



FROM AUTHORITARIAN ENCLAVE TO DELIBERATIVE SPACE: GOVERNANCE LOGICS IN POST-DISASTER RECONSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT:

These days, one would be hard-pressed to find scholars and practitioners who would argue against the virtues of community participation in post-disaster reconstruction. In practice, however, the legacy of community participation has been mixed. This article presents three cases of disaster-affected communities in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Findings suggest that different governance logics emerge in each of these cases: Authoritarian, communitarian and deliberative. Each of these logics promotes particular understandings on who should participate in the reconstruction process and the appropriate scope of action for citizens to express discontent, provide feedback and perform democratic agency. I argue that design interventions in participatory procedures as well as contingencies in broader social contexts shape the character and legacies of community participation. The paper concludes by comparing the legacies of each of these 'governance enclaves' and imagining possibilities for participatory politics in post-disaster contexts.

BIO

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COVER PHOTO

John Javellana

FROM AUTHORITARIAN ENCLAVE TO DELIBERATIVE SPACE: GOVERNANCE LOGICS IN POST-DISASTER RECONSTRUCTION

Community participation has long been a buzzword in post-disaster reconstruction. Participatory procedures have gained traction worldwide, from Japan's Jishubo, or neighbourhood-based disaster planning councils (Bajek et al 2006) to Papua New Guinea's public consultations that integrate indigenous and scientific knowledge in disaster prevention strategies (Mercer et al 2010). These days, one would be hard-pressed to find scholars and practitioners in the field of post-disaster reconstruction that argue against the virtues of community participation.

In practice, the legacy of community participation has been mixed. For some, it is mere rhetoric invoked in international frameworks that cannot be realised in practice. For others, the contingencies of a post-disaster environment hamper the full implementation of participatory principles, especially when decisions need to be made in a swift and decisive manner. The question then remains: What accounts for the uneven legacies of community participation in post-disaster reconstruction?

This article pursues this line of enquiry by examining the manifestations of participation in three communities affected by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Based on a two-year ethnographic research, findings suggest that while these communities belong to the same political jurisdiction, community participation unfolds in various ways. I compare each of these cases based on three critical questions inspired by the literature on democratic governance: (1) How is the community imagined? (2) Who makes decisions that affect the community? (3) What mechanisms are available for feedback and accountability? These questions are designed to reveal each of the case's 'governance logic,' or the underlying sets of assumptions and principles that facilitate particular understandings of who should take part in the reconstruction process, the depth and breadth of 'appropriate' participation and the scope of action available to provide feedback and express discontent. The logics that emerge in this case are authoritarian, communitarian and deliberative. I argue that design interventions in participatory procedures as well as contingencies in broader social contexts shape the character and legacies of community participation. This, however, is not to say that the governance logics that emerge in the aftermath of the disaster are obdurate. The cases also illustrate how various actors negotiate these logics, which shows some possibilities for the development and deepening of community participation.

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL: PARTICIPATION IN POST-DISASTER RECONSTRUCTION

It has been more than three decades since the United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation (1982) declared community participation as the 'key to success' in post-disaster reconstruction. This view has several iterations. In 2004, the Sphere Project developed a charter that identifies minimum standards in humanitarian response. Included in the charter is a commitment to create feedback mechanisms for disaster-affected communities and to ensure balanced representation of vulnerable peoples in discussions about recovery. These requirements fall under the first core standard of providing 'people-centred humanitarian response' (The Sphere Project, 2004). The United Nations-backed 'Building Back Better' agenda supports similar principles, with its first proposition underscoring the need for 'families and communities to drive their own recovery' (Clinton 2006). Reacting against the aid community's tendency to be 'arrogant and ignorant' for assuming that they are best placed to determine the needs of communities, this proposition foregrounds the importance of actively listening to survivors' voices. It articulates a vision for disaster response as one that invests in mechanisms for communicating with aid beneficiaries so their demands, grievances and ideas can influence the recovery process.

The devil, of course, is in the details. Although there appears to be a broad consensus over the desirability of community participation, this vision unfolds unevenly in practice. The definition of community participation varies and even the best of intentions can fall short in realising its core principles.

Part of the challenge is putting together an analytical framework by which the normative expectations and practical applications of community participation in a post-disaster context can be systematically examined. The literature on citizen participation, to be sure, already offers a range of analytical approaches. Sherry Arnstein's (1969) 'Ladder of Citizen Participation' has become one of the most influential frameworks, which maps the degrees of citizen involvement from non-participation to citizen control. Others draw from the language of empowerment, such as Deepa Narayan-Parker's (2005) conceptual framework which establishes the link between opportunity structures for participation, the capabilities of impoverished communities, and development outcomes. These approaches, among others, have gained traction in disaster research. They are often used in comparative studies which maps various forms of stakeholder participation in post-disaster reconstruction (e.g. Davidson, Johnson, Lizarralde, Dikmen, & Sliwinski, 2007; Ying, 2009; Chandrasekhar, Zhang & Xiao, 2014).

