

Resilience: What does resilience mean and how does it affect how organisations work with people and communities?

Adrian Healy

Cardiff University

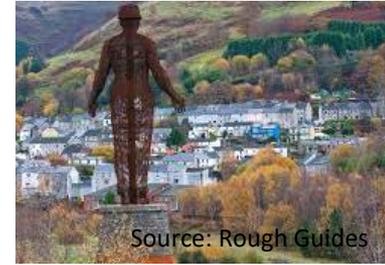
Healya2@cardiff.ac.uk

Various contexts

<http://africasacountry.com>



Wikipedia.com



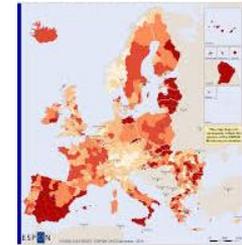
Source: Rough Guides

Economic Resilience of regions

Resilience of cities

Community resilience to economic shocks

Resilience of communities in the face of water crises



Coverage

- *What resilience means in different contexts – The environment, Economy and Community*
- *The difference between individual, collective and organisational resilience.*
- *The implications for the ways in which public sector organisations work in influencing choices and behaviour.*

Resilience

- Increasingly popular
- But used in a variety of ways
- Risk of being too 'fuzzy'?

UN Sustainable
Development Goals
Well-being and Future
Generations Act
Economic Action Plan

“A resilient Wales”

- A nation which maintains and enhances a **biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems** that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change)

- A prosperous Wales, a **resilient** Wales, a healthier Wales
- To build **resilient** communities
- A strong, **resilient** and diverse economy
- Building **resilience** to the impacts of climate change
- Improve the **resilience** of local businesses
- **Resilient** energy networks
- Develop the **resilience**, skills, enthusiasm and creativity (individuals) will need to adapt to the changing world of work
- Improve the **resilience** of our economy, communities and the environment

SDGs and a change in emphasis

- **Resilient Infrastructure**
- **Resilience of the poor**
- **Resilience of the vulnerable**
- **Resilient social systems**
- **Resilient eco-systems**
- Emphasis on anticipatory action in building resilience
- Reflects a broader shift away from the idea of *managing disasters* and towards the idea of *managing risk*

Introducing resilience

To bounce back

“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall”

Nelson Mandela

To return to the original state



Photo credit:
Blogspot.com

Adapting and transforming

- Not enough to (simply) withstand a shock or return to an original state, the challenge is to adapt to new circumstances.....to transform



Why?

- Because you need to be ready for the next shock
- Simply coping and surviving is not enough (asset depletion)

Resilience in different contexts

- Environmental resilience
 - ‘Building resilience to the impacts of climate change’
 - Mitigation and adaptation
 - Sustaining biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Economic resilience
 - Maintaining employment, incomes or GVA over time
 - Sustaining a diverse economy

Community Resilience

- Ability of communities to withstand shocks
- To anticipate risks and limit impacts
- To cope better themselves (reduce demands on others)
 - Seen as a positive or as abandonment?

