

## **ABOUT THARAGAMBADI VILLAGE**

Tharagambadi is located off the Coromandel Coast in Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu boarding the former French comptoir of Karaikal. Tharangambadi has been a popular destination of tourists' ethnographers and Ideologists. Tharangambadi today is inhabited about 1700 households, including traditional fishermen, scheduled castes, Muslims, Christians and various backward castes. Tharagambadi designated as a Town Panchayat. Tharagambadi can be reached by bus from Chennai and pondcherry in route its distance from Chennai pondicheerry Nagapattinam and karaikal are 296 K,mtrs 125 kms , 48 kmts, and 15 Km respectively. To the south is Chandrapadi village and on the northern side is Kuttiyandur village. The southern part of the village is at higher elevation than the northern part inhabited mostly by families of fishermen. As a result , the number of deaths due to the tsunami was higher amongst the fishermen than the other communities, the Christian and the Muslims families are located in the southern part of the village , and did not experience as much devastation as fishermen did .

Tharangambadi is rated to be one of the most severely affected panchayat of the district in the after match of the disastrous Tsunami that hit the coast on 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2004, registering over 300 deaths and enormous damages to the property and lively hoods as many as 525 deaths are estimated to have occurred in the whole of Tharagambadi Taluk

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Tharagambadi is a multi ethnic sea side habitation situated of the coromondaal coast. It was once the nerve center of several successive western communities that set foot in the area with dissimilar interest including envoys of Danish , East India, company , German missionaries in service of the King of Denmark and Moravian Enterepreurs. Before the arrival of the European, the area was the part of the Kingdom of RaghunathaNayakar the ruler of the Thanjavur.

## **THE MUSLIM TRADESMEN**

The Muslims arrived at Tharangmbadi in the 14th century to trade with the local people of Tharangmbadi. They came from the northern areas which were under the mugalas. There were two types Muslims trades Marakalaiyars and Rauthars. The Marakalaiyars used to come by Boats and Catamarans, and Rauthars came on horses . They gradually settled down in Tharamgambadi and later. When the Danes bought the colonies the Muslims also came under the Danish Rules. It is said that the Muslim used to stitch and sell clothes in this area and also send tailored clothes from here to Mysore for Tipu

sultan . Today the Muslims constitute the highest well being category in the village, and engaged in a variety of lively hood. There are 113 Muslim families living in the village today. About 30 Muslim families based in Goldsmiths street of Tharangambid left the village in the late 17s and settled down in their places, after promulgation of the Gold control act during the Janata Government of Shri. Morarji Desai

## **THE DANISH COLONY**

According to peter Rasmussen a Danish colony set up in Tharangambdi in the year 1620 when Ove Gjedde – commander of an expeditionary fleet from Denmark who went of on to become the Admiral of the Royal Danish Navy arrived in the court of Nayakas of Thanjavur after an unsuccessful effort to formalize trade links between Danish east India company and Ceylon . Instead , a treaty was concluded between the Nayakas and the King of Denmark, By which the Danes were given permission to erect a fortress at the village of Tharangambadi , in lieu of an annual rent of Rs. 3111/- During following years trade links were established between Tharanambadi on the coromandel coast and promising trading sites across the bay of Bengal . These channels came into being in the year 1621 and 1624 respectively, mainly for trading in pepper and doves, However the returns from the trading efforts were meager and by 1627 the colony in poor financial straits. However the poor run continued , prolonged cessation of payment of financial tributes to the Nayak of Thanjavur led to successive attempts to besiege the Tharagambadi fort between 1655-60 thwarted only by a valiant resistance offered by Commander Kongsbakke built a wall around Tharangambadi with the support of locals on 1660 and went on to privateering activities in the Bay of Bengal and thus the fortune of the colony. The king of Denmark later formally appointed Kongsbakke as the leader of the colony and he went on to become the last surviving Dane in the colony.

## **ARRIVAL OF ZIEGANBALG**

During the years the King of Denmark Frederic IV planned to send missionaries to Tharangambdi to spread Christianity. However, no Danish national came forward to join the mission fearing onslaughts from the native Barbarians of Malabar. However many people from neiebouring Germany offered their service in response to the wishes of the Danish King, including professor Francke. **A Halle based pastor**, who was instrumental in the arrival of a band of young German theologians at Tharangambadi, including 23 years old Ziegenbalg

Ziegenbalg came to Tharangambadi in 1706 with a Royal Danish order to propagate the Gospel among the Malabarians. In the course of his interacting with the Tamil natives and his inquisitive forays into cultural history and traditions of the area, he realized the fallacy of the western notions about the people of the area. He conveyed his interests to Francke- the pastor in Halle, requesting the latter to have the true account of the Malabarians published. However, Francke did not oblige and insisted on continuation of evangelization work. This did not dater Ziegenbalg and he kept enquiring and writing

about the various facts of Tamil life e.g. festival and temples ,arts and crafts music and dance , legends and fables, ritual and religious practices ceremonies customs and manners, diseases prevalent among them and the medicines used , and so on . He also compiled a lexicon in Tamil and summarized various palm-leaf books. Later he founded the Jerusalem church in Tharangambdi in the year 1718

## **THE MORAVIANS IN THARAMGAMBADI**

In 1758 The king of Denmark expressed the s desire to establish a Moravian settlement at Tharagambadi as a base to preach the Gospel in the Nicobar Islands a newly acquired Danish colony (popularly known as in Europe as Fredrick Islands) The Moravians were the followers of Brethrens church (The Moravians contingent arrived in Tharangambdi between 1760-1792 and included missionaries, merchants, students of theology lay preachers, surgeons, medical doctors carpenters, tanners, boat builder, shoe, makers tailors watchmakers, specialists in agriculture , blacksmiths organists makers of socks lock smiths and millers.