While these approaches have provided clear standards by which participation can be assessed, there are research contexts where pre-set categories constrain rather than enable analysis. This is particularly true for projects that use an ethnographic approach, where citizen participation, or the lack thereof, is examined by observing the everyday lived experience of disaster-affected communities. For this reason, I propose a broader analytical approach to studying community participation. Instead of anchoring the analysis to pre-set categories, I put forward three critical questions that surface the governance logics of various cases. These questions are anchored on the literature on democratic governance to foreground the normative assumptions of community participation and reveal the range of practices that shape the distribution of voice and decision-making power within a community.

1. How is the community imagined?

The term community, as Colin H. Davidson and his colleagues suggest, has often been used arbitrarily in disaster research. The term 'neither denotes what this group of people really have in common nor their differences,' making the term applicable to a neighbourhood, residents of a small town, or a group of NGOs (Davidson et al 2007: 102). By asking how the concept of community is imagined, one can generate grounded insight into which voices are considered relevant in the recovery process. It is crucial not to rely on a predefined notion of a community in a post-disaster situation, especially in a context where affected populations have been displaced and relocated. As disasters disrupt social networks and patterns of group behaviour, the notion of a community is constantly negotiated as citizens attempt to put order back into their lives. To critically examine community participation, it is important to first understand how disaster-affected communities and stakeholders recognise (or deny) the status of others as deserving of esteem and political recognition, such that their voices are valued resource in the recovery process (see Fraser, 2000).

2. Who makes decisions on behalf of the community?

Democratic governance relies on the commitment and capacities of ordinary citizens to take part in collective decision-making through thoughtful dialogue (Fung and Wright, 2001). The United Nation's Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction considers 'all-of-society-engagement' as one of its guiding principles, which underscores the 'shared responsibility' of the state and various stakeholders in reducing risks and harms. While the principle of all-of-society engagement underscores the virtue of inclusive decision-making, the applications of this principle in practice vary. The scope of participation in the Sendai Framework, for example, is qualified to 'relevant stakeholders at appropriate levels,' (United Nations General Assembly 2015: 5-7), which suggest that major decisions such as identifying relocation sites for disaster-affected communities is not considered 'appropriate' for all-of-society engagement as geographic, geological and meteorological considerations are best determined by expert communities. The challenge, therefore, is to specify the stages of decision-making where the input of affected communities are considered most relevant (see Aldrich and Cook 2013).

3. What mechanisms are available for feedback and accountability?

Davidson et al (2007) correctly identify the continuum of possibilities for participation. Community participation may mean involving communities as labour force in shelter programs or giving citizens an active role in decision-making and project management. While Arnstein's ladder of participation shows partiality towards approaches at the top of the ladder as more superior forms of political participation, other democratic theorists suggest that participation or 'citizen control' is not necessarily more desirable all the time. As Mark Warren puts it:

While we may not wish to participate most of the time, we want procedures that allow us to do so when authority becomes questionable, and this occurs when authorities make decisions no longer functionally specific to the goods they serve. (Warren, 1996, p. 49)

At the core of democratic participation are mechanisms for feedback and accountability, where communities have a fair shot at articulating their discontent and hold decision-makers responsible for their actions. Responsiveness is part of these mechanisms, where decision-makers give an account of their actions and address the concerns the community puts forward. Analytically, the challenge is to identify how formal and informal procedures for feedback and accountability are made available (or withheld) from communities.

As with other idealised forms of democratic action, the vision of participation faces tensions with entrenched political practices. Tensions may stem from the inconsistency between the principles of participation with governance structures that exist before the disaster. Ara Cho's (2014) research on Japan illustrates how attempts at decentralising governance in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake had little successes in reforming Japan's top-down structure. Even if municipalities wanted to involve more voices in their recovery plans, local governments' hands are tied with central government's guidelines to secure funding for reconstruction projects.

Political cultures can also stand in the way of realising the virtues of participation. In Italy's case, Silvio Berlusconi's 'cult of personality' resulted to the Prime Minister assuming all responsibility for deciding on the needs of citizens who suffered from earthquake in L'Aquila. Accountability suffered here, for when mistakes happen, blame is placed on other actors who 'failed' to realise Berlusconi's directives. For Alpaslan Özerdem and Gianni Rufini (2013), this signals a reversal from successful approaches used in disasters in Friuli and Umbria where local leadership and community participation took a central role.

These issues, among others, illustrate the complexities of implementing community participation in post-disaster contexts. The differential valuation of who belongs to the community and what counts as participation poses issues on the extent to which community participation can be inclusive, empowering and legitimate. Questions remain about the extent to which disaster-affected communities can meaningfully participate, especially in contexts defined by governance structures and political cultures that run contrary to the virtues of participation.

The next sections extend this discussion by investigating the precise ways in which participatory politics unfolds in post-Haiyan Philippines. It describes the different governance logics that emerge in the aftermath of disasters, all of which invoke community participation in varying degrees. Through this empirically-driven exercise, I hope to generate measured insights on what community participation can reasonably achieve in the context of vulnerable contexts, as well as identify avenues for participatory ethos to take root amidst trying times.

