NARRATIVES OF DISASTER RESILIENCE IN L'AQUILA RECOVERY

Giuseppe Forino[1], Ph.D. Candidate in Economic Geography,

Abstract

Resilience is constantly emerging as one of the dominant concept in understanding the reaction of social and ecological systems to an environmental crisis. In case of post disaster recovery in urban environments, resilience should exploit the power of place and the grassroots capacities, as well as suggested by disaster management guidelines. On the contrary, often grassroots capacities are overwhelmed and/or marginalized by top down, centralized interventions from national governments. In this way, two differing paths of disaster resilience exists: one is covered by the State, aiming to reach a paternalistic and centralized outcome of assumed efficiency, and the other by grassroots, that autonomously and spontaneously try to reorganize their life. Here resilience is considered in the second path, as stated by Manyena (2006, p. 439): "a deliberate process (leading to desired outcomes) that comprises a series of events, actions or changes to augment the capacity of the affected community when confronted with singular, multiple or unique shocks and stresses, places emphasis on the human role in disasters". In this vein, the paper objectifies resilience as a process analyzing the recovery of L'Aquila, Italian city hit by the earthquake of 6th April 2009. The paper highlights the necessity to consider the process toward a new objectification of disaster resilience, leading to understand different strategies enacted by different actors. Toward this goal, the paper proposes a narrative of resilience through a qualitative methodology, based on semi- structured interviews to members of "emergent groups" (EGs), local associations and spontaneous committees born after the earthquake, taking part in the reconstruction process of the city. Particularly, it describes the resilience process of EGs, strictly focused on social issues in reconstructing L'Aquila and hidden by government strategies. The paper claims that an integration of these initiatives in urban recovery would facilitate the rehabilitation of L'Aquila. In the way to facilitate disaster management, the paper underlines that in urban recovery built environment and social issues should be considered in an holistic and integrated understanding. Finally, it remarks the necessity of strengthening grassroots capacities and involving in an inclusive way affected population.

1. Introduction

Resilience is constantly emerging as one of the dominant concept in understanding the reaction of social, ecological and socio-ecological systems to an environmental crisis. Resilience could be defined as "the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner" (UNISDR, 2009, p.24). In this way, it has been

[1] La Sapienza-University of Rome, Rome, Italy – Giuseppe.forino@uniroma1.it

widely recognized as an helpful framework engaging with disaster management (Mileti, 1999; Manyena, 2006; Handmer and Dovers, 2007; Lettieri *et al.*, 2009; Kuhlicke, 2011).

This paper focuses on disaster recovery, within disaster resilience is defined as "the capacity of hazard affected bodies to resist loss during disaster and to regenerate and reorganize after disaster in a specific area in a given period" (Zhou *et al.*, 2010, p.28). The paper sheds light on the process of resilience enacted by spontaneous grassroots groups grown after the earthquake that struck the Italian city of L'Aquila on 6th April 2009. Quoting several contributions of disaster sociologists (Kreps, 1984; Saunders and Kreps, 1987; Kreps and Lovegren Bosworth, 1993; Stallings and Quarantelli, 1993), these groups could be considered as "emergent groups" (EGs), not existing prior to the events compelling their creation. EGs in L'Aquila are pursuing social and cultural initiatives reconstructing the city.

In this way, the paper highlights the relevance of these initiatives to deepen the understanding of victims' needs, and reveals mismanagements in reconstruction practices, due the marginalization of victims' "voices" in approaching to disaster resilience with a top-down perspective. Therefore, it suggests the necessity to consider resilience as a shared and dynamic bottom-up process, instead of a simplifying outcome (Manyena, 2006). The paper uses a qualitative methodology through semi-structured interviews (Secor, 2010), aiming to propose a narrative (Riessman, 1993) of grassroots resilience process considering as primary data the words of EGs' representatives. In this way, the paper further aims to encourage the use of qualitative methodology exploring disaster resilience in a holistic view, facing to the complexity of post disaster reconstruction (Zetter and Boano, 2010).

