

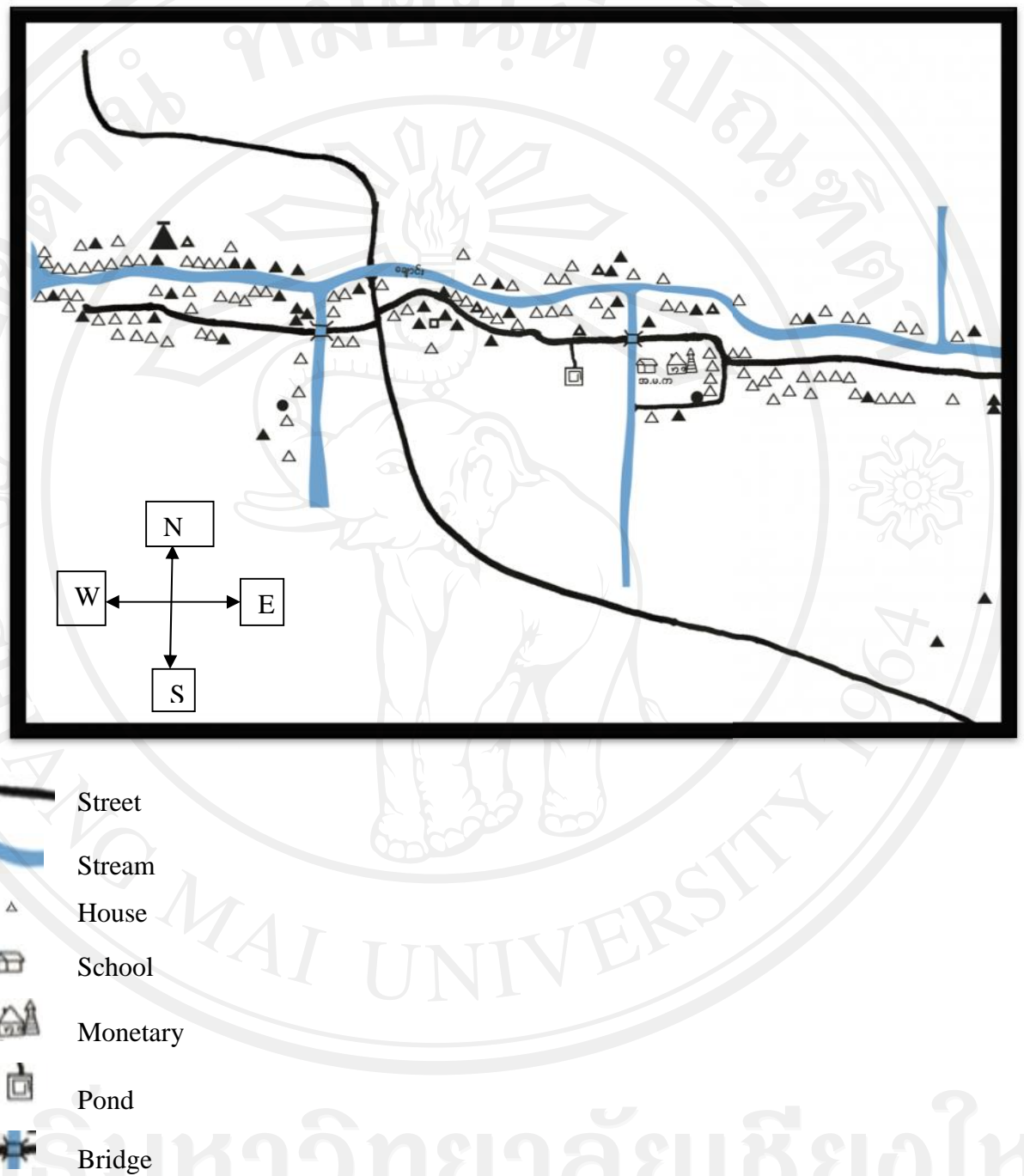
## CHAPTER 4

### “THA-GYAR-HIN-O” VILLAGE AN OVERVIEW

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter mainly focuses on the historical background of the study village and the social and economic status of the local people. The changes within the community before and after the disaster is critical to a broader understanding of the social impact of the cyclone. Thus, in this chapter, I will describe the community in Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village before the Nargis cyclone.

