Reframing Urban Resilience from the perspective of Nexus Practices

- Paper in progress -

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This presentation’s pathway

Leading question is: How does a practice perspective on the WEF nexus help us identify opportunities for transformative resilience?

- Resilience literature
- Nexus literature
- The nexus from a social practice point of view
- Resilience building practices
- Empirical illustrations from Kampala
Resilience literature

- Conventional resilience building: in response to crises and to restore the status quo
- Not addressing underlying causes of vulnerability
- Challenge for urban resilience building:
  - To identify cross-sector and cross-scale interactions which undermine resilience and transform them into synergies
- More inclusive forms of resilience:
  - Ranging from persistence to adaptive to transformative types of resilience building
## Types of Resilience Building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Adaptation</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coping while maintaining status quo, not addressing underlying causes of vulnerability</td>
<td>Incremental changes not addressing underlying causes of vulnerability (except short term and local)</td>
<td>Structural change addressing underlying causes of vulnerability</td>
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Nexus Literature

- Cross-sector and cross-scale interactions
- Tend to focus on efficiency and macro scale interconnections
- Nexus dis-connections between food water and energy make people vulnerable.
- Infrastructure fixes often fail, resist to scale up or produce unintended consequences.
- Limited insights into power and agency and how people can be enabled to support more resilient outcomes
- Tend to obscure day-to-day community and household nexus interactions
Some reasons to include Social Practice approaches

▪ “...adoption (of innovations) in poverty contexts goes far beyond availability and affordability, and perhaps we ought to reconsider the market-driven view of “adoption” but instead consider their uptake of cooking resources as a fit to cultural practices” (Schindhelm Georg and Hayward Jones, 2016)

▪ ...consumers do not separately consume water, energy or waste water services or would act differently in all these sectors, but they (smoothly) combine their use of network-bound services in a range of social practices (Van Vliet, 2012)
The Nexus from a Social Practice point of view

- Social Practices directs attention to the shared routinized and embedded nature of everyday practices around the nexus
- Consumption practices and WEF provisioning services are part of the same practices, mutually reproducing each other
- Connections between WEF being (re)constructed through performances of multiple social practices incorporating these resources
Seeing the Nexus from the bottom - Focus on cooking practices

COOKING

Resilience around the domestic NEXUS
Multiple Nexus issues in charcoal system of provision from cooking to production
Results and Implications

- Vulnerabilities in informal urban settlements cannot be assessed by only analysing “access” to single resources.
- A practice approach to cooking in Kampala reveals (a.o.) that charcoal is a crucial factor in cooking with a range of implications for:
  - Having a meal or not
  - Choice of menu (no beans or matooke, but leaves)
  - Taking risks of drinking un-boiled water
  - Social interaction that comes with cooking
Implications for urban Governance

▪ Integrative rather than silo thinking in service provision
  ● Providing socio-technical mixtures rather than the “modern infrastructure ideal” of service provision

▪ Facilitating and adopting lived practices of resilience building
  ● Daily survival strategies depend on a diversity of options to draw upon: charcoal, wood chips, kerosene; source water, piped water, rain water; self grown, bought or exchanged food supplies.

▪ Supporting, embracing innovations from the bottom up:
  ● briquette making, rain water catchment, efficient stoves; urban agriculture
To Sum Up

- Much of the resilience and nexus literature on restoring and efficiency of provision
- Important nexus is “made” from the bottom up: everyday life practices
- Practices as an analytical lens offers insights in urban life, its vulnerabilities and shows opportunities for inclusive resilience building
Thank You

For blogs about fieldwork in Kampala, Sofia and Guarulhos:

www.resnexus.org

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