In literature, several attempts to identify characteristics of resilience exists, with the aim to evaluate system performances facing a disaster and to measure them in quantitative analysis (Bruneau *et al.*, 2003; Cutter *et al.*, 2008a; Cutter *et al.*, 2008b; Cutter *et al.*, 2010; Zhou *et al.*, 2010). On the opposite, it seems to exist the necessity to further develop qualitative methodologies in resilience studies (Berke *et al.*, 2008; Kuhlicke, 2011 and, mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches, Marschke and Berkes, 2006; Mills *et al.*, 2011; Keogh *et al.*, 2011). This paper tackles that, although is acknowledgeable the validity of quantitative approaches developing the debate about resilience, often they lack of relevant data in understanding the disaster as a social construct. Particularly, quantitative interpretations do not help to identify resilience experienced by different stakeholders coping with a disaster, the relations among different actors and their enacted strategies, or the political strategies and power relations besides resilience (Cannon and Muller-Mahn, 2010).

After justified the choice of qualitative methodology, in this way it reveals crucial the remarks of Manyena (2006) revisiting the concept of resilience. Manyena argues that two different visions of resilience exist, leading two different approaches in disaster management. The first considers disaster resilience as an outcome, simply identified as a 'shock absorber' ensuring to the system small-scale negative impacts. In disaster management, this view tends to reinforce traditional practices, following a paternalistic and top down approach, potentially leading to the skewing of activities

towards supply rather than demand. These typologies of programs for disaster resilience tend to adopt a command-and-control management (Alexander, 2002; Alexander, 2007) that centralizes decisional power, preserves the *status quo* and marginalizes aspects such as social and spatial inequality, oppression and lack of civil rights that could often result in case of disaster. In this way, they neglect and/or marginalize grassroots empowerment and participation activities (f.i community or generally "local" initiatives) that could be efficient on the set of response and recovery strategies (Manyena, 2006).

On the opposite side, the second considers disaster resilience as a deliberate process (leading to desired outcomes) that implies the enactment of events, actions or changes to strengthen the capacity of the affected community facing with shocks and stresses. Therefore, it emphasizes the human role in disasters, exploits the human capacities and poses attention on how human beings, both individual and collective, are capable to face a disaster and, therefore, on how they enact strategies. In this way, this vision highlights grassroots potentialities coping with a disaster and strategies and considers them as decisive for reconstruction practices.

On these statements, the paper poses two main question: does top-down strategies from government respond effectively to the needs of disaster victims, or exist a neglect and/or a marginalization of some of them? Is the objectification of resilience as a process rather than an outcome helpful to a more holistic and integrated interpretation of reconstruction period?

Initially, the paper describes disaster management in the Italian city of L'Aquila after the 6th April 2009 earthquake. Next, it presents the qualitative methodology to analyze the process of disaster resilience enacted by grassroots EGs in L'Aquila. Afterwards, results are presented about grassroots initiatives, in satisfying needs neglected by governmental strategies. Finally, conclusive remarks are offered about the qualitative methodology analyzing disaster resilience, the revisitation of resilience approach as a process and the holistic perspective of disaster management.

2. Analysis

2.1 Contextualizing disaster management in L'Aquila

On 6th April 2009, L'Aquila Municipality and its 14 surrounding villages have been affected by an earthquake with a record magnitude of 6.3, causing the death of 308 people in the main shock and the injure of 1500 people, 202 of them seriously (Alexander, 2010). The damage of residential buildings has been severe: more than 60,000 buildings have been entangled, of which 18,000 judged as unsafe for occupancy (Papanikolaou *et al.*, 2010).

In this case disaster management has been strongly addressed toward centralized solutions, replacing the local response with a national one, under the powerful guidance of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Italian Civil Protection Department (ICPD) (Alexander, 2010). In the emergency phase the historical center of L'Aquila

was declared unsafe and consequently off-limits (Red Zone) and militarized. The immediate step in the emergency phase was the implementation of tent camps for 22,000 evacuees and the recovery for other 21,000 in tourist accommodations (Alexander, 2010), as previously enacted for example in occasion of earthquake in Friuli region in 1976 (Geipel, 1978; 1991). The necessity of quickly providing shelters to survivors drove ICPD and Italian Government to opt for emergency management leading to reconstruction strategies aimed at a direct transition from homelessness to secure accommodation (Alexander, 2010). Afterwards, two different strategies have been enacted for reconstruction. The first was the construction, between September 2009 and February 2010, of new earthquake-proof buildings in peripheral areas called CASE Projects (*Complessi Anti-Sismici Eco-compatibili* - Earthquake-proof Sustainable Eco-compatible Housing Complexes) (Calvi and Spaziante, 2010; Alexander, 2011a) capable to host about 15,000 evacuees of L'Aquila city. This project included 184 buildings and 5,736 residential flats at 19 sites around L'Aquila (Alexander, 2010). The second was the implementation of MAPs (*Moduli Abitativi Provvisori*- Temporary Housing Prefabs) in 54 localities, both in peripheral areas and closer to the damaged sites within L'Aquila municipality for the recovery of 8500 people (Alexander, 2011b).

