## Urban Resilience Research

Flagship 4 Symposium December 3, 2013 Hanna Ruszczyk, Department of Geography





#### Purpose

- Share my Masters by Research findings
- Introduce aims and objectives of PhD research
- Explore opportunities for collaboration

#### My background

- Practitioner background 20 years, small enterprise development and local economic development in 10 countries
- ♦ UNDP and ILO
- Masters by research 2012-2013 in Human Geography at Durham University
- ♦ Doctoral research Oct 2013 Sept 2016
- ♦ Relationship with EwF, NSET, Flagship 4

#### Literature Reviewed

Community Natural Hazards

Social Capital

Power

Livelihoods, Development

Resilience

DRR

Current debates
Definition
Utopia or tyranny

Community Sesilien

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#### Local Understandings of Community Resilience in earthquake prone Nepal

Masters by Research



#### MA Research Questions

- How is the concept of resilience understood by community members at the local level; and what, in local terms, are the characteristics or components of resilience?
- How do local, academic and practitioner understandings of resilience vary?
- Can resilience be enhanced or supported through external intervention? And, if so, what form might these interventions take?

#### Fieldwork in Nepal

- ♦ NERC/ESRC Earthquakes without Frontiers Project
  - (working with Nepal / Bihar team)
- National Society Earthquake Technology of Nepal
  - ♦ Partner
- ♦ Kathmandu Valley
  - ♦ Lalitpur Ward 12
  - Kirtipur Ward 9

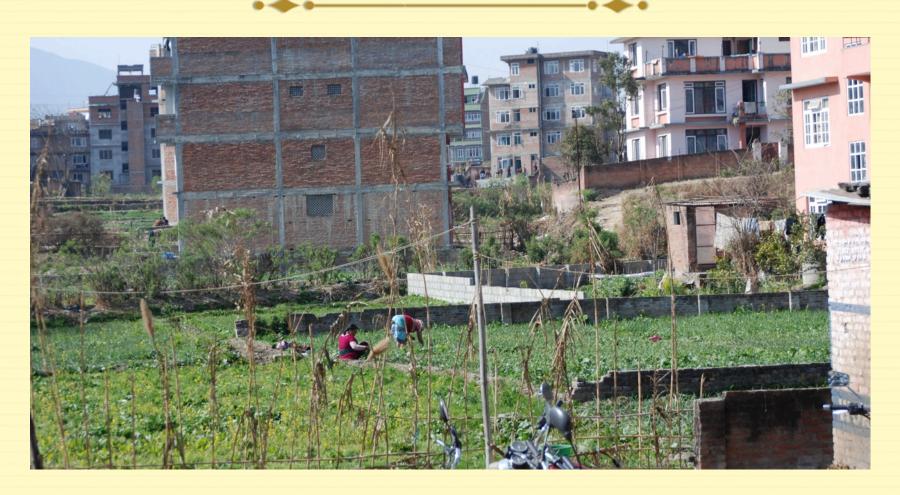
#### Methods

- ♦ Grounded Theory
- Semi-structured interviews with 41 people in 38 meetings
  - Key informants in the communities and local government
    - ♦ Lalitpur n =16
    - $\Leftrightarrow$  Kirtipur n = 14
  - Focus groups (youth groups and women's groups)
- INGOs and practitioners 10, Donors (3 informally), and University
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#### Lalitpur Ward 12



## Kirtipur Ward 9



Question 1 How is the concept of resilience understood by community members at the local level; and what, in local terms, are the characteristics or components of resilience?

- \* Resilience as a concept is not relevant to local people
  - Short term focus on everyday needs
  - Vulnerability due to physical infrastructure
- Social capital based on extended families and community groups
- Linkages between urban and rural

# Q2 How do local, academic and practitioner understandings of resilience vary?

- Variety of interpretations
- Academic contested phrase, usually incorporates elements of before, during and after disaster components
- Practitioner inclusive phrase which allows for dialogue between different actors AND understanding of systems approach of before, during and after disaster
- Local communities focus on social capital

## Q3 Can resilience be enhanced or supported through external intervention? And if so, what form might these interventions take?

- Yes, but need clearly formulated projects with input from communities on the design of intervention
- Clear definition of resilience (of whom, to what, when, for whose benefit)
- Build capacity of people, create dialogue between different actors
- Need relationship between government and people (community groups, DRR groups)
- ♦ Governance

## Mothers' Groups



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#### Synthesis

- → Governing urban resilience
  - \* Relationship between different levels of government
  - ♦ Relationship between government and civil society

- Everyday geographies
  - Necessity to embed EQ disaster risk reduction into everyday lives (livelihoods or in association with a hazard – fire)
  - People are not prepared but aware how to respond

#### Suggestions to practitioners

#### ♦ Capacity Building

- Engage with government (central and local) as well as civil society
- Encourage different levels of government to work together and with the communities
- Strengthen or help create Disaster Risk Reduction committees within ward and municipal level
- Build on existing community groups; Explore role of women and Women's groups in DRR activities

# Suggestions to practitioners (2)

#### ♦ Earthquakes

- Contextualise earthquake hazards into everyday risks/hazards
- Renew efforts to enforce National Building Code
- Continue working with the media (example dispelling myths additional cost of EQ resistant construction)

#### ♦ Projects

- Understand needs of communities
- Implement projects for a longer duration

# PhD topic: Community Resilience to Earthquakes

From development jargon to practical application in urban settings



#### PhD research questions

Aim 1: To assess the concept of community resilience in urban settings

Aim 2: To analyse and attempt to operationalise community resilience

- How does community resilience differ in the geographic, governance and social / cultural contexts of Nepal and Bihar State, India?
- Based on the research findings, can resilience be distilled and operationalised into a set of indicators and best practices that might have wider application in other urban

#### Research timeline

- ♦ 3 year research project (2013 2016)
- ♦ 2 fieldwork trips
- ♦ This trip:

Visit urban projects?

Consider the questions:

- 1. How to define community
- 2. Which are the most important characteristics of urban community
- 3. What do community level people think helps to make them disaster resilient