land.

Thiruvallur:

Street lights are being noticed in most of the hamlets. However there are no water and electricity in Bharathiyar Nagar. In Vairavan south, dish antenna and cyclone forecaster are also seen. In Sengimanagar and Thalan kuppam Harijana a TV room is also located. A hospital is located in Light house.

The main occupations of the people in this district are- backwater fishing, sea fishing, shell collection, coolie, fish vending. In the Bharathiyar Nagar, many people are working as auto driver and rickshaw puller. Due to the tsunami, people in Sengimanagar, Light house, Karimanal and Thalan kuppam Harijana colony had to suffer loss in terms of catamarans, nets, goats and cows.

In Sengimanagar, all the people belong to the tribal communities. However, there is caste discrimination between the Dalit community and the fisherman community in Lighthouse. There is no caste discrimination in Vairavan south.

Cuddalore:

PRA exercises carried out among the non-ocean fishing communities of Cuddalore district reveal that;

In most of the hamlets, people belong to almost the same community and no caste discrimination exists among the communities. In almost all the villages, children are attending school and number of drop out children is very less. Hence, it can be said that the district maintains a high literacy rate compared to other districts. Most of the hamlets in the district have agricultural land, palm trees, coconut trees, waste land, common land, schools, houses of various types, temples etc. So far as the occupational activities prior to tsunami are concerned, most of the villages depended on, backwater fishing, coastal agricultural activities, crab catching etc.; many women were engaged in shell collection, 'mathi' fish catching without any vessel or catamaran. Apart from that, the other occupations in which people in the district were involved are handicraft, mathi fish packing, classification of 'Sovi', small level fish vending, fish washing etc. Since most of the activities were involved with fishing, tsunami had a strong impact on the livelihood activities of the people of the district. They had to incur loss in their fishing related business as their occupation totally depended on the activities of the ocean fishing communities. Besides, the people who were working as agricultural coolies had to discontinue with their work as agricultural lands have got salinated after tsunami.

Looking at the post-tsunami scenario, it may be said that tsunami has brought changes in the livelihood activities of the people. The number of unemployed people has increased to a great extent. People in the district have come up with various suggestions with regard to availability of their livelihood options. Some of them want to form a cooperative society within their occupational communities, so that they can take up various activities within the society itself. For that, they have

expressed the need of market support. Similarly, many women have showed interest in tailoring, pickle making and papad making. Other requirements include catamarans, petty shop, nets, goats etc. Apart from these, some of them have preferred to go to other places for work. A significant observation about this district is that after tsunami, the participation of NGOs and governmental support has been very high in providing relief and compensation to the affected people in more or less all the hamlets in the district.

Kanyakumari:

This district has a few non-fishing hamlets affected by tsunami. People of these hamlets mostly belong to the SC, followed by the backward classes. However, Azadmagar and P.S. Puram have a huge Muslim population. The entire community in Veerapakupathi belongs to the MBC (Hindu Maruthavar). Chothavalia has a sizable Christian population (50 out of 400 families). In many of hamlets, a sizable number of houses have been damaged – either partially or completely. Tsunami had a prominent impact in almost all the hamlets. Veeraphagupathi was one of the worst sufferers as 7 people died and there has been a huge loss of property.

The major occupations in the district were – coir yarn making, coolie labourers, Kadambai loading and arranging them in pits, construction work, nylon rope making, carpentry and coconut leaf thatching. These occupations of the people had been affected by tsunami. In many of the hamlets people are still relying on government assistance as they do not have any alternative arrangements. The major occupation of the women in the hamlets prior to tsunami was coconut leaf thatching. Most of the hamlets have a lot of coconut plants. But the coconut trees were affected by salinity. As different economic activities of the people in many of the hamlets depend on the coconut plants, the livelihood has taken a beating due to the destruction of the coconut plants.

Tsunami does not have any impact on the education of the children in this district, except for the immediate few months.

NGO support is there in most of the hamlets. The government is also carrying out the relief and rehabilitation programme in many of the hamlets. In many cases, both the NGOs and government are working together. In Veerapakupathi, people expressed satisfaction on the post-tsunami relief they have been receiving from the government and the NGOs. People are also staying in temporary shelters. In Kaladivillai and Chivanthamanu, 195 people are interested in starting an Ice plant.

People in most of hamlets still live in the fear of tsunami. People in Sambasivapuram and Manavilai expressed unwillingness to venture for new activities.

In Chothavalai, people had to pledge their jewellery to run their families, this have increased their debt burden thus increasing their vulnerability.