Figure 1: CASE Project areas, identified with 19 black shapes. These have been proposed by the Italian Government to build the new housing complexes in L'Aquila Municipality (ICPD, 2009).

Although this scattered strategy seems to indicate a successful recovery plan, emergency and reconstruction mismanagement, both from an environmental and social perspective, have been recently pointed out by Alexander (2010; 2011a; 2011b),

Calandra (2011) and Microdis (2011). The reconstruction strategy followed two parallel lines of intervention: the closure of the historic centre, still declared off-limits after more than two years, and the creation of new peripheral settlements in predominantly rural areas used for agricultural activities.

The CASE project was approved by legislative decree just 22 days after the earthquake. The Government's priority was to find a timely solution to housing recovery which was carried out without consideration of the long-term consequences. The rapidity of the decision provoked a misallocation of resources both in terms of an excessive expenditure of funds (Alexander, 2010) and of soil consumption.

Furthermore, one of the most significant critiques that the government has received is the lack of involvement and participation of citizens in the decision-making process (Alexander, 2010). As regards the reconstruction, this has been perceived as a lack of attention to the prioritized needs of the population affected (Calandra, 2011). In addition, the displacement of the population, from their prior locations to the new CASE project areas, has caused the fragmentation of the pre-existing communities challenging the re-creation of a new feeling of belonging (Microdis, 2011).

The reconstruction strategy, exemplified by the CASE project, is representative of a paradigmatic top-down and emergency-led disaster recovery approach, merely focused on achieving a quick response. Furthermore, governmental proposals were not based on sustainable and ameliorative aims. In this way, grassroots decide spontaneously to take responsibility for their place and, therefore, to enact a more appropriate response, aware of their needs.

2.2 Methodology

In analyzing disaster resilience in urban systems, a multi-level understanding is necessary (Resilience Alliance, 2007), particularly highlighting issues related both to built environment and to social relations (Vale and Campanella, 2005; Campanella, 2006). Specifically, this understanding reveals crucial in post disaster reconstruction period, that should be understood in an integrate and holistic view considering its complexity (Zetter and Boano, 2010).

As mentioned before, this paper proposes a qualitative methodology to analyze disaster resilience. This methodology reveals itself helpful in understanding how social processes are shaped and constructed and, in a more critical way, how the 'truth' is acknowledged and socially represented (Knigge and Cope, 2006). The paper argues that a qualitative methodology is relevant in understanding how social phenomena are diversified in relation to actions and networks contexts. Furthermore, it poses the dialectical conundrum about how they exist in the 'real' world and how they are represented in their social construction (Bailey *et al.*, 1999).

In this sense, the paper aims to go beyond mainstream 'truth' about reconstruction practices in L'Aquila, and to highlight grassroots necessities marginalized by centralistic strategies. In fact, one of the main characteristic of disaster management in L'Aquila has been characterized a distortion of events' description by mass media and

a rhetorical sensationalism describing the 'truth' (Felice, 2010; Carnelli *et al.*, 2012). In this way, it seems necessary to underline 'other voices' aiming to understand the social implications of L'Aquila earthquake from a marginalized standpoint. Therefore, primary data have been retrieved from semi-structured interviews, extracting grassroots voices. According to Crang (2002) about a re-examination of their validity within social sciences, here it claims that semi-structured interviews represent additional sources to a standard archival research in case of information about events and facts not recorded by documents (Secor, 2010). In this vein, Kumaran and Negi (2006) suggests these interviews in disaster studies if it is necessary to spread marginalized and hidden opinions. Additionally, in understanding resilience, this typology of interviews allows to shed light on how individuals experienced disaster and resilience (Kuhlicke, 2011).

The fieldwork in L'Aquila took place since 15th May to 20th July 2011. As previously mentioned, it consisted in conducting semi- structured interviews focused on the autonomous resilience process of several grassroots EGs, born after the earthquake. In this way, several EGs exist with different goals depending to the number of members, the scale (neighbourhood, urban) of proposals and the perceived priorities. In selecting EGs for the research, earlier screening has been based exclusively on their spontaneous origin and, therefore, in the analysis have been excluded groups affiliated to local or national pre existing organizations.

