

# *Resilient Recovery*

toward improving the circumstances of  
socially vulnerable populations

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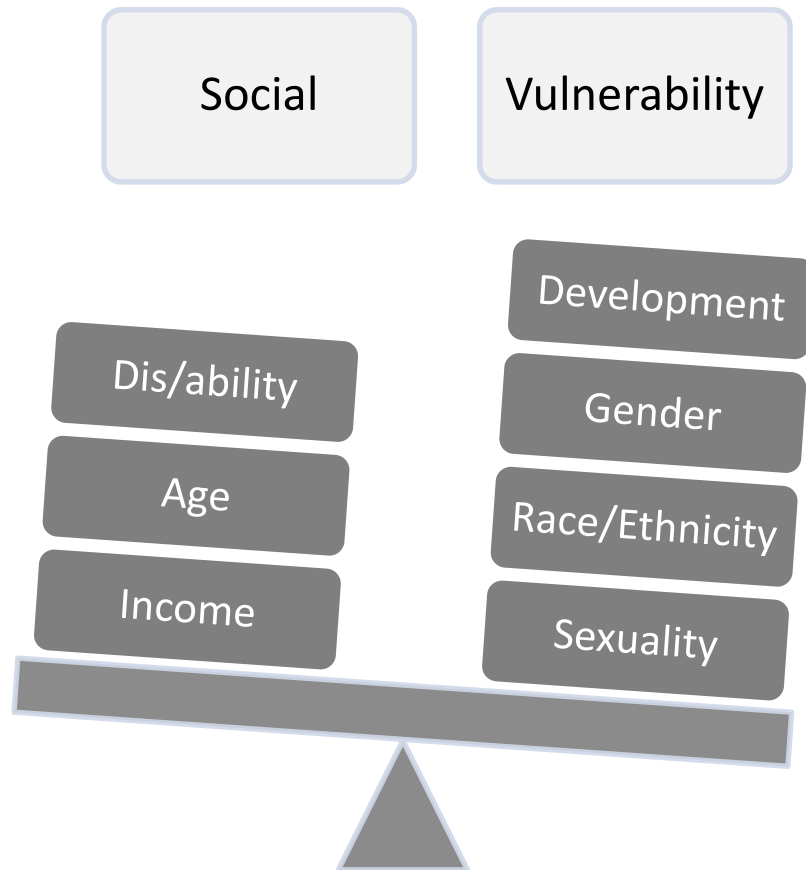
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# Social Vulnerability




“Differential social relations among groups” that complicates, exacerbates, and undermines the process of post-disaster housing recovery

(Fordham et al. 2014, p. 4; Phillips Forthcoming)



Photo courtesy of Pam Jenkins and Barbara Davidson

# Homeowner Return Process (Traditional View, U.S.)

- 
- Sort, pile and remove debris appropriately
  - File for insurance, state, and federal funds

- Wait
- Inspections, denials, appeals, lawsuits, apply for grants if permitted

- Clean the building site, create architectural blueprints
- Get a contractor....if you can; gets supplies....if you can.

- Building permits, approvals....and contractor gets sub-contractors...if they can: plumbing, electrical work, framing, roofing, countertops, flooring.

- Inspections for each (delays). Compliance with local codes and any new regulations like setbacks, mitigation requirements.

- Congratulations!!! It's time to move back home.

# People do not experience returning home the same way, nor do they have the same needs.

- People with disabilities
  - Accessible temporary and permanent housing
- Senior citizens
  - Independent through assisted living
- Children
  - Close to schools
- It's not a neat series of steps and stages.
- It's far from sequential or certain.
- Barriers stall movement towards resilient recovery.



# Princeville, North Carolina, U.S.



- The Tar River has flooded 10 times since 1800.
- Rebuilt the dike in 1967, “we have high water practically every year and every five or six years things get so bad that some families have to leave. With the river taken care of, there’ll be building and remodeling and people coming back instead of leaving. We’ll have running water in the houses, too, and maybe the government will give us a grant of some type for sewage disposal.”