Thoothukudi:

The main occupations of these hamlets are fishing coolie, salt pan coolie, fish processing, ice plant workers, fish processing (mostly women are involved), basket making (in Poopandiapuram). In Karikulam colony, few people go for lorry driving and construction work.

People in Mudukukadu, Keel Alangara Thittu and Poopandiapuram had expressed their inability to carry out an alternative livelihood activity as they neither have options or skill. In Mudukukadu, when asked on the idea of moving beyond 500 metres, they replied in the negative as it will affect their livelihood.

Tsunami does not have any impact on the education of the children, except for the immediate few months.

No prominent government support is noticed in the area though it has agreed to construct colony houses in Rajiv Gandhi Nagar. Even the presence of the NGOs is also negligible. In Karikulam colony, complaints have also been given to the collectors, chairman and councilor but no steps have been taken to provide any sort of relief assistance.

Nagapattinam:

PRA exercises carried out among the non-ocean fishing communities of Nagai district reveal that;

Among all the tsunami affected districts, this district has been found out to be the most adversely affected one. The hamlets in the district comprise of both homogenous and heterogeneous communities. Different cast groups live in identical pockets within a same village / hamlet and the post tsunami relief has fueled the already prevailing clashes and discriminatory practices. So far as the resources are concerned, most of the villages in the district comprise of common land, agricultural land etc. Backwater fishing and agriculture are the two main occupations of the people of the district. Apart from that, people of the district were involved in other occupational activities such as salt pan coolie, cattle rearing, fish vending, construction, etc. Since the main occupation of the people in the district was related to fishing, the impact of tsunami has led to changes in the occupational activities of the people to a large extent as well as partial and full damage to the houses.

People from some of the villages feel that auto rickshaw driving; craft, mechanical work etc. would help earn their bread in the present situation. Similarly, some of the people of the hamlet Gounder Theru feel that gem cutting and joint tailoring would benefit them. Some of them even have kept the hope of continuing with fishing if nets, fish vending equipments etc. were provided to them.

Apart from taking up fishing as an option for livelihood in the post-tsunami scenario, some people are also interested in getting involved in agricultural work if they get permission and loan facility is provided to them. They would like to resume working if they have milch animal and catamarans.

Some of the villages have access to self-help groups, youth club, ration card, panchayat office, Post office and NGOs. However, this is not so in case of all the villages. One of the major problems of most of the villages was the shortage of drinking water. Another problem is that of unemployment that came up after tsunami. They need money to invest in activities like thatch making. In some places, NGOs have intervened into such problems. However, in many villages, people have sought help from the NGOs and government in addressing the problems of housing and drinking water.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Specific Recommendations :

a. To the State

Mainstreaming of non-ocean fishing communities in the state rehabilitation:

The government of Tamilnadu could constitute and designate a committee comprising of key officials, representatives of NGOs / INGOs and representatives of Dalits, Tribes from the coastal areas to further investigate into the impact of Tsunami over the livelihoods of the non-ocean fishing communities and

- ? enlist all eligible families / Individuals and provide for interim relief / maintenance support,
- ? evolve appropriate livelihood rehabilitation policies that could be implemented either through the existing institutional settings like the Agriculture Cooperative Society, Salt Producers' Cooperative Society, Inland Fishers Cooperative Society, etc or through the local NGOs.
- ? As seen in the study, a large majority of the non-ocean fishing communities does not own any productive property in general and agricultural lands in particular. The government of Tamil Nadu could explore the possibilities of allocating reasonable portions of dry land to these poor landless people and provide forward and backward linkages to make them cultivable, so that they have a relatively sustainable option of livelihood. In doing so, the government could consider religious implementing of the existing schemes to this effect.

b.To the NGO community

Direct Interventions :

Resource rich INGOs and NGOs could divert part of their funds earmarked for tsunami recovery programs in Tamilnadu, to facilitate quick resuming of the lost livelihood opportunities of the non-ocean fishing communities, taking reference from this study. Rehabilitating of the non-ocean fishing communities will relatively be an easy and speedy process as compared to that of rehabilitating the fishing communities, since it does not involve any sort of political or environmental issues, like the CRZ. What all needed is the commitment and humanitarian understanding about the miserable conditions of these poor communities. Community fund model with appropriate support systems in place could well be considered as one of the intervention model, which would help make the interventions sustainable.

