Community/Social Resilience

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Resilience: a coat of many colours

- ☐ Ecosystems resilience
- ☐ Social resilience/community resilience
- ☐ Economic, financial resilience
- ☐ Infrastructural resilience

Community resilience?

Europe (FP7): 'social resilience'

Vs. Anglosaxon countries: 'community resilience'

(Community has no 1-to-1 translation into Dutch)

Our question: Local level: what can/do social organisations do?

Example of Maastricht – multiple memberships of social organisations (music, church, rifling)

A brutal world

- Ecosystems Resilience – complexity, tipping points, adaptive cycle

A pretty brutal world: restoring equilibrium means 'creative destruction'

Zelfredzaamheid: individuals and households
 vs.
Resilience: systemic

Bouncing back

- ...To what it was? Then you reproduce existing vulnerabilities
- E.g. New Orleans: building back better... All eco-label, but in the same vulnerable wetland and without proper repair of road infrastructure
- Can you bounce back at all? Cities cannot go back to what they used to be.

Bouncing forward

- ☐ Meta-stability: a new equilibrium
- ☐ But change may be continuous, no equilibrium
- ☐ Overcoming old vulnerabilities may well take change in social relations including social contract
- ☐ But normally this is not really part of the deal…

- ☐ Resistance
- ☐ Absorption
- ☐ Restoration principles
- ☐ Learning

resources &

(Harrald & Veldhuis 2020)

Resilience UK

- ☐ Resilience against disaster, terror
- ☐ 'Disasterisation'; everything is a danger: legitimises militarisation and exclusion of citizen participation: garrison city, controlled environment

Disaster risk, lack of social cohesion, instability

Making the resilient subject

- Assumption: The structure does not need to change, people have to adapt
- Liberation or abandonment? Not everyone can be expected to be resilient

- 'Adapted functioning is not necessarily superior in level or character or effectiveness to pre-event functioning; it is simply different.' (Norris 2008)

Resistance vs Resilience

- ☐ Reactive resilience: resists change, perpatuates status quo
    - ■ dominant in NL coastal flood policy
- ☐ Proactive resilience: system accepts change & risk and adapts to it
    - ■ growing awarenss in NL

(terminology after Dovers & Handmer 1992)

Resilience as process

- ☐ Resilience – a set of capacities
- ☐ Caphaznet: Capacity building to train these capacities in multi-stakeholder settings to improve preparedness and social learning.

- ☐ CIMIC e.g. Israel community-based

Social contract

- Implicit agreement about how much sovereignty citizens give up to an authority in order to receive or maintain social order.

- Normal assumption: In a crisis, willingness to hand over normal rights is high

- In preparation for a crisis, during a crisis and after a crisis (accountability)

- Citizens unhappy about handling of

Resilience in Maastricht: floods are fun

- ☐ People are used to occasional flooding: no fitted carpets, piano
- ☐ Borgharen: spontaneous reinstatement of cold- war civil defence to fill gaps where municipality fails
- ☐ Neighbours help each other to move goods upstairs, sense of solidarity and community (even if they haven't talked for 25 years)
- ☐ Working system for evacuating vulnerable people. Evacuated old lady: 'it was like a holiday'
- ☐ Partnership between Maastricht Local Authority and local parish councils – communication, ears and eyes

Downsides

- ☐ Road floods first – people refuse to leave even if they should and get trapped (1993: German THW's help needed – stubbornness puts aid workers in danger)
- ☐ While trained to support formal aid sector, village council wary of liability unless calamity scaled up
- ☐ Leaflets delivered at midnight
- ☐ River used to rise fairly slowly: lead time
- ☐ Now, due to diking, bathtubs, reducing resilience - floods come fast, people may be trapped

Public involment = participation

- ☐ Involvement in implementation (dike team) but rarely consultation, joint planning
- ☐ Participation is mostly externally organised
- ☐ In Holland professionalised participation, much less 'community' representatives (it pays to invest in getting to know them)
- ☐ Only genuine consultation if the answer can be 'no'!
- ☐ People 'get involved' in other ways than planned
  - Protest, boycott
  - Suggesting radical alternatives

Maaskaden (fast-tracked emergency measures) and Maaswerken (post-emergency measures)

Maaskaden (1995-1997/2001)	Maaswerken (1997-2005)
Triggered by calamity	Gradually developed by informal group
Emergency law: Delta Plan Great Rivers	Lack of clear-cut legal framework
Hard (if green) defences for protection	Combination of nature creation, flood protection and improved navigation
Waterschappen (water boards)	Public/private/NGO consortium
Fast-track procedure	Normal procedure
Polluted material disposed on no-questions-asked basis	Legally questionable disposal of polluted aggregates
Dispensation from Environment Impact Analysis (EIA)	EIA necessary
Informal participation	Formal participation
Province pulls out	Province takes the lead then backtracks
Openness	Often self-imposed radio silience

Post-disaster accountability

- ☐ After a disaster, both authorities and affected people may reconsider the social contract
- ☐ - Mexico 1985 revolution
- ☐ - Netherlands 2003; no longer 100% state protection => be resilient
  - ■ While stating the obvious it broke a administrative taboo

Floods in February 1995 (NL)

- Evacuation of 200,000 people, its need disputed. One person died during evacuation
- Authorities were basically unprepared

October 2010 Floods (Belgium)

- 5 victims incl. 1 suicide and 1 fatality during escape
- Regional state of emergency, evacuation
- Public anger at slow handling
- Belgium: a state without a government
- Evaluation: 'everybody did their best' – no culture of constant improvement

January 2011

- ☐ Netherlands: again evacuations, one person dies trying to save his dog
- ☐ Belgium: again 5 victims

- ☐ Part of Maastricht floods regularly, it flooded again
- ☐ We took a quick look to see how people experienced this year's flooding

Some propositions

- ☐ Resilience should be more than 'hands off'
- ☐ People will be more resilient if the sector itself is more resilient…
- ☐ Resilience is a learning process
- ☐ People should have a say in planning, not just implementation of flood resilience planning
- ☐ No involvement without development

Thank you!