# Would They Relocate?

- 1976 Bicentennial Commission: “in the midst of two of the most destructive floods of 1924 and 1940, there were a few diehards who refused to leave their homes or businesses. They took refuge on the second floor of the Grade School and imported their food by a motor boat. It was these diehards with other local citizens who returned that kept Princeville alive. They too envisioned their forefathers’ dream—they wanted a unique town; unique because it would be a town of Blacks governed by Blacks.”
- “My ancestors’ energies and efforts and resources went into a specific property in Princeville. Those are the streets I played in, the trees I climbed. You take a town and move it anywhere and then you’re severed me from my actual roots.”



“You’re asking them to pick up and move and go to some place else” said one *respondent*, “and they’re saying this is my home, this home has history.”

A wide, shallow bayou in Louisiana, viewed from a boat. The water is dark blue with white foam from the boat's wake. In the background, there are several buildings, including a large white structure, and several boats docked along the banks. The sky is clear and blue.

# Grand Bayou, Louisiana

# Community Context

- The strength of community
  - “Everyone has more than one mom and dad.”
  - Living into their 80s.
  - “No one ever went hungry.”
- Cultural heritage Attakapa Ishaak Native Americans
  - Elders: “here 300 years.”
  - Indian mounds, 1000 A.D.
- Environmental stewards. “God put us here.”
- Economic relationship to the land, subsistence work.



# Repetitive and Significant Risks



## **Tropical Storms pre-2005**

“Thirty-five minutes, that’s all it took.”

“The water barreled in and out, fast, real fast.”



## **2010 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico**

“As a commercial fisherman I have to be here. But with two hurricanes and now the oil spill, it’s like three strikes and we are out.”

# Relocation and Reconstruction Efforts That Failed

(Handmer 1985; Cuevas Muñiz & Luján 2005; Barenstein 2006; Johnson, Lizarralde & Davidson 2006; Davidson et al. 2007; Yonder, Akçar and Gopalan 2009; Raju 2013; Handmer and Nalau 2013; Karunasena and Rameezdeen 2014)

## 1999 Marmara Turkey Earthquake

- NGO/Contractors
- Lack of consultation
- Too far away from livelihoods
- “donor-driven” versus “owner driven” approach