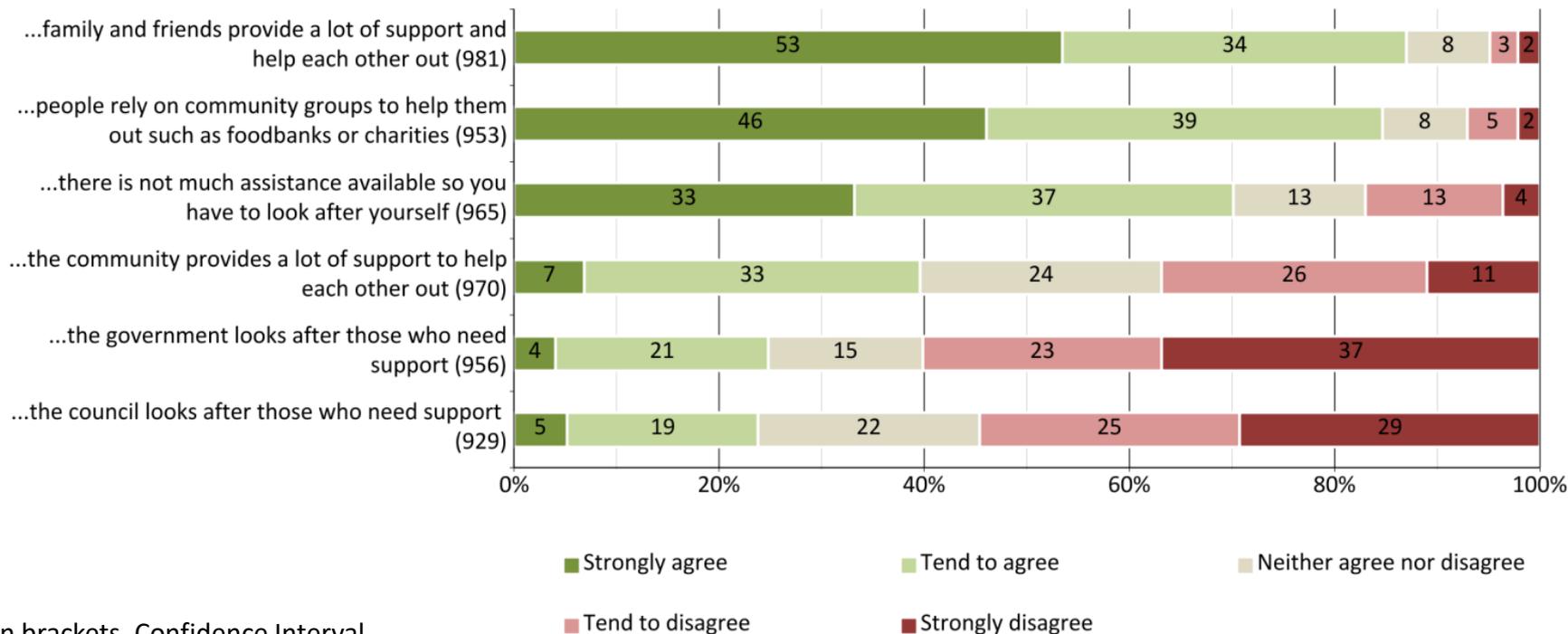
But here are some questions

Resilience of what to what.....

- Resilience for whom and where?
 - Are there trade-offs?
- Resilience by when?