However the Danish east India Company had withdrawn operations from the Nicobar Islands before arrival of the Moravians at Tharangambadi. This compelled the Brethren to concentrate of intensive agricultural operations. Handicrafts and other trades. They purchased the adjacent paddy fields extending to shores of the Indian oceans. Their cattle population consisted of more than 100 small and big animals of various kinds. And their handicrafts skills become a crazes of several royal courts. Governors and authorities of contemporary European colonies in India. However their missionary objectives took a back seat and the Brethren withdrew from Thargambadi in 1795

## **A TIME LINE OF THARAMGAMBADI**

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year	Events
1305	The masilamaninathar temple was built
14th Century	Muslim trademencame to Tharangambadi and settled here
1616	Envoys of Danish East company arrived to set up a port and trade in spices
1620	The King of Thanjavur sold Tharangambadi to the Danish for Rs. 3111/-
1620-1625	The Danes burg fort was built
1701	The Zion church was built by the Danish Administration
1706	Arrival of Ziegenbalg German missionary serving the Danish crown 300 years back A mosque was constructed
1712	The first printing press in India was started by ziegenbalg at Tharamgambadi
1715	Ziegenbalk transilated the Bible from German to Tamil
1716	The evangelical Lutherin church was started by Ziegenbalg
1718	New Jerusalem church was built

1719	Death and Burial of Ziegenbalg
1785	Contraction Govern's bug low opposite to the Dansborg fort
1792	An Arch was built as gateway to Tharangambadi
1845	The British East India Company bought Tharangambadi from Danes
1854	The Holy Rosary church was built by the Catholics
1884	A post office was started which is functioning at the same place even today
1901	A convent and St. Theresa's dispensary were started by Roman Catholics
1924	A Railway station was built by Southern Railways discarded in 1986
1935	A Muslim elementary school was started
1944	St. Theresa's Teachers training school started for women
1945	Tamil Evangelical Lutheran church started a Teachers' Training institute
1946	A school was started in memory of Plutschau -Ziegenbalg Colleague
1955	Church of Swedish mission built now as a guest house for missionaries
1958	St. Theresa's Girls Higher secondary school started with 138 students
1960	A hostel for Delit women were opened by Tamil Nadu Government
1966	A public library was started by Tamil Nadu Government
1968	The Indian Bank was opened and it is functioning till today
1976	Ziegenbalg's residence was converted into a boys hostel by TELC
1979	Renovation of Renuka Temple, A children's home was started by TELC
1989	A primary health centre was opened later upgraded as a hospital in 1997
1992	Renovation of the old Mosque built in 14th Century start a new mosque
1996	ROSA women's centre was started with the help of Danish Government
2004	Death of over 300 people due to the Tsunami.

### **Legacy of the colonization of Tharangambadi by the Danish**

Many of the institutions in Tharangambadi were started during the Danish period. Ziegenbalg started many institutions that are still contributing to the development of Tharangambadi. The missionaries who visited Tharangambadi both Protestants as well as Catholics have set up institutions like schools, teachers training institutes and an orphanage. These institutions today cater for all the communities present in Tharangambadi.

The Ziegenbalg spiritual centre apart from conducting workshops for pastors has also done a lot of social service in the community including AIDS awareness programs, health camps, leadership training programmes. Counseling programs for the youth and coordination of efforts of all Christian aid agencies in the village.

Still today Tharangambadi Association runs by a group of Danish people residing in Denmark. Their main interest is in restoring the glories and beauty of the old village near the fort. They work with Archeological Survey of India. In renovating the Dansborg fort, they also wish to improve the dilapidated Danish Govern's Mansion. They have prevailed upon the government to retain the old names for all the streets in Tharangambadi. As many as 64 Christian families still live in Tharangambadi.

## **Geography and Topography**

The main village of Tharangambadi is located in between two parallel streets and is diagonally intersected by a canal referred as( Buckingham canal) The southern part of the village is situated at a higher elevation compared to the northern part , as a result the effects of the Tsunami were relatively much stronger in the northern part, Before the Tsunami most of the fishermen had their residence right along the seashore.

Tharangambadi is flanked by Uppanar River on its southern side. As a matter of fact several people of the village practice agriculture and own agricultural land in the other villages of the region

## **SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE**

Tharangambadi is inhabited by 1725 house holds including the population of Velipalayam, Pudu palayam, kesavan palayam, and karan street hamlets inhabited mostly scheduled caste and located on the periphery of the village) The village population of 6991 people including more men than the women, the sex ratio of 971 women to 1000 men. Fishermen constitute of majority of the population with 1112 households of pattinavars inhabiting the village.

### ***Lively hood and occupations***

Tharangambadi has as many as 1670 Active fishermen, registered as member of the local cooperative society of fishermen. The traditional panchayat of the northern part of Nagapattinam district, being advantageous located at the junction of the Chennai-Nagapattinam highway. The Bay of Bengal; and the suburbs of Karaikal it is also an important place of auction. Sale and purchase of fish. It is estimated that during the peak fishing months of June and July the value of fish that is traded at Tharangambadi ranges between Rs. 5-7 lakh every day, amounting to a turnover of nearly Rs. 1.8 cores monthly. It is worth mentioning in this context that nearly 500 women in Tharangambadi operate as fish-Vendors , who buy nearly 20% of all fish auctioned in the village. These amounts to an incremental annual income of about Rs 38,000/- in house holds that have a woman fish -vendor. Rest of the fish purchased by companies like PPR, KNR.,M/s Manoharan, M/sMurthy.,M/s Raja etc besides the south Indian Federation of Fishermen's societies and fish-vendors from out side Tharangambadi