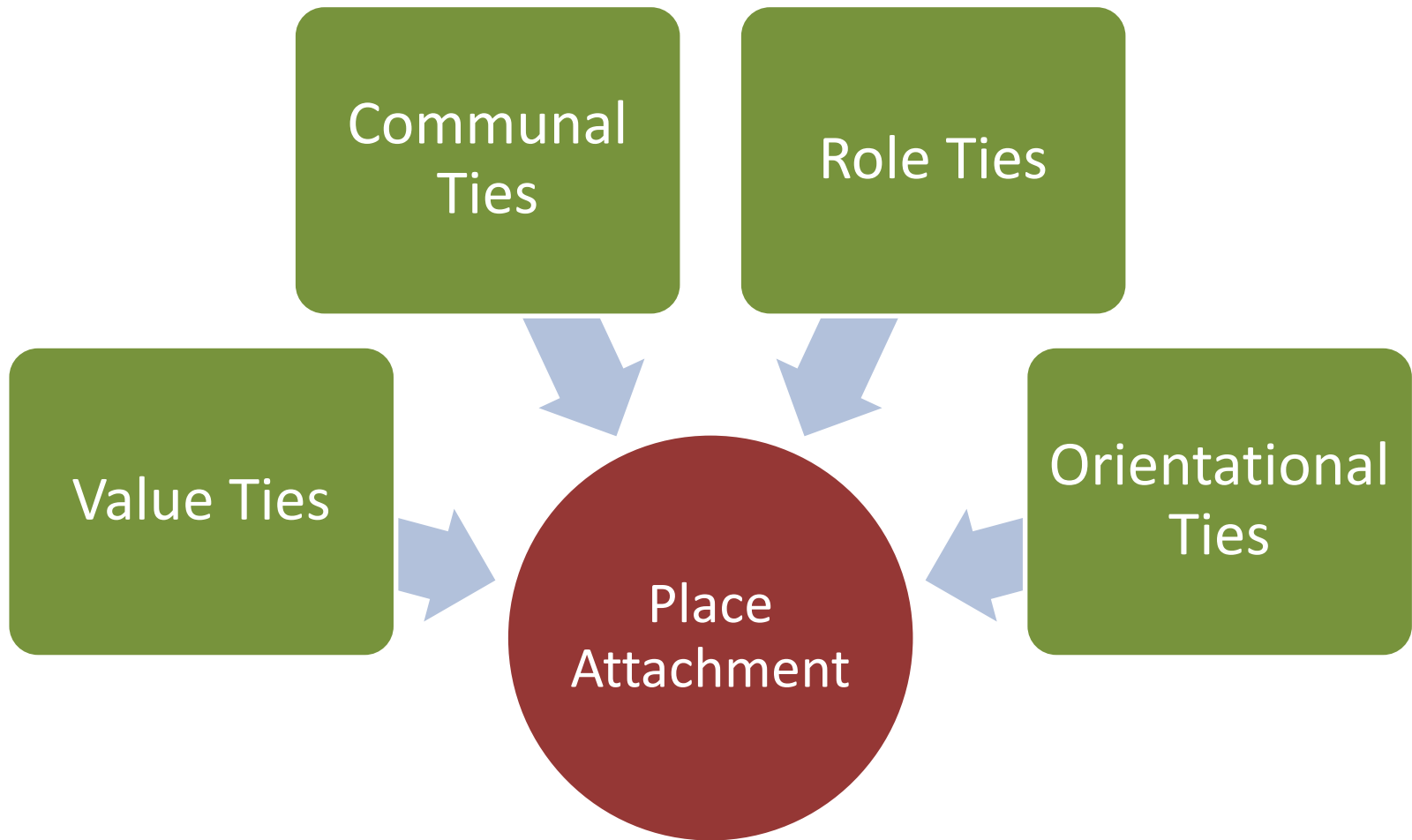
## 2004 India/Sri Lanka Tsunami

- Gov/NGO/Contractors
- No local involvement; Gender ignored
- No “signature veranda”; No trees; Concrete homes; No consideration of prevailing winds, “sweltering.”

*Sri Lanka: “beneficiaries of donor-built houses complained that designs do not conform to their rural lifestyle. Kitchens were designed for use of gas cookers instead of firewood, attached toilets instead of normally used detached toilets, less semi-open spaces, no space to keep fishing gear”*  
(Karunasena and Rameezdeen 2014, p. 183).

# Why People Will Not Leave

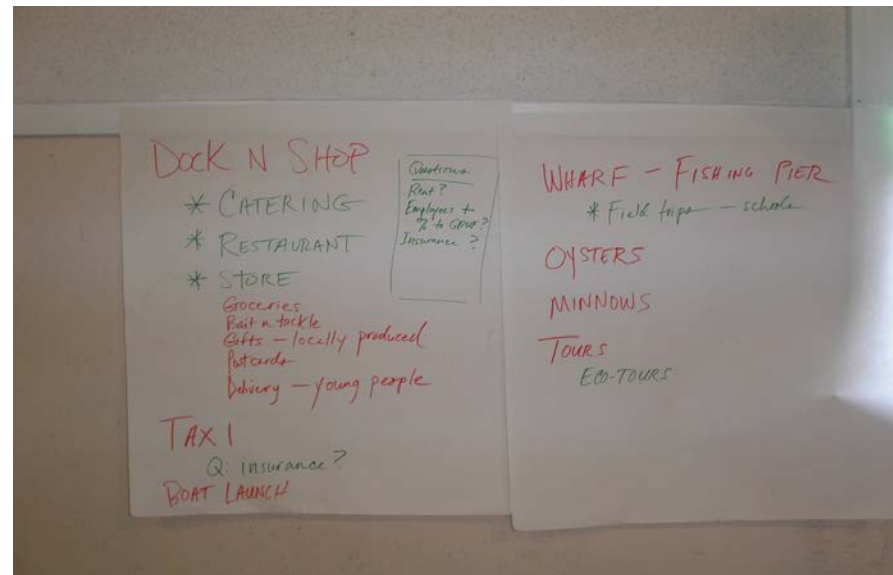
(Hummon 1986; 1990)



# The Value of Local Views

As far back as 1982, the United Nations indicated (p. 4), “the most effective relief and reconstruction policies result from the participation of survivors in determining and planning their own needs.”

Traditional  
Ecological  
Knowledge  
(TEK)



Sometimes referred to as traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), local “knowledge is derived from experience and shared from person to person” (Prober, O’Connor and Walsh 2011, p. 12).

