

**Understanding Design**  
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**Module - 04**  
**Start of Section 6**  
**Lecture – 23**  
**The user's role in sustainability**

Do you have any model from other related disciplines?

Janak mention an example from architecture. You must have seen how after major disasters the government builds housing for, you know, people affected.

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Such housing schemes usually do not involve local residents in the planning.

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And this often leads to houses of the locals do not feel at home in.

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And these displaces get neglected afterwards and the project becomes totally unsustainable because it cannot be maintained by the community.

I do recall something like this happened in Kutch after the big earthquake.

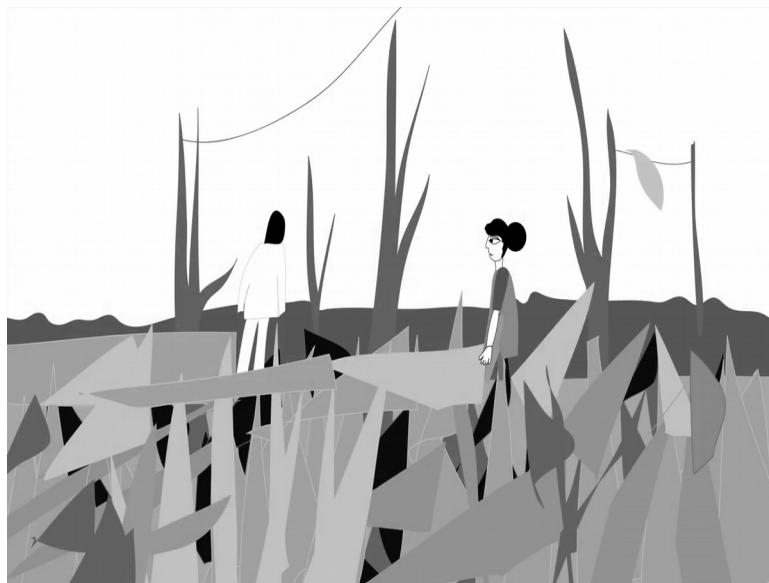
Of 2001.

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Now, this is in 2004 after the Tsunami.

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This the architect Durganand Balsavar was commission to design new homes in Tamil-nadu in the Nagapattanam district.

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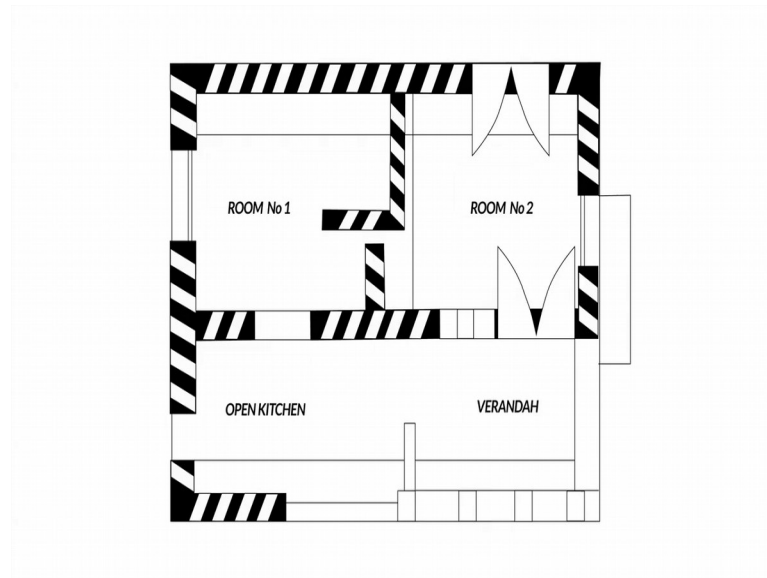
And he insisted on getting the local people involved right from the beginning. He wanted, you know, the local people to feel the sense of ownership in the homes at that came up that were designed. It was not very easy because the donor agencies and the local residents obviously had very different views on what needed to be designed in their ideal home.

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So, the house designed that the community wanted had a shaded veranda in front that was facing the street and which also housed a kitchen. They wanted their kitchen to be in the veranda of the front.

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And the donor agencies were completely opposed to this and even Balsavar didn't agree with this. (Refer Time: 01:26) For them the ideal kitchen did not have a, you know, have the kitchen on the porch, it was inside the house and it was closed.

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**Sense of place experienced in the indigenous dwellings**

The Houseform of these indigenous dwellings have evolved over a long period and each house has a unique character due to personalisation, which can be never matched in a temporary shelter.

Even the new concrete houses built recently follows a different image acquired by the people through various means, the new houses might not always suit the character of the existing fabric. Most of the time, the indigenous character of the dwelling is destroyed by these houses.

**Indigenous character**      **Temporary shelter**

**Alternative technology as an option**

Alternative technology as portrayed in the previous pages are a very good option for rehabilitation, but they should also be used in a sensitive way, as most of the pre-designed structures and units are unique and designed with only the engineering aspect in mind, without any consideration to the Houseform or the lifestyle of the people who will live inside. In the past there have many situation in relocation and rehabilitation where the units are inhabited at all as they don't fit the lifestyle and living of the people.

The response to reconstruct or rehabilitate is always at a dwelling unit level, rehabilitation should be considered as a settlement, intermediate spaces should be provided for the people to interact at a community level.

All disaster programs are not just engineering solution, its mostly cultural and an anthropological solution. Engineering is only a part of it.