### **Vital statistics regarding demographic composition of Tharangambadi and effects of the Tsunami**

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSE HOLDS	1725
TOTAL NUMBER OF POPULATION	6991
ADULT MALE	1779
ADULT FEMALE	185

## CASTE COMPOSITION

PATTINAVARS	1112
SCHEDULED CASTE	208
CHRISTIANS	129
MUSLIMS	116
VANNYAR	82
NADAR	19
CHETTIYAR	12
THEVAR	7
VELLAR	6
PILLAI	6
NAIDU	5
ASARI	5
MARUTHUVAR	3
KALLAR	3
YATHAVAR	3
PATHAR	3
PADAYACHI	3
BRAHMIN	1
NAIKAR	1
MUDALIYAR	1

## SUB POPULATION GROUP

Number of Widows	326
people with disability	102
number of female with disability	34
number of elderly men	335
number of elderly women	209

## EFFECTS OF TSUNAMI

		OUT OF
NUMBER OF PARTLY DAMAMGED HOUSES	226	
NUMBER OF FULLY DAMAGED	904	
NUMBER OF DEATHS DUE TO TUNAMI	304	
NUMBER OF FIBER BOATS DAMAGED	128	166
KATTUMARAMS	35	50
ENGINE KATTUMARAMS	165	175
MECHNIZED BOATS	15	15

### Alternative livelihood

Within the cluster of 351 house hold located on the southern costal part of tharangambadi, as many as 19 different kind of livelihood are practiced by mostly 69 non fishermen households. These include 27 house holds engaged in daily wage labour 14 in teaching 7 in vigilance work as watchmen 4 in masonry 2 each in cooking and running tea shops The scheduled caste based in the disjoint localities of Tharangambadi too have a variety of livelihood strategies round the year .

Alternative lively hood pursued by the scheduled castes of the villages. Around 120-145 men from all three hamlets work as agriculture laborers during farming season ranging between august and January. They are employed for a minimum of 6 months in agricultural work. During other months, they work as wage laborers on the shore of Tharangambadi (lording and unloading fish) and also work as masons and brick makers

About 25 men work with fish exporting companies as fish loaders. They receive a weekly salary of 550/- and daily allowance of 50/-. In addition to they charge Rs. 5/- from other parties using their service for loading an 80 Kg. inbox of iced fish on to Lorries or vans. On an average day they load between 50 and 60 boxes.

Around 40 to 50 persons work as full time masons/ carpenters. Mostly they work in Karaikal (12Km) , Mayladuthurai (30 Km) Sirkali (30km) Kottucherry (8km) and other areas . At present the community of dalits has three experience masons who inform the other masons about work availability. They attributed their occupational shift from agriculture to masonry to decline in agricultural productivity on account of persistent water scarcity. They earn Rs. 150/- in a day and have to part with Rs. 10-15 payable as commission to the head masons who select them for work.

### Agriculture

As many as 13 dalits families still practice agriculture in and around Tharangambadi including 3 families from kesavan palayam, 8 from Pudupalayam, and 2 from Karan street. Most of these families except one lease in land from the office of the Tahasildar and cultivate a total of 22 acres of land. 11 of them cultivate marginal land holdings of less than 2 acres. During the last season they spent an average of Rs. 6000/- on each acre. In spite of massive damages to their standing crops, for which they invested more than Rs. 1, 32,000/- none of the dalits received compensation for lost crops.

In addition to men the women and adult, unmarried girls of the dalit house holds too operate as agricultural wage laborers, for a maximum of five to six months in a year. They work in the fields of the near by villages e.g. Anakoil (3km) Anathamanglam(3 km) chinnamanikapangu (2km) Porayar (3km) periya manikapangu (2.5 km)and

Erkkattancherri (3km) which are totally dependent on the monsoon. Ground water in these areas is extremely salty, which prevents the landlords from using pump sets to extract groundwater. This also limits the scale of agriculture. The laborers failing to get work go to other areas, e.g. Kottucherry (8km) Varichikkudi (6km) Karaikal (12km) Thirukkadaiyur (10km) and Akkur (12km) where ground water of good quality is available in abundance and irrigated agriculture is done using pump sets. Each acre of agricultural land requires about fifteen persons for sowing and weeding. The daily wages vary between Rs. 40/- and 50/- depending upon the availability of laborers. Generally women start for work by 8 am and return late at 6 p.m or 7 p.m depending upon the distance and mode of transport. The agricultural season starts in the traditional month of Adi (starts in the middle of July) when farmers work on cleaning and preparation of fields. This activity lasts for about two or three weeks. Sowing takes place between the months of Avani and Aipasi (mid of August-mid- November) followed by weeding for another couple of months, and subsequent harvest. The laborers work from 8.30 am in the morning to 4.30 pm in the evening and are paid for Rs. 40/- (after deduction of Rs. 5/- in lieu of provision of tea and bread) Though the agriculture season runs for 6 months the number of working days varies from 120 to 150 days. Monsoons are an important determinant of success of agriculture in Tarangambadi Taluk. Other than paddy a few crops like black and green grams (used for making idly and dosai) are cultivated for 50 -60 days under rain-fed conditions, and these require only minimum involvement of hired labour.

### **Work in Brick kilns**

Many women from the dalit communities' work in brick kilns located in Erkkattancherry, Thillayadi and Porayer, during the lean months of summer (mid April- Mid June) work is available for between 40 and 60 days in the season. They are paid Rs. 75/- a day plus tea and bun (small round bread either plain or sweet) the women cut the bricks for firing in the kiln and collect the fired bricks.