# Princeville Mitigation

- Strengthened the levee
- Improved stormwater drainage
- Elevated homes



 **Princeville Recovery**  
**Dike Repairs**

- ◆ Level of Protection: 300 year event
- ◆ 100% Federal Funding

**Features**

- Removal of displaced and unsuitable soils
- Removal of temporary floodfighting dike
- Grading damaged surfaces in preparation for backfill
- Backfill and compaction to original design profile
- Removal of sediment and debris from drainage structures
- Regrassing slopes and side berms
- Clearing of trees, brush, and large roots from slopes and side berms
- Maintenance Travelway
- Railroad Closure

**Schedule**

- December 17, 1999 Advertise for bids
- December 29, 1999 Bid opening
- January 4, 2000 Award construction contract
- January 18, 2000 Notice to Proceed
- May 9, 2000 Complete dike repairs
- 6 months Complete railroad stoplog gate



  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
Wilmington District  
P. O. Box 1860  
Wilmington, N.C. 28402

# U.S. President's Council on Princeville

*“The legacy of Princeville is one of survivorship....the people of Princeville are very proud of their heritage and their ability to overcome adversity. Their decision to stay was a courageous one, and the Federal Government can provide Princeville with the opportunity to preserve its place in American history while rebuilding a better, safer, and more disaster resistant community.” -President Clinton’s Council on Princeville*



Historic Town Hall (above);  
New Town Hall (below)



# Mennonite Disaster Service

*A bi-national, faith-based organization that provides volunteer labor after disaster for repairs and reconstruction.*



Photo courtesy of Mennonite Disaster Service

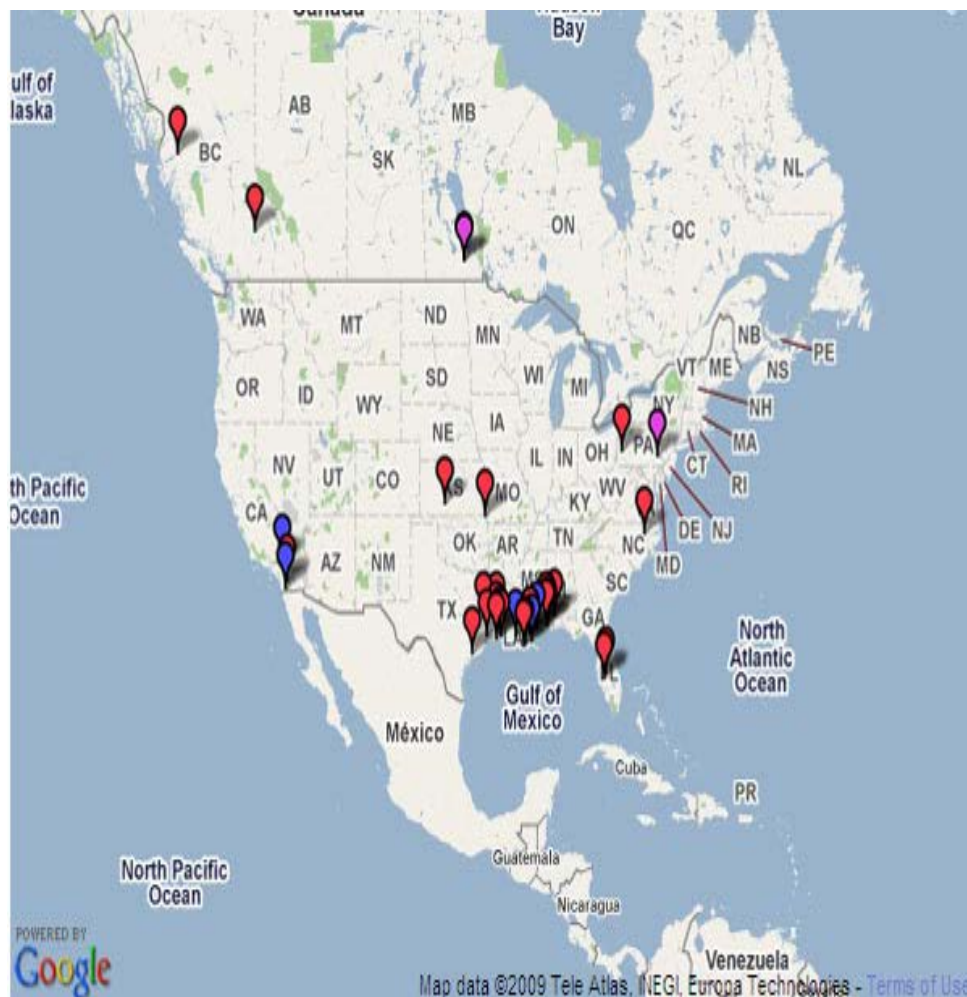
# MDS Client Selection: *“Falling Through the Cracks”*



