

**COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING
AND COLLECTIVE ACTIVITIES:
A CASE STUDY OF
THE TEENEK INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY
OF TAMALETOM**

by

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REVISIONS

1. *Clarify if snowball sampling method was used to find the research site.*

Response: The method used to find the research site was labeled as snowball sampling and has been clarified in the methodology section.

2. *Explain how did your strategy to accompany Benigno for fieldwork or his presence in the field research affect data*

Response: This has been addressed in the methodology section under instrumentation.

3. *Describe the importance of informal interviews conducted spontaneously.*

Response: This has been addressed in the methodology section under instrumentation.

4. *Mention the negative aspects of TCA or the pre-existing social capital.*

Response: A discussion of the negative aspects of the pre-existing social capital was included in chapter 5 and the conclusion.

5. *Describe appreciative inquiry as it related to the recommendations and main points of this thesis.*

Response: A discussion about Appreciative Inquiry is now included in the methodology section under strategic enquiry and considered in the policy implications section.

6. *Discuss how sense of community is associated with TCA and CCA.*

Response: More discussion and explanations were added in the conclusion to clarify this question.

7. *Discuss the rationale for why Benigno and the Ceremonial Center committee can be the representative of Tamaletom's community activities.*

Response: This has been addressed under the explanation of case selection under the methodology section under study site as well as in chapter 7.

8. *Check grammar and typos.*

Response: I conducted an automatic spell and grammar check and additionally had it revised again by a native speaker.

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I, Olga Patricia Barreda Moreno hereby declare the contents of this thesis
contain only my original work.
Any contributions by others have been cited
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND TERMS

AI	Appreciative Inquiry
CCA	Community Oriented Activities
CEMIAC	Mexican Center of Exchange
CDI	National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples
COMCAUSA	Supportive Urban and Peasant Communities with Alternatives
CONAMI	National Council of Indigenous Women
CONOC	National Council of Peasant Organizations
COPLADEM	Committees for Municipal Development Planning
INAH	National Institute of Anthropology and History
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography
INI	National Indigenous Institute
MAIZ	Zapatista Indigenous Agrarian Movement
NAFTA	North America Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PACMYC	Community and Municipal Culture Support Program
PAEI	Program of Indigenous School Dormitories
PAN	National Action Party
PFRI	Program of Regional Indigenous Funds
PND	National Development Plan
PDPI	Program for the Development of Indigenous Peoples
POPMI	Program of Productive Organization for Indigenous Women
PPCMJ	Program of Promotion of Agreements in Justice Matters
PRI	Institutional Revolutionary Party
PROCAPI	Coordination Program to Support Indigenous Production

PROCAMPO	Program of Direct Subsidies for Agriculture
PRODICI	State's Indigenous Community Development Program
PROFODECI	Program for Fostering and Promoting Indigenous Culture
PTAZI	Alternative Tourism Program in Indigenous Zones
RMALC	Mexican Network of Action against Free Trade
SAGARPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Stockbreeding, Rural Development, Fishing and Food Supply
SECTUR	Ministry of Tourism
SEDESOL	Ministry of Social Development
SEP	Ministry of Public Education
SFP	Ministry of Public Function
SLP	San Luis Potosí
TCA	Traditional Collective Activities
UN	United Nations
UNICOM	Community University of Tancanhuitz
XEANT	Radio station "la voz de las Huastecas"

ABSTRACT

This thesis explains the case study of community capacity development in Tamaletom community, Mexico, through the analysis of collective activities and their evolution. The objective is to analyze and interpret the impact of collective activities in community capacity of Tamaletom by conceptualizing it to contribute to community capacity development theory.

I used a post-modern paradigm and qualitative research approach. For this research, I stayed in the community with the community leader and used observation and interviews as tools to gather data.

This thesis approached the problem of the paradigm of development has historically been seen from a top-down perspective. Changes in this paradigm have been noticeable since recent years, and new strategies of participatory development are being implemented. Capacity development is essential for effective and sustainable participatory development but strategies for community capacity are not fully studied and tried.

In this paper I identified two types of collective activities: Traditional Collective Activities (TCA) and Community oriented Collective Activities (CCA). They both impact Community Capacity in different ways and levels, and at the same time, higher levels of Community Capacity make more complex Collective Activities possible, creating a cyclic relation.

The members of community of Tamaletom engaged in TCA which developed a high sense of community. Later, government and other external intervention, in an effort to reach local communities and engage in participatory development, created CCA in Tamaletom. This indirectly built commitment, increased access to resources and ability to set and achieve objectives by creating a common goal which coincidentally was the same as the community leaders. Soon, engaging in a combination of both allowed the development of more complex and sophisticated activities for future community change, continuously and gradually building Community Capacity.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research problem by explaining the issues of holistic development, development strategies involving community participation, and discussions on community capacity for effective localization and decentralization. Then the questions and objectives of this thesis are presented. The significance of this research along with the scope and limitations are described and in the end, an outline of the thesis will be given to facilitate its reading.

1.1 Research Problem

This study focuses on the issues of holistic development, development strategies involving community participation, and discussions on community capacity for effective localization and decentralization. These problems are explained in the following paragraphs.

The paradigm of development has historically been seen from a top-down perspective. Development policies or any other type of strategy are often designed and applied using commercial or political criteria, through colonizer or paternal perspective, aimed at the benefit of the “users”, “public”, “client”, “beneficiary”, etc. (Mora M & Mora C., 2010, p. 36). Development has been in the hands of government bureaucrats that believe they are righteous representatives of a nation because they were former combatants, social or social leaders, or intellectuals. Jackson and Kassam (1998, p. 11) state that “donor-driven and control-oriented approaches ... predominate the field of development cooperation.”

Changes in this paradigm have been noticeable since recent years, taking the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 as a milestone. This declaration takes the lessons learned of decades of experience in the field of development and emphasizes the need of more community participation, ownership of development strategies and inclusive partnership. This new paradigm is born along new strategies of participatory development such as participatory evaluation, in which stakeholders in a development intervention participate in the all stages of evaluation and in the action taken as a result in where by participating in this process they build their own capacity to promote other forms of participatory development (Jackson & Kassam, 1998). Another such as the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach which “places great emphasis on involving people in both the identification and the implementation of activities where appropriate” (Krantz, 2001, p. 2). Mexico has had important initiatives with significant impacts such as PACMYC and the regional funds of CDI formerly known as INI which supported self-management of the indigenous development projects.

“Capacity-building, along with ‘empowerment’, ‘participation’, and ‘gender-equity’ is seen as an essential element of effective and sustainable participatory development (Eade, 1997, p. 1)”. Miyoshi and Stenning (2008a, p. 49) argue that it is “vital to enhance the comprehensive capacity of community members to cope with problems on their own initiative and with their own efforts by utilizing ... resources within the community” for local municipality development. The importance of building community capacity and social capital in community development became evident and theories on how to identify, build and sustain it became hot topics of discussion.

The theory of community capacity building (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001) advanced on this topic. The community capacity development and policy structure model conceptualizes “the capacity of rural communities as well as social and economic activities implemented by them” (Miyoshi & Stenning, 2008a, p. 53) but these theories and models have not been explored in the context of rural indigenous community development. The issue of the role of collective action and its impact on community capacity has not been sufficiently explored either and it is in itself a very vague concept that needs further clarification and analysis.

1.2 Research Questions

In order to address the problems above, the main question of this thesis was formulated in the following way:

How is community capacity developed in the indigenous community of Tamaletom?

Sub-questions were also formulated:

What kind of policy exists in Mexico for rural community development?

How did the community policy structure and community capacity evolve?

How did external influence introduce new goals and activities to the community?

How do the groups and leaders engage in the new types of collective activities?

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to contribute to community capacity development theory by theorizing the impact of collective activities found in the indigenous community of Tamaletom in developing community capacity. Second is to describe how the context of Mexico's development policy is adopted at local levels. Third is to explore the existing collective activities, the introduction of new ones and their impact on community capacity. Fourth is to clarify the process of creation of new community oriented collective activities through external influence and its impact on new goals and capacity of people of the community. Last is to analyze how these new goals are adopted by the community developed into more complex collective activities and create change in community.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research aims to contribute to further development of development theory and rural and participatory development studies; contribute to the literature on community capacity and policy structure; and lastly, to contribute to the very few literature and shed some light on community capacity building in indigenous communities.

The research also aims to create a clearer concept of what is the role of collective activities in the process of community capacity building. By doing so, the assessment of community capacity and strategies to build it will become more clear and effective.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Research

This research focus is to clarify and build on community capacity development theory by analyzing a case study in the indigenous community of Tamaletom in rural Mexico. This study does not go without limitations.

The first limitation was time. Since I am studying in Japan, I had only a few months available to go back and conduct research. On top of that, the current situation of lack of safety and violence in Mexico limited my options of cases to communities where I could have a key informant.

The use of qualitative approach, case study and key informants to gather data limits the findings of this thesis. I attempted to mitigate this by expanding the informant's selection by talking on my own to people outside my informant's circle. To a lesser level, language posed some limitation since some people in the community were not fluent Spanish speakers and on the other hand, I am not a native English speaker which limits my writing abilities. To mitigate this limitation, I have checked grammar and spelling with a native speaker.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of 8 chapters. Chapter 2 is the review or literature related to the study, with the purpose of clarifying the main concepts and theories that guide this thesis. This chapter explains governance and its trends towards decentralization and localization, the growing emphasis on community and community development, community capacity and collective activities through which community change is achieved. The analytical framework guiding this study is presented at the end of chapter 2.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in this study, clarifying my personal worldview and the strategy of inquiry I used. This chapter also describes the fieldwork conducted for this study and clarifies the methods utilized. Finally some limitations are described.

The following 4 chapters are the data chapters. They are divided this way to relate clearly to the literature in chapter 2.

Chapter 4 presents the context of Mexico's public administration and how policy for development is actually planned and implemented.

Chapter 5 presents the community of Tamaletom, their two types of collective activities: TCA found naturally in the community, and CCA created after external influence; as well as the change in their community policy structure and development of community capacity.

Chapter 6 describes specifically how external influence created new types of collective activities, CCA, and the impact in community and community capacity.

Chapter 7 describes how the leaders and individuals promoted and advocated the traditions of the community, and how the community groups adopted these new goals and engaged in new collective activities based on their existing collective activities and achieve a more complex policy structure.

Chapter 8 summarizes the whole thesis, offers a contribution to community capacity theory and gives recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify and describe all the key concepts utilized in the case analysis and discussion. I will start explaining the continuously changing theories of public administration and governance along with their real life context which commonly draws on decentralization, localization, capacity development. However, for such approaches to be successful and achieve good governance, one requirement is enough citizen participation and organization, in other words, community capacity development at a local level.

2.1 Public Administration and Governance

The theory of public administration has been changing. Firstly the society the governments are meant to regulate have changed and become less governable making it difficult for the government alone to implement policy (Peters, 2001, p. 15; Pierre & Peters, 2000, p. 5). Secondly, the state has become what is called a “hollow” state, where it loses importance as an autonomous actor and depends on third parties such as the private sector and nonprofit organizations to distribute its services (Frederickson & Smith, 2003, p. 208; Peters & Pierre, 2007, p. 4; Rhodes, 1997, p. 53). This means that public administration now includes a variety of institutions and organizations traditionally considered outside the realm of the government. Thirdly, there is a global tendency towards decentralization is expanding, where the central government has to work more closely with subnational governments or decentralized organisms (Peters & Pierre, 2007).

Frederickson and Smith (2003) identified some core ideas of postmodern public administration. Among them are that bureaucracies are ineffective, cooperation, consensus and democracy is more likely to result in effectiveness than administrative authority, and that modern concepts of public administration must be more democratic, adaptable and responsive to social, economic and political change (p. 128).

As a consequence of these changes and constraints in the process of governing and the role of state, the concept of governance emerged as an alternative (Pierre & Peters, 2000, p. 7; Rhodes, 1997, p. 46). There is no cut clear meaning of governance. Rhodes (1997, p. 57) defines it as “self-organizing interorganizational networks” blurring “the distinction between state and civil society”; Pierre and Peters as the method to steer the economy and society and reach collective goals linking the political system with its environment (2000, p. 1), the UN (cited in (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007) as “the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country’s affairs” (p. 6).

For the purpose of this research, the description by Pierre and Peters (2000, pp. 21–22) of governance as communities is of relevance since it is a political theory which purportedly has found the middle standpoint between a state oriented and market oriented governance, as it minimizes state involvement and foster civic spirit in the community. The issue of this theory is that it is too idyllic, since people tend to be less inclined to make personal sacrifices to the common good.

2.1.1 Decentralization

Decentralization began after the Second World War as an effort to make public service more efficient and promoting democratic governance by empowering the local administrative units, which up until then they had been following the policy of an increasingly centralized government. Cheema and Rondinelli (2007) define decentralization as “the transfer of authority, responsibility, and resources – through deconcentration, delegation, or devolution – from the center to lower levels of administration” (p. 1). Decentralization became a popular strategy, even so that the IMF, the World Bank, and other international development agencies prescribed it as part of the structural adjustments.

Decentralization was later defined more broadly as not only transferring “power, authority, and responsibility within government but also sharing authority and resources for shaping public policy within society.” (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007, p. 6) This concept included not only government but the private sector and civil associations. Since the broader concept of decentralization includes these societal institutions, a successful participation of these actors cannot be achieved without enough administrative and organizational capacity.

The concept of decentralization is inevitably linked to building capacity at the smallest levels of community. The logic here is that if the capacity of the community organizations or local government is now high enough, allocating power and resources to the lower levels of community often results in the creation of widening disparities and increasing corruption (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007, pp. 8–10).

Decentralization in Latin America ironically progresses through top-down policies, as the central government sees local governments as not having enough capacity to control, direct and elaborate its own policies. In the case of decentralization of poverty reduction policies, Mexico's subnational governments' role consists on adapting the national guidelines to the particular needs of their jurisdictions, however some national programs such as Oportunidades, where a financial subsidy is transferred to poor families, is fully managed by the central government, leaving subnational governments with the role of implementer with no influence on the policy (Cabrero, 2007).

This role of implementer was already discussed by Grindle (1980) taking the case of Mexico. She argued that they end up being more responsive to groups considered essential to the regime in power, rather than the intended beneficiaries of the program for which he is responsible (p. 200) and that one way of tackling this is to improve the capacity of the intended recipients for effective demand making (p. 222). She concluded given this issue, the intended beneficiaries have to rely on the congruence of their needs with the goals of the implementers to benefit from the policies.

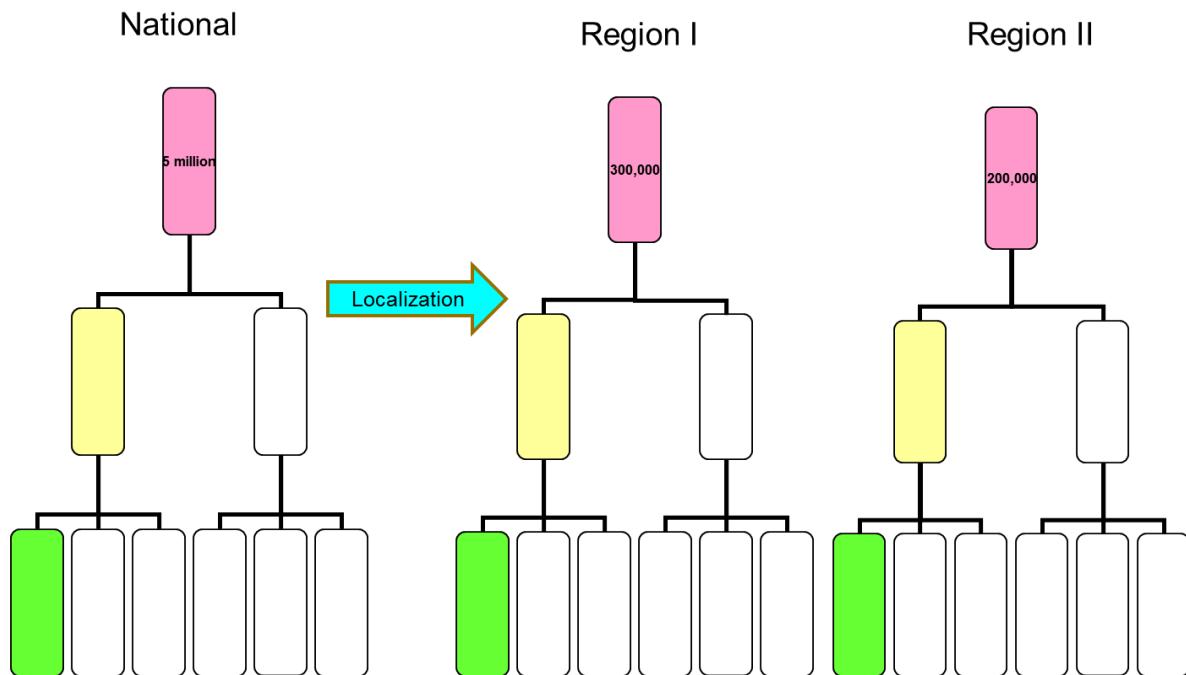
Cabrero (2007) argues that this type of decentralization on the other hand can create frustration among local levels of government which leads to a bottom-up approach – still rare but existent – claiming they have more proximity with the citizens and more capacity to address their needs.

2.1.2 Localization

Localization is not widely argued by researchers in spite of being an important issue in governance. Miyoshi and Banyai (2010) talk about the importance of localization in the context of policy evaluation as it promotes participatory practices and facilitates decentralization. They argue that localization of policy can make planning and evaluation at the local level clearer and empower the community.

Localization means to take the policy structure down to the smallest level of community while maintaining the relationships and connection between levels (Miyoshi and Banyai, 2010). Figure 2.1 is an example of localization of a national policy into two different regions, localizing the end outcome of the policy to a smaller level of community maintaining the national policy structure.

Figure 2.1 Localization of Policy Structure



Note. Source: Miyoshi 2011

Localization, as well as the previously discussed concepts of democratic governance, and the broader concept of decentralization require community organizing and participation, which can't be achieved without a sufficient level of community capacity.

2.2 Community and Development

2.2.1 Community

The word community has been appearing frequently in this chapter as an integral part of the governance, decentralization and localization processes. For the purpose of this study, a community is taken as the unit of analysis so it is imperative to define what a community is and which definition is important for this work.

Community has been defined as

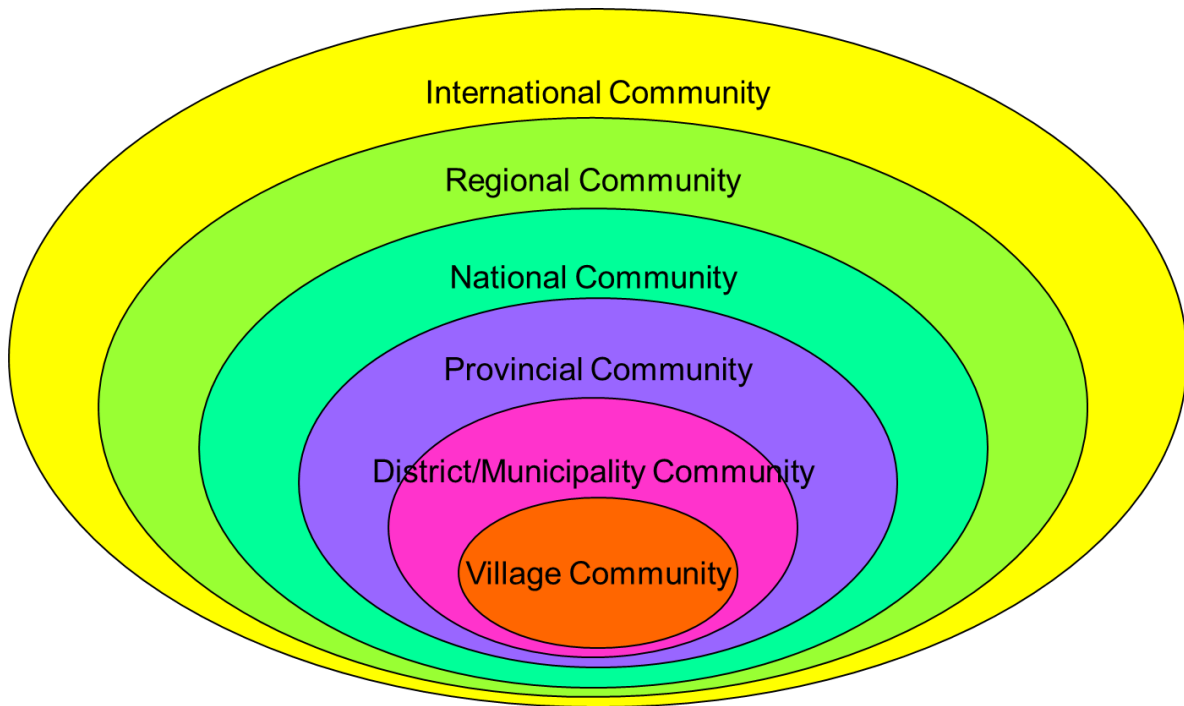
any area of common life, village, or town, or district,, or country, or even wider area. To deserve the name community the area must be somehow distinguished from further areas, the common life may have some characteristics of its own such that the frontiers of the area have some meaning. (MacIver, 1970, pp. 29–30)

often used interchangeably with *neighborhood* to refer to a geographic area within which there is a set of shared interests or symbolic attributes. (Chaskin et al., 2001, p. 8)

a relative aggregation where a social system is constructed by individuals and organizations acknowledged by a specific area, generally defined by administrative boundaries, and within this system, such organization, groups and individuals recognize themselves as being a member of the community. (Miyoshi, 2010, p. 7)

All these definitions imply there could be different levels of community. These are shown in figure 2.2 below. For the purpose of this research, the latter definition of community is adopted.