In Ayeyarwaddy Division, there are five main districts (Patheingyi District, Thatha District, Myingyi District, Maungmye District and Pyawbwe District). Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village is located in Daedaye Township, Pyawbwe District. It takes one and a half hours from Pyawbwe to reach the village by boat. The only means of transportation to the village is by boat. Some villagers own small boats with no engine that must be paddled. The villagers can also travel to main hub towns in the delta, such as Pyawbwe and Bogalae, by a public transport ferry (*line gaung* in Burmese). With this ferry, it takes one day to arrive at the village from Pyawbwe. Near Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village, there are some smaller villages such as Kan Seik, Phone Shan Gyi, Nyi Naung, Sweitaw Gone, and Hna Pin Saing. These villages are located within a 30-minute boat ride from Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village but there is no public transportation available for travel to these nearby villages. Villagers have to use their own local boats or have to wait at the riverbank to hitch a ride on passing boats.



**Figure 4.1 Village Transect Map**

**Source: Provided by the village head during data collection period**

One small stream, named the Tha-Gyar-Hin-O stream, flows across the middle of the village, so the village is divided into two parts; the north and the south. The village is also situated on the banks of the Pyapon River. Based on the village

settlement pattern, the eastern part of the village is larger than the western part, and in all, 80 percent of the villagers live in the southern part. One video hall, a primary school, a monastery, a generator house and some general stores are included in the village, and there are 160 households in the village with a total population of 632, which includes 342 males and 290 females. Before Cyclone Nargis, there were only 135 households in the village. After Nargis hit, 25 households were added to the village because newcomers from other disaster-affected villages came to settle near their relatives from Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village. In the village, there are two ethnic groups: Bamar and Karen (*Kayin*). The majority of the population is Bamar and Buddhism is the majority religion. There is only one monastery in the village where villagers gather on religious days and other festivals days. There is no church in the village and only three households identify as Christians. They pray every Sunday at their homes and they also join with other villagers if there are festivals being held at the monastery.

Most of the villagers are related and they stay very close to each other. Due to the close kinship ties there tend to be very few interpersonal problems within the village.

**Table 4.1 Population in the village before Nargis Cyclone**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
<b>Before Nargis 2008</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>603</b>

**Source: Provided by the village head during data collection period**

## 4.2. Village Structure and Setting

### 4.2.1. History of the Village

In the field, I asked the elders about the village history and had villager draw a historical diagram together. The village was established in 1964. The village's oral history explains that the founders of the village named the village "Tha-Gyar-Hin-O" because there are plenty of fish, prawn and other food goods to be found in the area. Because of the abundance of natural resources the devout Buddhists establishing the village believed that the lord of the first level of existence, ThaGyarMinn, Sakka in Buddhist scripture blessed them and made the land prosperous. In Myanmar, there are people who believe in "nat" spirits which they believe can help bring them good fortune.

I was fortunate to meet a village elder who helped me to understand more of the village history. A Ba Nyunt, or grandpa Nyunt, is an old man lives near my host. Luckily, he was willing to share his experiences and knowledge of the village. He was friendly and whenever I came to visit him he would treat me to Burmese pickled tea leaf salad and tea. Pickled tea leaf salad, "*la -phet-thout*" in Burmese, is a Burmese traditional food which is served to visitors. It is served to express the friendship and warm hospitality of Burmese culture.

In the village, villagers have originated from different localities across the delta area. According to A Ba Kyunt, the early settler thought this area was suitable to settle a village because the land easily provides food, cultivatable land, and easy transportation on the rivers. In the delta area, one can say that rivers are their life. Villagers find fish and prawns for food; they can have fun swimming in the stream; and can use the river for washing clothes and bathing.