EGs aimed to find a solution for individual and community necessities for whom Italian Government has been not aware through its centralistic disaster management. Additionally, these interviews were supplemented by field notes taken in attending formal and informal meetings of the groups. Numerous informal discussions were also held with inhabitants of L'Aquila members about emergency and recovery strategies enacted both by Italian Government and grassroots. Other information have been retrieved by articles from local media and Internet sources, and studies and reports produced by government and local agencies. Therefore, next session will propose results from these research in order to realize a narration of resilience process, as the existing work in literature by Berke *et al.* (2008) about resilience in Thailand after tsunami in 2004 and Kuhlicke (2011) after floods in Germany in 2002. Regarding L'Aquila earthquake this paper aims to fit within the critical literature about disaster management: Alexander (2010) highlights the strategies enacted by Italian Government and ICPD; Frisch (2010) underlines the impacts of CASE Project on urban planning; Pisu and Zardetto (2010) sheds light on the impasse one year after the event; Calandra (2011) analyzes the new social geography in some of the areas of C.A.S.E. Project; Comitato 3.32 (2010) reveals the strongly market-oriented mould of the reconstruction; finally MICRODIS (2011) proposes empirical results about social, economical and health impacts of the earthquake.

3. Results

3.1 Origin of EGs resilience and its objectification as a process

EGs are not existing before the disaster. As underlined in literature about spontaneity mechanisms of post disaster community solidarity (Solnit, 2010) and in enhancing

resilience (Tierney, 2009), L'Aquila experience sheds light on a spontaneous and autonomous way to enact a process of resilience by grassroots. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, in tents camps and in an open space in front of a dismissed mental hospital, in a locality called Collemaggio, groups of unorganized citizens meet in spontaneous assemblies to propose their capacities in restoring the city. During following months these assemblies resulted in some public initiatives, as for example the "wheelbarrows rebellion" in 2010, (Farinosi and Trerè, 2010) to clean up rubbles in the city center, and in a legislative proposal to Italian government (PLIP, 2011), recommending precise guidelines for a better organization of disaster management in Italy. These initiatives strongly claimed the necessity to involve grassroots in the whole disaster management both in L'Aquila and in Italy, rejecting top-down strategies in decision processes for the reconstruction (Farinosi and Trerè, 2010; PLIP, 2011).

Notwithstanding these claims, interviews clearly show two different approaches to resilience: one institutional top-down, aiming to the outcome to timely, and the other bottom-up, a process enacted by grassroots, marginalized in the government activities.

The first is based on a paternalistic view of reconstruction, a lack of flexibility and short-term goals, aiming to timely reach the result in providing to housing solution (the CASE Project). Within this priority a strong centralistic management of L'Aquila emerged, and a member of EGs declares:

"…. It has been adopted the justification of urgency and emergency and democracy has been abolished in L'Aquila. Through Civil Defence Department the Government occupied the territory. Military solution have been applied. Furthermore, local institutions concealed behind this urgency/emergency. They abandoned our place in powerful hands of central govern because they had fear about the complexity of the problems and about their incapacity. Therefore, CASE Project has been imposed."

Thus, it clearly manifests that central and local institutions have taken initiatives unshared with the grassroots, without any attempt to enlarge the consensual base and to rely to grassroots capacities helpful to strengthen and integrate their efforts. Central levels, as Italian Government and ICPD, and local institutions (Mayor and City Council, identified as the closest to the grassroots in issues of urban planning and management) worked with civil defense and "command-and-control" methods. The abused slogan "from tents to houses", which briefly describes the strategy of a direct transition from emergency housing to residential building of CASE Project (Alexander, 2010), endorses the necessity to adopt a "state of emergency" to provide temporary housing to the population. Concretely, this slogan describes the perversion of the democratic functioning and of the assumptions upon which to develop and legitimize public policies coping with the disaster (Calandra, 2011).

In this dichotomous landscape, several EGs grew up with different goals. The interviews do not cover all targets of EGs in L'Aquila, but partially describe the existing scenario, constantly in evolution. Here resilience process is narrated based on story-telling by representatives of following EGs: artists' associations, neighbourhoods promoters of recovery plans and social spaces, occupiers of a disused kindergarten, founders of a new ecovillage, cultural associations, promoters of

participatory initiatives, students' associations. Their names will be not identified to preserve privacy of interviewees and according to anonymity requests by some of them.