### **Work as Domestic Helpers**

Many women from poor families in Tharangambadi e.g about 50 women from scheduled caste hold work as domestic helpers in the better of households in the Muslim community. Most of them work for 2-4 houses in a day e.g between 7.00 -11.00 in the morning or between 9.00-12.00 in the forenoon. The works include cleaning and mopping the house washing clothes. Cleaning the vessels etc., during the agricultural season they finish the work early to go to the field. According to them most employers are lenient about timing during this season. They are given free food (which often sufficient for other members of their family as well), tea and Rs. 5/- For betel leaves, in addition to monthly wages ranging between Rs. 100/- . During festivals they also get extra money and clothes, Most importantly they borrow money from their employers in times of crisis.

## **THE DALITS IN THARANGAMBADI**

Tharangambadi has 208 households hailing from scheduled caste. Commonly referred to as dalits, these communities inhabit four different hamlets located on the periphery of the main habitation-called pudu palayam, Kesavan Palayam, Velipalauyyam, and Karan street respectively. While the 40 delit house holds in pudu palayam co-exist with 17 house holds hailing from the other backward castes (OBC) and most backward castes (MBC) kesavan palayam and Karen street ware inhabited only by dalits inclusive of 79 and 22 households respectively Veili palayam has as many as 54 dalit house holds. While the dalits living in pudu palaqyam and Karan Street have been lving in the respective localities for several generations, about 60 out of the 79 house holds based in Kesavan palayam were originally residents of a neighboring village called kuttiyandoor. They were forced to shift their houses to Kesavan palyam following recurrent conflict with the local community of fishermen n triggered by petty incidents. Eg. Straying of the goats, owned by the dalits in to the localities of the socially advanced pattinavars. Many of the dalits sold away their land to settle in kesavan palayam. Subsequently in 1993 they were granted legal ownership of their newly acquired land in Kesavan palayam under a welfare scheme of the Tamil Nadu government As a matter of act it is along-cherished aspiration of many dalit families to shift their residence to a place called kattucherry, and the stated reasons are articulated in in Box 5 below

<b>Rationale underlying the aspiration of many dalit families of Tharangambadi to shift their residence to Kattucherry</b>	
*	Kattucherry has a model residential colony established by the government of Tamil
*	Nadu under the ‘Samathuapuram’ scheme with the aim of settling socially marginal- Lazed groups, with nearly 60% of the housing units reserved for dalits.
*	The assurance of living in a safe environment and numerically –strong community promising security against the growing I intolerance and dominance of fishing communities vis-à-vis the dalits
*	Increasing in salinity of their agricultural land holdings after the Tsunami

## The Widows

**Tharangambadi has as many as 326 widows.** Most of the widowed before the tsunami. Many of them were selling fish before the tsunami and some of them, have again started selling recently. They sell both fresh as well as dried fish They go to vellakoil; (1km) Chandraapadi (2km) Anandhamangalam (2km) Porayar(3km) Kraikal(12km) Sirkali(about (30km) from Tharangambadi. They go there by bus and walk to the nearby villages.

In the recent tsunami many of them have lost all their baskets and pots that they used to carry fish in. . Many of the windows have been deserted by the ir sons and are art present living by themselves. They are not receiving any help from their children

**For Example, Valiammai is 80 years old and is a Widow.** She has so far only received the monthly compensation Rs.1000/- The compensation of Rs. 4000/- that the government gave immediately after the tsunami did not reach her. Her son took that money and did not give her even a small part of it. Her son is also collecting the rations that the government as well as other aid agencies has been giving. So she is totally at the mercy of other families in the village. She stays in some one else's house and eats the food given by the well wishers in the area.

Karuthumma sells dosas in the village to earn money. She has just started going this work after the tsunami as she was finding it very difficult to manage the family with the limited sum of money that she go as compensation. She sells dosa for one rupee. She sells only in the morning and manages to sell about every days in the. As she does not have a grinder she grinds in someone's house. They charge her Rs. 3 padi, 'Approx: 1 cup) of rice. She makes a profit of Rs. 10 each day.

In general the widows have received the compensation given by the government. They have received the Rs. 4000/-, which was given immediate after the tsunami and they have also go the Rs. 1000/- per month compensation for the past 6months

The widows are also members of the Self Help Group (SHG) in the village. There are SHGs in this area now. Two of them have been started after the tsunami. Now there are 39 SHG s in the village. Those who were members before the tsunami used to avail loans through the SHGs for settling up business enterprises, shops. They have all paid their loans back and there is no outstanding loan balance now.

Support systems for widows are very basic in the village. if there is a problem for the widows, they generally try to settle it with the help of their friends. If the problem is a difficult one they discuss with their friends during meetings and o only go to the

panchayat as a last resort. But the panchayat leaders are very easily accessible and listen to their problems. But by nature the women do not go to the panchayat right away if they have an issue.

The main problem the widows are facing in the village as of now is the lack of income because of the tsunami. Very few of them have started selling fish again, those who have started selling complained that the quantity of fish they buy from the auction is small and hence their revenue is also small. The widows also do not have any body to help them exothermally other than moneylenders. So they find it difficult to send their children to school those attend high schools have to pay fee Rs. 375 to buy text books and other necessary things for school getting this amount is a struggle for many of the widows.

The widows complained that the temporary shelters are very difficult to live in. It is too hot in these shelters and in many cases it is not enough for all members of the family to live in. Also the quality of the shelters is poor. During the recent rains many of them were leaking and the people had to move to temple for a couple of days till the rains stopped. So they want the construction of permanent housing to start as early as possible.