‘WE DESERVE THE BEST’

On November 8, 2013, one of the strongest tropical cyclones in modern history laid waste a cluster of islands in Central Philippines. Typhoon Haiyan, locally known as Yolanda, left over eight thousand people dead and four million families displaced—double the number of those who lost their homes in the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. More than \$563 million worth of crops and infrastructure was damaged, dampening the mood of a country that was just euphoric from registering one of the highest growth rates in Asia.

The extent of damage and complex political realities make post-disaster recovery exceptionally challenging. Tacloban City—one of the areas worst hit by the disaster and the focus of this research—needs to rebuild almost 30,000 damaged homes (The World Bank 2013). Most of these homes belong to urban poor communities living in informal settlements along the coast. After Haiyan, these areas are declared ‘no dwelling zones’ because of their vulnerability to storm surges and tsunami.

Tacloban City’s Local Development Council (the Council) formulated an Integrated Development Plan which seeks to relocate at-risk populations to permanent resettlement sites. ‘Tacloban North,’ as the Council calls it, is envisioned to be a ‘regional growth hub, building wealth and prosperity for its citizens, and playing a significant role in inclusive regional development.’ (Tacloban North Integrated Development Plan, 2016: 26). Tacloban’s economic recovery has an impact on nearby towns, as it is the centre of trade, commerce, education and industry in the region. Haiyan opened opportunities for Tacloban to make a case for developing a new township that can spur economic development. ‘The people of Tacloban have been through a lot,’ said one government official during the public consultation on the development plan, ‘we deserve the best.’

Community participation features in the City’s core commitments as its recovery plan is anchored on Building Back Better Principles. The City vows to take a ‘collaborative, multi-sector, participatory’ approach by listening and working ‘with all of the city’s constituencies’ (Proposed Tacloban Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan, 2014). Promoting community participation is consistent with the Philippines’ Local Development Code, which establishes the legal framework for participatory governance. ‘Mobilising people’s participation’ is one of the mandates of the Local Development Council, while national agencies are required to ‘conduct periodic consultations’ with ‘local government units, nongovernment and people’s organisations and other concerned sectors of the community before any project or program is implemented’ (Republic Act 7160). These, among others, are formal commitments of national and local governments in promoting community participation, at the very least on the level of consultation, whether it is in disaster contexts or normal conditions.

The manifestations of these formal commitments in every day practice vary. The definitions of ‘community’ and ‘participation’ shift depending on the context. Tacloban’s Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan was drafted in an ‘invited space’ (Gaventa 2004) where local government welcomed humanitarian organisations, international aid agencies and local NGOs. The masterplan is an outcome of months of planning workshops, meetings, consultations and expert deliberations. The public, on the other hand, is not invited in this space. The most visible attempt at directly bringing in the public’s voice was through a three-hour public consultation where village heads (barangay captains) had the chance to ask a few questions and vote to endorse the Plan. Viewed this way, there are two tiers of communities and two levels of participation in Tacloban’s recovery. Organised, professional communities were able to directly take part and shape the recovery plan while the broader publics—particularly the communities who will be subjected to this plan—had basic formal though not necessarily substantive avenues to take part.

The tiers of community participation become even more pronounced on the community level. In the next sections, I present three cases of communities that have been relocated to ‘safe zones’ as part of Tacloban’s recovery plan—the cases of Hill Side, Project Hope and Santa Rita. These cases are purposively selected to illustrate the varying depths of participatory practices among communities—all of them previously living in slum areas—within same political jurisdiction (i.e. they are all located in Tacloban City). The summary of my findings are in the table below.

Governance Logic	How is the community imagined?	Who makes decisions that affect the community?	What mechanisms are available for feedback and accountability?
Authoritarian Hill Side	Fragmented, corrosive community	State	Weak due to surveillance and silencing
Communitarian Project Hope	Shared identity, boundary-drawing	Community	Shared responsibility
Deliberative Santa Rita	Committee-based membership, boundary-drawing	Community State	Spaces for dissent within the community, village assemblies, meetings, marches/ demonstrations, lobbying

Data used in the case studies are based on over two years of ethnographic research (July 2014 to January 2017). This approach involves participation in the daily lives of disaster-affected communities through mundane conversations and interactions, observation of everyday activities such as neighbourhood meetings, trips to the city hall, or engaging in housework, and documentation of these experiences in text-based and visual field notes (de Volo and Schatz 2004). The goal was to understand the recovery process from the perspective of disaster-affected communities. In the process of my ethnography, I have conducted over two hundred fifty interviews. Most of my respondents are from impoverished communities that have been relocated or at-risk of eviction, while the rest of the interviews are with community organisers and government officials. In the subsequent sections, most of the insights I put forward are based on the everyday conversations with my respondents, which I have encoded as field notes. All case studies and names of respondents are anonymised, considering some data are of sensitive nature.