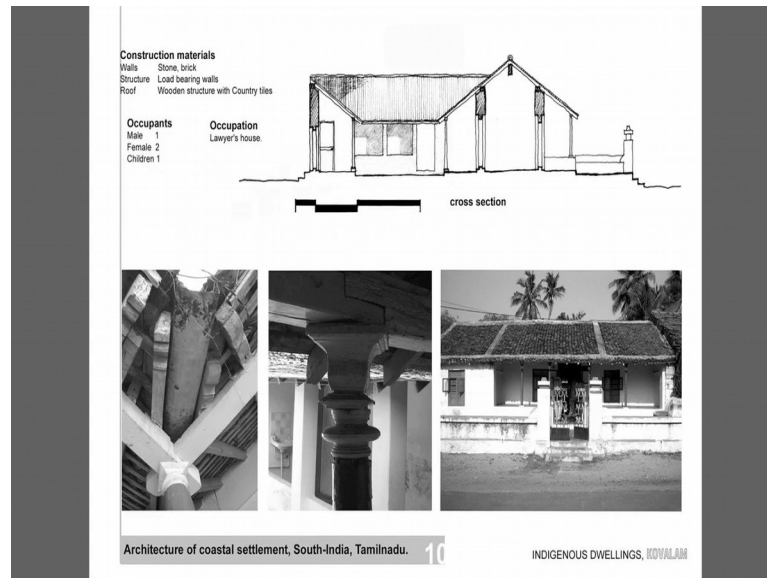
Architecture of coastal settlement, South-India, Tamilnadu. 18

SENSE OF PLACE, CONCLUSION

A collage of images illustrating the concepts discussed in the text. It includes architectural drawings of traditional houses, photographs of actual indigenous dwellings, and images of temporary shelters or modern units that lack the traditional character.

Balsavar then, I think, understood that this design solution was something that reflected the villagers way of life and so, he went with that.

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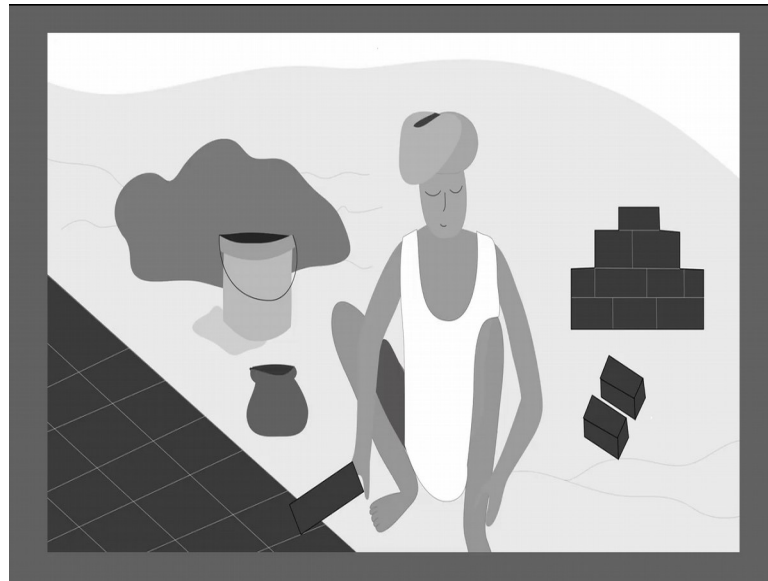


He included the people in the design.

And it was a very participatory process. The larger point was that when participated design ensures that the design sustains longer because those who are invested in using it, participate in the making of it they care about it and it lives with them far longer.

So, people were involved in the design planning as well.

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Yes, they were even involved in the construction- they made bricks, did masonry, carpentry and electrical work.

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The building process provided the people with livelihoods and they felt a keen sense of ownership in the project.

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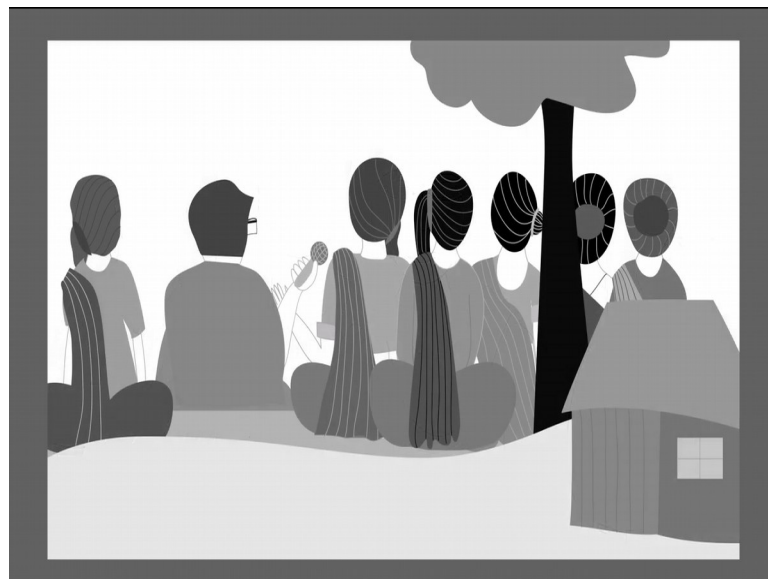


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The emotional investment of the local people translated into sustainability.

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As shown by their care for the buildings long after the design team had left.

So, this is another example where the socio cultural aspect was taken into account.