Photos courtesy of Mennonite Disaster Service

# Where were homes repaired and rebuilt?

- Rural communities
  - Bayou La Batre, AL
  - Grand Bayou, LA
  - Point aux Chienas, LA
- Small towns that took a major hit
  - Pass Christian, MS
  - Cameron Parish, LA
  - East Texas
- Urban neighborhoods
  - The Lower Ninth Ward, New Orleans



Getting it all in...to the bayou..  
With volunteer labor.



# Home Again...elevated.



# How Did That Happen?

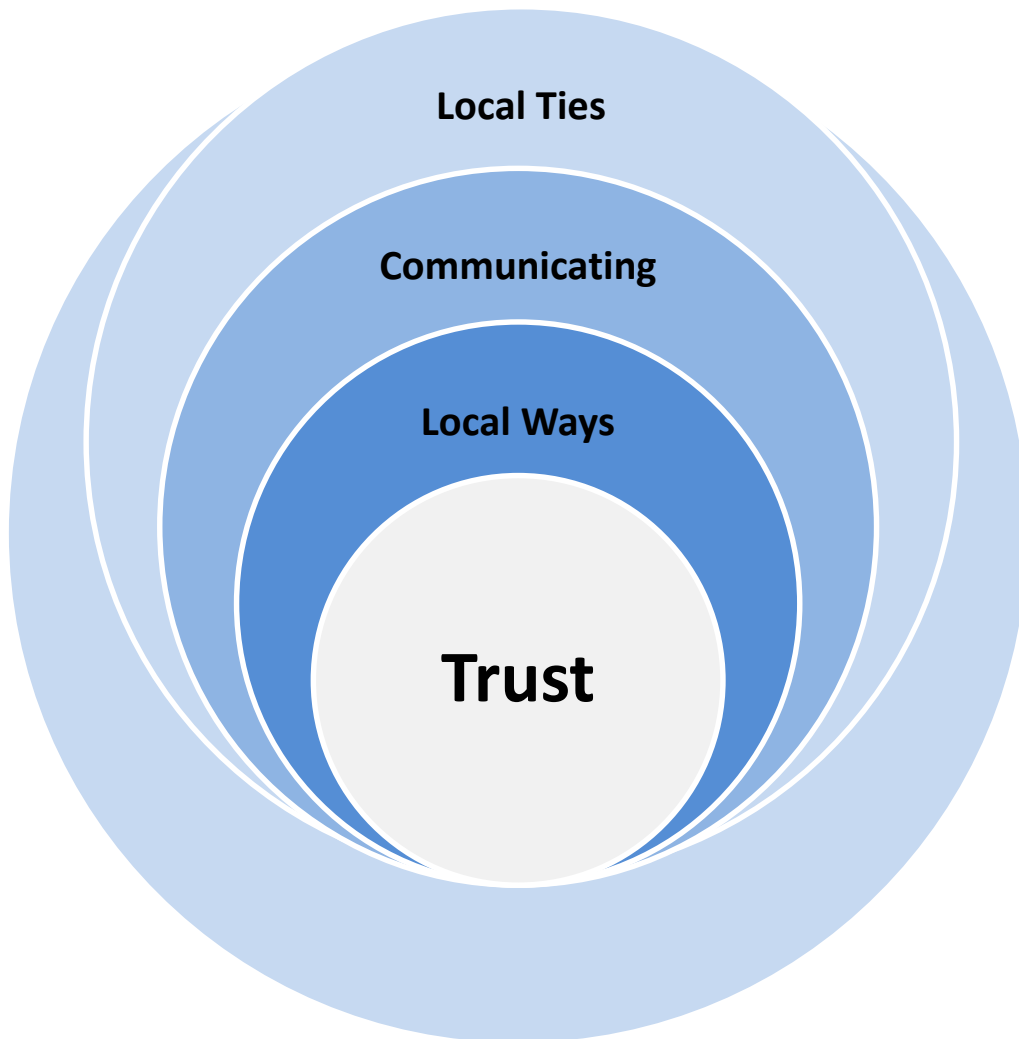
Because outside organizations empowered homeowner decision-making.