Figure 2.2 Level of Community



Note. Source: Miyoshi, 2011

2.2.2 Community Development

Development has turned its emphasis to involve participation of people at a local level. Community development has become an alternative development approach, and like the concept of decentralization, which poses emphasis on people's participation and development of their capacity. Community based strategies can be seen in Community-Based Forest Management approach where the management of forest resources and land is done by the local communities which offers them tangible benefits (Klooster & Masera, 2000).

The latest approach involving community's participation is the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. The SL approach "places great emphasis on involving people in both the identification and the implementation of activities where appropriate" (Krantz, 2001, p. 2) and "brings attention to bear on the inherent potential of people in terms of their skills, social networks, access to physical and financial resources, and ability to influence core institutions" (Serrat, 2008, p. 1).

2.3 Community Capacity

Eade and Williams (1995, p. 9) state that "strengthening people's capacity to determine their own values and priorities, and to organize themselves to act on these, is the basis of development". This statement shows the important of such capacity for the welfare of the society.

The concept of community capacity is defined as

the combined influence of a community's commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities.
(Aspen Institute, 1994)

the interaction of human capital, organizational resources and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of that community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organized efforts by individuals, organizations, and social networks that exist among them and between them and the larger systems of which the community is a part (Chaskin et al., 2001, p. 7)

a basic element that enables a community to function, and refers to the ability to achieve the community's shared goals through collective efforts of individuals and organizations, who are the community members, utilizing human organizational and social resources available within the community, as well as to promote and maintain the richness of the community. (Miyoshi, 2010, p. 7)

These definitions are extensive and focus on collective goals or problems by managing resources in and by the community. They identify community components or actors, characteristics and functions.

2.3.1 Characteristics

The four characteristics of community capacity are: sense of community, commitment, ability to set and achieve objectives, and ability to recognize and access resources which may exist to a differing degree in any community and may not possess every characteristic but still have capacity (Chaskin et al., 2001; Miyoshi & Stenning, 2008b).

Sense of community. This characteristic reflects the common shared values, norms and visions, and sense of belonging of the community members. This can be described either in affective or instrumental terms, i.e. working together to solve a problem or support a common good (Chaskin et al., 2001). It has been displayed through shared myths, symbols, rituals, ceremonies, language, dress and customs (McMillan & George, 1986, pp. 10–11). Sense of community is not sufficient on its own to create community capacity; it must be joined by other characteristics such as commitment or access to resources.

Commitment. It means taking responsibility of what happens in the community. Community members must see themselves as stakeholders in the collective well-being of the community and they should be willing to act as such (Chaskin et al., 2001). This definition sees two aspects of commitment, awareness of each person as an indirect or direct stakeholders and their actual participation in collective activities.

Ability to set and achieve objectives. This characteristic was changed from “ability to solve problems” identified by Chaskin et al (2001) by Miyoshi and Stenning (2008b) to avoid a negative denotation. This characteristic allows flexibility to continuous change, such as new challenges, and also involves more collective decision making in the absence of influential individuals (Chaskin et al., 2001).

Ability to recognize and access to resources. This characteristic is modified by adding the word “recognize” by Miyoshi and Stenning (2008b). By resources, it means resources within and beyond the community so it means creating links with larger social and political systems. Small communities exist within the larger socioeconomic systems and their well-being depends largely on their access to the policy made and implemented outside their border. The resources within communities consist of knowledge and skills of individual residents, commitment and skills of community groups, facilities, and services of local institutions. Resources can be any kind: economic, human, physical, and political (Chaskin et al., 2001).

2.3.2 Strategic component

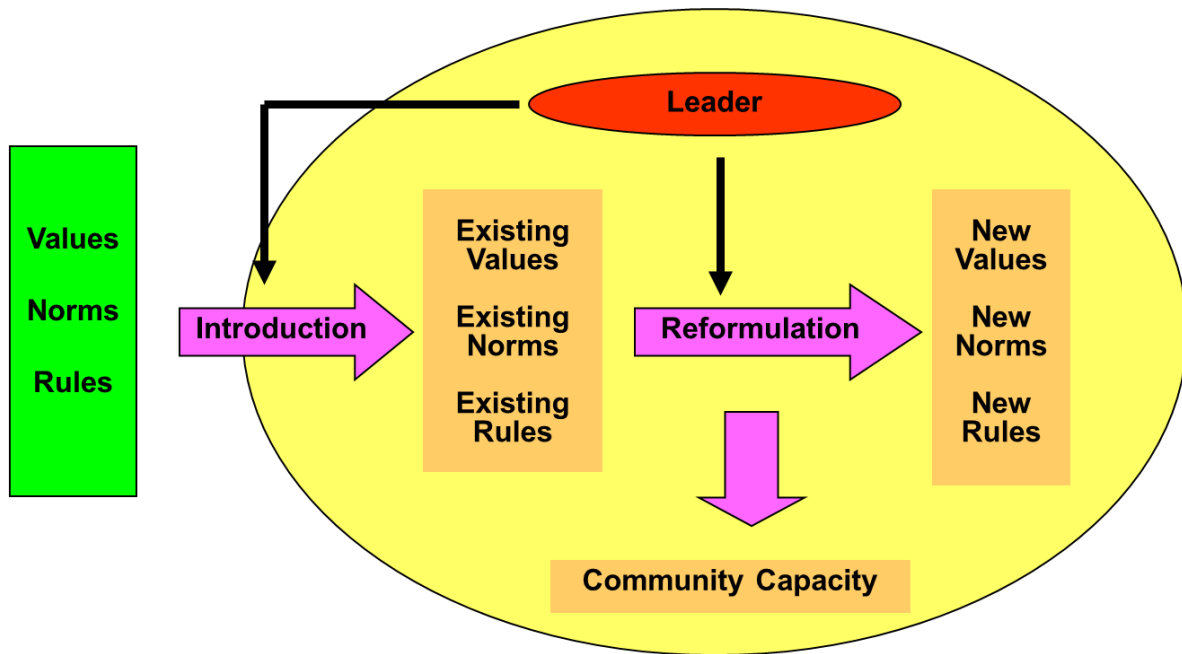
The components of the community refer to the stakeholders or agents in and outside the community which hold a link with it and through which capacity can be engaged or enhanced (Chaskin et al., 2001). “The community components, their characteristics and functions should not be simplified into ... linear, one-way or easily categorized inter-relationships, as reality is not that straightforward” (Miyoshi & Stenning, 2008b, p. 22).

Human resources. Chaskin (2001) identifies human resources as individual community members with human capital – the skills, resources, and knowledge of individual residents and their participation in community-improving activities. In other words, individuals who are the best at what they do and use their skills in favor of the community. When these individual members become agents of change or mobilize others and catalyze action using their human capital they become leaders (Chaskin et al., 2001).

Leadership. Leaders are agents of change (Chaskin et al., 2001). “Leadership is a kind of work done to meet the needs of a social situation”, “leadership is not equivalent to office-holding or high prestige or authority or decision-making” and thirdly “leadership is dispensable” (Selznick, 1984, pp. 23–24). Chaskin et al. (2001) believe a leader can emerge from any of a number of places in a community and calls him the charismatic “informal” leader. This study covers both types of leadership: formal and informal.

Figure 2.3 shows how leader changes the community’s existing values, norms and rules, to create new ones by reformulating depending them and introducing new ones from outside. This process creates new goals and therefore community change, increasing community capacity.

Figure 2.3 Role of Leader in Community Change



Note. Source. Miyoshi, 2011

Organization. Organizations are collective bodies of a community (Chaskin et al., 2001). As leadership, these can be formal (governmental, non-governmental, private, social organizations) or informal (church groups, dancing groups) and connect to larger systems, within and beyond the community as appropriate (Chaskin et al., 2001). Their capacity is measured beyond simple accounting services or goods provided, but also incorporate constituent representation, political influence and ability to collaborate with one another (Glickman and Servon, 1998 as mentioned in Chaskin et al, 2001).

For the purpose of this study, only organizations created within the limits of the community are considered in this type of component.

Social Capital and Networks. This component includes all networks among community members and between them, and entities beyond the community boundaries, among individuals, informal groups, and formal organizations (Chaskin et al., 2001; Miyoshi & Stenning, 2008b).

Social capital has been largely discussed in the context of community development (Chaskin et al., 2001; Gittel & Vidal, 1998). It is defined as “the features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action” (Putnam, 1993, p. 167), as “resources embedded in a social structure which are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive actions” (Lin, Cook, & Burt, 2001, p. 12), and as “networks and norms that enable participants to act together effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Gittel & Vidal, 1998, p. 15). The basic elements seen in these definitions are the existence of elements (networks) that can be used to produce action.

Gittel and Vidal (1998) describe the evolution of the key elements of social capital according to different actors taking the work of Putnam (1993) as a departure point as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Key Elements of Social Capital

Authors	Key elements of social capital	Additions to Putnam
Putnam, 1993, 1995a, 1995b	Trust, cooperation, long-term relationships	
Temkin & Rohe, 1997	Sociocultural milieu and institutional infrastructure	Neighborhood ability to act on common interest
Briggs, 1997	Social capital as leverage and social support	Social capital as leverage
Keyes, Schwartz, Vidal & Bratt, 1996	Long-term trust and relationships, shared vision, economic incentives to mutual interest, financial nexus	Networking, shared vision, financial nexus
Powell, 1990		See Keyes et al.
Granovetter, 1993, 1994		The strength of weak ties
Burt, 1992		Structural holes

Note. Source: Gittel & Vidal, 1998, p. 16

Putnam (2000) later identified two types of social capital: *bonding*, closed networks within the community, who already know each other; and *bridging*, network to access external resources, among people who previously did not know each other. These two types of collective activities have been discussed and refined by other authors.

Temkin and Rohe (1998) introduce sociocultural milieu as the sense of attachment to their community among residents (bonding), and institutional infrastructure is the level and quality of the community to act on their common interest making external connections (bridging). Granovetter (1973) discussed “weak ties” as a more effective method to reach a larger number of people than strong ties, indispensable to individuals’ opportunities and to their integration into communities, and an important resource in making possible mobility opportunity (bridging). Burt (1995) called the gaps between non-redundant contacts

“structural holes” and suggested that these should be filled by the community people to their own benefit to serve a collective good (bridging).

These two types of social capital are crucial for this study as I make a strong inference that the both separately are embedded within different types of collective activities with different types of collective goals which influence community capacity differently.

The focus of this study shall not confused with discussed the network and types of social capital of the community. It is rather to discuss the new type of collective activities that were created as a result of the process of networking stated above.

2.4 Collective activities

Collective activities have been discussed as part of different community development strategies: Onpaku approach, where new community based business activities are promoted in the community by the implementing organization through providing incentives for activities and presenting venues and opportunities to realize collective activities and such program plans and development are based on the activities of pre-existing activities in the community (Miyoshi, 2010, p. 35; Miyoshi & Ishimaru, 2010); and Centipede Agriculture of the city of Oyama, where in case some farmer was falling out, adjustments were made so that the leader and followers could coexist (Miyoshi, 2010, p. 33).

They have been discussed as an essential feature for community organizing strategy for community capacity building, which brings people together and seeks sustained

engagement of community members in collective action around issues important to them (Chaskin et al., 2001, pp. 93–122).

Chaskin (2001, p11) identified collective activities as one of the common factors of the definitions of many authors on community capacity, as well as a need of a platform to engage in them. But what are these activities and how do people engage in such have barely been discussed. It is to note that many communities do not have large segments of residents working for a collective good, sometimes they have a small group of residents which is consistent and active (Chaskin et al., 2001, p. 121).

The platforms to engage in collective activities are essential and usually provided by the implementing organization. It serves as a space where even individuals that are motivated by their own benefit, work with other similar individuals that otherwise would not collaborate with, i.e. a marketplace, a festival venue or taking the Onpaku example, a venue for programs. This system of platforms makes collaboration and collective activities easier since the individual or groups can simply contact the implementing organization or go directly to the place to do their activities.

I will attempt to interpret such discussions and theorize on what are collective activities and how do they manifest in the community through the findings of this thesis. Since collective action is born as people come together and work towards a collective goal, the understanding of such goal is important to understanding the types of collective activities. Analyzing the discussions mentioned at the beginning of this section I have come up with a vague classification of them.

People gather and work together because it is important to them, it is a custom, a habit, or tradition, part of their culture, of themselves or to preserve their lifestyle: such actions can include going to church, school, planning festivals every year, doing religious processions, harvesting, etc. These collective actions are done among the members of within the community and usually rely on strong bonds of the community members. A strong sense of community is potentially built through this since through engaging in them they share common values and strengthen their identity.

The second goal is to promote a better livelihood in the community, to promote development, knowledge, skills, new techniques, and new values. These activities have been broadly discussed and analyzed by many researchers such as the studies mentioned in the first part of this section. These activities are characterized by the influence of a third party from beyond or within the community, who organize groups of members of the community and engage on new collective enterprises for the collective good of the community. These activities rely on building new bridges among members within and beyond the community.

This thesis will attempt to exemplify and support these arguments by discussing the findings of how both are needed to increase community capacity and develop more sophisticated community policy structure.

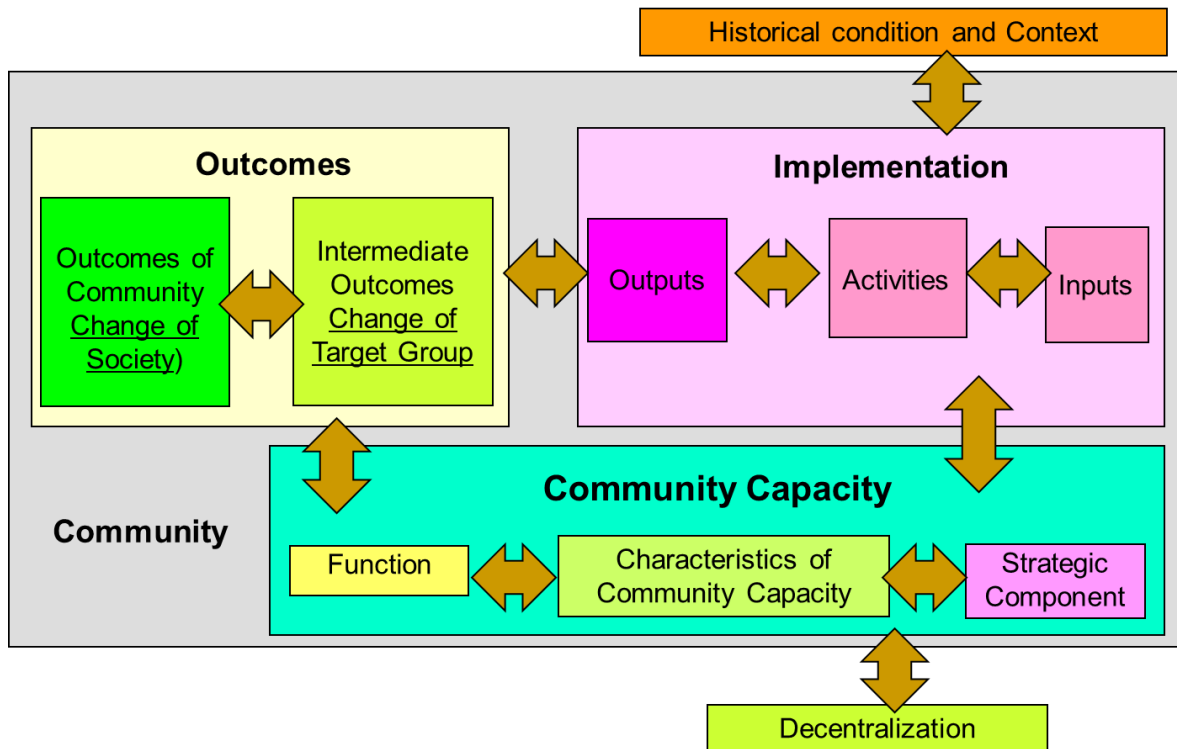
2.5 Community Change

Community change refers to the end outcome of the community policy, localized from the explanation that “end outcomes signify the eventual change in society due to a certain

activity or process” (Miyoshi, 2010; Miyoshi & Stenning, 2008b). For the purpose of this study, such change is relevant only if it concerns community capacity development. For such purpose, the Community Capacity Development and Policy Structure Model is used as a theoretical framework, as shown in figure 2.4.

The model shows that “as the community develops or upgrades its capacity, the community will naturally transfer to or select a new and more sophisticated or value-added policy structure” (Miyoshi & Stenning, 2008b, p. 42). This study will emphasize this more value added policy structure as a result of community capacity building through collective activities.