AUTHORITARIAN

'This place reminds me of martial law,' a community organiser said, as he talked to the residents of Hill Side, one of the housing projects in Tacloban North. Hill Side is a housing project led by the government's National Housing Authority (NHA). There are 2,000 units built but less than half are occupied to date. Each house can fit a family of five and has provisions to build a second floor.

Official documents and the Village's social media page portray the community as an idealised representation of a post-disaster housing project. Carefully curated images of freshly painted row houses with quaint gardens and welcome arches remind me of the aspirational middle class residential enclaves advertised in billboards and glossy brochures in Manila and other urban centres. Not evident in these photos are degrading realities residents face. They complain of substandard quality of homes, fuelling suspicions of corruption. At the time of fieldwork, the village has yet to be connected to permanent supply of water and electricity, leaving households to rely on solar power-operated gadgets and water sourced from container tanks. While these problems caused discontent among residents, such sentiments did not translate to collective action.

Hill Side is an example of the failed promise of community participation. Strategies of silencing are noticeable, leaving residents voiceless in the reconstruction process. The relationships of feedback and accountability between the community and decision-makers are weak, while spaces for participation are limited.

Corrosive communities

Part of the reason for Hill Side's poor quality of community participation has to do with residents' weak social bonds. The community is fragmented in the sense that there are no credible community-based organisations that can give voice to residents' collective concerns. Although residents come from the same geographic area before moving to Hill Side, the social fabric that holds them together was ruptured by a series of displacements after Haiyan. Most of my respondents had to move four times in less than two years—from their destroyed homes in the coast to the tent city, then to the bunk house which served as transitional shelter, and then to Hill Side, their permanent shelter.

The series of displacements makes it challenging for neighbours to forge meaningful relationships with each other. It intensifies resource competition as residents are after limited cash grants, livelihood opportunities, and slots in housing programs. This results to a culture of mistrust. Some are suspected for benefiting from patronage politics at the expense of others. The concept of 'corrosive community' applies here, where collective uncertainty and breakdown of social relationships result to self-isolation as coping strategy (Brunsma, Picou and Overfelt 2010: 13). Because the concept of the community is thin, the ethos of grassroots participation could not take root. The community is perceived by both government and residents as a passive beneficiary, a constituency caught up with their own day-to-day issues with little capacities to take charge of their own recovery.

Bureaucracy and technocracy

National and local governments serve as primary decision-makers that affect the lives of Hill Side's residents. Their approach to governance is technocratic, limiting the scope of decision-making to experts and bureaucrats. Although there are avenues for critical discussion among stakeholders, often, as one respondent from the city government intimated, these are entangled with politicized issues of turf wars among government agencies which delay the delivery of services like clean water and electricity.

The extent of partnership between residents and the state is restricted to giving communities the status of homeowners who will start paying for their housing units in five years' time. Equality in the recovery process goes as far as randomising beneficiary selection through a raffle. In the decision-making process, communities are considered subjects and not partners in decision-making.

Silencing strategies

Less than a year since families moved to their new homes, residents complain of leaking roofs, broken windows, exposed sewage pipes and hollow walls. Some households experienced waist-high floods and a number of children suffer from waterborne diseases. There have been reports of families abandoning their homes and relocating back to slums downtown. Transport fares from northern to downtown Tacloban can take up to half of their daily wage, which, for some, makes living in new homes a foolish decision. How are these concerns communicated to the state?

Formally, communities can have a voice in decision-making through village assemblies—the basic avenue for community participation in the Philippines. In practice, however, village assemblies are often used for information dissemination and rarely for collective decision-making. Instead of serving as spaces for bottom-up governance, these assemblies are used to cascade decisions made from the top, such as imposing curfews or selecting beneficiaries of training programs. Aside from assemblies, residents, in principle, have access to the NHA's site office to express their complaints. One city official responded by ordering an ocular inspection and reporting the findings to the NHA. The community, however, still await the feedback from the empowered space.

Beyond the inaccessibility of formal avenues are practices that discourage communities from taking an active role in post-disaster recovery. Security in Hill Side is strict, such that journalists, community organisers and researchers wishing to inspect the village had to go through a checkpoint and secure the approval of the chief of security. Such gatekeeping in both literal and metaphorical sense is a way for contractors to control the narrative – to ensure that journalists and researchers speak to handpicked respondents who affirm the imaginary of grateful beneficiaries. 'Ma'am, no cameras, please' the security guard appealed to me, as he let me enter the neighbourhood and speak to a number of respondents.

The residents, for their part, show indications of fear in speaking up. Some have spoken in cryptic terms during our conversations, resorting to allusions rather than explicit descriptions of their problems. One respondent, for example, kept saying ‘you be the judge,’ while signalling to a crack in her wall. Another respondent, a former fisherman, was conscious of not speaking negatively of his new home, although further into our conversations, he would make comparisons about how better things were when he lived in his dilapidated home near the coast. ‘At least it’s mine, I built it,’ he said, ‘what can I do [with this house]? ... I don’t know [how they built] this house.’ Ambiguity of responses gesture towards the community’s voicelessness, their insecurity in speaking up for expressing concerns may lead to sanctions.

