



EVALUATION REPORT OF THE PROJECT WORKING PAPER:

“Mainstreaming adaptation into existing urban development and environmental management plans”

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ASSESSMENT REPORT

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1. Introduction

In the ACCDAR Project, the role of the evaluation process is considered necessary in order to determine the appropriateness of the approach that has been adopted. For this reason, the assessment report will try to:

- underline some key issues, coming from the understanding of the on-going urban processes of the city;
- make some comments about the proposed methodology also considering some implications that are located beyond the Report under evaluation, since they could be helpful to locate this project within a larger theoretical framework.

The aim is to further discuss, here and after these three years of work, and maybe, to suggest also how to go forward.

2. The evaluation of the ACCDAR project

Clearly, the most important and original elements of the work is already in the premises: to keep climate change within the planning processes and practices, and stop to start every time for the beginning, such as a sort of tabula rasa. In fact, in this case, we are talking about the mainstreaming adaptation into existing urban development and environmental management plans, in order to mainstreaming adaptation into the plans themselves.

In this frame, the double key word is *existing*: existing urban development and environmental management and existing plans; the existing real world and the existing work of someone else (other planners) and also plans implemented in the real world.

Here, the challenging strategy is to cope with something that is there, before and after the nowadays

planners, officers, politicians, and beyond the project implementation, like the soil, the environment, the cities. In this sense, it is a useful approach that has to do with an *active idea of “sustainability at work”*, within an intrinsically ecological and sustainable way to do.

The main steps recognized as positive have been with the attempt to translate into real practices the general and in some how complex, difficult and challenging concept of climate change. For years (after A. Wildavsky, 1973) urban planners scholars use to say “if planning is everything maybe it is nothing”. Nowadays, we can consider this statement also for the recent world-wide success of the Climate Change concept, also considering that there are a lot of projects defined, designed and implemented “under the umbrella” of CC, with different approaches and success degrees.

The first predicted project’s result is therefore the whole process of knowledge building – regarding the population, local administrators, and the environment – which will allow:

- the identification of elements, which contributes to the development of adaptive capacity,
- the awareness of those obstacles that impede the adoption of new strategies.

In this perspective, the Project and its strategies seem helpful to contribute to the development of the “capability set” (Nussbaum 1991) of inhabitants but within the University partners and the local institutions. These capabilities could be very useful for the current (and next) urban development planning processes and practices, more adequate for a big city such Dar Es Salaam at the stake of the current global challenges. In fact, we all are in front of the failures and the problems of megacities (from Mumbai to Rio and other world-wide exemplum of unregulated urban development), enormous sprawl with the reduction/destruction of vital natural resources, the displacement of the poor from the central areas and so on. In this sense, the evaluation of the Project gave the opportunity to look forward and, maybe, try to say something also about the future of the urban development of this area.

3. Important goals reached

Coming back on merits and important goals reached by this Project and described in the paper, this Report would primarily underline two main points.

First, you tried to act locally the Climate Change adaptation as a complex idea and concept. And it is not easy at all. In fact, from theoretical framework to clear and practical activity, or in other words, keeping together from macro-theories and theoretical problems to thin practices for the constructed environment, the purpose to address the transition from articulated theoretical reflections – about topics and relevant issues – to operational and thin tools is a really challenging step. In this sense, the Project shows us how “planning research on the field” could make concrete contributions to the operational contexts without giving up with complex issues. In fact, the Project

is helpful at the same time to better define the complex concepts of climate change and adaptation in practice, but also to practically suggest how to better use water from the boreholes.

Second, the Project followed the hirshmanian attitude to do with the existing and possible things or cooking with the available ingredients instead of waiting to have all of them on your table for following the written recipe. Even if the “real secret”, it appears here to check very well what it is still available in the refrigerator.

4. About the methodology

In this Project, two things are really clear. From one side, if the city is an *unicum*, even if with three Municipalities as in the case of Dar, working by synecdoche as the part for the whole, continuing to look at the city as complex unit is, again, a very intrinsically ecologically sustainable approach. From the other side, by concentrating the activity on the peri-urban and in the Temeke Municipality, it gave the double opportunity to demonstrate that for working on the existing reality (that is more difficult than design a “new city”), it is important to select areas in which it will be possible to put “resources at work”; especially by rethinking resources in a different ways, such the water and the waste. But also by working deeply, as you have done here, with the single article of the master plan, of each plan regarding this territory, and find within the articles 6 and 18, useful elements, suggestions and mistakes. All these things are helpful for doing better, together with the existing Institutions and people.

Furthermore, the participatory practices have been introduced to better understand and decide together, but you didn't give up to clarifying and saying your working hypothesis: a) assess the existing plans, b) amend the plans, but with three clear options, technological, ecological and social, and it leaves the door open for some future steps.

5. Two extra implications for a more intentional use of “theory in practice”

Two more comments are here possible about the implications of some important points of your work.