Figure 2.4 Community Capacity Development and Policy Structure Model



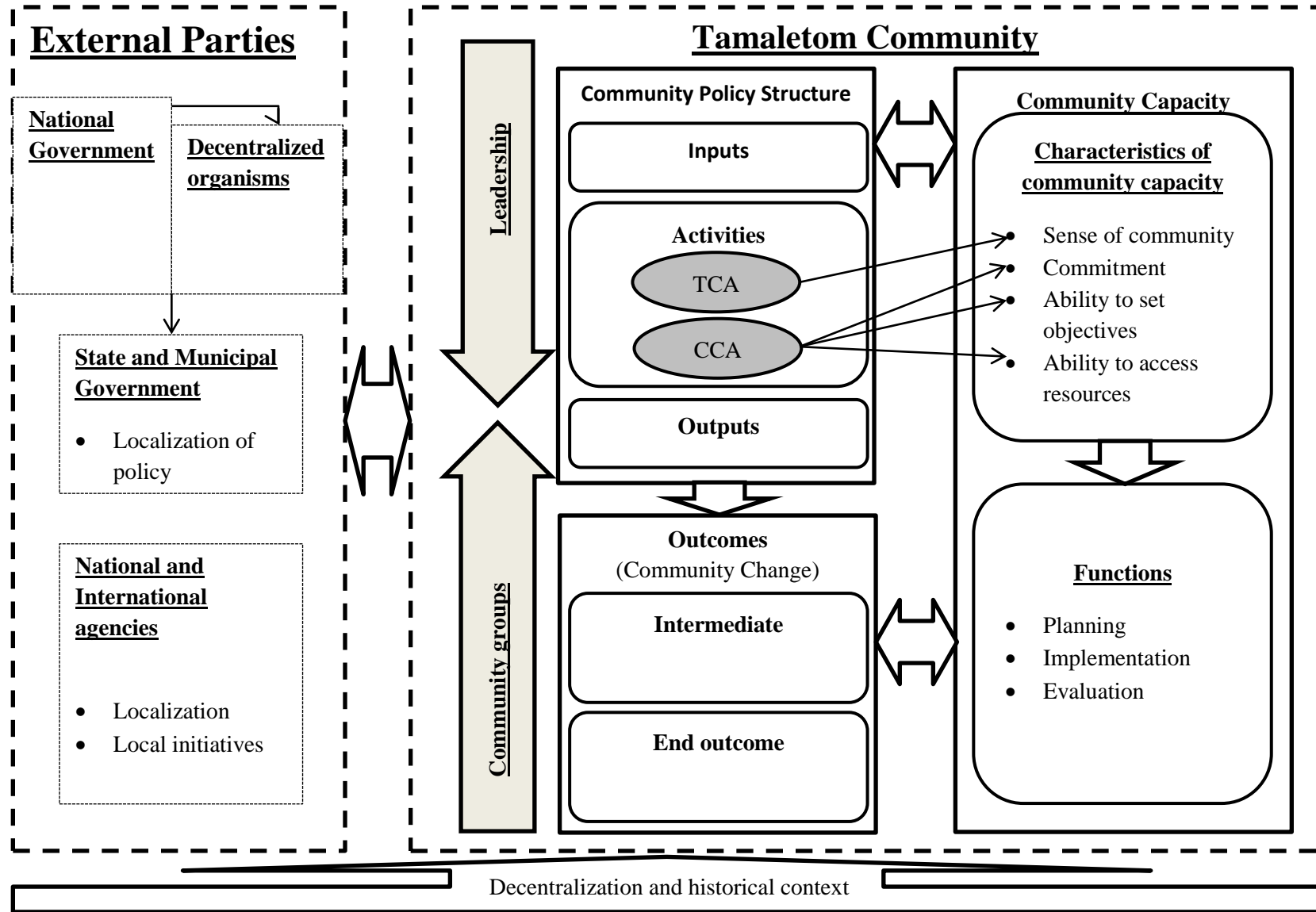
Note. Source: Miyoshi, 2011

2.6 Analytical Framework

Analytic frames constitute ways of seeing an idea (Ragin, 1994, p. 61); it guides the researcher on how to answer the research question usually based on a theory or pool of ideas. Figure 2.5 introduces the theoretical framework developed in accordance to this thesis main question: “how the community capacity of the indigenous community of Tamaletom built?” It was formulated in the course of the research mainly based on the theoretical framework of Community Capacity Building and Policy Structure Model and other concepts introduced in this chapter.

This framework highlights the importance of historical context and decentralization policies which will be discussed and clarified in chapter 4 of this thesis. The activities which are part of the community policy structure are divided into Traditional Collective Activities (TCA) and Community oriented Collective Activities (CCA) based on the findings of this thesis and will be discussed in chapter 5. I will also argue how these activities build specific characteristics of community capacity. The framework also suggests that interaction of the community's external network or external parties, with the internal social agents, mainly leaders and community groups, has an impact on the community policy structure and capacity. The impact of the external network and development policies will be discussed in chapter 6 arguing that such impact created CCA and built community capacity indirectly; and the role of internal social agents of creating and engaging in more CCA using TCA through leadership and community groups will be discussed in chapter 7.

Figure 2.5 Tamaletom Community Capacity Building and Policy Structure Model Highlighting External Influence and Collective Activities



Note. Source: Created by author based on Chaskin et. al. 2001, Miyoshi & Stenning, 2008a and interviews and observations

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter will explain the methodology employed in the research of this work. It will start explaining the design of the research which is the plan followed to answer the research questions (Tripodi, 1981; Cooper & Schindler, 1998). The design reflects the philosophical worldview assumptions of the researcher, the strategy of inquiry, and the specific methods utilized for data collection (Creswell, 2009, p. 5).

The research methodology or paradigms that guided this research based on well-known traditional and modern schools of thought will be identified first. Based on the identified philosophical worldview assumptions of the researcher, the strategy of inquiry and analytical framework for this research are defined. After defining the research paradigm the chapters takes on a more practical sense explaining the method of selection of the research site, and the methods for data collection along with the details of how and when they were actually employed in the field. Finally some research limitations will be pointed out.

3.1 Philosophical worldview

This study is approached form a post-modernist paradigm. The worldview or paradigm is defined as a “basic set of beliefs that guide an action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17) as cited in (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Creswell, 2007).

The history of mankind has been divided in three eras which are characterized by three different ways of seeing reality or paradigms: the premodern (theological beliefs), modern

(scientific and objective), and postmodern (relative and constructed on personal realities) (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Raskin, 2002; Sexton, 1997). “Postmodernism rejects all truth claims, accepting there are multiple realities and no foundations for asserting the superiority of one interpretation over another.” (Rhodes, 1997, p. 184).

Creswell (2009) identifies four worldviews: postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory and pragmatism. Postpositivists seek to identify and assess causes that influence outcomes; constructivists seek to understand the contexts of worlds where individuals live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings; a researcher with advocacy/participatory worldview is concerned with providing voice to participants and raising their consciousness of the need to improve their lives; and pragmatists focus on the research problem and how to understand and solve it.

As a truly beginner researcher with no prior experience doing research, identifying the philosophical worldview I bring to the study was not an easy task but given this explanation, my worldview is mainly a mix of constructivism, as I developed close relationships with the participants and tried to get a detailed picture of the case; and advocacy/participatory since I explicitly advocated for the community and they somehow helped me shape and focus my research. This worldview is typically seen with a qualitative strategy of inquiry as explained in the next section of the chapter.

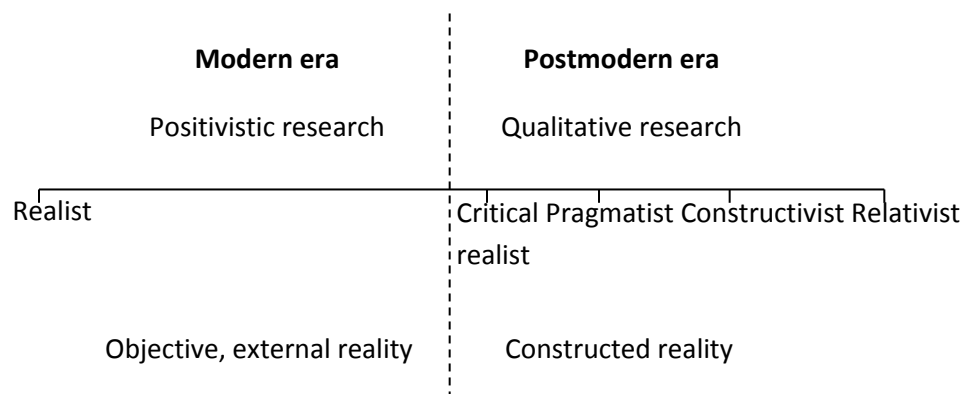
In addition to the paradigms adopted in this research, I used an adaptive approach. Mendis-Millard and Reed (2007, p. 547) explain that this approach allows the researcher to have a loose research design and be more flexible with the participant’s needs and desires. It was

essential to take this approach since I was aiming at having a deep connection of trust with the participants.

3.2 Strategy of Enquiry

The individual researcher's worldviews shape the design of the research. In addition, Creswell (2009) suggests that the discipline area of the student and supervisor's worldview often shape the researcher's own "set of beliefs" (p. 6). As I stated before, I approach this research through a post-modernist, constructivist and participatory paradigm which points out to using qualitative inquiry. Figure 3.1 shows the relation of the evolution of eras of mankind and research approaches.

Figure 3.1 Qualitative Inquiry Continuum



Note. Source: Butler-Kisber 2010, p. 6)

In addition, the people who engage in qualitative inquiry "support a way of looking at research that honors and inductive style, a focus on individual meaning and the importance of rendering a complexity of a situation" (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). Postmodern era is

somehow characterized by the emergence of qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2005, as outlined in Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 3) mapped out eight moments in qualitative research corresponding to the last two eras of mankind where qualitative research struggled to be accepted a legitimate for of study.

Below is Creswell definition of qualitative research:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (2007, p. 15)

Because of the natural setting and detailed explanations needed for conducting qualitative research it has also been called *descriptive* or *naturalistic* research among various other labels (Wolcott, 2009, p. 2).

A qualitative type of research suggests 5 different approaches to inquiry (Creswell, 2009). These are the narrative research, phenomenology, ethnographies, grounded theory studies and case study. Butler-Kisber (2010) classifies different inquiry approaches by form of typology: thematic, narrative and arts-formed inquiries. Depending on the author the names and classifications for qualitative inquiry varies. For the purpose of this research, the case study inquiry approach was selected and will be discussed below.

A case study is used when “how” or “why” question is being asked about a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, which the researcher has little or no control over (Yin, 1994, p. 9). It is not only a data collection method or a design feature alone but a holistic

research strategy that allows the researcher to make a deep investigation of a particular case, (Yin, 1994, p. 14) supporting existing theories and models and incorporating elements of grounded theory. A case study research can include single and multiple case studies and it is mainly used to explain, describe, illustrate, and evaluate cases which other strategies would leave unclear (Yin, 1994). This study adopts a descriptive case study approach focusing on a single case.

To select this case, I looked for a model case or the best example of collective action and endogenous development. I gave high importance to potential projects and usage of existing resources.

This case features an example of the appreciative inquiry approach (AI) which heightens positive potential of a situation. The capacity of the leader to identify the strengths and advantages of the community and the collective action of the members of the community groups towards a common vision that characterizes this case is similar to the principles of AI. This approach is different from the common problem-solving methodologies as it is based on the assumption that “every organization has something that works well and these strengths can be the starting point for creating positive change” (Cooperrider, Whitney, Stavros & Fry, 2008, p.3). AI is a strength-based approach (Kimura & Kodama, 2008) and as such, it reflects the capacity of the leaders and community members to identify their potential resources and coordinate efforts towards change.

3.3 Data collection

The first section of this chapter clarifies the postmodernist approach I take for conducting this research and the strategy of inquiry it entails. This section now goes into explaining the specific methods and instruments I used to collect primary data in the field or study site. It also clarifies how and when these methods were used and the participants in the research. Secondary data was gathered through books, journals, magazines, newspapers, videos, lecture notes, and training presentations, and referenced throughout this document.

3.3.1 Study site

The study site was defined very broadly based on my own interests on studying an indigenous community in Mexico as I had been advocating their rights and studied their issues as a graduate student. I also believed it could contribute to the theory as these types of communities had been barely studied. In August 2010, I went back to my hometown Tampico to refine the case for study and create contacts with academics and government officials knowledgeable on the topic.

I attended the annual XV Festival de la Huasteca¹ held in my hometown. For 3 days, lecturers from 5 different states talked about tourism development cases in indigenous communities of the region and I took the chance formally introduced myself as a researcher from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University looking for a case I could use for my study. I decided to concentrate on the State of San Luis Potosi because of the high number of indigenous cases and closeness to my hometown but due to the lack of time and resources to visit the communities that time, I had to go back to Japan and look for a promising case

¹ Regional cultural festival focusing different topics every year

through information shared by the professor Mauricio Guzman of the Colegio de San Luis Potosí via e-mail.

In February 2011, I went back to Mexico to narrow the case down and conduct the fieldwork but unfortunately Professor Guzman was not available to help me. I struggled calling other people and meeting researchers from the Tecnológico de Monterrey who could help me and I finally received a positive answer from the Archeologist Guillermo Ahuja from the Cultural Center of the Huasteca Region of SLP in Ciudad Valles.

To select the case, I stayed in Ciudad Valles for 3 days. During that time I interviewed the archeologist and asked him which would be a good case from his point of view. He pointed me out to two communities: Huehuetlán and Tamaletom in Tancanhuitz; and suggested me to talk to historians and government officials from various municipalities and asked their opinion too. He took me to a meeting with them where I was again formally introduced and I could get some information. Then he took me to Huehuetlán and Tamaletom to meet the community leaders and hold interviews with them.

As a result of the interviews and observations of the communities, the Tamaletom case was selected and I asked the leader, Benigno Robles to support me receiving a positive answer. The first round of fieldwork for narrowing down the case is shown in table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Case Selection Schedule

Period of Research (MM/DD)	Location	Method
Aug. 19 – Aug. 21, 2010	Tampico-Festival de la Huasteca	Interviews
Feb. 04 – Mar. 16, 2011	Tampico-Tecnologico de Monterrey	Interviews with researchers of the university, phone calls, email
Mar. 17 – Mar. 19, 2011	Ciudad Valles/Huehuetlan/Tamaletom	Interviews

The method for finding the research site was mainly based on the advice of my key informants who pointed me to other key informants. This is similar to the snowball sampling method used to recruit more research participants through the participant's network of acquaintances (Penrod, Preston, Cain, & Starks, 2003) and could be therefore labeled as such.

During the second round of fieldwork, I was allowed to reside in the house of Benigno, and he supported me and coordinated my interviews and visits to the community groups, government officials, and external organization representatives. He is the leader of the project of the Ceremonial Center of Tamaletom. In this case, Benigno, as well as the Ceremonial Center committee, became the main research focus and are placed as the center of community activities for their high community capacity and complex Collective Activities and therefore are the main focus in order to explain the development of community capacity. Other community activities and groups were also interviewed and discussed in this research in order to clarify and give a more detailed context of the whole range of Tamaletom's community activities and analyze their impact on community capacity.

Table 3.2 shows the details of this second round of fieldwork.

Table 3.2 Fieldwork Details

	Round 1	Round 2
Period	Aug. 19, 2010 – Mar. 19, 2011	Mar. 21 – Apr. 1, 2011
Place	Tampico, Ciudad Valles	Tamaletom Community
Method	Interviews	Observation, interviews, photography
Collected data	Academic community studies, photos, videos, interviews	Official documents, interviews, photos, videos
Participants	Academics, researchers, government officials	Group of dancers, group of embroiderers, traditional authorities, government officials, organizations that were recommended to visit
Main purpose	Select appropriate case	Collect primary data

3.3.2 Participants

Snowball sampling was used utilizing Benigno's network to access the key informants in the community due to the difficulty to access the population due to its physical dispersion and lack of time for the community to grow used to my presence. It usually used in cases where the population is sensitive to the topic of research or where it is hidden (Penrod et al., 2003).

I was again referred to other key informant by the people I interviewed and I spent most of the time in the fieldwork walking in and around the community guided all the time by Benigno. I also interacted and discussed casually with members of the community and through this I learned about their opinions and points of views of their environment and everyday life.

3.3.3 Instrumentation

Common qualitative research methods encompass open-ended questions, interview, observation, audio-visual data, text and image analysis, and patterns interpretation (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative research methods such as formal and informal interviews with open ended questions, and observation of the target group and stakeholders were utilized in order to collect primary data for the investigation research and will be further explained below.

Interviews

Interviews are essential and important sources for case study information (Yin, 1994). Yin (1994) pointed out that compared to surveys, interview offer a more fluid approach as they resemble guided conversations. However the researcher has to follow her own line of inquiry and she needs to ask question in an unbiased manner. For example in this case, instead of posing “why” questions, how” questions were used for a more neutral approach.

Most interviews are composed of open-ended questions (Yin, 1994). This allows the researcher to even inquire further based on the respondent’s insights, and to be referred to other sources of evidence. Other types of interviews follow the continuum towards a more survey like structure. However, for the purpose of this research, open-ended nature interviews were utilized, and yes or no questions were avoided.

Table 3.3 shows the interview schedule form the second round of fieldwork since it is the one that contributed most to this study. Interviews done casually to community members

while walking around were not included in the table as well as the latter interviews with Benigno since only the first one was planned and recorded. Latter interviews with him occurred spontaneously while he was guiding me through the community.

Table 3.3 **Interview schedule**

Time frame	Interviewee	Affiliation	Place
March			
21	Alejandrina Martinez	Embroiderers group	Ceremonial Center
	Juan Miguel Santiago	Dancers group	
	Benigno Robles	Leader of the Ceremonial Center	Benigno's house
22	Asención Reyes Cruz	Commissioner of communal lands	Community limits
	Alberto Miguel	Vigilant counselor	
		Voluntary workers	
23	Juan Sanchez	Municipal government (indigenous affairs)	City hall
	Guillermo Aguilar	Municipal government (culture and tourism)	
	Maria Hernandez	Municipal library	Library
	PR	UNICOM	UNICOM
	David Noyola	UNICOM	
	Bertha Santiago	XEANT announcer	XEANT
	Isidro Martinez	Canhuitz A.C.	Canhuitz A.C.
24	Marcelino Hernan	CDI	CDI
	Octavio Hernandez	XEANT	XEANT
	Arturo Ramirez	CDI	Ceremonial center
25	Jose Licon Bargas	CDI	Regional Fund Office
	Elizabeth Lopez	World Vision	World Vision Office
	Eusebio Proto Rodrigo	CDI	CDI
April			
1	Laura Hernandez	COMCAUSA	Laura's house
May			
17	Norma Don Juan	CEMIAC	e-mail

The interviews with the participants on March 23, 24, and 25 were conducted in the presence of Benigno, while the rest of the interviews were conducted between me and the interviewee. His presence helped me get closer to the participants since all of them were familiar with Benigno. His familiar presence guaranteed them I was trustable and might have made them feel comfortable enough to answer detailed questions. During the interviews, Benigno often intervened with comments and his own questions, and often even helped the participant remember more specific details about a topic, therefore creating a richer source of information. On the other hand, negative aspects may have been omitted from their answers therefore creating a bias in this research. However, also conducting interviews without his presence provides more validity to the data collected.

A broad guide of questions for the interviews was prepared before each interview however, spontaneous questions were also asked accordingly. Informal interviews conducted with community members and Benigno revealed often the feelings of the people towards their job, the ceremonial center or voluntary activities. They often also revealed negative aspects such as internal fights or disagreement with neighbors. This is relevant as it provided the point of view of the community members as opposed to formal interviews with leaders and external organizations.

All of the formal interviews were conducted in Spanish, recorded and notes were taken. The last interview had to be conducted through e-mail, sending open ended questions, since the person was not available when I visited the field. Respective transcripts were also prepared.

Observation

For Yin (1994), two types of observation can be identified. Direct observation is where the researcher makes a field visit to the study site and looks for evidence that can be observed. Participant-observation is when the researcher is no longer a passive observer and participates in the events being studied, for example, participating in the activities of the communities. This research used a combination of both observation approaches but mostly participant, being involved in the everyday life of the community and trying to communicate with them as much as possible.

3.4 Data validation and analysis

In order to construct validity to the data collected, the method of triangulation was used. Triangulation consists of the use of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1994). Triangulation is reflected in this study through sources and methods suggested by Patton (1987). Regarding sources, not only the community people such as traditional authorities, leaders, and women were interviewed, but external people too such as university academics involved in the project, municipal government officials and other organization representatives. Different methods were used for gathering data as explained above: observation, interviews, official documents, internet and other secondary data.

All data collected in the interviews was transcribed in Spanish. Taking the transcripts, the raw data was later analyzed and processed into a narrative form in chronological order. Notes and diagrams were elaborated to make the data processing process easier and more understandable.

3.5 Methodological limitations

The main limitation of the methodology was situation of insecurity and violence in Mexico. I could not move freely on my own and visit the communities unless I developed a local contact since the roads and rural areas were said to be highly dangerous. This limited me as I had to spend time to look for a researcher or person who was willing to help me and guide me to a safe community.

My second limitation was that I cannot speak the indigenous language. Although most of the community, especially young people, was fluent in Spanish, among them they spoke Teenek. Speaking the local language also helps getting familiar with the people, an opportunity I might have missed due to my limited time in the community. Some elders in the community could not speak Spanish so I had to use Benigno's help to interpret my questions and understand the answers.

The lack of experience doing research poses another limitation as my experience as an interviewer has not been tested.

CHAPTER 4 MEXICAN INDIGNEOUS RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The main purpose of this chapter is to clarify the context of community development in Mexico. To achieve this, I will first clarify the historical background, country profile and the national development strategy based on vision 2030. Afterwards I am going to explain how public administration actually functions in Mexico, where even after a global trend towards decentralization, power is still concentrated in the center with little decision making power at subnational and community levels. Efforts to localize the policy planning process are being done to include proposals from the local communities but policy making and implementation is still concentrated in the central government.