The first step to frame their resilience process is to clarify why it could be defined as a process and not an outcome as Manyena (2006) stated. The objectification of resilience as a process is claimed by an interviewed that explains:

"….an idealistic recovery model does not exist in general and specifically for L'Aquila. Several difficulties exist in analyzing current needs for grassroots. In this way, citizens must be powerful, must be actors in reconstruction, everyone aiming to solve their problems and developing their theoretical and practical skills and capacities. They must share their ideas in a slow and dynamic process".

The interventions enacted by the institutions is considered reductive and not aware of the urban complexity of L'Aquila. In fact, the strategy of CASE Project does not consider both the past and the future of the city (Calandra, 2011). In this way, it rejects its history the acknowledged peculiarity of L'Aquila as a "planned city" of medieval foundation (Clementi, 2009; Clementi and Piroddi, 1988), with a precise urban form within the city center (now Red Zone) historically represented – still performing after more than eight centuries- the cultural, social and economical heart of the numerous surrounding small villages. Furthermore, it lacks of any mid-term and long-term evaluation of urban planning of the city, neglecting a vision necessarily perspective of recovery (Berke and Campanella, 2006) and an holistic view of reconstruction practices (Zetter and Boano, 2010). These remarks are strongly affirmed here:

"CASE Project is a wicked attempt to move inhabitants outside our historical city center, in the *periphery of the periphery* (emphasis added).The renaissance of L'Aquila must begin in the city center, our heart, where people lives. People can't move elsewhere, because this 'elsewhere' consists of buildings not existing as social, cultural and relational structure. They just exist as buildings on crossing roads, they are *non-places* (emphasis added)."

Additionally, the reference to the "non-places" of Augè (1995) seems to represent the core of the inputs for resilience process. In fact, EGs underline that institutional strategies of recovery marginalized the manifold issues related to the planning of social aspects, in the new areas of CASE Project and in the rest of inhabited areas of the city. In this way, interviews prove that EGs perceive as relevant the lack of generic spaces for sociality for the whole population and the necessity to regain a sort of 'everyday life' able to recreate community ties.

As stated by this interview:

" due the lack of places where we can meet, our group (*one of the EG, n.o.A.*) represents at least a partial solution to recreate a place to meet, to share ideas or simply to have fun."

Another interviewed declared that

"it does not exist more the *everyday* (emphasis added), children playing in green areas or in the square, benches taken by people chatting. There is an emptying of the public space."

3.2 Desired and enacted interventions of EGs

Based on the above statements, resilience process by EGs in L'Aquila is slowly shaping along these three years. Since the aftermath of the earthquake a permanent Citizen Assembly attempted to develop own ideas about emergency and recovery solutions. These solutions

"…have been elaborated and shared among citizens and laid open different options. However, we had a common goal: to avoid the spread of inhabitants after the emergency period in tents camps. We aimed to respect the historical peculiarity of L'Aquila and to maintain both the geographical and psychological continuity of inhabitants with their places. Therefore, we proposed to promptly implement more wooden buildings (the MAPs mentioned in the Analysis paragraph, N.o.A.) both close to the hamlets and to the city center. Furthermore, we propose to implement containers classified as A+, the highest standards of liveableness for these structures. These are earthquake- proof and they require small areas for the assembly and pitches of excavation, without large soil consumption".

Here it appears significant the proposal of the traditional approach to post-disaster temporary housing (Quarantelli, 1982 in Johnson, 2007): temporary shelter (tents camps), temporary housing (for L'Aquila, MAPs and containers A+), permanent housing (refurbishing or reconstruction of pre-existing buildings).

Regarding the villages around L'Aquila the resilience process is essentially based on three different interventions:

- reconstruction plans for some of the small historical centers of the villages around L'Aquila;
- construction of multifunctional center to regain a daily life in the struck villages;
- construction of multifunctional center supporting areas of CASE Project.

In these three cases, a strict relation exists between the reconstruction of the built environment and the restore of social aspects.

In the first case, EGs claim the physical reconstruction of historical centers is vital for their future, for the future of the village and for the community belonging. The resilience process has been exactly enacted to take responsibility about their place, and consequently about their future life.

"We absolutely want to come back in our neighbourhood, and for this goal we have necessarily to rebuild the historical center, even because is the place where we had our houses and usually met. We don't want to wait the slowness of Italian machine, we don't want to take the risk to spend 20 years to rebuild our place as well as the reconstruction for center of L'Aquila. Further, we want to come back together, at the same moment, in our houses. It is a nonsense coming back in different moments. For

this, we have planned to subdivide our historical center in five areas, assigning each of them to a building firm. Our goal is to come back in five years".