Two of my key informants affirm this observation. One informant mentioned instances when a representative from the state threatened to sequester the homes of those who will grant media interviews to expose the poor conditions of their houses. Families remain vulnerable to these threats as they do not hold a proof of ownership of their homes. Another informant explained why they are apprehensive to mobilise as a community. Security personnel, she explains, are tasked to disperse suspicious gatherings, invoking their mandate to maintain ‘peace and order.’ Collective action raises suspicions, leaving families vulnerable to intimidation. ‘I just don’t want trouble,’ another respondent said, ‘do you want to complain or do you want to keep your home? [The choice is] obvious.’ In one of my last field visits, the same respondent said, albeit in jest, ‘they might just put me in the list, if I say something.’ In this context, ‘the list’ refers to the roster of suspected drug dealers. The list has become symbolic of threats, such that anyone who has earned the ire of village officials could be part of a list which serves as basis for police arrests.

The case of Hill Side illustrates community participation’s failed promise. Community is imagined in a thin manner – a group of disparate residents who have weak social bonds and suspicious of collective action. The governance regime in this community follows an authoritarian logic, not only in terms of practices of security and surveillance but also in terms of constricting liberties and spaces for collective action. Although there are formal avenues to communicate discontent, both coercive and subtle silencing strategies dampen momentum for participation. But this is the weakest case of participation. The next cases illustrate two modalities of participation: communitarian and deliberative, where communities have more leverage to take part in the recovery process, albeit in different ways.

COMMUNITARIAN

My key informant asked me to call him Uncle Jon. Every day, the forty-five-year-old father of three cycles ten kilometres to get to work, traversing a steep hill and a massive highway. Uncle Jon is a security guard, working odd hours to look after a warehouse. But his responsibilities do not end with his shift. At home, he is responsible for the residents of Project Hope Village. He is the Village’s project leader, and among his tasks includes listening to the concerns of his fellow residents, convening monthly meetings and conceptualising small-scale livelihood programs for the community. ‘Don’t you get tired?’ I asked him in our interview. ‘Yes, but it is important to be self-reliant,’ replied.

Uncle Jon used to live in one of the roughest urban slums in Tacloban City until his home was destroyed in a fire in 2011. Together with twenty-four families, he moved to Project Hope, another residential area in the northern part of the city. Project Hope is a community development foundation that gives homes to families in slum communities. ‘It’s my first experience to take part in a leadership role... I never even raised my hand when I was in school,’ he narrated. Now, Uncle Jon is responsible for forty-four households, as twenty disaster-affected families relocated to their village after Haiyan.

Project Hope follows the communitarian logic of governance. The community is defined by a strict boundary, not only in terms of the physical territory where homes are built, but also in terms of their shared identity and values that distinguish them from other communities. ‘The community’ serves as primary decision-makers of everyday issues that affect their lives, often detached from the state. Feedback and accountability mechanisms take the form of village assemblies and collaborative problem solving, while confrontational politics such as protests are stigmatised. This governance logic mirrors the logic of communitarianism, where emphasis is placed on the social cohesion, shared values and the role of civil society in delivering social services.

Engaged beneficiaries, cohesive communities

Project Hope has a strong conception of the community. Residents express a sense of place and allocate responsibilities equitably. Such appreciation of the community developed over the course of several months through rituals Project Hope Foundation designed to solve the 'behavioural problem' that causes poverty. For Project Hope's founders, these programs are handholding exercises to restore the community's dignity.

First, the concept of community is constructed through the direct participation of residents in building their homes. Unlike Hill Side where construction is contracted out to private companies and beneficiaries are picked through random selection, Project Hope requires 'sweat equity'—1,500 hours of labour for each household to complete to qualify for homes. This approach is integral to the Project Hope model as it is through rendering voluntary (or unpaid) labour that the community is formed. For some, this is a rite of passage that 'weeds out' less committed beneficiaries. 'You'll see the true colours of your neighbours if you get your house this way,' as one respondent puts it. That all residents put in the same amount of work forge a sense of equality, that everyone living in the village is 'truly deserving' of their homes.

Second, the community is constructed based on a shared set of obligations. These obligations are codified in a document all residents must sign before they receive their certificates of occupancy. The guidelines for community living – a predetermined set of rules applicable to all Project Hope beneficiaries worldwide – cover a range of practices, from actively participating in the community's governance structure to prohibiting 'eye sores' that compromise the aesthetic of their surroundings. 'Values formation' programs build the community's capacity to realise these obligations. These programs include sessions on personal hygiene as well as discussions that affirm their commitment in collective problem-solving. Included in these community-affirming rituals are payments of association dues, where residents are made to pay a peso a day (.02 USD). This amount, though marginal, plays a symbolic function. It suggests that everyone is paying their dues, that there are no freeloaders, that everyone is responsible for each other.

