

Urban Resilience Research

Flagship 4 Symposium December 3, 2013
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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

Resilience

Power

Livelihoods, Development

Community

DRR

Current debates
Definition
Utopia or tyranny

Resilience

Local Understandings of Community Resilience in earthquake prone Nepal

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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
 - ✦ Kirtipur n = 14
 - ✦ Focus groups (youth groups and women's groups)
 - ✦ INGOs and practitioners 10, Donors (3 informally), and University

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



Hanna Ruszczyk

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 contexts?

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