Toward a Self-Determination Approach to Post-Disaster Recovery for Aboriginal Peoples

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Colonial History of Taiwanese Aboriginal peoples(1): the loss of self-governance

- **Stage 1: Aboriginal people as the only master**
  - The appearance of aboriginal peoples in Taiwan can be dated to 2000 years ago.

- **Stage 2: Aboriginal people as one of the masters**
  - The Chinese began to migrate to Taiwan four hundred years ago.
  - In 1897, Taiwan was conceded to Japan by Imperial China after defeated in the Yellow Sea.
  - Japan colonial government initiated its warfare against aboriginal people in 1913 in order to gain access to camphor.
  - In 1930, Wu-She uprising: the final resistant from aboriginal people against the ruler. After three months of machine gun, bomber, military action was not successful. Violating international law, Japan used toxic gas. More than two hundred Atayal peoples committed suicide.
  - Aboriginal hero, Chief Mona Rudao in the 1930 Wushe uprising. The Japanese military mounted his bones as specimens in the Imperial University at Taipei (National Taiwan U.)
1913-8 warfare & Chief Mona Rudao in the 1930 Wu-She Uprising
Stage 3: Aboriginal people as the subordinated

- In 1945, Taiwan was returned to Nationalist Chinese Government after WWII.
- In 1949 Communist China established and the Nationalist government retreated to Taiwan.

Stage 4: the Birth of Aboriginal movement: path toward self-governance?

- The first aboriginal autonomous group established in Taipei in 1984 by aboriginal college students.
- Rename ourselves as Aboriginal people movement in 1992 in the constitution.
- Establishment of formal statutory governmental department in 1996.
Post-recovery as Pathway to Self-Governance?

- Aimed at challenging the individualistic assumptions underlying disaster policy and practice in the 1999 Chi-Chi post-quake recovery efforts.
- The traditional conceptualization of disaster discourse, PTSD, fails to involve the community, and often perpetuates the conditions that make the community vulnerable to disasters.
- Developing local understanding of disasters and taking informed action to rebuild their lives at a community level post-disaster, should be a key segment of disaster policy.
- Community participation is a long desire for aboriginal peoples to reclaim their ways of living.
- The case of the Community Family Support Center project is analyzed as an example of such a disaster management paradigm shift.
Paradigm Shift: from PTSD to Collective Trauma and Historical Trauma

- PTSD, victims of a disaster are identified according to individual symptoms: physical trauma in terms of death or disability, fiscal losses in terms of house damage, psychological trauma in terms of the most popular professional jargon after 921 quake, Post-Trauma Stress Disorder (PTSD).

- Collective Trauma: Loss of human life and belongings is visible, but loss of community and networks tend to be unseen and therefore neglected (Erikson, 1976).

- Historical Trauma: Experiences of human suffering become collective memory that passed on from generation to generation. If the trauma is not healed, it becomes a frozen rite in which aboriginal people are locked into a state of mourning and grieving that they cannot get out unless the stories can be told and retold again.
‘collective trauma’ : the phenomenon whereby social fabrics become disconnected after a community has experienced extreme stress.

Disaster causes not only individual trauma, but that community organization also suffers. Collective trauma damages the connections between individuals.

Disaster destroys not only lives, but also social relationships and the culture that hold the community together, making lives meaningful.

Developing local understanding of the disaster and taking informed action to rebuild their lives at a community level should be a key component of disaster policy.
Why communities become unseen in recovery process?

- First, most of the recovery efforts were framed in professional perspectives rather than in a community-based perspective.
- Second, although only few recovery efforts were targeted at building community capacity, these few efforts suffered from a lack of incorporation across jurisdictional and disciplinary boundaries.
- Third, the goal of disaster recovery policy was not aimed at sustainable development for the affected communities, but only at restoring the communities to their previous level before the disaster.
Local or Professional Orientation?

- the division between locally based organizations (insider) and social service organizations (outsider) is not fixed.
- The case of Community Family Support Center project provides a good example that illustrates how outside social service organizations become localized and played the role of a catalytic agent in the disaster recovery policy after the Chi-Chi earthquake.
Community Family Support Center (CFSC) project

- The CFSC was designed to establish a network of twenty-three CFSCs in all thirteen regions of the county to provide accessible services to the vulnerable population.

- In contrast to other professional-designed projects, CFSC was aimed at establishing a mechanism for community participation, rather than providing designated types of services.

- CFSC provided a chance for outside organizations to reallocate their energy into long-term recovery efforts.
Interface between Government and Community

- CFSCs played a dual role in disaster recovery, both as a mechanism to implement government-led disaster policies and as a mechanism to reflect community needs.

- The dividing effect of the multi-jurisdiction authorities within the government was minimized by the establishment of CFSCs. CFSC became the focal point of incorporated action that moved across multi-jurisdiction and disciplinary boundaries.

- CFSCs played a key role in coordinating resources and planning during the disaster of the Tao-chi typhoon in the summer of 2001.
The story of Atayal tribes in the Da-An river after 921 quake
Transition from expert-led model to participatory model

- Standardized social service program
- Referral and information
- Counseling service
- Case work for vulnerable population
- Community-based program
- Self-help housing project
- Community kitchen
- Community economic development
Community Kitchen as a revival of traditional way of living: Sharing
廚房樣貌
Local resident is the key to recovery

- Women and young men are recruited as workers
- Elders are interviewed to document oral history of the tribe as guiding vision for recovery
- Traditional cultural image, Gaga, words of our ancestors: living together as one
Division of work: Agriculture, Marketing, Tradition
Public projects contracted to local residents
Using traditional way to do things

漂流木半成品門牌柱
竹牆
Farming together
Preserving traditional culture: bamboo cup and rice wine
Traditional food
Product research and development: Wine, food, weaving clothes, fruits
Logo design and packaging
2008 package
Feedback mechanism to community

- Mutual care for frail elderly: meal delivery
- Scholarship for high school students
- Co-op system: saving, purchasing, student loan
Meal delivery to frail elderly
Reviewed by local priests, teachers, and elders
Hand over to local organization

- Formation of local organization to take over the task from Compassion International in 2008
- Local residents become community workers
- Community economy to be sustainable to support the community care program (70%)
New crisis, Old problem but New approach

- 88 flood in 2009
- 80% of victims are aboriginal people
- The government decides to move from emergency relief directly to permanent allocation without transitional allocation
- Aboriginal peoples who choose permanent allocation will be denied access to traditional territory.
- Paying full-time salary to 10-15 local residents in aboriginal tribes to be community workers and tutored by aboriginal workers of 921 for the next 5 years.