Third, the community is constructed through active boundary work that sets the Project Hope apart from other housing projects in the area. Project Hope houses are known for their bright multi-coloured paint. Like Hill Side, it follows the template of middle class communities with welcome arches and potted plants. Unlike Hill Side, however, Project Hope's duplex homes are in better condition. There is a regular supply of electricity and water ration. When I visited, there were buntings traversing the roofs, as if the neighbourhood is constantly having a feast. The government-built row houses beside it looked pale in its dull white paint.

Beyond the difference in physical structures, however, the community members' boundary work sets apart their values from others. This has various articulations, although often expressed in subtle terms. One respondent, for example, alluded to beneficiaries of NHA homes as having an easier time, for they received their homes 'without a drop of sweat.' Integral to the community's identity, therefore, is their own recognition that their community follows a better model of governance, that their shared values and experiences are credible foundations on which to build a resilient community.

Community-based decision-making

When asked who makes decisions on behalf of the community, the respondents make a distinction between day-to-day administrative issues (e.g. what to do when someone hangs a clothesline—a violation of rules on aesthetics) and major issues that affect the lives of residents (e.g. deciding on how to spend the association dues). Leaders and caretakers can decide on the former, while the latter are collectively decided in community dialogues. Except for controversial issues that need to be elevated to the Project Hope Headquarters in Manila, the community enforces its own rules within its own ranks. Viewed this way, the empowered space is closely linked to the public space. The public space has direct access to community leaders to resolve banal disputes, while the residents themselves can become part of the empowered space to make decisions on major issues. The state, on the other hand, is conspicuously absent in their imagination of the empowered space.

How the community handled issues of illegal drugs illustrates how Project Hope's focus is limited to governing the daily life of their village, instead of actively linking their programmes to the broader public sphere. When a member of the community was reported to use methamphetamines, the caretaker in-charge of the user's household talked to the offender and issued a written warning. The offender was asked to sign the warning and, if unable to heed to it, he will face sanctions, the worst of which is expulsion from the community. Neither the police nor elected village representatives were immediately brought in the picture, as is usually the protocol in local government. Instead, the community relied on itself to enforce these rules and issue penalties, invoking the codified obligations they are required to follow as residents. 'It is normal for communities to have conflicts,' Uncle Jon said, 'but in Project Hope, if there is conflict, we can directly facilitate it because we are close to the people.' The sense of self-reliance in the community is evident, such that respondents often invoke 'meetings' and 'processes' whenever I ask them about how their issues are resolved.

Shared responsibility

Related to the concept of self-reliance are Project Hope's feedback and accountability mechanisms. The community uses a caretaker system where clusters of households are assigned to a 'caretaker' who discusses issues with their wards. Their wards' feedback, in turn, are cascaded to the wider community in monthly meetings. Accountability, on the other hand, is conceptualised in communitarian terms—that community members are accountable to each other. Following the rules, reporting violations and attending meetings are manifestations of accountability among household owners. Some respondents also expressed accountability to the donors, in this case, an advertising agency, by ensuring that funds are well spent. 'The good thing with Project Hope is donors see where money goes, there are houses built,' as the community's treasurer suggests. This statement alludes to beneficiaries of other housing projects who misuse the aid given to them, because they were not appreciative of the hardships involved in raising and managing funds.

What about the link between the community and the state? Consistent with the theme of self-reliance, the community takes pride in not demanding politicians' support. Like Hill Side, protests are not viewed positively, not because their liberal freedoms are curtailed, but because they consider joining barricades futile. Some also expressed scepticism towards electoral politics or participation in village assemblies, for these traditional avenues for political participation are seen as out of touch and 'too politicized.' For a number of respondents, the Project Hope is different because 'a politician did not put us here.' Because they 'earned their place,' they are confident that they cannot be arbitrarily evicted, unlike villages whose land tenure is hinged on their bargain with local power brokers.

Taken together, the governance regime in Project Hope enforces the logic of communitarianism, where self-reliance, shared identities and collaborative problem solving drive the practice of politics. Boundary work – the process of distinguishing Project Hope from other housing beneficiaries – is integral to their notion of community, while participation is viewed as part of their commitment as housing beneficiaries.

DELIBERATIVE

Santa Rita is one of the few successful in-city relocation projects in the aftermath of Haiyan. While Hill Side and Project Hope are located more than ten kilometres away from the city, Santa Rita –purchased through a grant from a foreign donor—sits on a 12.8 hectares property five kilometres away from downtown. Unlike Hill Side and Project Hope, however, Santa Rita Village is a work-in-progress. To date, the construction is still on-going, with its future residents living in transitional shelters where their houses washed away by the typhoon once stood.

The forms of participation in Santa Rita share a number of similarities with Project Hope. Sweat equity and attendance in community gatherings are some criteria for beneficiary selection. The goal of self-reliance is central to the Village's model, as community-based governance structures, the principles of 'responsible stewardship' and sustainable livelihood programs are put in place. The notion of the community is also constructed by 'values formation programs' that establish the shared norms. To be a 'model community' is one of Santa Rita's aims, suggesting

that the Village envisions itself to be the crystallisation of building back better's principles of people-lead rehabilitation. To this extent Santa Rita shares Project Hope's logic of boundary drawing, which distinguishes the community from the beneficiaries of other housing projects.