I asked A Ba Nyunt more about the history of the village. He told me this story:

"On the way to our village, you can see many fishing boats along the river. That is one of our delta area traditions. We go along the river for fishing with a boat. We bring everything on

that boat that we will need – cooking materials, bedding, etc. Sometimes, we go with our family. Sometimes, during the fishing trip, we stop somewhere along the river bank and stay there for a while drying fish and doing other things like finding wood and cooking meals. In the earlier times, people arrived in this area like that, as travelers. They stopped several times here, at this place, and so they learned that this area would be a good place to settle as a village. Then they started to bring their relatives and family here. That is the history of this village, as told by our ancestor's oral histories.”

According to A Ba Nyunt, the villagers from this village started to build a local school for their children's education in 1978. It was a primary school and the villagers hired one school teacher from Pyapon. Students were not only from Thagyar-Hin-O village, but also children from other villages nearby. After five years, the government recognized the village school and it became an official government primary school with two government teachers. That was a significant milestone for the village that illustrates the successful collective action of the villagers. The village school was established by the villagers by their collective effort. Building a school for their children shows their common value for education. Through this experience, they have also seen the benefits of reciprocity from collective commitment. When the village school began getting support from the government, this meant that the village was creating not only bonding social capital amongst the villagers but also linking social capital by connecting with government officials.

#### **4.2.2. Social Cohesiveness of the Local Community**

Village life in the Delta is governed by a range of formal and informal institutions. Social groups have been established inside the villages for specific social functions. Formal institutions are the local government authorities, government army in the area, government-formed groups like the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAF), the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), the fireman group, and the village-level Red Cross Association. The other association which is not related to



government is the Parent and Teacher Association from the village school. Regular meetings of the household heads are held in the village to discuss village problems, though the main purpose is the transmission of government orders. However, these formal of groups mostly just in name and were formed simply to fulfill a government requirement. The groups rarely have regular activities or meetings. Mostly, the group members will only gather if local governments ask them to show up at an assembly or township level meeting to show that these groups exist.

Informal institutions in the village include, the young men groups (*Karla Thar*), young women groups (*Karla Thamee*), women's groups (*Swan-Long-Athin*), men's groups (*Thar Yae – Nar Yae* group), the Buddhist religious group (*Gaw-Pa-Ka* Group) and Christian religious group. These informal institutions emerged based on the village's cultural, religious and local customs. People naturally gathered together in these groups to have regular activities and meetings in a form of localized practices. These kinds of groups gather at the Buddhist temple (*Ywar-Oo-Kaung*) for meetings and activities. These informal institutions may include village elders, religious networks and local customs and tradition. Monks play an ever important role particularly in solving problems and conflicts. Usually the villagers ask advice from head monks, school teachers and traditional village heads when they have conflicts, problems or important decisions to make. This is the way of traditional practices that show the important role that informal institutions play in the controlling, decision making and problem solving processes in the villages. At times religious groups and the Village Welfare Associations may have meetings attended by the entire village. This may be the case if there is a large issue to be addressed such as village development or a religious event. Both Buddhists and Christians participate in the Village Welfare Associate, which facilitates communication within the village. Through these social activities, villagers maintain a connection with the different religions and social classes in the village. Young people and elders have worked together since before Cyclone Nargis, so there is no big conflict between the two generations.

#### 4.2.3. Monk as Community Leader

Every morning, the mother from my host family gets up early and cooks rice and curry to offer to the Buddha and monks. The villagers from Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village call the head monk from the monastery, “*Sayardaw*” or abbot. They respect Sayardaw very much.

On a daily basis, the monks go around the village accepting offerings of food from each Buddhist household. In this way, the monk can keep in touch with the villagers every day and also can observe the happenings around the village. This can help the monk to know who needs help and what is happening in the village. The monk can also share important information with the villagers such as messages about water, health and other concerns. During these daily alms gathering activities, the villagers can also ask the monks for advice and gain valuable guidance.

The Sayardaw in Tha-Gyar-Hin-O is not originally from this village. He was raised in Pyapon town and only arrived in the village later in life when he came to be a school teacher. The villagers said that he was a good teacher and students loved him very much. Later he returned to his home town and become a monk. He went to Yangon to attend the Buddhist school for monks. He then came back to visit to Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village. At that time, villagers and the head monk asked him to stay in the village monastery. He agreed and when the former *Sayardaw* passed away he became the head monk. As a monk and also the former teacher for this village, this *Sayardaw* has a good relationship with villagers both young and old.