Because outside organizations worked with local organizations.



# Making Entry into New Communities: Views from Local Leaders

Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Ike (U.S., 2005-2008)



- “They arrived self-contained.”
- “We connected Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) with local contacts.”
- “I did a lot of devotions for MDS.”
- “They answered the phone.”
- “If something happened to slow things down, they were always gracious about it.”
- “We did the accounting together every morning.”

*“We had promises from other organizations that did not follow through.”*

# “Others would push their weight around.”

- “They were anxious to learn our way of building...not all contractors would do that.”
- “They took the house apart and rebuilt it to the higher elevation.”
- “It’s not about speed, it’s about quality work.”
- “Those houses...are built like Fort Knox.”



Photo courtesy of  
Mennonite Disaster  
Service (US/Canada)

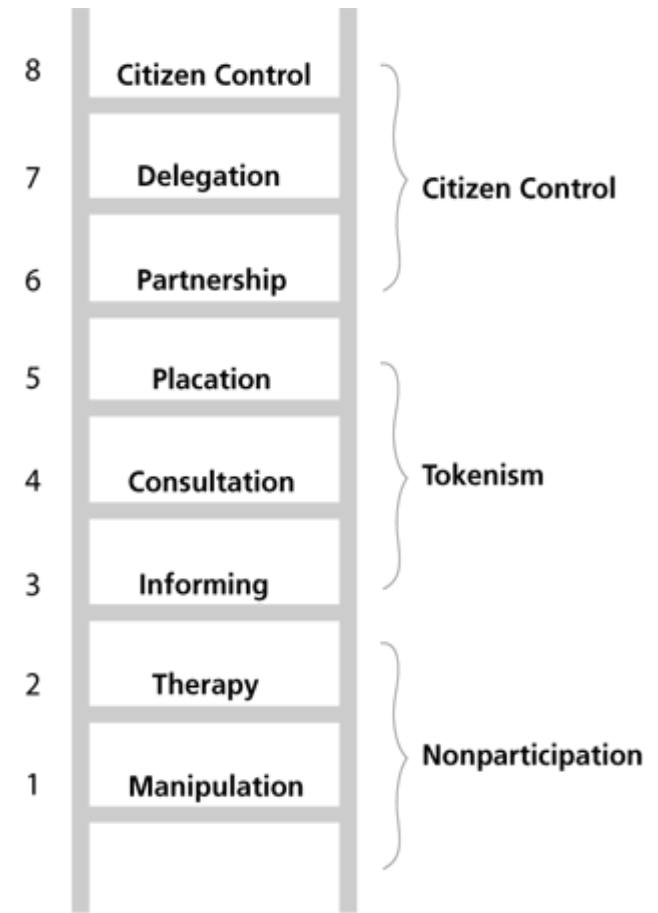
# Ladder of Participation

(Arnstein 1969; Davidson et al. 2007; Coles and Buckle 2004)

At the top of the ladder, residents are actively involved in decision-making.

At the bottom of the ladder, officials inform survivors of decisions.

As noted in Australia and the United Kingdom, “effective recovery can be achieved only where the affected community participates fully in the recovery process and where it has the capacity, skills and knowledge to make its participation meaningful” (Coles and Buckle 2004, p. 6).



Arnstein's Ladder (1969)

Degrees of Citizen Participation

# Empowering Local Decision-Making

- “The plan called for a small hatch door to the attic which would have made it inaccessible to me. MDS agreed to install a proper door with a ladder. The house had no exit for handicapped people which would serve as a second fire escape. They changed a bedroom window with a door and added a second set of steps. They did this willingly.”
- She praised the project director heavily especially for finding a two-seat shower, “my daughter loves it. The shower is a godsend (so she can bathe a child with a disability).”
- “We requested a handicap ramp be built, a tub instead of a shower (installed), and requested a different stove for handicapped people which were the main changes from what was on the standard blueprints.”
- “They redesigned the cabinets to be lower to match my height.”