## **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

In Tharangambadi As many as 109 people, including 34 females have disabilities of various kinds. Some of the local persons with disabilities have been issued disability cards by the government. However 6 out of 13 Persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the north western segment of the village do not know the use and benefits of the card. They want disability card to be issued to every body and the benefits explained to them.

All of them also want the disability pension of Rs 200 from the government They want employment opportunities to be provided to them and also necessary training given to them,. They want the government to implement scheme to improve the conditions and situations of the disabled in the village.

Two cases stand out amongst the disabled in area. Kannamma lost her eye sight in an accident. She used to sell fish before the accident and since then has not been able to sell fish; she is at present living with her daughter. She recently married of her daughter and during the marriage she received money as gifts from friends and relatives .she still has some money with her a and also the compensation she has received from government she does not know how she is going survive from now on. Hower daughter and son-in-law are supporting her. Once she spends all her money she has to depend on her son-in-law to get money. Even now her daughter is being treated badly by her husband. Her husband comes home drunk and harasses her often.

Rammya aged 16 cannot speak and hear she lost the capacity of speak while she was 6 years old. Her parents did not educate her. She now lives with her parents and does

chores. Since she cannot hear, every thing has to be explained to her using sign language. Her friends said she would do any kind of work if explained properly to her. She wants to learn some vocational skill so that she can do some work from her house itself during her free time.

### **THE ELDERLY**

Old Women numbering 209 constitute the majority of elderly population of 305 people of Tharangambadi. Most of them live separately. Normally some start live separately after getting married. According to some of the elders, people consulted in the village. The number of families has increased the recent past and most elderly people are lonely and have to feed themselves. Many of the elderly men are going for fishing and women for selling fish. Some of them injured during tsunami. Majority of the elders are widows and widowers. Few of the old couples are living together who got relief money from the government and other private agencies. In some families son took away the money received as compensation from their parents.

Jayapal aged 72 years old is a widower. He has four children one son and three daughters. All of them are married. He is living alone. His right hand got fractured during the tsunami and he could not go for work. He however was certified as a person with disability after the tsunami. Only his daughter supported him, while his son took away all relief money. These days, he receives partly amount every month from his son. He is staying in a temporary shelter which according to him has no basic facilities. One of his daughters provides food for him. Loss of productive assets (boats, Catamarans, engines, nets etc.) and inability to earn through alternative means are his other key problems.

### **THE KUDIPILLAIS**

There are 4 Kudipillais living in the central part of Tharangambadi village namely manivel, Rajaram, Thangam and Muthu. One of the Kudipillais for the village is Muthu who is 24 years old. He belongs to parayar community (SC) . Muthu's father used to be a kudipillai before him. But after his death Muthu has been give the job. Muthu's duty is to just inform people in the village and outside about any death that occurs in the village. Each kudipillai is given Rs. 80/- for arranging and organizing all the death ritual. Every time muthu informs the villages about a panchayat meeting he is given Rs. 100/-. While

informing about a meeting they to look for kudipillai and whoever is available is given the job he will inform the villagers about the meeting. On an average there are about 5 panchayat meeting in one month. So each of the kudipillais get about Rs. 500 every month.

Their main problem is that they have not received any help from any NGO or government organization so far. Since their houses were only partially damaged nobody came to their area to help them. Their houses were all set apart from the rest of the houses in the village and so when the temporary shelters were being constructed they were not considered as an affected community. Even though their houses are located a bit far from the sea shore, water came in all the way till their houses and they lost all their household items. They aspire for compensation for all their losses.

## **WOMEN**

The women who are above 35 years of age go for selling fish. The younger women either have a different business like owning a shop or stitching clothes etc. If not they just remain as house wives. Some of the women received tailoring training through their SHGs and were stitching blouses, skirts and frocks for ladies and children. But they have all lost their tailoring machines now.

The main problem they face is the lack of enough financial resource to support their families. The fishing activity has not resumed in full and so the fisherwomen have no business as well. They want the agencies to support the fishermen in getting back to their business. The women also complain about the lack of a dependable water source in the village. As of now the most reliable one is the water supplied through tankers. But even this is very erratic far as the time is concerned. The quantity of water they get through tankers is only 2 pots on average and this amount is not enough. The water in the hand pumps is extremely salty. So the women want aid agencies to identify a dependable source of water and then supply water through taps to the community.

Housing is another big issue for the women. They are unhappy with the shelters provided. All the shelters are of mediocre quality. But the one given by the government is very poor flooring. All of them leak whenever it rains. The shelters are all close to one another. Putting so many people so close to each other is leading to sanitation and hygiene problem as well. The families wash and cut the fish right next to their shelters and throw the waste in front of their houses. This attracts lots of flies and their area is always buzzing around the houses. The women want permanent houses built soon so that they can move out of the shelters. One of the interesting developments at Tharangambadi

was the marriages 118 minor girls in the last three months. According to the some of local people the main reason for the same is the intent to claim greater quantum relief on the pretext of creation of additional household, and the possibility evade dowry and expenses on weddings. Locally people refer this marriage as Tsunami marriages.

## **SELF HELP GROUP**

Tharangambadi has as many as 39 Self Help Groups of women which were formed due to the initiatives several agencies e.g., SNEHA, ROSA, PEDA, AND WARD., As many as 10 SHGs are located in the localities inhabited by dalits. Most women in Tharangambadi join SHGs in the hope of receiving loans from banks at a subsidized rate. While each of the 10 SHGs facilitated by Sneha has 20 members, the number of members in the other SHGs varies. While ROSA was instrumental in the formation of 14 SHGs PEDA and WARD have formed just one and two SHGs respectively. Some of the SHGs have been actively involved in savings and credit activities. E.g. Alaikosai formed by Sneha , which has been involved in credit transaction worth of 40,000/-

Seven on the SGHs were organized after the Tsunami. Alayarasi was the final SHG formed in the village due to the efforts of SNEHA at present the NGOs has a deep root as a for as the SHGs are concerned. No SHGs in the village has yet availed loans to pursue alternative livelihood. According to sushu one of the SHG functionaries, training on alternative livelihoods is necessary for those who are not engaged in fishing. Box no. 6 represents the key aspirations of SHG members..