The monk is used to working with people, working with groups like youth group and village management group, and leading the religious ceremonies. Sometimes the monk is involved in social activities such as reconstructing the village road every summer and attending the village school meeting that takes place before the start of each new school year. The monk is also leading a class on Buddhist teachings at the village school for the students.

In line with Myanmar tradition, the head monk is a respected mediator and advisor for the village. When problems and disagreements occur between the villagers they

depend on the monk to help resolve the conflict. Most of people, both Buddhist and Christian, respect the monk and listen to his advice. The monastery and pagodas in the village are houses of worship that serve religious and also communal functions for the village. Use of these spaces is not restricted to a particular religion. Activities like seasonal festivals, communal alms-giving in certain seasons, family celebrations and novitiations regularly take place in the monastery compound near the small pagoda. Consequently, people in the village, whether Buddhist or Christian, are familiar with monk and his monastery.

Because of his strong leadership role in the village, *Sayardaw* was able to play a critical role in helping the community during Cyclone Nargis. The ways in which the *Sayardaw* was able to support the village will be further explored in Chapter V.

#### **4.2.4. Educational Level of the Villagers and activities of Parent and Teacher Association**

Regarding education, there is a primary school in Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village but there is no middle or high school. The villagers have to send their children to Pyapon, Bogalae and the other towns in the division to attend middle and high school. Because of transportation and financial difficulties most villagers, with the exception of wealthy families, cannot send their students for further study past the primary level. In addition to this, most of the people from the remote area believe that basic survival is more important than a secondary education. They believe that being able to read and write is the only educational necessity for their life. After learning these basic skills, they believe that children need to help with their parents' work and for their households needs; therefore, school participation drops quickly upon reaching grade 3, and further at grade 4.