4.1 The United Mexican States

4.1.1 Historical Background

Mexico was colonized by Spain for 300 years, from 1521 to 1821. The movement for independence started in 1810 and it finally ended in 1821 when the Mexican Empire was established. In 1824, the empire was overthrown and in its place a republic was established for 40 years. During that time Mexico engaged in wars with the United States and France, where the country lost the northern territories of Texas, New Mexico and California. Mexico came back to being an empire for a short period of 3 years until the republic was restored. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 produced the constitution of 1917, which is the ruling constitution until today. In 1929 the National Mexican Party was founded, then renamed to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). The PRI won all presidential

elections for approximately the next 70 years. Partly due to popular discontent of one sided elections, in the year 2000, the opposition party, PAN finally won the presidential elections showing a slightly increased democracy.

4.1.2 General country profile

The United Mexican States is located in North America, bordering the United States of America to the North, and Guatemala and Belize to the south. According to the national census of 2010, the population of Mexico is 122 million 337 thousand people. Most of them concentrate in the urban areas while less than 30% lives in rural areas. 50% of the people that live in rural areas live in communities of less than a thousand people, and because of their size, access to services and infrastructure is difficult (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (Mexico), 2005). The poverty headcount ratio at rural poverty line was 60.8 of the rural population in 2008 (“The World Bank Country Data,” n.d.).

Around 50% of the people in rural areas work in agriculture (INEGI, 2005). The percentage of agricultural land is 52.7% of the total land area according to the World Bank in 2008. The World Bank classifies Mexico as an upper middle income country and measures its GDP for 2010 in a bit over a billion US dollars, however, only 4% of that GDP comes from agriculture. The Huasteca region of this case study is located in an area with the highest rural population.

1. Regionalization. Traditionally, the country is divided in 8 regions according to factors such as environment, culture and history. They are:

1. Northeast region
2. Northwest region
3. Occidental region
4. Oriental region
5. Central-north region
6. Central south region
7. Southeast region
8. Southwest region

The community relevant to this case study is located in the state of San Luis Potosí (SLP) in the central-north region. The state of SLP is further divided traditionally into 4 regions which are: High plateau, Center, Middle and Huasteca region which are further divided into micro-regions. The micro-region where this research was conducted is the micro region of Central Huasteca within the Huasteca region of SLP and its location is demonstrated in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Research Localization

Country	Region	State	Region	Micro-region	Municipality	Community
Mexico	Central-north	San Luis Potosí	Huasteca	Central Huasteca	Tancanhuitz de los Santos	Tamaletóm

2. Huasteca region. The country's Huasteca region covers the area of 6 states, them being: Veracruz, San Luis Potosi, Hidalgo, Puebla, Queretaro and Tamaulipas (Gustavo A. Ramírez Castilla, Román Güemes Jiménez, Artemio Arroyo Mosqueda, & Juan Manuel Pérez Zevallos, 2008).

Three of these are among the top 3 states with more rural population. The Huasteca region discussed here is broader than from the Huasteca region of SLP discussed above and therefore the latter one is part of the former one.

The territory of the Huasteca region is defined by the territory where the Huastec culture was developed and where nowadays the population that speaks the Huastec language, in other words, the indigenous people resides. The indigenous population in the region consists of around 900 thousand people according to the CDI PDPI 2009-2012, 56.9% of the total population in the region. Details of the region are found in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Composition of the Huasteca Region²

State	Language	No. of speakers	No. of municipalities	Total indigenous speakers
Hidalgo	Náhuatl	159,893	8	159,893
Veracruz	Náhuatl	131,555	18	204,787
	Teenek or Huastec	48,868	7	
	Otomí or Hñahñú	14,750	6	
	Tepehua or Limasipihní	5,754	3	
	Totonaca	3,860	2	
San Luis Potosí	Náhuatl	129,164	10	215,099
	Teenek or Huastec	83,679	11	
	Pame or Xi'iuy	2,256		
Puebla	Náhuatl	16,752	6	21,364
	Otomí or Hñahñú	3,367	2	
	Totonaca	1,245		
Queretaro	Pame or Xi'iuy	84		84
Tamaulipas	Virtually no population except workers			

Note. Source: (Gustavo A. Ramírez Castilla et al., 2008, p. 9)

² The data is taken from the national census of 2000 so the numbers vary from the data of the CDI PNPI 2009-2012.

4.1.3 Mexican Indigenous community background

The Mexican government recognizes 62 indigenous peoples in the country based on common features such as language, values, and norms. Indigenous peoples represent 9.8% of the country's population and are concentrated in the south.

Nowadays the indigenous population suffers from discrimination according to the National Survey on Social Discrimination by SEDESOL³ in 2005. To counter this, the approach of the National Government for the country's development consists of assimilation and incorporation of the indigenous communities in the strategies for development while recognizing and respecting their identity. The following table explains the evolution of such approach since the time of colonization.

Table 4.3 Evolution of the approach towards indigenous communities in Mexico

Time-frame	Century	Approach
Conquest and colonization	XVI-XVIII	Conquer, Extermination, Protectionism, Secessionism
Independent Mexico and Porfirism ⁴	XIX	Marginalization, Discrimination
Mexican revolution	XX	Marginalization
Post-revolutionary governments	XX and XXI	Assimilation, Identity, Recognition, National and International Regulation, Vindication

Note. Source: Based on the presentation on Indigenous Rights by Marco Antonio Perez de los Reyes in the Judicial Electoral Training Center in Mexico 2010.

³ Ministry of Social Development

⁴ Period when President Porfirio Díaz was head of State 1876-1911

4.2 National development strategy

4.2.1 Vision 2030 and The Plan Nacional de Desarrollo (PND) 2007-2012

Mexico Vision 2030 is a long term strategy of the Mexican government towards Sustainable Human Development. In the PND 2007-2012, the vision 2030 is stated as below.

“Towards 2030, Mexicans see the country as a country of laws, where our families and our heritage are safe, and we can exercise our liberties and rights without restrictions; a country with a highly competitive economy that grows in a dynamic and sustainable way, generating enough and well-paid jobs; a country with equal opportunities for all, where Mexicans fully exercise their social rights and poverty has been eradicated; a country with sustainable development where there is a culture of respect and conservation of the environment; a nation fully democratic where the rulers are accountable to the citizens, where political actors work in a co-responsible way and build agreements to promote the permanent development of the country; a nation that has consolidated a mature and equal relationship with North America, that exercises leadership in Latin America and maintains an active foreign policy towards development, stability, and national and international security (2007, p. 25).“

The vision is structured in various goals divided by 5 pillars that by 2030 are assumed to be achieved. These 5 pillars are:

1. Rule of law and public safety,
2. Economic competitiveness and generation of jobs,

3. Equality of opportunities,
4. Environmental sustainability, and
5. Effective democracy and responsible foreign affairs.

Each pillar has around 5-6 goals each with indicators to clarify when the goal has been achieved.

To reach the vision 2030, each presidential period in Mexico, a new national development strategy is planned out and named the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo* or National Development Plan. President Felipe Calderón's administration developed the PND 2007-2012 through consultation with different sectors of the society aiming to receive their ideas and proposals to include in the Policy.

The current PND's basic principle is Sustainable Human Development. The Plan describes it as "the purpose of development consists in creating an atmosphere in which all can increase their capacity and opportunities can expand for current and future generations (2007, p. 23)." Following this principle and in order to achieve the vision 2030, the Plan proposed the achievement of 10 national objectives.

The Plan is structured in five strategic pillars which are exactly the same as the 5 pillars of the vision 2030. The PND establishes specific objectives and strategies to develop for each pillar. This requires joint efforts of all government levels and agencies. Table 4.4 presents Mexican strategy towards Sustainable Human Development in a program theory matrix structure. In the table, the vision 2030 is identified as the end outcome.

Table 4.4 Country Development Strategy Program Theory Matrix

End Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Output	Activities	Input
Mexico Vision 2030	PND 2007-2012			
	PND 2013-2018			
	PND 2019-2024			
	PND 2025-2030			

For the purpose of further detailing the areas relevant to this thesis, the national development strategy regarding the Rural Sector and Indigenous Communities will be explained below.

4.2.2 Rural Sector

The rural sector's main problems of underdevelopment and irresponsible use of water and sea resources, underproduction and lack of value-addition in the rural sector in general are reflected in the objectives of the PND regarding rural development:

1. Increase the human development level in the coast and rural areas,
2. Supply the national market with quality, healthy and accessible products of national origin,
3. Improve the income of producers by increasing exports, promoting value added products and bio-energetics,
4. Revert deterioration of the ecosystems through actions of conservation of water, soil, and biodiversity, and
5. Conduct a harmonious development in the rural area by concrete actions, with the agreement of all actors in the rural sector. Also promote actions that favor legal certainty in the rural sector.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Stockbreeding, Rural Development, Fishing and Food Supply (SAGARPA) has among its objectives to integrate the activities of the rural sector in the national economy, stimulate cooperation among producers through programs, exercise a supportive policy to improve production and comparative advantages, as well as the goals and objectives of the PND regarding the rural sector.

The Ministry offers programs and financial support but the only beneficiaries in the area of study are the brown sugar or *piloncillo* produces, activity which the community studied gave up long ago.

4.2.3 Indigenous Communities

The challenges regarding the ingenious communities according to the PND are lack of economic, cultural, and social development, of basic infrastructure, roads, and violation to their human rights. The sole objective established is therefore to incorporate the communities into the economic, cultural and social development of the country respecting their traditions and heritage.

The organism in charge of implementing and coordination efforts towards indigenous community development is The National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI). CDI is a decentralized government institution that, as the name indicates, is in charge of the development of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico. This institution published the Program for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (PDPI) 2009-2012 in accordance to the PND 2007-2012 and the central government strategy called “*Vivir Mejor*”⁵. This

⁵ “To live better”

program works along 5 pillars that match those of the PND. These aim to strengthen indigenous rights, overcome the obstacles for development “with identity”⁶, recognize the cultural diversity, increase participation, and improve institutions.

The community of Tamaletom has been long been beneficiary of various programs offered under the PDPI.

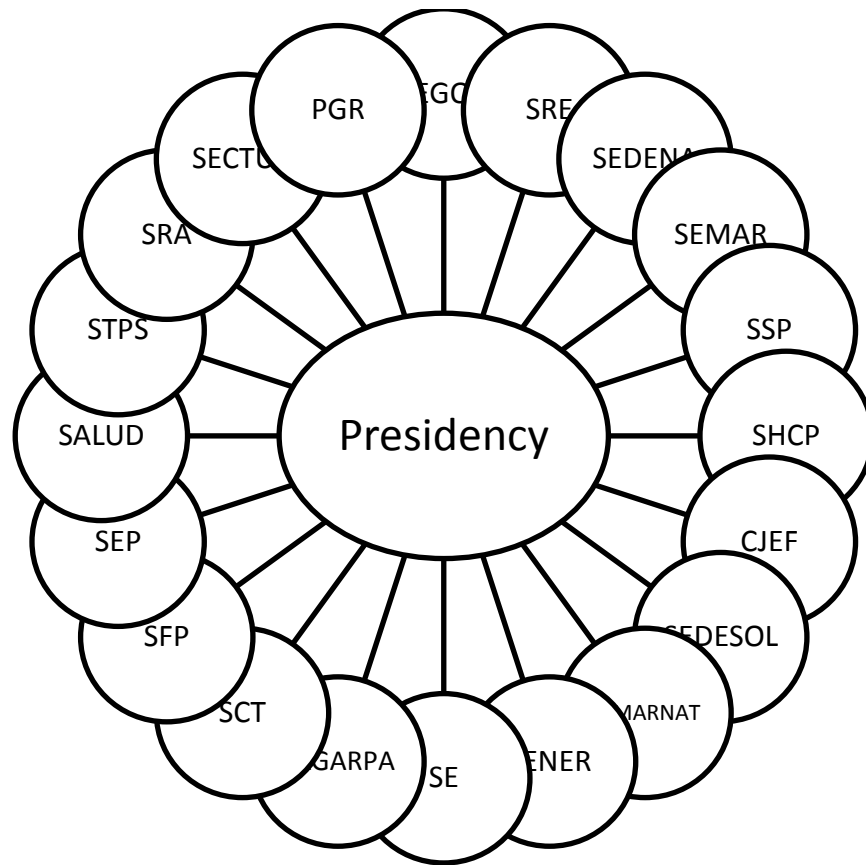
4.3 Public administration

4.3.1 Public administration structure

In Mexico, the Organic Law of Federal Public Administration established in 1976 is based in centralized and *paraestatal* (semi-public, partly owned or managed by the state) administration. Centralized public administration consists of the President, his State Ministries, Administrative Department, and the Federal Executive Legal Ministry. Figure 4.1 shows the centralized public administration structure with the president in the middle and his dependencies or ministries surrounding him.

⁶ With respect for their traditions and culture.

Figure 4.1 Federal Government Structure



Note. Source: based on the chart found in <http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/gobierno/estructura-del-gobierno-federal/>

Decentralized organisms, state share-holding enterprises, national credit institutions, national auxiliary credit organizations, national insurance and financial institutions, and trusteeships are part of the *paraestatal* administration. These organisms are partly owned by the state and created by any laws issued by the congress or by order of the president but they have their own legal status and patrimony. The purpose of these institutions is

commonly to provide social services or implement activities corresponding to the government strategy.

4.3.2 Public administration system

The ministry in charge of implementing the public administration functions commended by the Organic Law of Federal Public Administration among other administrative laws is the Ministry of Public Function (Secretaría de la Función Pública, SFP). The priority functions of the ministry are:

- Promote a culture of law and appreciation of accountability
- Expand the coverage, impact and preventive effect of auditing the public administration
- Inhibit and sanction corrupt practices
- Articulate professional, efficient and effective structures of the government
- Improve regulation and administration and processes of the federal public administration
- Optimize the use and make better use of federal property

4.3.3 Public administrative units

The Political Constitution indicates that “the states shall adopt for their internal government, the popular representative and republican form of government”. The states are divided into Free Municipalities for political and administrative organization. Each municipality is

governed by a Municipal Council chosen through direct election by the people. It is composed by the Major, legal representatives and Councilmen. The municipalities have legal capacity and handle their own estates and duties such as water management, waste management, street lightning, and so on. Table 4.5 presents the present administrative units, its numbers, representatives and the relation to the study's site.

Table 4.5 Present Mexican Public Administrative Units

Level of Community	Number of Units	Representative	Research Site
Nation	Mexico	President	
Federal State	31 States and 1 Federal District (Mexico city)	Governor	San Luis Potosí
Municipality	2,441 municipalities ⁷	Major	Tancanhuitz de los Santos

Note. Source: Made by author based on the Political Constitution of Mexico

The state of San Luis Potosi is divided in 58 municipalities and these municipalities are further divided for public and administrative organization purposes into *cabeceras* (administrative center), delegations and communities. Each municipality has its *cabecera* in the town with the municipality's name and this is where the town or city hall is located. The localities within the municipality fit into different political categories according to the number of people, infrastructure and services they have.

⁷ Data calculated by the National Institute for Federalism and Municipal Development

Table 4.6 Categories of Localities within the Municipality

Category	Population	Infrastructure
City	20,000 or more	Medial services, police, paved streets, municipal offices, market, prison, graveyard; banking, industrial, commercial and agricultural institutions, and elementary, secondary, high schools, and universities.
Ville	7,501-19,999	Medical services, police, paved streets, municipal offices, market, prison, graveyard; banking, industrial, commercial and agricultural institutions, and elementary, secondary, high schools
Town	1,001-7,500	Basic public services, offices for local authorities, graveyard and elementary schools.
Ranch	1,000 or less	

Note. Source: Made by the author based on the Organic Law of the Free Municipality of San Luis Potosí

Within the indigenous communities, particularly Teenek communities, the public administration system is deeply related with moral values and norms mixed with religious conceptions. The tasks are divided through the community assembly or general assembly where the responsibilities are assigned to different religious and civic authorities as well as local committees. These responsibilities are designated by the community members who choose the best citizens, considering important that they know how to read and write in Spanish (Gallardo Arias, 2004). Judges assign the tasks for the voluntary work among community members

4.4 Decentralization

After the Latin American economic crisis of 1980's decentralization has been reshaping the political environment by implementing reforms that will strengthen the local and regional authorities in Mexico as well as the whole Latin America. In 1983 and later on again in the

1999, Mexican government launched reforms that would give local authorities (*municipios* or municipalities) more autonomy and resources (O'Toole, 2011).

The states are able to create their own policies (following the national policy) having the right to create their own state constitution, and at a municipality level, the government is free to plan out the local infrastructure and investments, waste disposal, and so on. However, the states and municipalities are still somehow limited to do so since the resources mainly come from the central government (O'Toole, 2011). A tendency of allowing more public expenditures to the sub-national levels is apparent in Mexico since the mid-1980's and federal states have received a steady 17-19% of the national budget for the latter half of the last decade.

The indigenous communities were also given certain autonomy since the constitutional reform of 2001 triggered by protests of the organized group of indigenous peoples from Chiapas called *Zapatistas*. The Political Constitution now "recognizes and protects the right to self-determination of indigenous people and communities and, consequently, their right to autonomy (2008, p. 3)". Indigenous communities can:

- Decide the ways of their community life as well as their social, economic, political and cultural organization
- Enforce their own legal systems to regulate and solve their internal conflicts
- Elect, in accordance with their traditional rules, procedures and practices, their authorities or representatives to exercise their form of internal government

- Preserve and promote their languages, knowledge and all those elements that constitute their culture and identity
- Maintain and improve their habitat and preserve the integrity of their lands
- Attain preferential use and enjoyment of any natural resources located in their communities, save for the ones pertaining to strategic areas provided in the constitution
- Elect representatives before town councils in those municipalities with indigenous population
- Have full access to State jurisdiction

The constitution and laws of the Federal District and the states determine those elements of self-determination and autonomy that “*best express* the conditions and aspirations of indigenous people in each state, as well as the provisions for the recognition of indigenous communities *as entities of public interest* (2008, p. 6).”The wording of the law evidently shows the limited autonomy they were granted.

In practice, the state of SLP, where the community of this case study is, recognizes the *usos y costumbres* (indigenous traditional rules) in the article 10 of State Public Security Law considering them in the implementation of the law. The constitutional reform of 2001 stated that indigenous territories shall be taken into account to delimit the territory of the electoral districts, all of this in order to increase indigenous representation in the Congress. In 2004, 28 of the 300 districts were identified as having more than 40% of indigenous population and one of them, Tamazunchale, is in SLP. The community in this case study is not in this

district, however, they have autonomy to elect their authorities and representatives towards the municipal government.

4.5 Localization

4.5.1 State Level

Policy localization exists in the shape of the State Development Plan of San Luis Potosi. This paper claims that the fundamental pillars of the state policy are congruent with the pledges in the government proposal by the then candidate to governor, Fernando Toranzo Fernández, and the 5 pillars of the PND 2007-2012 (2010, p. 24). It retains the objectives of the national policy but it also targets the needs of the state population by the following methods:

1. Collection of 3,200 proposals and demands from the citizens aimed at the priority sectors
2. Visits of the governor and his cabinet to municipalities
3. Establishment of Committees for Municipal Development Planning COPLADEM to develop municipal development plans
4. Open spaces on the internet such as Facebook and Twitter to receive proposals
5. Hold Citizen Consultation Forums in 6 municipalities to identify main issues in each sector and viable solutions
6. Hold Specialized Forums with specialists of each sector to define specific goals and objectives

The state plan was a result of cooperation of 3 actors: governor and his team that defined the planning strategy, sectorial institutions that made diagnosis of each sectors and organized specific consultations, and citizen participation. Specialist of the Autonomous University of SLP also participated in the process.

The result of the process of localization explained above is the state plan found in the priorities established for each region of the state, based on the proposals received from the municipalities and categorized according to the strategic pillars of the State and National plan.

4.5.2 Municipal Level

At a municipal level, the 58 municipalities of SLP are in charge of developing each one Municipal Development Plan on time to submit them to be utilized as reference to develop the State Development Plan.

In Tancanhuitz, similar to the State Plan process, they summoned and organized workshops with the 183 community authorities (100% of the localities of the municipality) to produce the Municipal Plan. They also got support from the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL) and the Autonomous University of SLP. The Plan also follows the guidelines of the PND 2007-2012. In the paper they are able to identify the objectives, goals and strategies for each sector critical to the interests of the municipality.