**“Their reputation with the clients is above and beyond the norm. They work with the homeowner, will even say ‘we can try that’ when someone wants a modification. To me that says they have more than just the homebuilding skills.”**

**Local building code inspector, Louisiana, US.**

# Encouraging Local Involvement

- Build capacity through encouragement
- Make room for those willing to step up the plate.
- Others are watching, possibly waiting.
- Think about levels of involvement.
- Think about ways to be involved.
- Remove barriers: time, work, transportation, child care, gender, mobility, food, language.



# Unintended Consequences

*“We really needed a friend to talk to.”*

*“Knowing that someone cares is so helpful.”*

## *The Therapeutic Community*

“compensates for the sorrow and stress under which many members are living with an unexpected abundance of personal warmth and directed help.” (Barton 1969)

# “Sympathetic Listening”

“They were not judgmental about why people wanted to say here, to live here, to want to build back. They never questioned why. They felt for our people. They understood our love for our community and tried to help us get it back. They would say, what can we do to get you back on to your porch. It is just their way of walking in, like they have always been in your community.”

“It is amazing how one day of our work can help a person go from despair to hope. There were people who lost it emotionally and we were often called upon to be comforters. One of our women played a major role in listening to other women and just being with them.”





# Sympathetic Identification



*Amish ShooFly Pie*

*Shrimp "Gumbo"*

- “A highlight each week for each group of volunteers was taking them out on my boat to watch the porpoises and feed the gulls. We would often end the day with a dinner from our area – they especially enjoyed the Vietnamese dinners. The community really enjoyed sharing their local customs with the volunteers.”
- “There were young and old people. They were very interested in us and how we lived- our culture. They were down to earth people, they liked finding out about us and our food, like oysters. They had a different culture and were happy to explain their religion and culture to us.
- “We educated each other and we are lifelong friends. I fixed gumbo one night and other Cajun cooking, stuff they don't know.”

# Rethinking Resilience

- A mutual decision-making process between those with and those without resources, designed to maintain cultural identity, historic community place attachment, psychological well-being, environmental resources, and livelihoods in a safer albeit familiar and meaningful location.....a *holistic* resilience.
- Resilience requires listening, negotiation, consideration, empowerment.
- Owner-driven over donor-driven.
- Doing *with*, not doing *for*, people at risk.



Photo courtesy of Richard Babb

“Anyone is welcome to help....

But *few* are invited to  
gumbo.”



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Extra Slides on Research Process  
For Discussion Period as needed

# Research Design

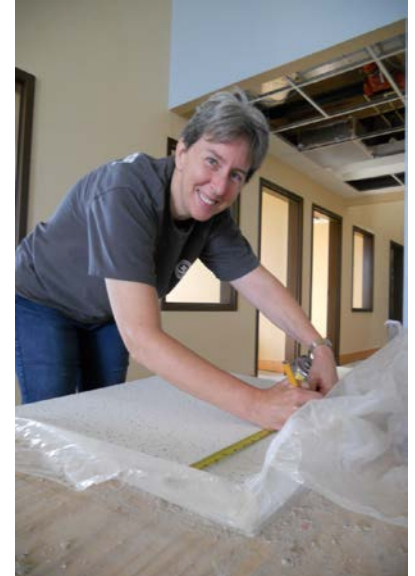
## QUALITATIVE

- **Interviews**, 1-2 hours long
  - 162
- **Focus Groups**
  - PDs, OMs, Cooks (N=59)
- **Participant Observation**
  - Project Sites
- **Archival Research**
  - MDS files
    - Pennsylvania
  - Mennonite libraries and archives
    - Kansas
    - Indiana
    - Pennsylvania

## QUANTITATIVE

- **Survey**
  - Online – Survey Monkey
  - Paper – Traditional Mail
- **Total Number**
  - Online = 651
  - Paper = 201
  - Total = 852/17 denominations

# Participant observation



# Documents & Visual Data



Kansas MDS Committee - 1960's

**Consultations with historians,  
religious studies scholars, experts  
on Anabaptism.**

# Interviews

- **Did we build the best house for you? 25**
- **Building Relationships 69**
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# Transferability