Training aspirations of SHG members in Tharangambadi

Box 6

1. Tailoring
2. Basket making
3. Computer training for educated youths
4. Value addition training on fishing like pickle making

In addition to this some of SHG women aspire for loan facilities for rearing animals such as cows and goats.

## TRANSPORATION AND COMMUNICATION

Tharangambadi is located on the east coast road connecting Chennai with Karaikal and Nagapattinam. There is a bus stop on the main road, located at a distance of half a kilometer from the heart of the village. Frequent buses are available to go to number of places within the district as well as outside. The main bus-stand of Karaikal is located about 15 km. away. Other than buses other modes of transport such as car, van, minibus, auto-rickshaw etc. are available. Many of the residents of Tharangambadi own two wheelers and cycles as well. The nearest telephone exchange is located at Porayar, at a distance of 10 km which also has an internet café. Tharangambadi has several STD booths.

Being a town panchayat and the head panchayat of as many as 24 traditional panchayat of fishermen in the region, Tharangambadi is the base of several important institutions, including a government hospital, the office of Assistant Director of Fisheries, department and a Teacher Training College. Box 8 presents a mobility map relating to various key institutions and serves that people and the panchayat access for various reasons.

MOBILITY MAP RELATING TO INSTITUTIN AND SERVICES FOR PEOPLE OF THARANGAMBADI

Kathanchavadi (1.5km)	Electricity Board office
Chanddrapadi (3km)	Wine shopt
Poraiyar (3km)	Water board, Police station, Fire service, College, Corporation office, hospital, telecommunication Facilities, telephone exchange, tailoringshop, Wedding hall.
Karaikal (15km)	fish market, theater, hospital, college
Mailaduthurai (29km)	Fish market, theater, grocery wholesalers
Nagapatiinam (33KM)	Fisheries department, fish market, college, Fishermen society, market for dress, vessels
Palaiyar (40km)	Catching fish
Thirukaddiyur (8KM)	Performing marriages
Mallipattinam (105km)	catching fish during October-December
Poombuhar (30km)	college museum
Mayavaram (32km)	college, theater,, market for fish, furniture, dress
Sirkali (35km)	selling fish
Chidambaram (55km)	purchasing nets
Jagadapattinam (200km)	catching fish during Oct-Dec
Kodiakarai (80km)	catching fish between Oct-Dec

## EDUCATION

Amongst the community of fishermen in Tharangambadi only above 20% of people were known to enroll in primary school. This has gradually changed over the years and now most of children are enrolled in the elementary school. The village has good educational facilities, and within 20 km there are few Tamil Medium schools and colleges including one in Porayar (3KM) another one in karaikal 15 Km. Tharangambadi has a high school, Mother Theresa Girls Higher secondary school, John High school, TELC Middle school, and a teachers training college, beside an industrial training institute. Even though large sections of the fishermen's community do not give much importance to investing adequately in getting their children educated

## HEALTH

Tharangambadi has a government hospital, upgraded from a primary health centre in the year 1997. The primary Health center was opened in the year 1989. This serves as the hospital for the all the villages in the surrounding area. There are beds here though. A doctor visits the hospital every day and stays till 12 pm there is also a village health nurse who stays in the village itself for emergency.

The hospital conducted medical camps immediately after the tsunami. They have also conducted awareness programs on cleanliness and personal hygiene. But according to the doctor Dr. Vijay Rani the people do not take cleanliness seriously and this has led to lot of illness in the village following the tsunami.

According to the doctor water is the most important issue in this village since there is no good reliable source the people are forced to drink and use other contaminated sources. In Tharangambadi the occurrence of water born diseases is particularly common in the three localities inhabited by schedule castes. i.e,Pudu palayam, Kesavan palayam, and Karan street, such diseases occur mostly during the monsoon. Diarrhea is one common ailment many of the elderly people and children suffer from. On probing this was attributed to **lack of firewood to boil water during rainy season.**

Fishermen living in the northern part of the village by the seashore also recalled incidence of Jaundice, fever, Typhoid and Diarrhea as the common water borne diseases prevalent in the village.

Since the people all bathe and wash clothes in the pond there has been increase in number of cases of skin disease like skin rashes and scabies. There is also been an increase in the number of cases of anemia and malnutrition after the tsunami. But the

exact numbers are not known. The reason for there could be the decreased intake of nutritious food in the fishing community. Since the tsunami the fishermen have not had **normal quantities of fish in their diet.**

The incidents of Chicken pox and herpes has gone up. The temporary shelter provided is very hot inside and the people have perceived this as of the reasons for the increase

The villagers are complaining that the doctor stays only in the morning time in the hospital so in case of an emergency during after noon and night, there is nobody to consult. They then have to go to the government hospital at porayar or karikal. Most of them prefer to go to karaikal as the facilities are supposedly better.

## **WATER SUPPLY**

Tharangambadi has multiple sources of water ranging from an open pond to a desalination plant. However from across the different localities in the village, women and men have complained of inadequacy of potable. According to the fishermen of Tharangambadi currently living around the Buckingham canal, every house hold in the locality having two or three children requires no less than between 10- to 13 pots of water every day. Nearly 80% of this need is met with water collected from hand-pumps.