4.5.3 Community Level

At a community level, decision-making is limited to internal administration and problem solving through the *vigilant council*, *commission of common lands* and other authorities,

however they do not create their own policy. The community of Tamaletom organizes a General Assembly once or twice a month to discuss issues related of the community but they do not have a space or resources to discuss policy localization. They have the right to create a community development plan and send it as a proposal to the municipal government so it can go up the government levels and be part of the national policy. However, the community lacks the capacity to create a plan with all the necessary elements to be accepted as a proposal.

4.6 Summary

Most of the rural population in Mexico is indigenous and suffers from poverty due to discrimination and underdeveloped rural development strategies. The Huasteca Region of SLP is characterized by its indigenous rural poverty. The national policy recognizes this issue and defines the goals and objectives for this and other sectors.

The government still shows a centralized administration system but the process of policy development has recently involved citizen participation through different methods. Localization and decentralization allows moderated policy modification at a municipal and state level to focus on the priority areas of the region, within the strategic pillars and sectors defined at a national level, however, policy implementation is still limited as most resources come from the central government and is mostly carried out by government dependencies.

Next chapter will discuss the policy has been implemented and adopted by the community and explain how this triggers new collective activities by taking the case of the indigenous Teenek community of Tamaletom.

CHAPTER 5 TYPES OF COLLECTIVE ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how the community policy structure and capacity evolved through analyzing the previously existing collective activities and the newly introduced ones by the influence of an external network.

This chapter will analyze the community of Tamaletom, highlighting the history of its collective activities. It is argued that collective activities are a key factor for development of community capacity. In this section, I would like to make a distinction of two kinds of collective activities. In the case of the Teenek traditional collective activities (TCA) are essential and of superior importance to create a sense of community, but commitment can only be reached by introduction of community goals and incentives of the now on called community oriented collective activities (CCA). Through time, it was possible to combine both types of collective activities, as community capacity was built little by little, such as their capacity to access resources increased and commitment among some groups in the community also became stronger.

In the case of Tamaletom, CCA were introduced by implementation of national or other external policies: through external influence such as projects and programs from different levels of the government or other kinds of organizations. They were also internally developed and reinforced by Benigno, a leader with enough skill and trust from the

community who promoted a collective goal among the community members, and community groups who adopted this goal and organize themselves to achieve it.

5.1 Local context of Tamaletóm

5.1.1 General Background

The community of Tamaletóm is located 5 Kms away from the *cabecera* of Tancanhuitz municipality. It is divided in 3 sections separated by mountain paths and streams, each about a 10 to 15 minute walking distance from the other. The population according to official government information of the municipality does not go above 3,000 people; each section accounting for less than 1000 people but more than 100. The main productive activities are production of sugar cane, corn, beans, orange, and mandarin. However the community is nationally and internationally known for its cultural heritage that is the *Bixom-Tiiw* dance, also known as “*Gavilán*” or “*Volador*” (hawk or flying man) dance, and traditional embroidered handcrafts. The dance is performed mainly in March and November, in honor of the Lord of Corn, Dhipaak who gives food to the people. According to observations and talks with the locals, the 3 sections seem to work rather independently from each other, with the exception of the activities regarding the Ceremonial Center of Tamaletom. A map of the 3 sections is shown in figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1 Hand Drawn Map of Tamaletom



Note. Source: Made by Benigno Robles and his son, photographed by author

5.1.2 History of Tamaletom

In 1954, the community of Tamaletom was officially recognized by presidential resolution; its limits were defined and the traditional authorities were elected. The cultural aspects of the community have been documented by Miguel León-Portilla. In his book he gathers interviews and articles by the French anthropologist Guy Stresser-Pean who visited Tamaletom and performed the traditional dance *Bixom-Tiiv* in the 1950's (León-Portilla, 2008). According to the ex-judge of the community and now leader of the Ceremonial Center project, Benigno Robles, the dance was almost forgotten after the time the French

anthropologist came and was recovered just recently. More on how the tradition was reactivated will be explained in the next chapter.

The government has supported the community through different programs mainly for agricultural production and infrastructure. The municipal government also collaborates with CDI and other institutions through the Office of Indigenous Matters, by contacting the communities, co-financing and coordinating programs. Common opinion though, is that supports and projects that come straight from the municipal office are implemented with political objectives, to win votes, not to benefit the communities. Table 5.1 shows some of the projects implemented in the community.

Table 5.1 History of Projects in Tamaletom

Year	Project	Source of support
1970	Construction of the current elementary school	Not defined
1977	Construction of the first road to connect to the <i>cabecera</i>	Machinery of the municipality
1984	Construction of the distance learning middle school	State government
1989	Introduction of PROCAMPO	National government
1997	Introduction of electricity in the 1 st section	National government
1994	Road construction	Municipality
1998	Introduction of Oportunidades	National government

Note. Source: made by author based on a study of the community by the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí

5.2 Analysis of Tamaletom's collective activities

In this section, the collective activities of Tamaletom will be analyzed. The TCA were identified as the activities that the community members engaged in naturally since many years ago. Later, CCA introduced by external actors will be discussed.

5.2.1 Traditional Collective Activities

Collective activities are characteristic of all Teenek communities, including the community of Tamaletóm. According to the findings of the study they are done because it is the responsibility of each member for being part of the community, in other words, for harmonic subsistence, or because they were thought to do so by their elders, cultural heritage. These types of activities will be called Traditional Collective Activities (TCA).

Harmonic Subsistence. Political and social collective activities such as voluntary work and the general assembly have been traditionally carried out since many years ago. They foster a strong sense of community since most of these activities are not remunerated, are shared among everyone equally and are based on the principle of reciprocity.

The voluntary work called *faena* is done mainly among men and usually consists of cleaning roads, weeding and simple tasks, however, it can also involve labor intensive work such as building roads like in 1995 when they built a 5 km road to Tancanhuitz by hand. The *faena* is a very important mechanism of cohesion because from a very young age they have the obligation to participate. This voluntary work can be at a community level or family level. This work is also called upon in case of a natural disaster when people need their house to be rebuilt or need a place to stay.

Figure 5.2 Community members in Faena



Note. Source: taken by author

There are not many traditional collective activities for profit making since originally the community subsisted on their own crops and trade with neighbors. There is individual and family agriculture and they sometimes ask for the help of community members in the harvest season. Men also are sometimes hired in the community to gather tall dry grass and make roofs for somebody's house.

Cultural Heritage. Some other activities like cultural and social activities are done because they're ancestors have always been doing them and they are thought to do them as part of their identity. Embroidery and dances are an example of this point since the knowledge is transmitted to them by their mothers and grandmothers as one of the women in the community said.

The religious processions can last for weeks. During this time, each home in the community receives a group of people that are carrying a saint, gives them food and water, and lets them rest. Everyone in the community does it as part of their obligation as member of the community.

Sometimes there is no clear distinction since both categories often overlap, like the general assembly which was previously discussed. The community can participate freely in the general assembly and it is also used as a platform to organize events such as festivals which is part of their cultural heritage. To organize the festivals, groups of the community are called to make preparations and food which is part of their responsibility as community members.

Table 5.2 summarizes the traditional collective activities identified in the community excluding the ones that happen due to the impact of external organizations and under the influence of Benigno's leadership.

Table 5.2 Collective activities before external influence (TCA)

Category	Activities
Economic	Agriculture Hire neighbors to build houses and roofs
Religious	Processions
Cultural	Dances Embroidery
Social	Ceremony and festival organizing Disaster relief and voluntary work
Environmental	Voluntary work to maintain roads and houses
Political	Assemblies and elections of traditional authorities

Note. Source: created by author based on interviews and observations

Some negative aspects were observed and also discussed with the community members regarding TCA. A strong discrimination against women in most activities was observed such as forbidding the woman to participate in assembly or embroidery because she had to do housework. However, external organizations and the local Ceremonial Center committee conducted initiatives to empower women through encouraging their participation in CCA.

5.2.2 Community oriented Collective Activities

As it will be discussed in chapter 6, just recently organizations such as CDI, CEMIAC, COMCAUSA, and World Vision, have focused their efforts on working with the community. This involves workshops to teach them about their rights, new skills, about the opportunities and support that many NGOs and government institutions put available for them, etc. Workshops to preserve the environment and land through organic farming and promoting the trade of non-transgenic corn were implemented by national and international NGO's and many members of the community have participated. These efforts have indirectly created awareness and even though not all are successful or completely beneficial to the community, they created new collective goals in the community. These activities created commitment through a common objective or incentive in benefit of their own group.

As it will be discussed in chapter 7, when Benigno came with his idea of rescuing and preserving the culture and traditions of the community, not many listened. However, after he managed to rescue and promote their dances, recover the sacred place of the ceremonial center, and the tourism project started being realized, some community groups were formed and some of the existing workgroups started merging with the new Ceremonial Center

under the same objective of preserving and promoting the traditions to draw tourists' attention. Educational workshops lead by Benigno Robles started at the ceremonial center. 53 people of the community are listed as participants including the instructors who are also members of the community. The main topics are language, music, dances, agriculture, embroidery and rituals. They also started to conduct ceremonies at the ceremonial center that were once lost or practiced somewhere else, such as the corn ceremony and the spring ceremony where the group of dancers perform their famous *volador* dance for the community and visitors. Community groups such as the embroiderers groups started value addition and commercialization of their embroidery. Women groups operate a traditional kitchen where the women sell their traditional dishes, together with other groups collectively manage the Ceremonial Center under Benigno's lead.

These activities described above are all collective activities created to benefit separate groups or the entire community and will be called from now on Community oriented Collective Activities (CCA). These are described in table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Collective activities after external influence (CCA)

Category	Activities
Economic	Embroidery commercialization Operating a traditional kitchen Management of community tourist facility with museum
Cultural	Recovery of indigenous culture through educational workshops Festivals and ceremonies in the ceremonial center
Social	Corn festival in Tancanhuitz
Religious	-
Environmental	Recovery of indigenous plants project Organic farming
Political	-

Note. Source: created by author based on interviews and observations

In the next section I will describe how TCA and CCA helped build community capacity in Tamaletom. Some internal strategic components such as Benigno and community groups with high community capacity built after engaging in TCA and CCA were able to combine both and create more complex and sophisticated activities, continuously building community capacity further.

5.3 Analysis of characteristics of community capacity

Table 5.4 summarizes the characteristics of community capacity in Tamaletom. Each element is then described below.

Table 5.4 Tamaletom's Characteristics of Community Capacity

Sense of community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share traditional norms and values as Teenek • Participation in voluntary work • Feeling of being different and unique
Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility as traditional authority and payment of contributions • Working in the ceremonial center to attract tourism • Social and cultural activities to promote culture • Environmental protection activities
Ability to set and achieve objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote culture and tourism through performing and assisting events inside and outside the community • Opening the ceremonial center to the public
Ability to recognize and access to resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognized value of embroidery and traditional dances • Increased network to gain economic and technical support for the ceremonial center and other smaller projects

Note. Source: created by author based on interviews and observations

5.3.1 Sense of community

All the people in the community identify themselves as Teenek people of Tamaletom. This is strongly rooted in their common values and norms, in their identity as an indigenous

community. These values and norms are shared in the community through their traditional activities such as dances, music and embroidery.

Some members of the community are forced to migrate outside the community to work but they still come back for the festivals to meet their relatives and friends. Many people of the community work voluntarily as authorities or through the *faenas* with the common value of helping their neighbors and being reciprocal as they might once need their help in the future.

5.3.2 Commitment

Many of the people in Tamaletom lack commitment and eventually leave the community in search of better opportunities. However, the people involved in CCA, such as some of the ones sponsored by external organizations and those endogenously created and promoted by the community groups and leader show the highest levels of commitment. They work together towards a common beneficial goal, giving them the motivation to stay together and try to work harder.

Not only the people involved in CCA show commitment. The local authorities and people engaged in local businesses are also fairly committed and concerned for the welfare of the community.

5.3.3 Ability to set and achieve objectives

Not everyone in the community has the common objective of promoting their culture through the ceremonial center; however, most of the people support this idea. The community groups and individuals actively working together towards this objective are the

ones with the highest level of this characteristic such as the dancers group who are flexible enough to perform in distant places and different conditions.

On the other hand, most of the members of the community have worked together setting and achieving objectives through programs and projects sponsored by external organizations. Out of these cases, only a few of them have been successful such as the first embroidery group and some cooking groups but still their capacity is low since they often fail to meet or participate actively. The representative of the CDI's regional fund talked about many failed experiences, one of them being a group of farmers of the community who received support to raise chickens but then they sold them all and they could not pay back the loan. When the money was gone, they could not continue with their activities. A reason for this could be that these were part of projects and programs that came from outside and the community people did not feel the commitment they would feel if it was a local initiative.

5.3.4 Ability to recognize and access resources

Perhaps this is the most evident characteristic in the community and the best example is the history of the ceremonial center. The ceremonial center was built after years of searching for support and resources by Benigno and the traditional authorities.

The community members also have experience of recognizing and accessing resources since they often submit and send proposals to external organizations. Most of the women in Tamaletom are recipients of the government cash support Oportunidades which is provided in exchange of regular school attendance, health check-ups and nutritional support.

An example of this characteristic and the previous one is also seen in the anecdote of the creation of the church in the third section. At the beginning, the community people organized an initiative to build a church in the third section of Tamaletom but none of the municipality's departments would agree to sponsor the work since they argued that people in that section could go to the church in other sections. After being rejected, the leaders directly contacted the governor when he was having an official visit in the area, asking for sponsorship to build a community center for them to hold meetings and assemblies. With that, the governor agreed and provided the financial support. When the construction workers came to build the church, they convinced them to modify the outside and raise a section of the floor inside for the altar. After it was finished they called a priest to come and celebrate mass every week and up until now the church is fully managed by the community.

Figure 5.3 Church of Tamaletom 3rd section



Note. Source: taken by author

In terms of the resources inside the community, groups such as the embroiderers' group have recognized their embroidery as a successful activity, and the group of dancers promotes their unique *bixom tiw* dance as a valuable resource of the community.


5.4 Summary

The CCA along with TCA were discussed and explained in the context of the community of Tamaletom. Then the community capacity of Tamaletom was analyzed and linked to such activities. Table 5.5 makes a distinction of which types of activities influenced these characteristics. TCA fostered a greater sense of community through natural bonding with community members while bridging with the external network created CCA which introduced a common objective, created commitment and improved access to resources.

Soon after, both types of activities were created and preserved through networking within and outside the community, in other words, through both bonding and bridging, building on the strong sense of community of the people of Tamaletom and their greater capacity for organizing themselves to address a collective goal after external intervention. The influence of the external network on creating new collective activities will be discussed in chapter 6 while the role of the community in preserving such activities and increasing the value of the policy structure will be discussed in chapter 7.

A bigger level of community capacity allows the community groups to plan and implement a more value added policy structure. In the case of Tamaletom, they reached a wider range of CCA based on TCA promoted by the leader and supported by external networks now generates welfare and preserves the traditions of the community.

Table 5.5 Logical framework of collective activities

End outcome	Intermediate outcome	Output	Activities	Input
Everyday subsistence and harmonious community	Creation of sense of community	Building works, basic foods, decisions on consensus	Voluntary work (Tequio) Trade among neighbors Religious processions General assembly and other administrative assemblies Farming Dances House building/ Disaster relief	Local people Local products
				
Preservation of traditions and improvement of life in the community	Creation of commitment Working towards a collective objective Increased access to resources	Development of the creative and productive skills of the community to improve their income, self-esteem and relations as a group Development of awareness of external resources and a common objective	CCA by external influence Groups under CDI programs Festivals organized by INAH Radio programs Workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aid for tourists • Recovery of indigenous plants • Organic farming • Backyard vegetable farming • Self –esteem building • Fertilizer production • Value addition to honey products • Utilization of digital cameras and computers • Water recycling 	Financial support from external organizations Technical support from external organizations Local leader Organized community groups
			CCA from TCA Fiesta del Maíz (Corn Festival) Management of the ceremonial center Festivals in the ceremonial center and community workshops on culture and traditions Direct sales	

Note. Source: Created by author based on interviews and observations

CHAPTER 6 EXTERNAL INFLUENCE AND INTRODUCTION CCA

This chapter introduces the external social agents or strategic components: the network of the community, external actors and implementing parties that implement the government policy in the community. The large number of projects and organizations working in or around the community has had some sort of impact in it even if most have not been successful probably due to lack of sufficient community capacity to make full use of them. The interventions by each institution are described and the way they involve the community is analyzed in order to clarify their ties to community groups and members. The impact of such intervention on developing a common goal and indirectly building community capacity is analyzed at the end of the chapter.

6.1 Network: External Actors of Tamaletom

Probably because of the high number of indigenous rural population of the municipality, a large number of national, state, municipal, decentralized and international organizations and agencies that work on rural and indigenous development are based in Tancanhuitz, giving Tamaletom a good location in terms of access resources and knowledge.

The most prominent institution is perhaps the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI). They have been involved with Tamaletom with various projects throughout the years and the community members are well aware of the functions and programs of this institution. The National Institute for Culture and Arts (INAH) has recently begun working with the community, especially with the group of dancers.

Secondly, the radio station XEANT is widely recognized by the community and easily accessed by any person. Most community members listen to this station every day, some institutions promote their programs and projects through it, and some prominent members such as Benigno, make use of this institution to promote or broadcast their activities.

NGO's such as CEMIAC and COMCAUSA have a more moderate impact on creating CCA, since they operate mainly through creating workshops but they also collaborate to organize festivals and conferences. World Vision in addition, has operated organizing projects related to water recycling with some members of the community. The intervention of such institutions will be explained in detail below.

6.1.1 CDI, INAH

The CDI is an autonomous and decentralized organism, independent from the ministries, with its own resources and legal status. It was created in 1945 but it was known as a centralized organism called INI (National Indigenous Institute), but then it was restructured as CDI in 1993. They coordinate with the national and state ministries through a “government board” with 195 members. The board is formed by representatives from 13 ministries related to indigenous peoples’ development, a board director from the CDI, and 145 advisers of the consultative advisory board: representatives of all 64 indigenous regions elected every 4 years democratically, academic advisers, delegates of the congress and state governments, organization representatives, and researchers. The counselors submit proposals to the board; these are analyzed and then transformed into a program of the

corresponding ministry. This structure is created in an effort to strengthen participation of the communities in the process of policy planning.

Figure 6.1 Election of the Indigenous Advisor of the Central Huasteca region 2011



Note. Source: taken by author

The CDI also implements a long term 10-year program called “Territorial Planning and Implementation Strategy for Development with Identity”⁸ in 85 micro-regions. It is a holistic program focusing on the economic, cultural, environmental, physical-demographical, and institutional aspect of the communities. Through this program, they identify the characteristics and needs of the communities within the micro-region and then call all institutions that can respond to each demand of the communities and plan projects

⁸ The official name is: Estrategia de planeación y gestión del territorio para el desarrollo con identidad.

that are closer their needs. The CDI makes use of the communities' general assemblies to recruit members of the community to participate in the diagnosis and evaluation of their situation. The micro-region of Coxcatlán collaborated as the first participant in 2010 and the micro-region of Tancanhuitz, including the community of Tamaletom, is defined to be the next participant in 2011.

The CDI office in Tancanhuitz covers the Teenek north and center Huasteca region. According to the coordinator of the CDI in Tancanhuitz, they don't have enough presence in the community so they need to improve and increase their programs. However, the CDI has intervened in the community through PROFODECI, helping preserve the community's dances and culture through donations of instruments and clothes since long time, after the community submitted the corresponding proposal. When the CDI opened the PTAZI program, they proposed to the community to use it to restore their sacred teenek gathering place and adapt tourist infrastructure turning it into the Ceremonial Center of Tamaletom. The coordinator made it clear that this support was offered thanks to already having contact with the community before and having knowledge about the community efforts to preserve their sacred traditions and sites.

Tamaletom has also received support through POPMI and PFRI, although many of them, especially the ones through PFRI have failed or have been discontinued due to lack of capacity of the groups to organize and utilize the support. Table 6.1 shows all the programs offered by the CDI and which of these have been implemented in Tamaletom. All programs constitute collective activities since they require having a meeting place and quorum of

organized community people to participate. The most important up until now is evidently PTAZI, however, POPMI has had the second biggest impact, encouraging women to work together for a common good since way before PTAZI was introduced.