Committee-driven recovery

Compared to Project Hope, however, Santa Rita has a more demanding conception of community membership. Committee-driven recovery is how I describe this approach, as people-driven participation is operationalised based on 'committees.' To belong to the community is to belong to a committee, whether it is procurement, construction or livelihood, among others. Structuring the neighbourhood into these subgroups foster functional differentiation, which are essential for Santa Rita's agenda of self-reliance and sustainable development. As one committee builds capacities to learn masonry and bricklaying, another learns accounting and financial management. All committees are encouraged to see their newly acquired skills as part of a long-term strategy of building community-based livelihood programs. Viewed this way, the community is imagined to be part of the entire project cycle, from decision-making to implementation, evaluation and conceptualisation of new projects. Santa Rita is envisaged to be a continuous project, one that relies on the investments in capacities, time and energy among its members today.

As with most good intentions, however, committee-driven recovery has faced scepticism among some residents. My visits in the transitional shelter reveal a number of respondents feeling a sense of exclusion. Women with young children, for example, find it impossible to take an active part in any of these committees as they feel that childcare is their primary responsibility. Their husbands, on the other hand, consider it more practical to find employment elsewhere, as the stipend given to volunteers is not enough to support their families. 'If they really want to join, they will find a way,' said one of the community leaders I interviewed, when asked about the uneven capacities of residents to participate. For this community leader, the issue is one of persuasion—that community leaders should do a better job at reaching out to those who prefer to stay out of the process. This view underscores the agency rather than structural limitations of those who could not take part.

Viewed this way, the community is simultaneously characterised by deep membership and exclusionary logics. While those who have gained skills and status by being part of committees recovered their esteem and enjoy their new social status by being part of a virtuous project, those with little capacities to take part remain in the community's fringes.

Consortium-based decision-making

Decision-making in Santa Rita occurs in various levels. A consortium composed of humanitarian donors, religious organisations, an urban poor movement and two elected leaders from the community serves as the project's formal decision-making body. While the consortium rarely meets as a whole, one of the discussions I observed remarkably reflects the virtues of democratic deliberation where participants carefully exchange and listen to each other's justifications for their preferences. A full day was allocated to carefully go through each agenda item. Participants had the freedom to identify issues for discussion, challenge others' views yet maintain respectful communication, and propose directions for moving forward. Men on the table tend to speak more than the women, but the project leader performed the role of facilitator by reaching out to those less inclined to speak, recognising their expertise and contributions germane to the discussion.

The scope of decision-making on this level is limited to staffing issues and monitoring project targets. Part of Santa Rita's vision is the full integration of residents in community-based decision-making. 'We need to ask the community,' is often the response, if not intuitive go-to phrase, when the consortium encounters issues that directly affect the residents' lives. From deciding on the 'fair' number of hours families should render to qualify as housing beneficiaries to selecting the type and colour of homes to be constructed—these are all decided in the Community Council where twenty representatives consider input of five hundred fifty households.

Committing to public deliberations, however, has some unintended consequences. Meeting fatigue is one of these. Some residents argue that housing is an entitlement. 'Isn't housing a right?' one respondent asked, 'then [why do they] make us spend less time with our family [because of] meetings, and meetings.' Santa Rita's meetings often occurs in weekends, moments that some residents think should be devoted

to their families or moonlighting to augment their income. To this extent, Santa Rita's participatory structure has faced some contestations within the community. This, however, is not necessarily an indicator of Santa Rita's weakness. Instead, it instead signals the spaces available for dissenting voices to surface and interrogate the Village's governance regime.

Santa Rita's conceptualisation of the state is distinct from Hill Side and Project Hope. Unlike Hill Side where the state is the primary actor in constructing homes and unlike Project Hope where the state is absent in its concept of community-based decision-making, Santa Rita sees the state as a partner in community-driven recovery. Partnership takes various forms. Providing counterpart funding is one example, as in the case when the consortium lobbied to secure funding from the Department of Public Works and Highways to pay for slope protection structures, constructions of roads and earth-moving. Providing disaster risk reduction training is another form of partnership, representatives from the state are tapped on their knowledge transfer capabilities. While Project Hope's understanding of self-reliance is to insulate the community from the distress brought about by politics, Santa Rita insists on the role of the state to deliver its obligations to its constituencies.

Internal and external feedback

Santa Rita uses a range of feedback and accountability mechanisms. Internally, community leaders serve as conduit for residents to communicate their preferences to the consortium, similar to Project Hope's caretaker system. Feedback may also be written and placed inside suggestion boxes – a surprisingly well utilised feedback mechanism even with access to social media and mobile phones. Also noticeable is the consortium's openness in showing its financial records to the community. Aside from this being a trust-building exercise, this practice also provides depth to public discussions. When residents see the cost of their request and realise the amount of money that could have been spent for other needs, they are lead to weigh and reconsider their priorities.