First, sharing the mainstreaming process with the local institution and the direct involvement of local officers. This is a relevant piece of the capacity building strategy of the Project, that is an important requirement to better involve the population in real and efficient planning practices. In fact, in the framework of international cooperation relations (and not as a mere subsistence) with countries with great human and intellectual resources, a process of capacity building is based on the ability to:

- enhance those existing cultural and Institutional capacity for the realization of a form of self-centred development;
- build social and institutional capital, also to contain significant migration processes that seriously reducing the opportunities of individuals and society.

In contexts like this, in fact, the cooperation through the disciplines related to urban and territorial planning, could be interpreted, especially, in terms of helping third countries to provide tools for research, reflection and action more appropriate and adequate to address the main challenges (De Leo 2013).

Here the challenges are the climate changes and the fast and faster urban development, that frequently operate through an unequal development process, driven only by strong economic actors (national and international).

In this term, the capacity building strategy is relevant within the institutions and for the relationship between institutions and citizens. All citizens. Especially if the capacity building has to do with the capability approach, defined as “the substantial freedom, a set of (usually interrelated) opportunities to choose or to act”. Or in other words, “the freedom to achieve alternative functioning combinations, not just abilities residing inside a person, but also the freedoms of the opportunities created by a combination of personal abilities and the political social economic environment” (Nussbaum 1991, p.20-21).

Second, in somehow, the project has already used the “existing plans” as a “boundary objects” and, maybe some further developments could be located in a more intentional use of this concept to reach further goals. The “boundary objects” concept has been developed by Star and Griesemer (1989) and then it has been used within the Trading Zone approach of Peter Galison (1997; 2010) “as an useful instrument for understanding innovation processes in the field of science” (Balducci, Mantysalo, 2013, p.2). In fact, studying the way in which the processes of innovation and paradigm change occur, “Galison noticed that it often occurs through interaction between groups belonging to different disciplinary fields, which, although they have different objectives and viewpoints, use forms of exchange by building an intermediate language which allows them to communicate and create new artefacts” (ibidem). Very briefly, the interesting concept of boundary object proposed by Star and Griesemer (1989; Star 2010) is a kind of heuristic instrument to understand the opportunity of creating projects and temporary agreements even between actors with conflicting value systems and interests. Within the Trading zone approach, the boundary object seemed able to open a new interesting perspective: actors may disagree on values and objectives, may change their positions over time, may demonstrate to be interested in completely different aspects of what is at stake but

may nonetheless reach agreements on the boundary of each one's strategy (Mantysalo, Balducci, Kangasoja 2011).

So, according to the proposed methodology, starting from the different existing plans and planning process, each involved actor could re-conduct all the different constructions to a common representation in order to easily reach consensual choices for the future. In this sense, the idea of boundary objects seemed to some scholars really capable of producing a new interpretation of what makes complex decisions happen. Thus, this approach is very useful to find new solutions and visions for difficult and complex problems, with many actors and interests, the trading zone concept encourages to look for the elaboration of an intermediate language that allows the production of partial agreements and the discovery of boundary strategies accepted by different parties.

6. Final remarks

Finally, this Report concludes with a thought about international cooperation among universities in the urban planning field. The Universities, according to their own different goals and objectives (i.e. comparing for example with the NGOs) have the opportunity to play a positive role in terms of training (i.e. for local officers, future planners, and so on) and, most importantly, of sharing of research tools and appropriate response to the specific context.

Moreover the Universities also have an interest in maintaining relations of exchange and interaction of long-term, but also to expand and accumulate situated knowledge and experimentations. In this sense, the cooperation projects may be more appropriately used to let us know and, therefore, make known, even "unknown" neighbouring areas, frequently obscured by a system of cultural hegemony or domination by the media. In fact, by shared knowledge it is possible to better understand also strong existing asymmetries of power and, therefore, inevitably influential on the persistence of the condition of discomfort, isolation and subordination.

The Project and its methodology evaluated here, highlight one more time the importance of international projects to:

- engage with the so called "community of practice" (local scholars and officers), starting from inside the institutions, with a role of activation by the external university through the EU project: the real challenge is to maintain in time this relation;
- develop a way of thinking and acting jointly, between exterior and interior/local and international partner, strongly anchored to the local level;
- develop a critical approach to the theories of planning for the most optimal use in their practices.

Finally, the contribution of this kind of international project reached important goals in terms of the so called "transnational flow of planning ideas and practices" (Healey, 2012): "the conception of

such flows was underpinned by linear and singular models of development pathways – the ‘modernization’ myth. This rendered them apparently benign and positive contributions to ‘development’. Today, such concepts have been replaced by a recognition of contingency and complexity” (Healey, 2012, p.188). Nonetheless, comparing this experience with previous in other contexts, it is clear that the international project are not “success stories series” within an exhaustive list of given questions and answers. Indeed, it's a kind of special skill, often an “artisan skills” (Sennett 2008), able “to do well despite everything”, to work on rough ridges and keeping open the reflection on their own limitations rather than on its own merits and solid certainties. And for sure this Project gives its own contribution in this direction.

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