Table 6.1 Summary of Programs offered by CDI

	Program	Description	Implemented in Tamaletom
1	POPMI	Support productive activities by women groups	X
2	PROFODECI	Support preservation of cultures, language and traditions of the community	X
3	PTAZI	Support to tourism oriented projects	X
4	PAEI	Support education for indigenous communities	
5	PROCAPI	Support production of transformed products	
6	PFRI	Canalize loans and economic resources for productive activities	X
7	PPCMJ	Aims to generate conditions to exercise collective and individual rights	

Note. Source: Made by the author based on interviews

INAH is a government organism dependent of the Ministry of Education created in 1939 with the objective of preserving the cultural patrimony of the country. This institution has helped organize the First Corn Festival in 2010 in Tancanhuitz in collaboration with MAIZ and SIN MAIZ NO HAY PAIS with the participation of the women and dancers of Tamaletom. The same year, following the national policy of celebrating the 200th anniversary of independence by promoting Mexican culture in the world, the INAH invited the dancers of Tamaletom to participate in the Smithsonian Festival in Washington DC. This was a rare opportunity to promote their community outside the country and they successfully prepared and performed in front of the Washington Monument as seen in picture 6.2.

Figure 6.2 Voladores of Tamaletom performing in Washington DC



Note. Source: Photographed by Photo by Jacquelyn Martin and found in the Arkansas Journal Online (accessed 10 Oct. 2011)

6.1.2 Radio Station XEANT

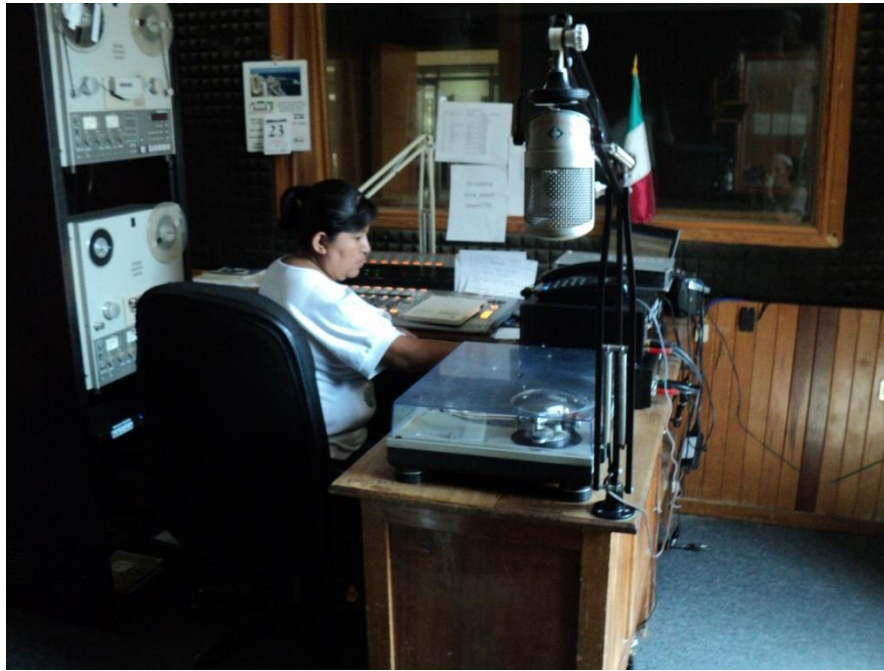
A radio station called “XEANT The voice of the Huastecas⁹” is located next to the facilities of the CDI in Tancanhuitz and broadcasts information in Teenek, Nahautl and Spanish. It was created in 1990 because a group of professors in the region that had a radio program called “Huastec World” broadcasted through other stations. They identified a need of a media to communicate the culture of the region and began efforts to create the station in 1984. It was created as part of the INI and now forms a part of a network of 27 cultural indigenous radio stations affiliated to the CDI. They are operated by the communities and

⁹ XEANT, La voz de las Huastecas <http://ecos.cdi.gob.mx/xeant.html>

their objective is to promote the indigenous culture, and improve the quality of life of the population through broadcasting useful information to the communities.

The radio station also has a consultative advisory board that is formed by representatives of approximately 280 localities inside the coverage area. These representatives are elected by the communities through the general assemblies. They are in charge of informing what information the community wants to listen or know about such as notices, festival coverage, live event broadcasting, etc. The community can also create their own radio programs with equipment given to certain community groups by the station after they receive training on how to use it. On the other hand, the institutions can also make use of the radio station to create informative shorts about programs and projects directed to the communities.

Figure 6.3 **XEANT Radio Station**



Note. Source: taken by author

The radio has a specific program about the productive industry. It informs the communities on what products are being produced in the region, what workshops and trainings are out there related to the product, and what the production process is like. It also broadcasts programs about gender equity, traditional medicine, and traditional music. They have just a few programs directed to the youth. A survey conducted by the station shows that the youth barely listens to the radio but that they consider that the information given through this media is important and useful.

Lately, Benigno has been making use of this station to transmit information of the activities that take place in the Ceremonial Center as well as news on its development. He has also

broadcasted 34 programs about the Teenek language origins and writing, history of the Teenek people, etc.

6.1.3 MAIZ, COMCAUSA, CEMIAC

COMCAUSA is an NGO introduced in Tamaletom in 2008, however it exists since 2007 in different states. The organization's objectives are to inform people about their rights, preservation of the environment and of indigenous cultures. COMCAUSA is part of the organization called MAIZ, which defends the rights of rural and indigenous communities and facilitates negotiations with the CDI and other ministries related to the indigenous communities such as SAGARPA and SRA. MAIZ is also affiliated to networks at a national level such as CONOC which organizes events to promote sustainable rural development, and elaborates policy proposals based on sustainable productions and food sovereignty of the producers; SIN MAÍZ NO HAY PAÍS, that strives for the preservation of the varieties of corn of the country; and RMALC, which protests against the NAFTA, among others.

COMCAUSA works as the link between the community and the events and programs proposed by MAIZ or other of its affiliates. They invite the people of the community, in this case, Tamaletom, to participate in workshops and events that are of interest to their situation such as workshops about first aid for tourists and preservation of native plants. As stated before, they also work alongside people of the community to design project proposals and submit them to the CDI or state or national ministries.

The representative of the organization, Laura Hernandez, has lived in Tancanhuitz since 1995, and she has been in constant contact with Tamaletom thanks to her friendship with Benigno Robles. She joined efforts with him to push the ceremonial center project and was hired by the Ministry of Tourism as a technical expert of the project by request of Benigno. She has also a good friendship with Norma Don Juan, the representative of CEMIAC in the region that allows her to do joint projects and therefore get more access to resources. Laura explained that she and Norma collaborated with material to create the workshop for value added honey products since Laura could only afford to hire the expert.

CEMIAC was introduced in the community in 2007. They organized workshops to empower women among other productive workshops such as the one explained above. They also help the embroidering group to get access to cheaper material and train them to get it themselves. They are affiliated to CONAMI, an organization at a national level that fights to empower indigenous women.

These two organizations joined efforts with SIN MAIZ NO HAY PAIS, INAH and Amnesty International to create the annual Corn Festival in 2010 to raise awareness of the dangers of transgenic corn in the communities. They invited communities from around Tancanhuitz to participate including Tamaletom, which had an important role since some groups involved with the ceremonial center of Tamaletom actively participated cooking and dancing. Benigno was also invited to give a speech on the importance of preserving the traditional corn and its religious meaning.

6.1.4 World Vision.

This organization came to Tamaletóm in 2008. They focus on organizing workshops and trainings on key issues of the community, mainly directed to helping children. They identify these issues after doing a participatory diagnosis with the community. The organization mainly focuses on 4 areas, education, health, food security and human rights.

However, according to the director of the representation of World Vision in Tancanhuitz, they were not welcomed well by the community at first as they are not used to this kind of working methods. The first section of Tamaletom bluntly rejected to work together with them as they offered no money or any kind of economic support.

However the second and third sections seem to be getting used to their method according to the director. They identified the issue of malnutrition among children in the community and organized workshops about the importance of water in their lives and on water recycling and usage so they can assure a sustainable food source by growing plants and raising animals in their yards. In the second section they finished the first phase of digging wells and the next stage consists of reutilizing residual water on their crops and gardens. In the third section they have yet to reach a concrete project but they are still working on it.

6.1.5 Community University and other institutions

The Community University of Tancanhuitz was created in 2001 with support of the state government and is part of a network of 10 universities in the state. At that time the SEP was starting a program to create universities designed especially for indigenous communities all over the country, however the project of the university was already ongoing by the state's

own initiative. The objective of this institution is to deal with the necessities of the communities that cannot access other universities. Thanks to this university, people who used to finish their education after high school can now attend university and have more hope and better prospects for the future. The students attending this university come from Teenek and Nahuatl and non-indigenous communities within a 30 minutes distance.

The University offers the following majors focused in the needs of the indigenous communities:

- Managerial Informatics
- Municipal Public Administration
- Law
- Law with Focus on Indigenous Matters
- Regional Economic Development
- Indigenous Language
- Sustainable Tourism
- Community Health

Figure 6.4 Community University of Tancanhuitz



Note. Source: taken by author

The university has a department for social linkage with the communities. It collaborates and receives support from the CDI to get the resources to go and implement projects in the communities. Through this department, workshops have been done in the communities to inform about the changes recently made in the article 2 of the constitution¹⁰ and the corresponding changes of the state constitution regarding indigenous rights with the law students. The students of economic development and public administration were also involved by helping the local community authorities to develop a well-designed community diagnosis, community development plan and community projects. After working with communities, some reach out again to the University to request support with other issues.

¹⁰ These changes were explained in chapter 4.

There are still very few students that after they graduate actually stay and work for their communities. However this university brings the youth the opportunity to aim for a better future and be involved with their community rather than migrate right after they finish high school, such is the case of Benigno's daughter who studies community health at this institution.

Some other institutions work in connection with the community of Tamaletom. Archeologist Guillermo Ahuja, the director of the Cultural Center of the Huastec region of SLP located in Ciudad Valles, has a close relation with Benigno. Thanks to this the community is informed about festivals and workshops where they can participate. At the same time he is a professor at the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí at the campus Ciudad Valles. Because of this he often takes his students to study trips in the community or the ceremonial center where they learn about their ways of preserving cultures and traditions.

A group of traditional medicine-men from various communities including Tamaletom, are organized in an organization called Canhuitz A.C. near the facilities of the CDI. The members try to preserve traditional medicine through workshops and a small cabin where they give treatment to the people of the surrounding communities.

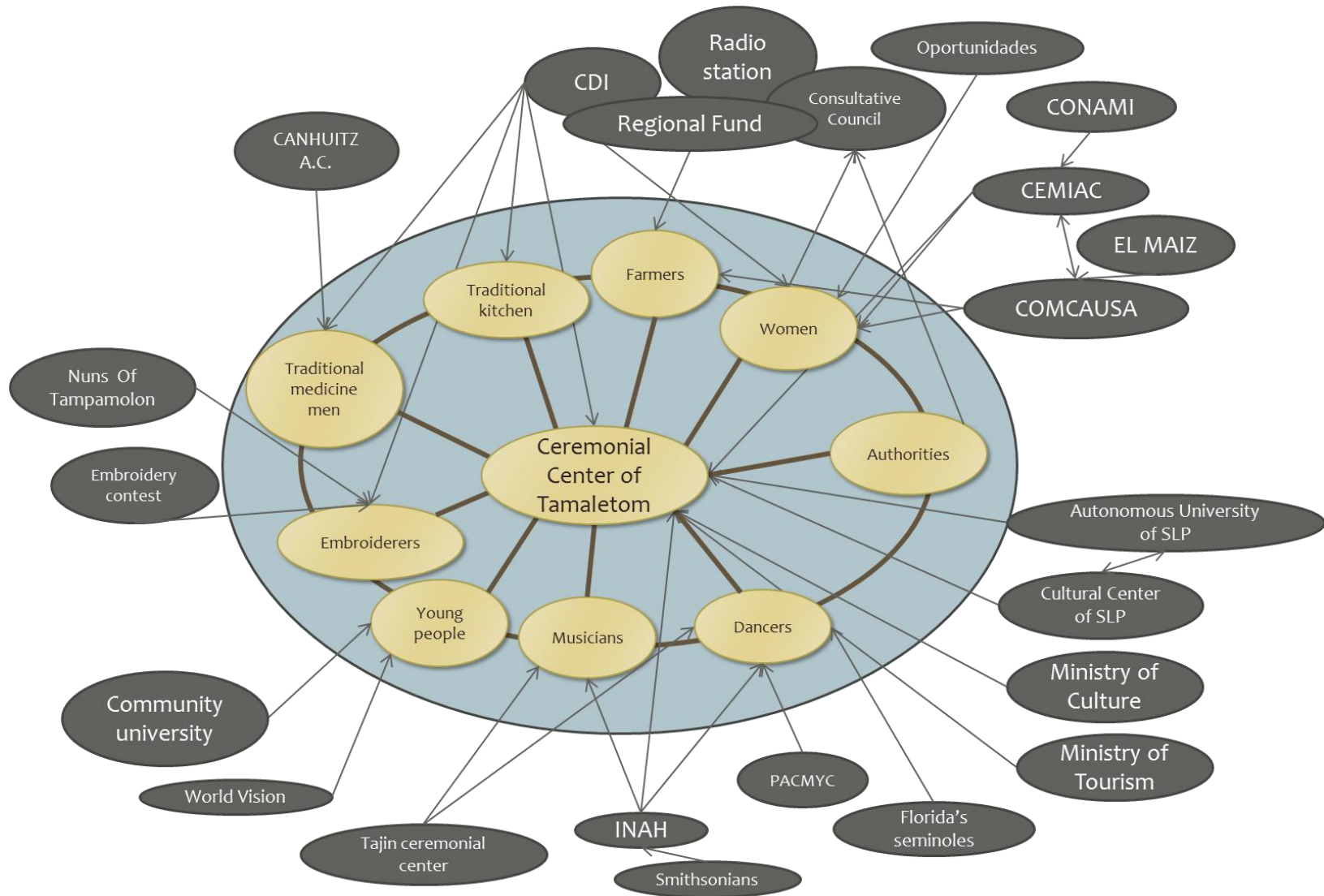
The *voladores* of Tamaletom were invited for the first time to participate in one of the biggest cultural events in the country called "Cumbre Tajin" which takes place in the Ceremonial Center of the archeological ruins of Tajin. This event took place in March of 2011 and they performed the *bixom tiw* in front of thousands of visitors.

6.2 Summary of Network in Tamaletom

The following figure tries to illustrate the stakeholders in and out the community and the relationship they hold with each other. The light color bubbles represent organizations and groups inside the community which will be further analyzed in the next chapter, dark color bubbles represent the network outside the community which was analyzed in this chapter. The arrows indicate relationships between the groups.

The central point in this network is the Ceremonial Center of Tamaletom as it is the central platform for the more complex Collective Activities derived from TCA. But the main figure behind the Ceremonial Center is actually Benigno, so this network actually represents Benigno's network which was created partly through informal ties such as former workmates and friends, and formal ones such as government contacts. Benigno and the inner circles will be analyzed in the next chapter which constitutes the internal strategic components of Tamaletom. The lines connecting this inner circle symbolize the strong bonds among community members.

Figure 6.5 Network of Tamaletom



6.3 Community Change

The community has been growing to be familiarized with the organizations since many of them have been in contact with the communities due to the national policy of rural and indigenous development and different development programs and projects. Many of them have failed and the community loses hope of achieving success. However, many of the long term impacts of such interventions have stayed in the community.

The following table summarizes the main activities of each external organization working in the community. The table also introduces the objective of such activities. All of them are categorized as either welfare of promotion and preservation of culture of the community. In the last column, the actual long term change in the community in the form of community capacity (improved access to resources, increased commitment, etc.) as a consequence of such influence is described.

Table 6.2 Relation of External Impacts and Community Capacity

Year	Organization	History of activities	Objective	COMMUNITY CAPACITY
1990s	CDI	Provide financial support for different type of projects	Welfare Promotion and preservation of culture	<u>Access to resources</u> . Community awareness of different types of support. <u>Ability to set and achieve objectives</u> . Community organizes in groups and submits projects.
1990	Radio Station	Broadcast relevant information to the community in Teenek language	Promotion and preservation of culture	<u>Access to resources</u> . Community awareness of up to date news and a new space to voice their opinion.
1998	Oportunidades	Financial support for women	Welfare	<u>Commitment</u> . Women create work groups
2001	Community university	Offers classes related to the community's needs and traditions and workshops	Welfare	<u>Access to resources</u> . Youth have hopes of a better future through higher level education.
2004	Ministry of Culture of SLP	Provide financial support for the ceremonial center	Promotion and preservation of culture	<u>Commitment</u> . <u>Ability to set and achieve objectives</u> . Community starts to believe the project can be successful.
2007	EL MAIZ, COMCAUSA, CEMIAC	Submit projects to CDI and organize workshops, festivals	Welfare	<u>Access to resources</u> . Community has more knowledge, skill, and easier access to support at a national level.
2008	World Vision	Workshops on water usage	Welfare	<u>Commitment</u> . Community concern about their own environment
2008	Cultural Center of the Huastec region of SLP	Provide support to promote the ceremonial center and their culture.	Promotion and preservation of culture	<u>Access to resources</u> . Increased access to a wider community and bigger media.
2010	INAH	Organize cultural festivals	Promotion and preservation of culture	<u>Access to resources</u> . More access to international groups such as the Smithsonian and Seminoles.
2011	Tajin ceremonial center	Host a yearly spring celebration with thousands of tourists and artist.	Promotion and preservation of culture	<u>Access to resources</u> . Access to people who normally would not know about their dances.
n/a	Traditional medicine-men organization	Practice traditional medicine with license	Promotion and preservation of culture	<u>Access to resources</u> . More diversified access to health services and preservation of tradition.

It is evident that the changes in community caused by the influence of the external parties are reflected in some good experiences and sometimes even economic benefits. Many of the interventions of the organizations are slow, have failed or the projects eventually stopped due to lack of following up, capacity of the community to use the resources, or even change of administration. Mostly however, the main impact of the projects and programs is reflected in more awareness working towards the benefit of community, of belonging and sharing responsibilities with their neighbors.

The community capacity has not been developed at a high level but it has been enough for them to organize and collaborate to preserve their dances and traditions, and furthermore promote them outside the community through the ceremonial center and external events. The main achievement of the organizations is that the communities have managed to organize in groups with a common objective, be either for educational workshops or production projects, to work together and cooperate, even when they run out of support of programs or projects as will be seen in the next chapter.

6.4 Summary

The community of Tamaletom has access to a great number of institutions such as government organisms, NGO's, universities, and decentralized organisms. Many of these have been involved with the community since many years ago and most have ongoing projects in the community. Little by little the intervention of external parties through these projects has created awareness within the community and increased community capacity to different degrees. The projects and institutions also created among the people a common

objective oriented to the welfare of the community, to protect their traditions, or to promote their culture outside their community. These goals became deeply rooted among the members of Tamaletom.

The biggest project now is the Ceremonial Center of Tamaletom which was born as a local initiative to preserve their traditions but then evolved as it received the support of the Ministry of Culture of SLP, Ministry of Tourism and the CDI to become a concrete project. The leadership of Benigno and the history of external support to the community had a main role which generated awareness of a common goal in benefit of the community.

The next chapter investigates how Benigno and the community groups started to work towards the preservation of their traditions and welfare, and how they could develop their own projects for the benefit of their own community.

CHAPTER 7 COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND MORE COMPLEX CCA

In the previous chapter, the external components of social agency, the network outside the community was discussed and their impact in creating CCA was clarified. In this chapter, leaders, human resources and community groups as internal components will be analyzed taking a central focus on the case of Benigno Robles and the Ceremonial Center project.