Externally, Santa Rita utilises a range of mechanisms to reach out to government. One of the members of the consortium has a long track record of lobbying for land rights in Manila, and the same approach is being used in Tacloban. 'We talk to anyone we need to talk to,' said one resident, when I asked her about Santa Rita's strategies for engaging the government. Included in Santa Rita's approach to lobbying is training community members to communicate to decision-makers. I witnessed one training workshop in Santa Rita's headquarters, where two young women, using hair brushes and markers to stand in for microphones, were rehearsing with community organisers. In a couple of days, they will secure an audience with one of the most influential city councillors to express their views on the government's tide embankment project. Part of Santa Rita's aims is to build strong communities so they can 'effectively engage local governments,' and these training programs are part of this agenda. In this sense, the community is not just involved in getting their own village working. Their scope of political action extends to monitoring and engaging local and national government agencies.

Demonstrations are also part of Santa Rita's arsenal of feedback mechanisms. 'Strengthen DRR [Disaster Risk Reduction]!' 'Support the People's Plan!' 'Listen to the People' are examples of slogans written on placards as future residents of Santa Rita Village marched in the streets of Tacloban. 'It wasn't a protest, it was a march,' one participant made it clear to me. Noticeable in these slogans are positively framed demands, avoiding aggressive protest rhetoric that confront those in positions of power. Unlike militant organisations that have been vocal in shaming public officials whom they consider to be responsible for poor disaster response, Santa Rita takes a 'constructive approach.' The aim is to get the ear of government, and doing this means avoiding confrontational tactics that may compromise their message. 'We can't call them incompetent if I'm counting on them to deliver a road project' one respondent said, taking a long view of their indispensable relationship with government agencies. This explains why the community uses creative mechanisms to express its voice. Staging a prayer rally or singing hymns are collective, creative yet undisruptive mechanisms to register their positions in the public sphere.

In summary Santa Rita illustrates the case of community participation using the logic of deliberative action. The norms of inclusive reasoning are evident within the community council, while citizens demonstrate a plurality of contesting views about the governance regime in place. The demands of community membership and participation are taxing, which, for some, enhances their level of political esteem and social status while, for others, result to the maintenance one place in the fringes of the community.

CONCLUSION

The literature on participatory politics views the community as ‘a place where politics can be democratized, active citizenship strengthened, [and] the public sphere reinvigorated’ (Brown et al 2000: 57). This article investigates the extent to which this vision unfolds in three communities that experienced displacement, vulnerability and uncertainty in the aftermath of Haiyan.

These findings illustrate the possibilities and deficiencies of community participation. While all communities, formally, have access to village assemblies and state-sponsored feedback mechanisms, the spaces where the ethos of participation can take root vary. The promise of community participation can unravel to an authoritarian logic, one where corrosive communities can do little to overcome silencing and surveillance strategies that further inhibit collective action. But disasters can also open doors for deepening participatory practice. The discourse of self-reliance can inspire communities to focus on collective problem solving while insulating themselves from the politics of the state as in the case of Project Hope, or it can drive communities to subscribe to demanding standards of community membership and governance, as in the case of Santa Rita. The three cases suggest that the varying breadth and depth of community participation is underpinned by shared assumptions on who can take part and how to take part in the recovery process as defined by various stakeholders with differential access to power.

One clear similarity between the more successful cases of community participation has to do with civil society organisations taking the lead in the recovery process. This underscores the central role of NGO interventions in consolidating what could otherwise be fragmented communities vulnerable to intimidation, as demonstrated in Hill Side’s case. While this observation portrays the role of NGOs in a positive light, the implication of this to the broader recovery process warrants critical interrogation. The emergence of governance enclaves where different communities are subject to assorted governance logics results to an uneven protection of rights and enactments of democratic citizenship. This poses normative issues as far as the democratic character of the recovery process is concerned. What do we make of a situation where both authoritarian fiefdoms and participatory enclaves co-exist with each other? Is the shape of post-disaster politics, where governance logics are quarantined in particular communities, some of which serve as laboratories for democratic innovations while others wither away as no-hope communities who can only be grateful for they at least have a roof above their heads?

These, to date, are open questions for the legacies of governance enclaves warrant further monitoring. Democratisation, indeed, is an uneven process. There are reasons to celebrate the achievements of participation in some communities but there are also reasons to critique the rollback of democratic practice in others. One of the spaces for democratisation in this context is for communitarian and deliberative enclaves to broaden the ways in which they imagine the community. Santa Rita’s approach is headed to this direction, when they consider consistent government engagement as integral to their strategies for recovery. Lobbying for people-centred policies through dialogues and demonstrations can carry the agenda of politically marginalised communities, albeit indirectly, and make representative claims on their behalf. Societies are only as good as their weakest link, Zygmunt Bauman argues, and this is especially true in post-Haiyan Philippines as its communities seek to build back better.

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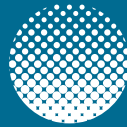
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