In the second case, EGs claim that in the post disaster period is relevant the emergence of a disorientation among grassroots, and that an intervention focused on *ad hoc* structures for the local social issues could lead to re-establish daily networking. In this way, a member of an EG declare:

"We deliberately are not focusing on housing reconstruction, because it is right the owners would personally decide about this. We think it is inopportune taking decisions instead of them……So, we pose our attention on public spaces and facilities concerning the community and not the individual. We wondered what would happen after the period in tents camps. Before the earthquake the social life of our neighbourhood took place in the main square and usually consisted in children playing football, women chatting on the benches and guys meeting in a room in the parish recreation center. After the earthquake our desires were to reestablish these forms of community life, even because people was disoriented. We decided to reevaluate or belonging to the place and to avoid the loose of our cultural roots. We found donors financing a multipurpose structure with a recreation centers for donors, a playground for children, a small auditorium with a library and a multimedia room…..In this way, we hope just to give the people some social spaces avoiding a strong emigration".

In the third case, the given reasons are identical, but the aim is to intervene both for grassroots of struck areas and for people moved on CASE Project areas. As stated in Calandra (2011) new social geography of these areas lead to an acceleration of community fragmentation and exacerbate individualized and atomized choice, whom EGs attempt to contrast through an own initiative. Regarding this, a member of an EG involved in this issue reported:

"Our aim is to realize a trait-d-union among our struck village and new CASE areas….The idea of a multifunctional center has been developed because we considered our current condition just as temporary, but this temporariness seems to stretch indefinitely. We were wondering about how integrate in our community people moved in CASE from the center of L'Aquila. This is not their place; people from the center know anyone and for them this condition is surely traumatic."

3.3 Taking relations with local institutions

The resilience process by EGs need institutional support in organizational, bureaucratic and technical issues. Nevertheless, difficulties in relations with institutions are relevant: missing or incorrect communication channels, lack of preparedness in solving problems in a quick and flexible way resulted as decisive in slowing this process. An interviewed states:

"Difficulties in communication with institutions exist. People have a blurred vision of post- earthquake administrative and bureaucratic machine. People rely mostly to technical staff as those can explain and solve the so-called "papers". This often creates a word-of-mouth, for which information are omitted, misrepresented or forgot.

Obviously, this happens because some people do not have such a background through whom you should filter information, and therefore real difficulties exist in understanding the current situation.

Another interviewed declares:

"There has been a great confusion because the institutions have never been able to relate with people in a satisfying way. When Civil Defense was responsible for emergency management (since 31/01/2010 decisional power passed to the Region Abruzzi President, N.o.A.) it was our first interlocutor. When local authorities became our referents, they really were just formally. People were so confused with so many leading figures but nobody gave us precise answers, often passing the buck. Also for our project we faced a long bureaucracy, every week going to municipal offices to understand what to do."

Furthermore, laconic is one commentary:

"I note really numerous difficulties interacting with the *politicians* (emphasis added). In town councils each politician has an own problem about which he barks, however citizens' problems seem to not exist, nobody cares about us."

4. Conclusions

This study considered disaster resilience *à la* Manyena (2006), as a process able to exploit human capacities facing a disaster. The resilience process has been analyzed from the standpoint of grassroots EGs in the Italian city of L'Aquila and, specifically, on how they have enacted initiatives aiming to satisfy their necessities reconstructing the city. Two main conclusions can be extrapolated.

The first is that, for L'Aquila case, EGs are born and have decided to take in action due the marginalization of some of their necessities in the institutional interventions. The neglect of their voices and the marginalization of a due attention both about social issues and built environment peculiarities motivate the grassroots to focus on these forgotten arguments. In this way several initiative took placed by EGs, particularly in restoring a sort of 'everyday life' that was impossible to maintain in new temporary housing areas. The second is that an objectification of resilience as a process provokes a shift in viewing post disaster period. This period is the most challenging and complex in disaster management (Zetter and Boano, 2010) and requires necessarily inclusive strategies to better restore urban environments. Such an inclusion could be better enacted considering the most vary capacities that grassroots have taking

responsibilities of their place. L'Aquila case shows that, in case of disaster, grassroots demands for involvement and participation as well as social spaces to share their ideas and their knowledge. The objectification of resilience as a process could help to activate more inclusive mechanism in post disaster management.

Furthermore, the use of a qualitative methodology allows to give voice to the victims of the disaster, that are usually marginalized in political and management discourse (Mercer *et al.,* 2008), and of whom instances are often underestimates in quantitative methodologies.

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