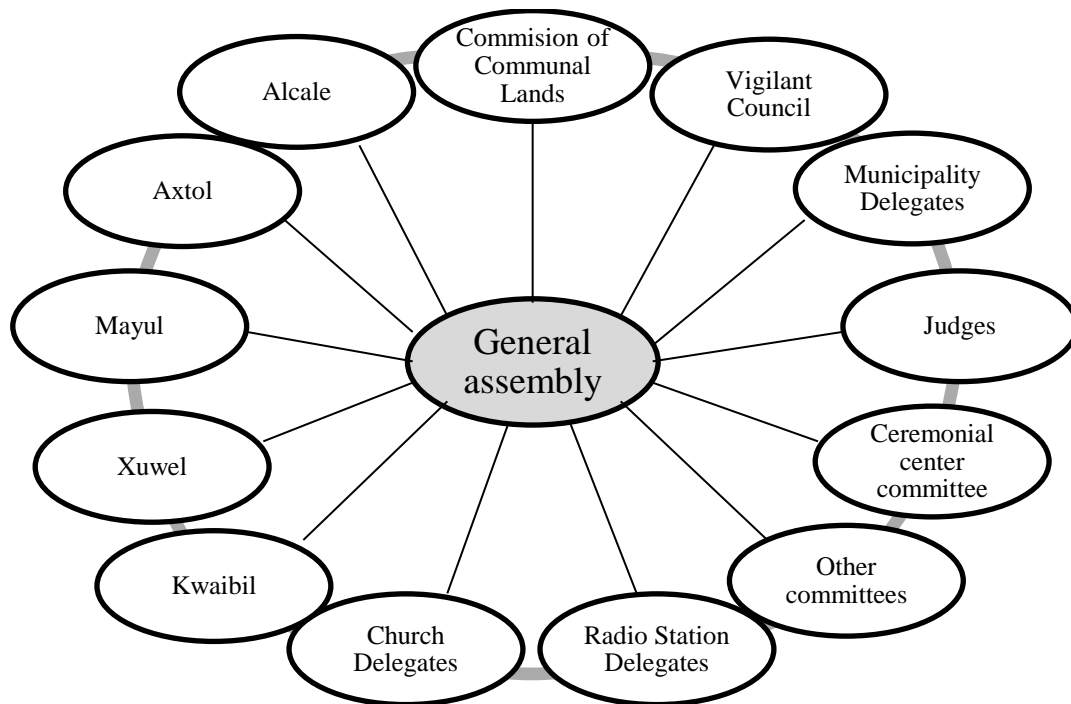
Special attention will be drawn to the way the people from the community adopted the objectives and ideas promoted by the leaders, especially Benigno, and then transformed what used to be TCA of the community into new CCA. These activities became part of a more sophisticated community policy structure which entails a subsequent change in the community.

7.1 Leaders

The community has several leaders known as traditional authorities. These gather twice a month in the general assembly. The general assembly is a meeting where all the community can attend to watch. Traditionally, these are held to hold elections of the traditional authorities, but in fact all matters and issues of importance to the community are discussed among the leaders and representatives of community groups and committees, and sometimes representatives of external organizations with projects in the community and representatives of the municipal government.

According to interviews with the chief of the commission of communal lands, of the vigilant council and with Benigno, no authority holds a higher position than the other (except in the case of the community policemen ranks) and none of them can act individually. The lines connecting the authorities and the general assembly in figure 7.1 illustrate the interconnection among them and the necessity to notify and act collectively when making decisions.

Figure 7.1 Authorities that gather in the General Assembly



Note. Source: created by author based on similar figure created by Benigno

The policemen are organized in two groups in order to rotate and let one group rest. There are one of each for the 3 sectors of Tamaletom, therefore, there are a total of 15, but since there are 2 groups, 30 people are doing this job voluntarily.

There are many committees in the community representing working groups, institutions, cultural community groups, etc., as illustrated in the previous figure. In this thesis I would like to highlight one of them, the Ceremonial Center committee. Lately it is the most active one as it is led by Benigno. Benigno and the Ceremonial Center committee are taken as the center of community activities for their high community capacity and conducting complex Collective Activities and therefore are the main focus in order to explain the development of community capacity.

The committee attends the assembly to obtain permits and help from the traditional authorities, as well as promote the ceremonial center with the community. The authorities of the community are summarized in table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Leaders in Tamaletom

Sector	Position		Main Activity
Traditional authority	Commissioner		Safeguards the patrimony of the community
	Councilor		Land conflict resolution
	Municipality Delegate		Reports to the municipality
	Judges		Acts as legal endorsement in community affairs,
Public	Policemen	Alcale	Chief policeman
		Axtol	Messenger of the Alcale, notify about meetings
		Mayul	Policeman
		Xuwel	Second policeman, accompanied by the Kwaibil
		Kwaibil	Policeman apprentice
	Church delegate		Organize processions and mass
	Women committees delegates		Discuss Oportunidades and organize women assemblies
	Health committee delegate		Mobilize <i>faena</i> in the local clinic
Private	Institutional committees representatives		Depends on the projects that are implemented (from World Vision, CEMIAC, etc.)
	Ceremonial Center committee leader (Benigno Robles)		Promote the ceremonial center internally and externally
Individuals	Peasants and elders		Organize special agricultural assemblies

Note. Source: created by author based on interviews and observations

Most of the authorities are the members of the *faenas*, voluntary collective work. Their high sense of community was demonstrated during a *faena* to delimit the community, They showed great commitment and affirmed that what they were doing was because they wanted the benefit of the community. They were all very well informed and happy with what Benigno had done with the project and asked him when the road was going to be finished. Not every member agreed with the ideas of Benigno, saying that the traditions were already forgotten and there was no point in rescuing them since they would not benefit the community, but he has managed to earn their trust and help. Since Benigno is now known as an important leader of the community by the authorities and external parties, it is important to describe this character.



Benigno Robles (Benigno) is a social leader of the community of Tamaletom. His parents used to work as sugar cane growers and he used to live in Huehuetlan, but moved to Tamaletom when he married. He studied traditional medicine plants and

linguistics. He mentioned he studied some time in Guatemala, where he realized the excitement and love the Maya have for their own culture. He started feeling the necessity to do something for his own community. He knew that the *bixom tiw* was a unique tradition in Tamaletom so he decided to pursue the idea of recovering it. Benigno admits that he had no idea he would get this far, and be known and respected inside and outside his community, he told me he only wanted to rescue the culture and ceremonies.

He was elected as judge for the community and worked voluntarily for one year. He also worked in the radio station XEANT as radio presenter and created his own radio programs until 1998, when he decided to research a way to bring back the tradition of the *voladores*. During the 90's, Benigno had begun to attempt to recover the tradition among other dances such as “danza del rey colorado”, “danza de las varitas”, and “danza de la Malinche”¹¹. Basically everything he used to see in the community.

¹¹ These are traditional dances performed by the people of the community. The names mean: the dance of the red king, the dance of the sticks, and the dance of Malinche, an Aztec indigenous woman known to be the translator of Cortez during the Spanish conquest.

He began to bring back the *voladores* tradition in 1998, when some dancers who practiced the *bixom tiw* outside the community received support from the government to promote the dance. Benigno started wondering where they practiced the dance before since it was originally from his own community. He found out the exact place and asked the commission to assign that land as a sacred place, as a ceremonial center. They told him to discuss it in the general assembly.

As explained above, not everyone was in favor of the idea, but he managed to convince the majority in the community to vote to approve the recovery of that sacred place. The authorities finally measured the perimeter in 2000 and celebrated the demarcation with offerings and dances.

He also managed to revive a lost ritual called the “corn ceremony” in honor of the corn Lord *Dhiipak* which was lost since the 1950’s and now teaches it to the community. He said he went to an elder of the community so he could learn about the ceremony and incorporate it in the ceremonial center. Some were displeased with the result since the original ceremony was 7 days long, but due to the lack of resources and support of the whole community, it can only be offered for 1 day. It has been celebrated for 4th time since being recovered, but Benigno hopes that someday it can be fully restored.

Benigno has worked outside the community as well. He used to work with the community of Tanaznec, where he says he left an organized group of women and men. But since he became busy with his own community he had to come back.

7.2 Human resources

Many individuals have leveraged their human capital to support the creation of new collective activities or to preserve traditional collective activities.

Alberto Miguel is the current leader of the vigilant council. He said that his job is to make sure things in the community were done, and get involved in them too, such as the *faena*. He is disappointed that only 100-300 people participate in the general assemblies and he wished the whole community would be involved. He works together with the other authorities to encourage participation in community affairs.

Asención Reyes Cruz is the commissioner of communal land. When I talked to him he showed a lot of compromise, he told me he was convinced that what they were doing in the *faena* was for the collective good of the community. He was aware of the importance of his role in the community since he said it was for the sole purpose of benefiting his neighbors. He also regretted not having the complete support of other members.

Other important human resources were identified by observation and through Benigno's direction, such as *Claudia*, the traditional medicine woman in Tamaletom who participates through the committee of medicine men of the ceremonial center. She has been called to the ceremonial center to teach her skill through workshops.

Rodrigo Martinez and Esteban Enrique Roman, are also involved in the project of the ceremonial center, as they are the captains of the two groups of *voladores* dancers and are close to Benigno. They support him and the project by leading their groups to participate in every event organized in or outside the community.

Concepcion Mendez, women dancers' leader. She works together with the *voladores* groups and organizes her group of other dancers to participate in events. Miguel Santiago is the main musician of the community, he is 73 years old. He and Concepcion also participate as teachers teaching their skill to the younger generation through workshops organized in the ceremonial center inviting the members of the community.

Jose Benigno is Benigno's son. He does not have a clear role in the community but he is a talented artist. He reflects the identity and traditions of the community in his art, using resources found in the community such as pieces of wood and rocks of the rivers, painting the Lord of Corn, the dancers and traditional designs. His art is sold and shown in the museum of the ceremonial center, having great popularity with the visitors. This is shown in figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2 Work of Benigno's Son



Note. Source: taken by author

7.3 Community Organizations

Community organizations have an important role of transforming TCA into CCA with the help of Benigno and other organizations that provide platforms for them to collaborate. The ceremonial center acts as such platform which at the same time is managed by various committees formed by members of community groups. These groups or organizations will be introduced below.

7.3.1 Ceremonial Center

“We started it as a ceremonial center specially built for the voladores, but now we are looking at not simply as a ceremonial center, but as a cultural center, like the one in Valles, not the same, but that involves working with the indigenous communities” -Benigno Robles, Project leader and social leader of Tamaletóm

“In the end, it was born with the idea of recovering the culture, the Teenek identity.”

-Laura Hernandez, technical advisor and representative of COMCAUSA

The ceremonial center was originally a place where the community gathered. According to Benigno, the Ceremonial Center existed since 1922, and it was commonly used by the communities for all kinds of celebrations. It even attracted the attention of the French researcher Guy-Stresser Pean who visited the community many times since 1938. After 1960, the place was no longer used and abandoned. Table 7.2 shows the chronological background of the Ceremonial Center after these events.

Table 7.2 Ceremonial Center Project Background in Chronological Order

Year	Activity
1998	A group of <i>voladores</i> received an economic support from PACMYC (community and municipal culture support program)
1998	Research the original sacred place of the ceremonies and approach authorities to reuse the place.
1998	General Assembly to discuss the issue and majority was in favor.
2000	Authorities marked the boundaries and gather the community in the place to make a party and offerings.
2001-2002	The community received support of the Indigenous Culture Fund (<i>fondos para la cultura indigena</i>) with the idea of building a small museum. They cleared the land, bought construction material.
2004	The community received support (80,000 pesos) from the SLP's Ministry of Culture's PRODICI (Indigenous community development program). It was enough to make the floor and walls.
2007	Discussion with CDI and the Ministry of Tourism took place for receiving support to finish the project and re-direct it towards an ethno-touristic project. The Ministry of Tourism gave technical assistance to plan the project.
2008	The project was authorized and building continued again.
12/11/2009	The museum was completed and opened to public.
2010	Small kitchen and two small gathering places were built.
2010	Registration process as a tourist institution started
26/03/2011	Road to the ceremonial center was completed.
29/04/2011	A fire took place that burned down the ceremonial center. Efforts are made by local government and CDI to rebuild it and the surrounding households.

Note. Source: created by author based on interviews and observations

The project took approximately 10 long years to be completed. Benigno and the authorities had to apply for support of various organizations to complete it but such struggle caught the attention of the CDI and other institutions that saw a potential ethno-touristic project that could benefit the community.

The project has involved the community through committees formed by the residents sharing different tasks. These committees are divided by tasks which are: kitchen, *voladores*, handcrafts, administration, other musicians and dancers, and traditional medicine men. There are 2 for each in case one of them is not available to participate and to

include more people in the community. The groups are made having as a basic principle to make a balance between men and women participation.

Figure 7.3 Ceremonial Center of Tamaletom



Note. Source: taken by author

The project started as a cultural project, but turned into a profit making tourism project. Facilities such as a museum and kitchen were built and can be seen in figure 7.3. However, due to the violent situation in the country, tourism has dropped dramatically and the community has not fully received benefits of this project. The project has not been fully completed either, and the infrastructure is not enough to sustain a profitable tourism industry.

Figure 7.4 Museum and Kitchen of the Ceremonial Center



Note. Source: taken by author

However, the community and the members of the committee have made use of the ceremonial center as a gathering place to conduct workshops¹². One group of women has used the place as a direct sales point and some university students of Ciudad Valles also attend the ceremonies held there as field study.

The current situation of the ceremonial center is unknown because a fire that burned down most of the place occurred in April, 2011. This tragedy was inevitable and it is expected that the recovery of the center will be slow. For the purpose of this study only the activities and groups formed up until before the fire will be explained

¹² Such workshops are mentioned in the previous chapter and summarized in the next chapter

Figure 7.5 Cultural Workshop at the Ceremonial Center



Note. Source: taken by author

During and after the development of the Ceremonial Center, some community groups started to be formed and organized by Benigno to be part of the project and committee; some were invited after their formation to work there. Benigno convinced these groups to work with him towards an end of either more economic benefit or strengthening their identity as Teenek and preserving their traditions. This idea was eventually adopted by the groups and some have become more independent of Benigno, exercising their own leadership and activities.

7.3.2 Dancers groups

These groups were contacted and organized by Benigno to take part in the Ceremonial Center committee. Thanks to being organized under the structure of the ceremonial center, they have had the opportunity to go to many places and events and perform as guests.

These events include the “Cumbre Tajin”, the Smithsonian Festival of 2010, among others regional events. Both of these events are part of the national policy to promote the culture of Mexico and thanks to being organized they can make use of supports derived from this policy.

The dancers groups had met and performed in the community festivals as a traditional collective activity, but after being organized with a common objective of preserving the tradition under Benigno, they became more organized and received more invitations to perform outside the community. The difference with before is that they danced because it was what they did, what they were, and because it was an offering to Dhiipak. However, now they developed an ability to leverage their skill into an effective collective action oriented at preserving and promoting the traditions of their community.

7.3.3 Embroiderers groups

There are currently 2 groups of embroiderers in Tamaletom. These are groups formed entirely of women who meet every week to work together and sell their products collectively. The groups started as one big group of women that discussed together how they could receive the support of the POPMI program offered by the CDI. This group was independent from Benigno from the start, but due to informal relations such as being related by family, they had contact with him.

The group submitted their application and finally they got the support to buy material and technical support to learn how to sell and make new products. According to Benigno, the

women used to produce only embroidered tablecloths, *quexquemiltl*¹³ and small handkerchiefs but they did not sell very well. After they received technical support through the program, they learned how to create bags, shirts, pants, belts, and headbands.

In 2010, there was an embroidery contest in the region and the women participated as a group but the prize could only be awarded to an individual person. A woman of the group turned out to be the first prize winner. They had problems deciding what should be done with the prize, some said the winner should keep it because it was her skill that allowed her to win, and some said she should split the prize since they went to the contest as a group. The technical assistant, a nun from a neighbor community of Tampamolón, also suggested that the winner should keep the prize. This situation created disagreements and conflicts among the women so eventually the group split into 2.

The women that won the first prize and the ones suggesting her to keep the prize formed a new group, independent from the support of POPMI. The nun agreed to keep offering them her support and come once a week to train them and help them buy cheaper materials as well.

This second group consists of 19 women. Every woman since they are little girls, learn how to embroider through their moms or aunts according to a girl member of the second group, however they need other skills. That is why three of these women learn and practice how to use the sewing machine, mainly the younger ones who do not have that much time to

¹³ A piece of cloth the women wear around their neck, fully embroidered and decorated with color strings hanging from the bottom part. Usually a white cloth with embroidered shapes of animals, “the tree of life”, flowers and corn in orange, red, and green.

embroid, such is the case of Benigno's daughter-in-law who has a small child and works at home. For that they gather every Friday at the house of Ms. Juana and the nun comes to deliver the material they need and teach them new skills.

They gather all their products and then choose one or two of them to take them and sell them. To help this group get easier access to buyers, Benigno offered them to use the Ceremonial Center freely as a direct sales point. Figure 7.7 shows a picture of Alejandrina, Ms. Juana's daughter, selling the groups' merchandise at the Ceremonial Center during the spring festival celebration held there in March 21, 2011.

Figure 7.6 Direct Sales Point for Embroiderers in Ceremonial Center



Note. Source: taken by author

This second group is born completely on their own initiative to continue selling their products with their own resources. They are convinced that this activity, working together with each other, is beneficial for them and want to continue even on their own expenses. They have developed a traditional collective activity which is embroidery into a profit making enterprise under the common goal of increasing their income. Benigno has supported these entrepreneurs by welcoming them to make use of the facilities of the Ceremonial Center.

7.3.4 Traditional Kitchen

This is another group of women contacted by Benigno to use the traditional kitchen facilities in the ceremonial center and sell food at events and ceremonies. The women

usually gather and cook for the local festivals. One example is the recently restored corn ceremony or the corn festival celebrated in Tancanhuitz for the first time in 2010 where the women prepare traditional food such as Zacahuil and Bolin.

Benigno included the kitchen facilities in the Ceremonial Center thinking they could sell the traditional food to the visitors. The women were invited by Benigno to become part of the committee of the Ceremonial Center. This was also because one of the conditions of forming the committee was to include a certain percentage of women.

Now the women cooking group is able to sell their homemade food and get an extra income for being part of the committee. What they do is just redirect an activity they used to do voluntarily as part of their festivities to get profit from it. This keeps the women motivated and creates commitment with the overall tourism project.

7.4 Community Change

7.4.1 Impact of leadership

Benigno was a key element for the community to find a common goal although he himself was surprised at how far the Ceremonial Center project had gone when people at first were not very convinced of his ideas.

He worked very hard to convince the community to trust the project, going to the traditional authorities, attending the general assembly, and convincing the people on the importance and uniqueness of their culture. He went very far by restoring the corn ceremony and offering it to the community.

In spite of his efforts, not everyone is in favor or wants to work with Benigno. But at least he has managed to give the people a place that the community can use freely to engage in collective activities and to continue practicing and promoting their traditions.

7.4.2 Impact of community groups

The community groups developed community capacity by engaging in activities addressing collective goals (CCA) which are based on existent collective activities (TCA). These activities are possible thanks to a strong sense of community existent within them but nurtured and promoted by Benigno, renewed commitment among members, and their increased capacity to organize and access resources partly due to the influence of external parties.

Thanks to the local leader Benigno, the ceremonial center and the community groups that work together with Benigno, the community has had a substantial change and their capacity has been built to be able to get the biggest benefit they can with what the resources they have. The following table shows a comparative analysis of the changes in various aspects in the community due the own effort of the community members.

Table 7.3 Relation of Leaders and Community groups with Community Change

Social agent	Situation	COMMUNITY CHANGE (complex CCA)
Leader (Benigno) Community groups (dancers)	Community with forgotten tradition of corn ceremony and forgotten dances	Restored tradition where various groups of the community can participate The ceremonies and dances are performed in important events of the community and outside the community.
Community groups (embroiderers, dancers, workgroups and kitchen group)	Community with an under-used collective facility where they hold ceremonies.	Tourist facilities built in Ceremonial Center. The community gathers and holds their workshop and events in this facility It is used as a direct sales point during events
Community groups (women workshops, embroiderers)	Women were dependent and afraid of being involved in workgroups	Women convince their friends to participate in their workshops and create new ones Entrepreneurs
Community groups (embroiderers)	Only low profit sugar cane and sugar candy production Traditional embroidery sold as souvenirs	Diversification of activities and products including high value added embroidery that can be bought by anyone not only as souvenir but as a usable article.
Community groups (dancers)	Community with limited resources and not known outside	Community known nationally and internationally for their culture and traditions More opportunities due to increasing network and interest of sponsors outside the community

Note. Source: Created by author based on interviews and observations

7.5 Summary

Benigno's role as leader was characterized by his efforts to draw the attention of his fellow community members towards the goal of recovering the former Ceremonial Center, the traditional dances of the community, and the corn ceremony. He and the traditional authorities started looking for external support, expanding their network, attracting organizations and government institutions to support the project in various stages. Support was successfully received from government institutions and NGO's, because the community capacity was high enough for them to work together to make use of the external policy.