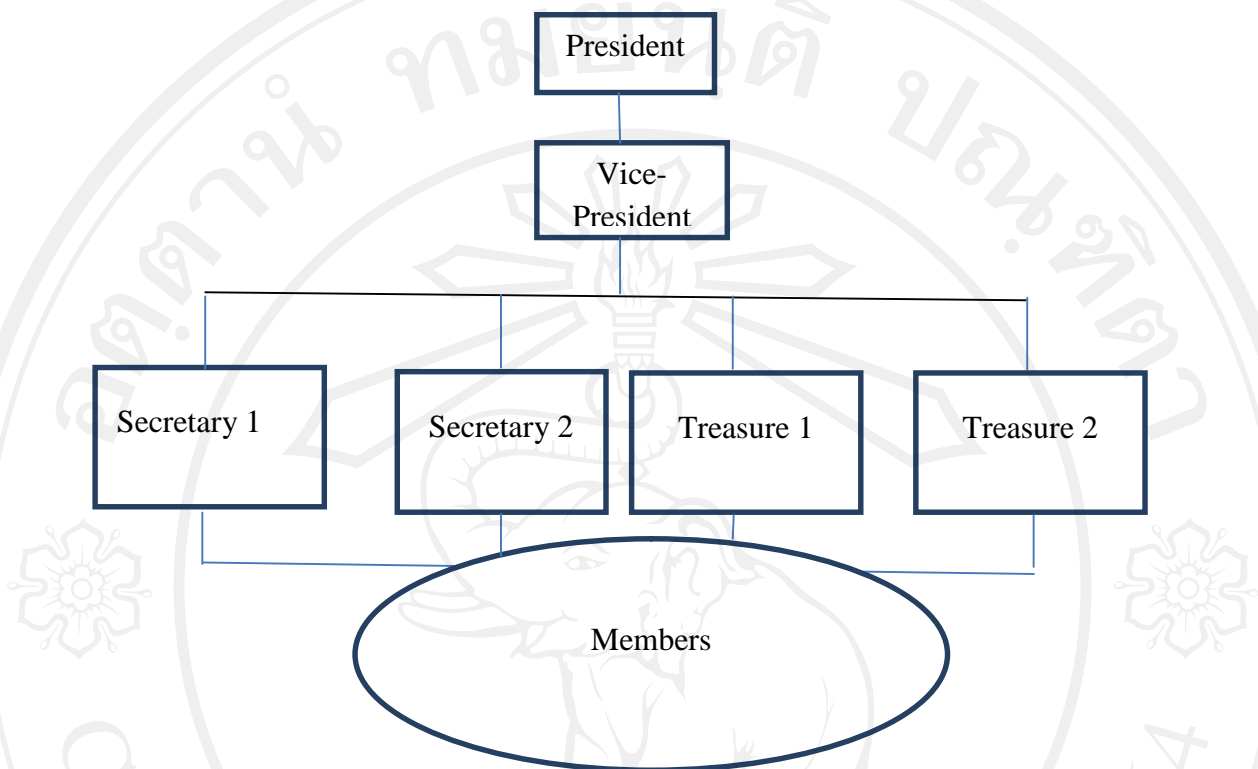


**Table 4.2 Students Enrollment Record of “Tha-Gyar-Hin-O” village primary school year 2007 (Before Nargis Cyclone)**

Level	Male	Female	Total
Grade 1	25	26	51
Grade 2	22	18	40
Grade 3	7	11	18
Grade 4	2	5	7
Total	59	67	126

**Source: Provided by the teacher from the village school during data collection period**

An important association for the education of the villagers is the Parent and Teacher Association. In the village primary school, there are only three teachers that are appointed by the government. One is the head master and two lead classes. In Myanmar, the salary for teachers is very low and the village is quite remote so most of teachers that were assigned to Tha-Gyar-Hin-O worked only a short time before trying to transfer back to the city. This is a common challenge for schools in other remote areas around the country. The villagers, knowing that a high teacher turnover rate would bring negative outcomes for their children, wanted to find a way to encourage the teachers to stay longer at the school. To this end, they organized the Parent and Teacher Association four years before Cyclone Nargis. The main objective of the association is to provide enough teachers for the village school. The association has one president, one vice-president, two secretaries, two treasurers and the committee members, elected from amongst the students' parents. Generally, over 70 members are in this association. There are around 120 students, not only from the Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village, but also from another seven villages in the village tract.



**Figure 4.2 The Structure of Parent and Teacher Association of the Village**

The Parent and Teacher Association meets regularly before the start of the school year. At that meeting, the members discuss the problems that the school teachers and parents are facing and try to find solutions to the problems. Most of the parents participate in that meeting and discuss the problems they face. The monk is also present at the meeting. The villagers and committee members invite the head monk of the village to join as an advisor. All parents recognise that the government teachers' salaries are very low, thus most of the remote villages provide food and shelter to the teachers in order that they may stay longer at the village. At the Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village school, the committee usually provides 60 baskets of rice to each teacher for one school year and offers them a homestay at a villager's home. At the meeting, the committee members decide on the quantity and logistics for the rice collection as well as other things they need to do for the school. Recently, when the school needed an additional teacher, the committee members decided to use their own

funds to hire one private teacher for the school, thus taking the initiative to further improve upon their village's situation.

#### 4.2.5. The Musician Group

Traditional folk music and dance for the religious occasion emerged from the custom of entertaining the crowds, especially volunteers at community charitable activities. Its purpose is to inspire people to donate and to do meritorious deeds for the betterment of their next lives and also to entertain the crowd.



**Figure 4.3 The Village Musician Group Performing at Monastery**

There can be seven or more musicians in the music group. The members include main drum player, xylophone player, flutist, solo drum player, a bamboo clapper player, singers and dancers. The music group is the pride of the village. It is also evidence of local hand-to-hand knowledge transferring practices between older and young generations. Additionally, the music group has connections with other villages' musician groups and uses these networks to exchange knowledge on music-related issues and for collective performances.

#### 4.2.6. Youth Groups from the Village

Well before Cycle Nargis, the village had two youth groups: the young men's group (*karlathar*) and young women's group (*karlathamee*). These groups regularly gather when social occasion of joy or grief are happening in the village. The groups have joined together to do social work and improve their village community. They are quite informal and don't have regular meetings, an annual plan, or an organizational structure for group. However, the groups do have informal leaders called "*Karla TharGoung*" and "*Karla ThameeGoung*". *Goung* in Burmese means "head". Therefore, "*Karla TharGoung*" and "*Karla ThameeGoung*" means the head of the young men's and young women's groups. These "*Karla TharGoung*" and "*Karla ThameeGoung*" are typically the oldest and most active members for the group.