According to the section of villagers living in one of the western street, their daily requirement of 13 pots of water is spent on cooking (2 pots) cleaning utensils (2) pots on bathing (4) pots washing clothes (3) pots and drinking (2) pots. According to scheduled caste women residing in Kesavan palayam, Pudpalayam and Karan street, two buckets (20-30) liters of water are required by each house hold every day for drinking and two buckets for cooking purpose. However according to the fishermen located in the northern coastal part of Tharangambadi, the minimum daily requirement of water is 100

Liters per house hold. While venturing out in the sea for fishing the fishermen are estimated to carry about 10 liters of water on the boats. Box 9 presents an analysis of relative merits of water from different sources, from the perspective of fishermen.

The maintenance of the desalination plant (installed by an agency called (SDFI) the responsibility of panchayat. While villagers appreciate the utility of the plant, several people lamented the slow rate of water yield, which consumes over four hour to fill a 1000 liters tank. Some of the panchayat members also lamented the high electricity consumption by the plant costing panchayat over Rs. 600/- every month as electricity charge.

In most house holds of tharangambadi, water is stored in plastic pots. A few house holds use clay pots to hold water. Use of the plastic pots of 15 liters capacity has picketed up particularly after the tsunami since people have to often traverse long distance to fetch water. Earlier containers made of steel and aluminum was in common use.

### Ranking of Key water sources by the community in Tharangambadi

Sources	Quality	Accessibility
Water tanker	2	1
Hand pump	4	2
Water taps	3	5
Desalination plant	1	4
Pond	5	3

### ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

Before the Tsunami absence of dustbins made people to dump waste on the seashore and a canal passing through the heart of Tharangambadi. Large amount of waste materials were pushed into the village by the mighty tsunami waves, causing inconvenience to local people. However several dustbins have been put in place by various NGOs after Tsunami.

Before the tsunami, a large number of female residents of Tharangambadi, except for the better off Muslim and Christian households, used the bushes located around the village for defecation, while males used the open places closer to shore. But post tsunami, all the bushes were destroyed to construct the temporary shelters. This resulted in lack of place for defecation. Today people use a small place near the temporary shelters for defecation, causing an increase in the number of flies and mosquitoes in the village. During village level interactions, many people emphasize upon the need and importance of toilet in the proposed new houses

## CULTURE

The fishermen of Tharangambadi celebrate Olugal Manglam Mariamman Kovil festival IN March and April. Kanni festival is a February which is celebrated for ten days. Renugadevi Ammankoil festival is celebrated in August. Only the fishermen celebrate this festival. The people of Tharangambadi pooled money Rs. 45 lakh for the construction of Renugadevi Amman Temple. This temple is their prestige and the kumbhabhishekam, ritual was performed two years back. The system of dowry is prevalent in the community of fishermen. After marriage the bride goes over to stay in the house of the groom. After 3 days she is brought back to her parent's house for some ritual, before returning to her in-laws house to stay forever. The dalit communities in Tharangambadi celebrate pongal with great pomp and show, and have their own Ayyanar (Village God) temple.

## THE TRADITIONAL PANCHAYAT OF THE FISHERMEN

Tharangambadi has an active traditional panchayat of fishermen plays a key role in administrative and decision-making role for the fishermen community, jurisdiction in the capacity of head panchayat is spread over 24 traditional panchayats of the area. The panchayats include (1) Tharangambadi, (2) Chandrapadi (3) Chinnarpettai (4) Kuttiyandiur (5) Vellakovil (6) Perumalpettai (7) Pudhupettai (8) Thalampettai (9) Chinnangudi (10) Vanagiri (11) Chinnavanagiri (12) Pombuhar (13) Pudukuppam (14) Madavaimedu (15) Periyandipettai (16) Chinandi pettai (17) Chavadikuppa (18) Keelamoovarakari (19) Melamoovarakarai (20) Keezhakarai (21) Thirumullaivasal (22) Thoduvai (23) Koolaiyar and (24) Pazhayar.. As a matter of fact the traditional panchayat of one of these 24 villages i.e. Periyandipettai has been entrusted with the administrative responsibilities of the last panchayats (numbered between 15 and 24 mentioned earlier) in the capacity to a sub head panchayat while Tharangambadi panchayat has the overall responsibility of all the 24 constituent panchayats, and direct administrative responsibility for the first 14 panchayats.

The institutions of the traditional panchayat of fishermen came to being the year 1974. Earlier the community was administered under the leadership by lineage. There were 18 members in the Tharangambadi panchayat before the tsunami. However 17 others were included after disaster to share the increased responsibilities relating to relief and rehabilitation after the tsunami. A general body of fishermen families in the village selects by consensus the panchayat members for a term of two years. There is a provision for performance-based extension to some of the members. On the day of the

election the existing members have a separate meeting with all the elderly fishermen age 50 years of above. They propose new names for the ensuing term. The names are subsequently read out in the presence of all the fishermen. Who are asked to raise their hands in support of the candidate? Only those candidates are given the opportunities to represent the community whose names do not meet with any objections. . The key criteria for selection of panchayat members include honesty, good communication skills and affordable relationship with different communities. There is also the provision to allow people to officiate as members of panchayat on a trial basis for two months, on completion of which they are either regularized or dropped according to their performance.

The expenses of panchayat members related to village development works, eg. On travel, food etc, are met from the public fund of the panchayat. Meetings of the panchayat are held every Saturday, unless it's a day bumper catch. Meetings are held occasionally on other days as well, if any important decision is required to be taken. Meetings are minutes and signed by all participants. Resolutions are maintained for follow up until action is taken. All the participants of a meeting, irrespective of age, are allowed to express their views. However, women are not allowed to take part in the meeting.

