

## **Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change into Urban Planning: Lessons from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

Silvia Macchi<sup>1</sup>, Liana Ricci<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Civil, Building and Environmental Engineering (DICEA) – Sapienza University of Rome

[silvia.macchi@uniroma1.it](mailto:silvia.macchi@uniroma1.it); [liana.ricci@uniroma1.it](mailto:liana.ricci@uniroma1.it)

### **Abstract**

There is an ongoing debate over how to proceed in order to achieve effective mainstreaming of climate change adaptation, at what level to act, on what topics to concentrate, and what type of initiative should be prioritized. The paper addresses the specificity of Sub-Saharan cities with reference to the case study of Dar es Salaam, which raises both concerns and hopes for the actual advantages of pursuing adaptation through mainstreaming at the local level.

A variety of lines of reasoning converge on the importance of the local dimension in determining the efficacy of adaptation mainstreaming in urban policy and planning. First, the “culture of planning” of a particular place influences the possibility of practicing the mainstreaming approach. In the case of Dar es Salaam, it seems appropriate to ask whether it makes sense to proceed with the mainstreaming of adaptation within the context of urban plans that are usually in default of implementation. Nevertheless, mainstreaming of adaptation seems more practical at the local level since conflicts between competing priorities are more evident, and shared interests in avoiding socio-ecological crises are stronger among actors who co-habit the same place. From this perspective, it is essential that the mainstreaming process involves the population that most depends on natural resources and is therefore most likely to suffer from climate change effects. Lastly, there is a concern in least developed countries that donors may use adaptation mainstreaming to impose certain conditions, a concern which also applies to national governments.

In conclusion, adopting the mainstreaming approach to adaptation to climate change in Sub-Saharan cities is anything than a simple choice. However, in our opinion it remains an opportunity to reframe urban policy in the promising new directions emerging in the sphere of the African urban thought.

Cutter S, Osman-Elasha B, Campbell J, Cheong S-M, McCormick S, Pulwarty R, Supratid S and Ziervogel G (2012) Managing the risks from climate extremes at the local level. In: IPCC (2012) Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation. A Special Report of Working Groups I and II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, p 291-338

Davoudi S and Porter L (eds) (2012) Interface: Applying the Resilience Perspective to Planning: Critical Thoughts from Theory and Practice. *Planning Theory & Practice* 13(2):299-333

Friedmann J (2005) Globalization and the emerging culture of planning. *Progress in Planning* 64(3):183-234

Macchi S. and Tiepolo M. (eds.) (forthcoming) *Climate Change Vulnerability in Southern African Cities: Building Knowledge for Adaptation*. Springer Verlag. ISBN 9783319006710

Ricci L (2011) Reinterpreting Sub-Saharan cities through the concept of “adaptive capacity”. An analysis of “autonomous” adaptation practices to environmental changes in peri-urban areas. PhD in Urban Planning. Sapienza University, Rome. Italian version available via <http://padis.uniroma1.it/handle/10805/1375>. Accessed 28 Jul 2013