These two young groups are very close and usually carry out community projects and activities together for the benefit of their village. These groups are also called "*Lu Pyo*" and "*A Pyo*" groups meaning "singles group". This name reflects the predominant trait of the members of this group – the fact that they are single. While being there is no formal rules of regulations barring married members, group members tend to be single people who don't have a family. The assumption is that those without the responsibility to care for a family, have more time to dedicate to community work.

The activities of these groups vary according to the social occasion. When the group has a planned event at their village, the group's members inform each other and gather at the site of the event, working together on all tasks needed for the preparation. The "*Karla TharGoung*" leads the young men and "*Karla ThameeGoung*" supervises the young women allocating jobs and duties.

One of the young men's group members, KoSein explains the groups activities;

"We work together on social work for our village. That has been our village tradition for generations. Our parent's also did the same thing when they were single. The young people around our age should unite to do social activities for our village."

#### 4.2.7. Healthcare and Facilities

There is no clinic or hospital in Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village. There is no doctor but there is a nurse and a midwife nurse who have been assigned by government to provide health care to five different villages in the region. The nurses come to village once every two months to care for the health needs of the village. Because of this extreme lack in formal healthcare services in the village, villagers mostly use local Burmese traditional medicine and traditional healers (*baindawsayarin* Burmese) who use traditional medicine made from forest products. If the traditional healers cannot heal the sick person or if the illness or diseases severe, the villagers go to the village tract level healthcare center or the township hospital which is situated at Pyapon town. Villagers regularly suffer from malaria and cholera usually at the beginning of the rainy season. Most of the diseases present in the village are related to water and sanitation problems.

#### 4.2.8. Religion and Traditional Beliefs

In Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village, according to the village headman, 97% of the population are Buddhist and the rest are Christian. There is one monastery in the village but no church, so Christians gather in each other's homes. They rotate from home to home each Sunday and worship together. The Christian families in this village are from the Karen ethnic group.

The Buddhist villagers go to the monastery regularly on the Sabbath days. On these days, they gather at the monastery to listen to religious sermons from the monk, offer donations, pray and feast together. The Buddhist youth group and the women's group cook together at the monastery. They prepare food for the monks as well as all the visitors who will come to the monastery that day.

The Buddhist communities in the delta area also believe in the *Shin Upagutta*, one of the Buddha's disciples that is known as the "saint" of all water. According to legend, *Shin Upagutta* grew up a troubled boy until the Buddha visited him and brought him instant enlightenment. From that moment, he spent his time meditating in



the Irrawaddy River. He is the saint of boatmen, of fisherfolk, and of anyone who relies on the river. Peoples believe he is still alive up until today.



**Figure 4.3 Shin Upagutta Figure**

In the monsoon season, communities throughout the delta prepare bamboo rafts topped with *Shin Upagutta* statues. These rafts are then decorated with flowers, candles and donations and set afloat down the river. When the rafts come a shore near a village, the villagers are greeted with reverence and a ceremony will be held. This celebration will sometimes be just a day or it might stretch into a few days. Then, the villagers will set the raft loose so it can continue down the river, bringing blessings to the next village that takes it in.

Buddhism in Myanmar is primarily practiced with a mix of *nat* (nature spirit) worship. Most people from the delta area worship a *nat* named *U Shin Gyi*, also known as Lord of the Sea. *U Shin Gyi* is said to have appeared over the last 100 years and is believed to protect his worshippers from coming to harm from water. Fishermen and also farmers may pray to *U Shin Gyi* daily before going to work. Believer families from delta offer a ritual offering ceremony to *U Shin Gyi* at the beginning of rainy season. It is believe that the *nats*, such as *U Shin Gyi*, can communicate with the human world through mediums known as *natsayar*. A *natsayar* leads the offering ceremony and offers sticky rice, fried fish, palm sugar, betel, betel

nut, snacks, flowers and candles. The *natsayar* are respected people with good morals. The community depends on them for communication with the *nat*, ensuring that the villagers can be safe when they are on the water. Thus, the villagers have a high opinion of the *natsayar*.