Specific recommendations to those who want to intervene:

The study indicates that there are some common options which people are familiar with and like to take up as their livelihood. 67.32% of the total families studied intend to carry on their existing activities, as they are not confident about the prospect of the new options and their skills to carry on such activities. Data also reveals that whether it is existing activities or new livelihood options, financial support is the primary issue involved. 89.85% of the families intending to carry on their existing activities have asked for only financial assistance. On the other hand, 55.72% of the families willing to take up new activities want financial support. Therefore, two conclusions can be easily drawn: *firstly*, people are more inclined to go by their own choice of livelihood rather than those imposed by the NGOs; and *secondly*, financial support is their priority so far as external assistance is concerned. It may be recommended that the NGOs who are willing to take initiative in the rehabilitation process need to keep those facts in mind so that their resources are utilized in a more effective way.

Please refer the district specific tables named “Existing Activities”, and “Communities’ perceptions on new / NGO imposed options” to learn as to how many families want to resume their existing activities and what is the support they require for doing so and how many families are willing to take up different activities newly like pickle making, papad making, petty trades, vending etc., and what are the supports like training etc., they require for venturing into them. These tables prescribe you the support they require and the no. of families in each category – village / hamlet wise, hence easing your process of initiating a project. These tables will help you choose the district(s) and villages of your choice for intervention, depending your resource and interests.

General Recommendations:

1. Response to human rights protection :

There has been overwhelming humanitarian response to the disaster by Governments, NGOs, and National Human Rights Institutions as well as United Nations and other agencies. However, much less attention has been devoted to issues of human rights protection that also have arisen and need to be addressed. Protection concerns include access to assistance, discrimination in aid provision, loss of documentation, safe and voluntary return or resettlement, and issues of property restitution etc.

2. Need for a rights-based approach :

There is a need for a rights-based approach to humanitarian assistance that would in particular include the application of international human rights norms and standards, particularly the right to participation, the right to livelihood (food, health, housing, etc.), and right against discrimination (against minorities, marginalized people, Dalits, women, children, aged, disabled etc.). Indeed, doing so is essential for a comprehensive and effective humanitarian response.

3. State responsibility :

At the heart of the UN *Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)*, and of the international human rights and humanitarian law on which they are based, is the concept that States bear the primary responsibility for the protection of persons within their jurisdiction (Principle 3).¹⁰

4. Safeguard against discrimination among different groups of IDPs :

There is also a need to safeguard against discrimination among different groups of IDPs. In some areas, there had been reports of discrimination in treatment of different groups of people affected by tsunami, which was sometimes ascribed to political and religious factors and to discrimination on the basis of caste. Such inequities in aid distribution not only violate the principles of impartiality and non-discrimination, they also risk creating resentment and tensions among communities, which can complicate the rehabilitation and reintegration of IDPs and threaten their security. It is often found that the people affected in tsunami have been excluded from the planning about the location and layout of camps and settlements, the manner in which aid is distributed, the type of food and other items supplied, and other matters central to their daily lives. Their exclusion from the decisions that affect their lives can heighten the sense of helplessness inflicted by a disaster like tsunami, undermine the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, and even put their physical security at risk, in particular that of women. Even where people's participation is sought, women too often are left out, despite the fact that they, along with the children they care for, have specific protection, assistance and reintegration needs that, in the absence of consultation, risk not being addressed.

5. Role of the State in rehabilitation process:

After the emergency stage of tsunami was over, it was the primary duty and responsibility of the national authorities to provide assistance to rebuild their shattered lives. Apart from rebuilding homes and other infrastructure, assistance should also be provided to enable the affected people to re-establish previous livelihoods (e.g., rehabilitating damaged agricultural land, business assets, fishing boats, nets etc.) or providing them with training and assistance for developing new sources of income. Moreover, there is high probability that rules on registration and inheritance may discriminate against women, who experience difficulties in regaining their homes and property, especially when they lose their husbands. As an element of their assistance for resettlement, authorities should anticipate and address these types of problems in the most equitable way possible.

¹⁰ *Principle 3*

1. National authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction.

2. Internally displaced persons have the right to request and to receive protection and humanitarian assistance from these authorities. They shall not be persecuted or punished for making such a request.

6. Focus on Women:

Women being an integral part of the economic activities of the non-ocean fishing communities, it should be ensured that they are recognized as workers at par with their male counterparts and hence have equal rights to livelihood-related compensation and aid. It should also be ensured that women equally participate in the planning and distribution of food, shelter and economic assistance. Special efforts should be made to identify and help women at risk, such as widows, single mothers, women-headed households or pregnant women.

7. Coordination in Rehabilitation Process: Develop strategies to enhance coordination among government officials, non-governmental organizations and other external agencies. This is also to ensure that the resources are distributed among the affected communities in such a way that they do not overlap but are complementary to each other. This would help to come up with a comprehensive rehabilitation scheme.