Benigno's initiative was eventually transformed into a tourist project where all the community could benefit from by participating in collective activities. Benigno started inviting people from the community to work with him and adopted a common goal.

Additionally, the groups involved in the ceremonial center turned what used to be TCA into activities addressing the community interests and needs of preserving traditions and achieving welfare, in other words, more complex CCA (TCA+CCA). Utilizing their community capacity, even though the stage of development of these groups is very early, they already reached a more sophisticated policy structure.

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION

This thesis described the process of community capacity development in Tamaletom focusing on the history and types of collective activities the members of the community engaged in to clarify how they were created and how these impacted the process gradually in different ways.

It attempted to further develop the concept of community capacity building in regard to the initial problem of increasing participation from the community in the process of development which was stated in the beginning of this thesis. A qualitative approach was adopted using a case study. The data was gathered in the community through interviews and observation and was presented using a narrative style and pictures.

Government and other external intervention, in an effort to reach local communities and engage in participatory development, created CCA in a community with previous and naturally formed TCA. This indirectly built capacity by creating a common goal which coincidentally was the same as the leader's goal, commitment and increased access to resources and ability to set and achieve objectives. Thanks to the leader's determination and capacity, the project of restoring the ceremonial center and making it a platform for community participation was possible. Soon, groups and individuals with higher community capacity started engaging in a combination of both TCA and CCA through the ceremonial center to pursue their own objectives and develop their own policies, developing more complex and sophisticated activities and achieving community change.

8.1. Summary of Analysis

Figure 8.1 presents the Community Capacity Development through Traditional and Community oriented Collective Action in Tamaletom. This framework is based on the analytical framework used to conduct this research presented in chapter 2 but includes the actual findings of this study discussed in the previous chapters.

As discussed in chapter 4, indigenous communities suffer from poverty due to discrimination and underdeveloped rural development strategies. The process of policy planning is done at national level but has recently involved citizen participation. Localization and decentralization allows moderated policy modification at a municipal and state level, however, policy implementation is still limited as most resources come from the central government and is mostly carried out by government dependencies.

As discussed in chapter 5, TCA and CCA were identified in Tamaletom. TCA had been done in the community since many year ago because of cultural heritage or to subsist harmonically. These activities created a strong sense of community among the people of Tamaletom by creating a sense of connectedness through shared traditions or shared circumstance or responsibility such as belonging to the authorities, a group of dancers, a section of the community, etc.

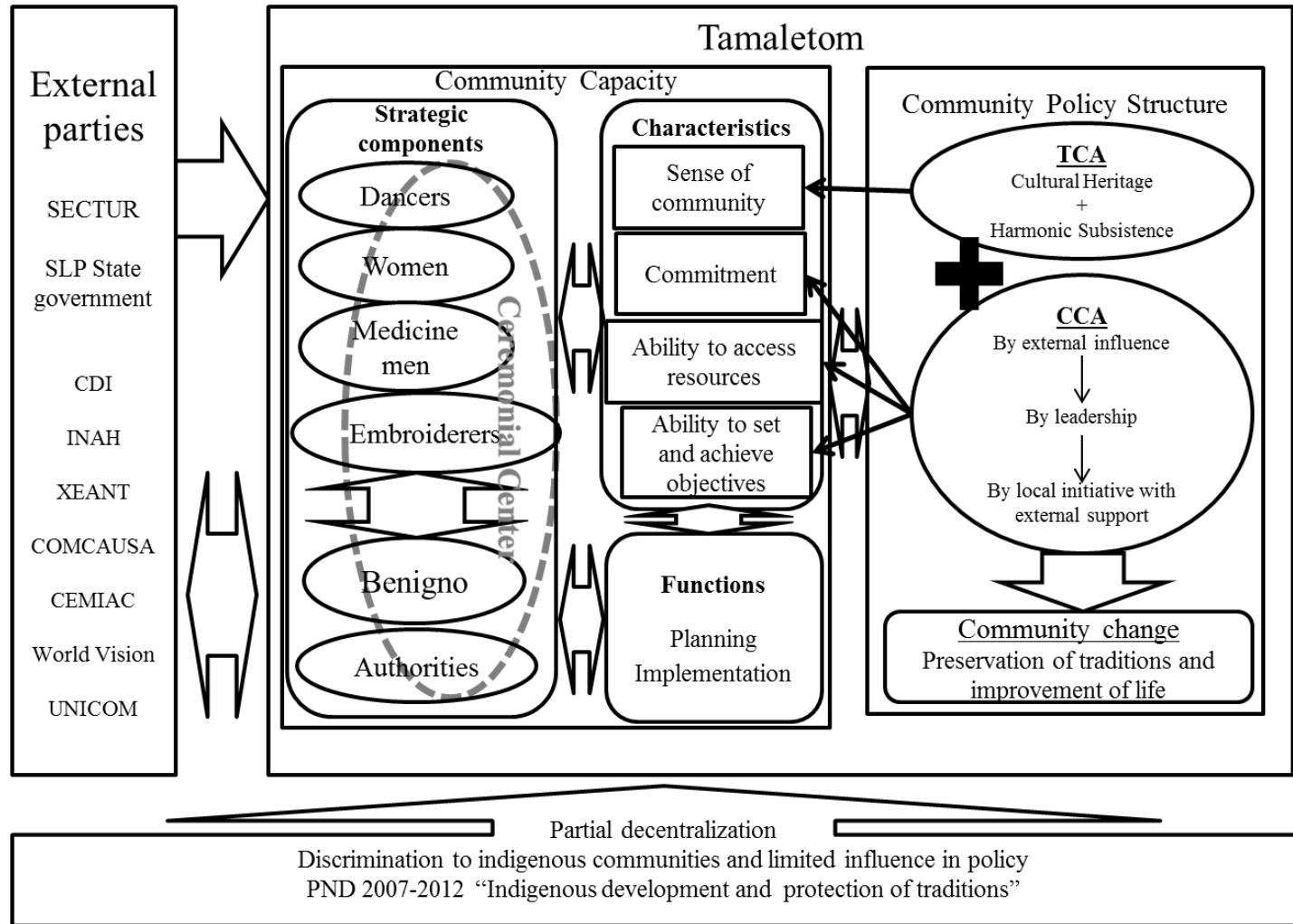
In chapter 6, I discussed that CCA were introduced by external policy through the external network of community which consists of decentralized organisms such as CDI, the radio station and INAH; NGOs such as COMCAUSA, CEMIAC, and World Vision; and other institutions through programs, projects and workshops involving community participation.

CCA introduced by external influence were not very successful but indirectly increased community capacity particularly the characteristics of commitment and ability to access resources but also to set and achieve their objectives. These CCA indeed created a space where people came together to support a common good, creating and promoting instrumental ties that therefore strengthen sense of community.

On the other hand, Benigno exercised leadership and promoted a common goal in the community of preserving the unique traditions of Tamaletom as discussed in chapter 7. He conducts workshops and encourages community members to participate in collective activities such as ceremonies, cultural workshops and festivals.

This eventually became of interest to the external actors and the community received support to transform the initiative into the collective project of the ceremonial center where various community groups became organized and involved in managing it. Some groups and individuals with developed community capacity could combine TCA and CCA utilizing the ceremonial center as platform, increasing their activities in both quality and quantity and achieved a change in community.

Figure 8.1 Community Capacity Development through Traditional and Community oriented Collective Action in Tamaletom



Note. Source: created by author based on interviews and observations

8.2. Contribution to Community Capacity Theory

One of the aims of this study was to contribute to the community capacity theory through the clarification and analysis of the concept of collective action or collective activities.

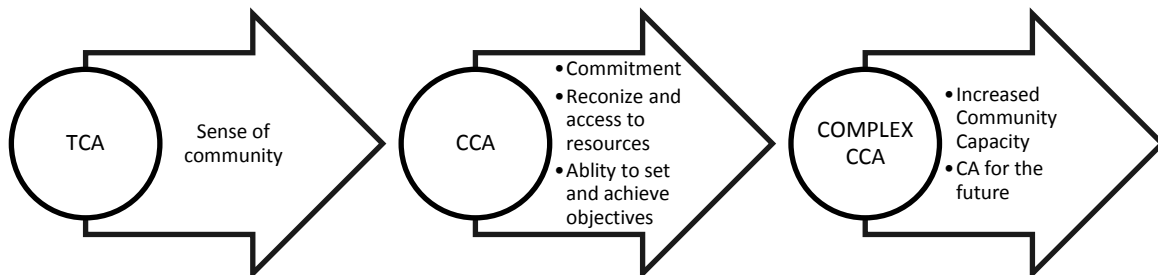
This thesis provides a case where two types of collective activities were identified and described with concrete community activities. The first of these are the Traditional Collective Activities which can be either done because of cultural heritage or to subsist harmonically with the rest of the community. Because of the endogenous nature of these activities, and the cultural, religious and reciprocal context involved, these were found to directly foster the sense of community of the people who engaged in them. They increase their awareness of their community and sense of belonging and were naturally found in the community.

The second of these are the Community oriented Collective Activities. In this case they were introduced by external actors of the community but adopted and promoted by the leaders and some community groups. They feature a common goal towards the community's benefit which in this case was preserving their traditions and increasing their quality of life. People that engaged in this kind of collective action featured an increased commitment, ability to access resources and also to set and achieve objectives to different levels on a case by case basis. This common goal also strengthens and promotes sense of community. It is still unclear why some members who engaged in CCA exhibit more capacity than others. It is presumable that the implementing organization's closeness to the community's needs and initiatives can influence the commitment gained or the ability of

the members to continue their activities. For example, it was observed that many of the CCA that were initiated by external parties were abandoned, while some CCA that came from local initiative are more successful (but some cases of local initiative were also not successful either). CCA that involved collaboration of a local initiative and external support from a well-established external institution was the most successful case as seen in the example of the Ceremonial Center of Tamaletom.

The impact of Collective Activities in Community Capacity can be seen as a cycle where one impacts on the other and so on building on each other continuously (figure 8.2). In this case study, TCA built community capacity by developing a higher sense of community which allowed individuals to identify their traditions and culture as unique. With the intervention of external actors, CCA were created and some groups and individuals developed a higher community capacity by increasing commitment, recognizing and accessing resources, and setting and achieving their own objectives. A greater community capacity allowed them to create their own more complex CCA based on their previous TCA, which is presumed to build more community capacity and more collective activities in the future.

Figure 8.2 Relation of Collective Activities and Community Capacity based on Case Study



8.3. Policy Implications

This study identified different types of collective activities. As explained before, these impact and increase community capacity in various ways. To support and promote such activities could therefore constitute a viable strategy to strengthen and build community capacity.

However, policy makers usually focus on introducing new activities and goals, while for example TCA or other existent collective activities are ignored or not taken into account as part of the development strategy. Therefore it is recommended that new policies identify and include different types of collective activities such as TCA and recognize their importance in creating a strong base for community capacity and their potential for becoming or creating more complex collective activities.

Following the trend of using Appreciative Inquiry approach which focuses on the strengths and opportunities rather than problems and solutions, policy makers should identify the different types of collective activities naturally existing in the community or those which

are already receiving external support, and include such among the strategic priorities for development of community capacity. Like AI highlights, existing resources such as potentially successful TCA or motivated groups receiving external support could become potential sources of knowledge and resources and therefore it could even be used to promote endogenous development (Kodama & Kimura, 2008).

The negative aspects of TCA or pre-existing social capital should be considered when using Appreciative Inquiry to identify the existing or potential strengths and resources. In the case discussed in this paper, women discrimination was tackled with women empowerment in CCA by external initiative as well as in the new CCA derived from TCA. If possible, in the future, negative aspects should be recognized and taken into consideration.

8.4. Areas for Further Studies

The concept of collective activities was developed here but it is still vague and needs more research. Clarifying what other kinds of collective activities are out there and how they directly influence capacity would provide valuable knowledge that could help developing strategies to build community capacity. It would be worth studying other cases where both kinds of collective activities or more are identified and study its parameters and implications.

I would also suggest researching other reasons why communities or community groups engage in collective activities other than the paradigm I used based on the goal matching the needs of the community such as the influence or networks of the social agents, etc.

There is a need for us researchers to provide tools and methods to the policy makers and people engaged in human development, methods that are developed from real examples of real communities, who developed their capacity exemplarily. We must learn from them and listen to what they have to say about their own achievements, so we can transform them into efficient methods that can benefit us all.

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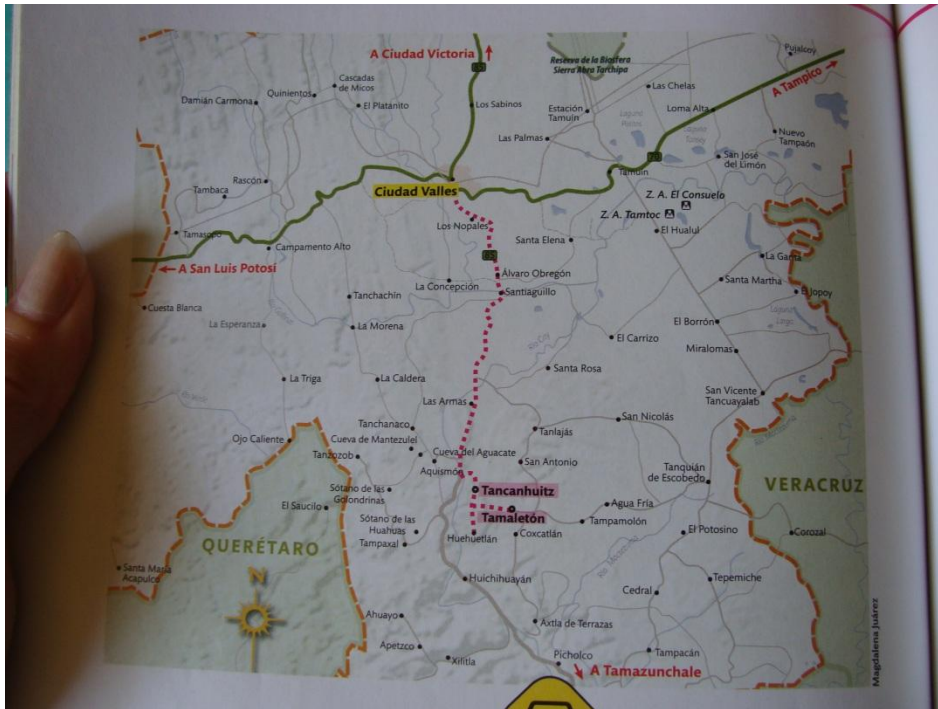
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Map of Mexico and location of community



Appendix 2: Road to Tamaletom from tourism magazine



Appendix 3: Newspaper article of the start of the Ceremonial Center project



Appendix 4: Newspaper article about the spring equinox celebration



Appendix 5: Newspaper article about the reconstruction of the Ceremonial Center after fire

16 REGIONAL HUASTECA HOY LUNES 9 DE MAYO DE 2011

EL SITIO DEL RITUAL DE LOS VOLADORES, QUEDÓ EN CENIZAS

Reconstruirán Centro Ceremonial Tamaletón

AYUNTAMIENTO TRAMITA APOYO A TRAVÉS DEL PROGRAMA PETAZI

Verónica Gálvez
[Huasteca Hoy]

TANCANHUITZ. Por medio del Programa Turístico Alternativo en Zonas Indígenas (Petazi) de la Comisión Nacional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CDI), el centro ceremonial Tamaletón será reconstruido en su totalidad.

Juan Sánchez Ayón, director de Asuntos Indígenas en el



REPARACIÓN. El Centro Ceremonial será arreglado a la brevedad posible. (Archivos)

Ayuntamiento, informó que están haciendo las gestiones correspondientes para recibir

ayuda a través de dicho programa para volver a equipar el centro ceremonial y a fin de que los

indígenas sigan realizando sus presentaciones y sus rituales.

Dijo que estaba por terminar la obra del acceso principal al lugar, sin embargo con el fuego todo el proyecto se vio afectado y el sitio donde los voladores de Tamaletón hacían su ritual quedó en cenizas.

Agregó que es importante que le invieran a este lugar, por ser muy representativo de las tradiciones y costumbres de la región Huasteca.

Mencionó que muchas familias que habitan alrededor del centro ceremonial se venían beneficiadas por el comercio y las actividades que se pueden realizar cuando el lugar se llena de visitantes.



Guillermo Aguilar

Hoy día concurren
"Un caso a México"

ES A NIVEL

Appendix 6: Community group featured in tourism magazine

78 guía especial • México desconocido



Donde dormir

Hotel Sierra Bugambilias ★★
Circuito Dorla Moya 200,
col. San Joaquín
Tel.: (482) 367 0206
hotelvsierra@hotmail.com

Hotel Vergel Huasteco ★★
Km 335 carretera México-
Laredo,
Ciudad de Aquilón
Cel.: (945 481) 100 2724,
www.hotelvergelhuasteco.com
hotelvergelhuasteco@hotmail.com

Donde comer

Restaurante Pequetzen
Km 335 carretera México-
Laredo,
Ciudad de Aquilón
Cel.: (945 481) 100 2708
hotelvergelhuasteco@hotmail.com

El Taco bohemio
Francisco I. Madero s/n,
col. Zona Centro
Tel.: (482) 367 0330
maguivias@yahoo.com.mx

Esta familia de voladores (abuelo, hijos, yernos y nietos) manifiesta con su baile agradecimiento a la naturaleza por sus bondades. Desde pequeños ya comienzan a hacer sus primeros vuelos.

Conozca más

Una de las actividades que caracterizan a los *teenek*, además de la agricultura y ganadería, es la producción de piloncillo, sobre todo en la comunidad de San José Pequetzen, utilizada a su vez para la elaboración de aguardiente.



para buscar el árbol conocido como volan-
tin, debe ser alto (alrededor de 25 metros)
y lo más derecho posible. Cuando ha sido
encontrado, estos hombres bailan y piden
permiso al espíritu del árbol para cortarlo,
lo bendicen y le quitan las ramas; después lo
arrastran al lugar donde se efectuará la dan-
za. Mientras se entierra, se hacen oraciones
y se coloca un tamal grande llamado bolim
o un pollo para bendecir el lugar y atraer la
atención de los dioses.

Una vez instalados, cinco hombres –que
antao cubrían sus cuerpos con plumas
para simular a un pájaro o
gavilán–, enredan una cuerda
en su cuerpo y el extremo lo
amarran al tronco; al ritmo
de un tamborcillo y una flau-
ta de carrizo, el caporal baila
en la cima en dirección a los
puntos cardinales mientras
los otros cuatro se lanzan
cabeza abajo para empen-
der el vuelo, al mismo tiem-
po el cuadro ubicado en la
parte superior del árbol gira
lentamente en dirección en
que los voladores descien-
den. Durante el trayecto, es
constante el ritmo de la flauta que simbo-
liza el canto de las aves y del tambor que
representa la voz de los Dioses. Las vueltas
poco a poco se hacen más amplias y da
oportunidad a los hombres de extender sus
brazos quienes piden a su Dios por las llu-
vias y cosechas. Al tocar el piso, los cuatro
voladores han dado 13 vueltas –correspon-
dientes al número de meses del calendario
azteca y maya–, lo que suma 52 vueltas en
total –número de semanas del año–.

Esta danza es muy similar a la que
realizan los Voladores de Papantla. En los
últimos años, éstos Voladores de Tamaletón
han tenido mayor difusión, debido a su
espectacular ritual *teenek*.

Tip

Para visitar la comunidad se sugierimos ir en tu
propio auto o rentar uno, pues no hay transporte
público que te lleve a este rincón de la Huasteca.

preservación de estas costumbres y tradi-
ciones. Además de tener presencia en las
fiestas de los pueblos huastecos. También
se le conoce como la Danza del Gavilán,
pues en sus orígenes era la danza del vola-
dor, que en huasteco significa danza de las
águilas o gavilanes.

El ritual inicia desde el momento en que
un grupo de hombres se interna a la selva