#### **4.3. Villagers' Livelihoods Pre-Nargis**

The river is the life of the people in the delta area. For my field site, Pyapon River and Tha-Gyar-Hin-O River are integral to the daily lives of the villagers. The rivers provide the main transportation for the villagers. The most predominant livelihoods - rice cultivation, livestock raising, and fishing - all depend on the rivers. . In terms of other livelihoods there are also landless people working as casual laborers. They are called *bout* in Burmese language. As casual laborers, they may have little professional skill and frequently have to change the kind of work they do based on the working season and available work. They usually work for affluent landowners or big boat owners for their income. Small-scale sellers are also present in the village. They may do small-scale fishing as well as collecting and selling of local forest products.

The wealthier people in the village own land and other important resources such as fishing nets. Fisherfolk from this village do not own big fishing boats with engines; they only own fishing nets, some other gear and traditional small boats that use an oar. The livestock farms are mostly run by the wives of the fishers and farmers who stay at home taking care of the children. Of their many duties, livestock farming and home gardening are usually included.



**Figure 4.4 Local Villager Fishing Practice in Ayeyarwaddy Delta**

#### **4.3.1. Farming Communities' Livelihoods**

The farmers in the village can be separated into two types. First there are the small farmers who own some land but may also rent additional land from larger land owners. The second is large-scale farmers who are large land owners working with daily workers or wage labourers.

The farmers normally start working their farm in June at the beginning of raining season. According to traditional farming practices, farmers first need to prepare their land so that it is ready to grow paddy. They do so by plowing the fields using cattle or buffaloes. These days, some farmers use hand-tractors instead of using cattle or buffaloes. The farmers are using both direct planting and transplant paddy growing methods, depending on the land's position and soil condition. Male workers regularly work on all stages of agricultural work, but women usually only work during the planting and cultivation stages.

The farming season is two seasons long in the Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village as the farmers can grow paddy both during the monsoon and the summer. But to grow the summer season crop, farmers need to invest double the costs compared to the monsoon season because the summer crop needs more fertilizers. Yields are also different for

the two seasons; farmers can harvest 40 baskets to 60 baskets per acre for the monsoon crops and 50 baskets to 70 baskets per acre for summer crops. The input cost for farming highly influences the profits that farmers are able to gain from each season's yield. Even if farmers have land to cultivate, there is still the need for high up-front investments in seeds, fertilizers and labourers. Generally, farmers need one labourer for every five acres for the whole monsoon season. However, during paddy transplanting and harvesting time, eight to ten workers are needed for ten days work in the same plots. The labourer fees before Cyclone Nargis were five baskets of rice per acre for those working for the whole monsoons season - around 120 days. The other rate was 1,000 kyats for daily workers. The farmer's total investment was estimated to be anywhere from 100,000 kyats up to 200,000 kyats per acre per season.

The government offers loans for the farmers through the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank. There are both -monsoon loans and summer loans available at 8% per annum interest rate. The monsoon loan for the paddy is 50,000 kyats per acre and for the summer paddy is 80,000 kyats; the government will provide loans only up to a maximum of 10 acres of farmland. If the farmer fails to repay, he or she cannot receive a loan for the next season. The challenge for agrarian communities is that the government loan for farmers is not enough for the needed investment; therefore the farming community gets trapped in a continual cycle of debt. Each year, wealthy land owners and large-scale farmers lend money, at high interest rates, to small-scale farmers. They also loan out their tools and cattle needed to till the soil. After the harvest, the debt is repaid and the cycle continues. This scenario has been playing out for many years in the delta region. In this "borrow-harvest-repay" system, the farmers are repaying their debt to the creditors after finishing harvesting and then needing to retake the loan before the next planting season. Even though the farmers are using this debt system, they can still save rice for their own consumption, an important indicator of quality of life in Myanmar. The farmers find ways to afford family occasions and religious ceremonies. They can generally also find ways to repair their homes before the rainy season. There are even families who can save some money for their children's education, special occasions and other purposes.



