

Sustainability of the long-term recovery process of the resettled minority communities
after the 2009 Typhoon Morakot in Taiwan

Department of International Studies

Completion of Master Program: March, 2018

Name: Mei Gu

Student ID: 47-166769

Advisor: Prof. Honda Riki

Keywords: post-disaster, community recovery, resettlement, Indigenous People

Background and Objective:

Taiwan was the only region that was threatened the most by natural hazards with 73% of its population to face more than three different types of catastrophes (The World Bank, 2005). Typhoon Morakot devastated Taiwan on August 8, 2009. Large and accumulated precipitations triggered landslides, mudslides, flooding, debris flows etc., caused 673 people dead and 26 missing. The areas hardest hit by Typhoon Morakot were the indigenous people's villages in the southern and eastern areas in Taiwan. Impacted people in the dangerous areas evaluated by the government and the experts had to resettle to the safe places. Tasks of reconstruction and resettlement were quite challenging. Under the circumstances of public-private partnership and agency-driven reconstruction, providing permanent houses by non-government organizations and reducing the use of shelter houses was adopted. With the assistance from the government, NGOs and other sectors of the society, the resettled communities might have new looks and advancements in industries, culture and other aspects which are different from their original ones. Five years after Typhoon Morakot, in 2014, Reconstruction Council was dissolved and the Special Act expired. As a result, provision of special assistance from the government ceased and the norm resumed. Eight years has passed since Typhoon Morakot devastated Taiwan. the objectives of this study are to: i) review the reconstruction and recovery process based on five resettled communities in southern Taiwan post disaster; ii) identify the successes and failure during the process; iii) analyze the factors behind the successes and failures; iv)

to provide some insights or suggestions for the future policies of similar disasters, which could enable a smoother process.

Methodology:

The first is the literature including official documents, books, news, dissertation to deepen the understanding of the issue and supplement the insufficiency of the fieldwork. The second is the fieldwork which was undertaken in ten days in several permanent housing sites in Kaohsiung City, Chiayi County, Pingdong County etc. and includes interviews. Thirteen interviewees are from their communities, Chang Yung-Fa Foundation and Morakot Post-disaster Reconstruction Council.

Analysis and Conclusions:

This study reviews the long-term recovery process of the resettled communities especially minority communities after Typhoon Morakot based on the cases of five permanent housing sites in southern and eastern Taiwan. Their recovery process and current situation was reviewed and for each case, the successful or the failed parts during the recovery process were identified. Factors for successful or failed parts were analyzed and the corresponding implications were provided. The findings of this study demonstrate that the location of the resettled place, ethnic heterogeneity or homogeneity, participation in decision making, capabilities of the leader(s), approaches adopted by NGO for reconstruction can be the factors affecting the long-term recovery of the resettled communities.

Recommendations:

These surveyed cases are all of resettled communities while cases of reconstruction in the original place are worth focus as well like the topic on difference on the recovery process between resettled communities and not resettled ones.