Fund augmented from imposition of fines and penalties constitute a key component of Panchayat's resource. Fishermen violating local norms, e.g. eve teasing, acting against the dictates or reputation of the panchayat. Etc., are prohibited from fishing till the time they pay the penalties decided for the propose, besides, the panchayat collects rental from local shops operating in Tharangambadi. Liquor shop required to pay Rs.40000/-per month before tsunami. In addition the panchayat members or those who are sent by them gets free alcohol; In case outsiders come to sell their fish in the village they are charged Rs. 50/-. Families that were given monetary compensation after the tsunami are required to Rs. 200/- each from their receipts to the panchayat (refundable after completion of the relief administration process).

The Tharangambadi panchayat has been involved in a variety of development activities e.g. desalting of pond, management of water supply and electricity connection, etc., Post –tsunami all the relief measures undertaken by the government for the fishermen have been routed through the traditional panchayat. It also provides funds for the funeral of the poorest community members.

## DALIT PANCHAYAT

Each of the three dalit localities of Tharangambadi has its' own a panchayat selected by the respective dalit communities, Kesavan Palayam, Pudu Palayam, had one common caste panchayat until 1981. In that year Pudu Palayam decided to start separate panchayat after an altercation with Kesavan Palayam opposing collection of donations from non-dalits for construction dalit temple in the village. Both panchayats now have five

members of each while include an Odumpillai (messenger). Till a few years back (2001) Kersavan palayam had the Nattar system in existence. Whereby the position of the community headman was reserved for descendants of a particular family. The dalits of Karan street, being a small community of only 22 house holds, have community leaders to represent and govern them. The dalit community has representation in the traditional panchyats of the fishermen despite co-exists with and serving them in many villages. As mentioned earlier, dalit panchyat are federated at the taluka level making it a stronger entity.

#### MUSLIM JAMAT WAQF PANCHYAT

The Jamat of Muslims is an important institution of governance in Tharangambadi, which governs the community of 83 Muslims households in the village. Elections to the governing body of the Jamatt are held every five years and are conducted by the Waqf board of Chennai. The body comprises of President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, 5 members of a Core committee and modhinar (one who calls for the prayers) every adult male member of the Muslim community has the right vote.

The Jamat receives Rs. 100/- from every adult member of the community every year, in addition to charges for a conduction circumcision at the rate of Rs.200/- and remittance of Rs.200/- from people returning from foreign countries. These funds go towards meeting the operational expenses of the Jamat. It operates a public address system used for announcing the prayer hour five times every day.

#### TELC THARNGAMBADI

The evangelical Lutheran church is headed by Pastor Rev Gunalan, who is responsible for religious stewardship of the Lutheran Christian community. The church elections are held once in three years conducted by the Bishop of Trichy. Those whole working as government servants pay Rs. 180/- every month towards the welfare of the church. Member's contributing to the church are eligible for voting. The roles of TELC supposed to be collecting donations, distributing clothes to the elderly, widows and orphans during festival and helping poor families in and around.

## TSUNAMI

As many as 304 lives of residents of Tharangambadi were lost due to the Tsunami. More than hundred and fifty deaths were of young children. It resulted in full damage of altogether 904 houses, and partial damages to above 266 houses.

A large number of household of fishermen lost valuable productive assets due to the tsunami. This included as many as 128 of the 168 fiber boats, 35 out of 50 catamarans and 165 out of 175 motorized. Catamarans

Government of Tamil Nadu provided a relief amount of Rs. 4000/- each tsunami-affected household. Followed by monthly allowance of Rs. 1000/- per household for three months. Besides as per the provisions of the government order No. 583 each household was provided 60 kg rice, edible oil, 3 liters Kerosene, spices etc. worth of

Rs. 2000/- per house hold. Besides a Relief assistance of Rs. 100000/- was provided for every death caused by the tsunami b the Central Government and Rs. 100000/- from the state Government. The government also constructed 276 temporary shelters. A large number of national and international development support agencies also made significant contributions in mitigating the adverse effects of the tsunami and the reconstruction and development of Tharangambadi. Box No. 15 captures some of the salient responses to this effect of the part of various agencies

POST TSUNAMI RESPONSES OF VARIOUS DEVELOPMETS SUPPORT AGENCIES

SI No.	Name of the NGOs	Responses
1	HOPE foundation, New Delhi	Provided 34 fiber boats and an English medium school, Started vocational Training centers Running a school
2	SASTRA, Thanjavur	Provided 5 fiber boats with new Boats and constructed a community Hall
3	Ramakrishna math	Replaced 5 fiber boats with new Boats provided T-shirts
4	SIFFS	Provided 262 temporary sheds and Construction of permanent houses

5	World Vision India	Provided 200 temporary shelters
6	Khushi New Delhi	Provided 50 temporary shelters
7	Gramiya sangam Nalam	provided 27 temporary sheds Including 7 thatched sheds
8	Marutham/NESA	Provided 72 temporary sheds and A community hall
9	CASA Chennai	provided ration items
10	PETA/PREPARE	provided ration items, Repaired engines
11	HOPE Kolkata	provided free services for repair of Engines and fiber boats
12	OH International	Provided 5 fiber boats with ACG, London engines & nets
13	VHP	Provided 5 fiber boats with Engines and nets
14	RDT Anandhapur	provided 30 boats with engines And nets
15	Amrithanathmayi	Provided 9 fiber boats with engine And nets
16	SNEHA Nagapattinam	provided ration item, 50 Kg rice T-shirts
17	Hon'ble minister Mani Shankar Iyer M.P	provided nets worth 300,000/- for fishermen besides edible oil 5 kg rice and mats for all victims