### 4.3.2. Fishing Communities' Livelihoods

In the farming sector, there are a variety of actors including the large scale businessmen, the middle men and the village level, local fisherfolk. The large scale businessmen are those who have won the auction for the fishing permits. They can afford the permission fees that need to be paid to the government. Middlemen network between the large scale businessmen and the local fisherfolk. These middle men work as traders and retailers for the fishing industry. These three kinds of fish industry actors have their relationships constructed by the procedures and regulations of the fishing industry. Local fisherfolk who want to fish in the river need to buy a permit from the auction winner (the large-scale business men) who can then grant permission to specific fishing grounds. In turn, the local fisherfolk must sell their catch to that auction winner. Credit in the fishing industry is given by the large-scale businesses to both the local fisherfolk and the middle men. Usually, the loans will be given to the middle men directly and then they can disperse it to the network of smaller fisherfolk. The loans help the fisherfolk get the needed inputs for their livelihood. Some small fishers avoid dealing with the large businesses all together by doing traditional farming in the smaller streams. The lives of the fisherfolk were mostly secure before Cyclone Nargis, and fishing rights were issued by the government, either through auctioning exclusive leasehold rights to certain flood plain fishing areas, or by issuing licenses to fish in open fishery areas by a set fee or through a tender process (TCG 2009c).

The loan repayment calculations are influenced by the tides because the catch differs based on tides in a given month. The fishing season starts in June and ends in February. The fisherfolk typically have a better catch in the first three months, the peak season for fishing. The amount of fish caught then gradually decreases over the last three months of the season. The fisherfolk catch larger amounts of fish on high-tide days than the low-tide days. Therefore repayment systems are set to coincide with the high tides. For example, to give back 200,000 kyats, a borrower may agree to pay 20,000 kyats after every high tide. He or she will have to do that ten times to pay off the loan. If the fisherfolk cannot pay back the loan, the fishing permission will be



revoked. Meanwhile, the auction winning businessmen fully control the fishery sectors and the local fishermen who are indebt and have no ownership of the waterways on which they depend for their livelihoods. The income for the fishing communities depends on the amount of fish they can catch in the fishing season. Mostly, on a borrow-fish-repay system the fishermen can payback their loans after the fishing season and can receive a new loan again when the fishing season starts again. Fisherfolk can get enough money for household consumption before Nargis. However, unlike farmers, most fishermen can't save or spend as much, but they are able to use the money for making donations and observing family occasions. The three months of the summer around March and April are the off-season for fishermen. This is the time when some fisherfolk work as casual labourers. Others stay with family and repair their homes and fishing gear before the rainy season comes.

#### **4.3.3.Casual Labourers' Livelihoods**

Casual laborers in Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village do various kinds of work. Mostly their job opportunities depend on the farming and fishing industries. Men may work as permanent workers at a farm or on fishing boats. Their daily income for one person is about 1000 kyats. Women mostly do part time jobs also at farm during plantation and harvesting times. They also repair fishing nets and sort fish for the fishing communities. Some women collect fish from the middlemen or buy snacks from the village store with credit and then go around to nearby villages selling the fish or snacks. They repay their daily loan the next day, keeping some money as personal profit. For some families, husband and wife undertake subsistence fishing in the traditional way and go around the village selling the fish that they caught. However, traveling one village to another village is not easy an job, so there is only a limited number of villages doing this livelihood. Most of the casual laborers depend on jobs from farming and fishing. Before Cyclone Nargis, the casual laborers could find a job easily and, for the most part, could meet their family's consumption needs.

#### 4.4. Summary

To understand the situation of a community post-disaster, it is important to understand the various types of community capital that are critical to the recovery processes. The village communities in Tha-Gyar-Hin-O village are any example of the ties that bind residents to each other. This connecting force is a resource that social scientists have labeled social capital. Within networks, norms of reciprocity were observed in the Parent and Teacher Association, the youth group, and the musicians group, which are all part of the traditional social group system of the local communities in the village. There are also cultural traditions, collective experiences and shared values that the community can draw on in times of need, such as during long-term post-disaster recovery.