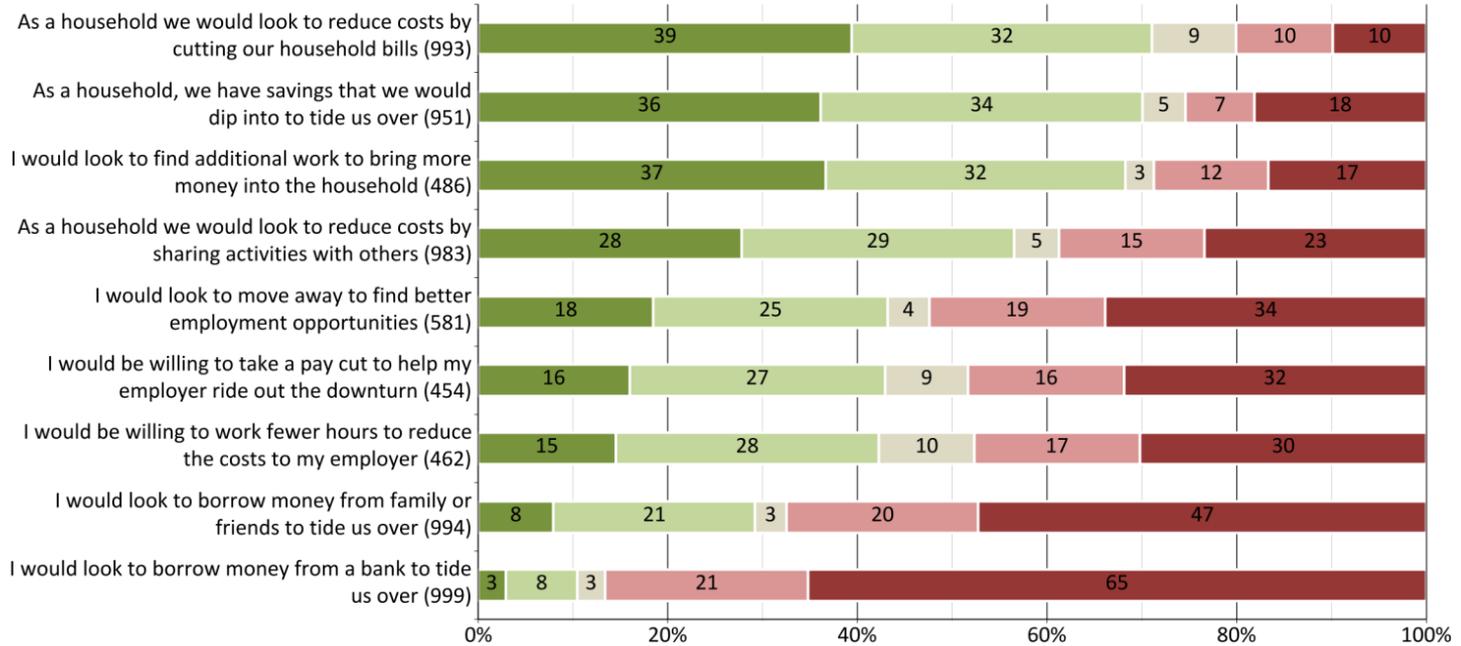
- Can we construct resilience?
 - Innate factors vs choices and behaviour
- Concepts of negotiated resilience?
- What do individuals feel about their own circumstances?
- Is resilience always good?

Who's there to help?



Base in brackets. Confidence Interval
±3% at 95% confidence

Coping strategies in the face of an (economic) shock



■ Very likely ■ Fairly likely ■ Neither likely nor unlikely
■ Fairly unlikely ■ Very unlikely

Base in brackets. Confidence Interval
±3% at 95% confidence

Differences between individual, collective and organisational resilience

Individual resilience

- Own resources, own choices
- Limited asset base
- Reaches a limit depending on capitals available
- Potential negative spillover effects

Collective resilience

- Collective resources, shared activities/responsibility, trust
- Greater asset base
- Social capital
- Distributional dimensions begin to emerge
- What scale are we speaking of?

and what of Organisations?

- The resilience **of** an organisation
 - Ability to respond to a shock/changing circumstances (adaptive capacity again)
 - Lessons from Great East Japan Earthquake
 - How does a Local Authority (for example) deal with a shock
 - Risks of unintended consequences (Cape Town Water Supply)
- Organisations and resilience
 - ie how do organisations support resilience of others

Implications for how public services work

- The role of public services
 - Coping strategies vs transformation
- Direct action vs enabling actions of others
 - Facilitators and enablers vs leaders?
- Collective actions towards shared goals
- Seeing/setting organisational goals in a wider context (wellbeing/sustainable livelihoods.....)
 - New metrics?

Grenfell Tower

“There’s no-one here to co-ordinate”

“There’s no-one giving us information”

“It’s just the charities. Where are the government officials, where are the council officials?”

All quotes from BBC (Rannard, G. and Eggert, N. 17 June 2017 London fire: Relative cites ‘lack of coordination’ in response)

New roles or old wine?

- Are we just adding the word resilient to what we already do....?
- What is different about what we're trying to achieve....?

There is still a long way to go to promote greater understanding of resilience as an outcome rather than as a set of activities or outputs. (ODI, 2016)

Resilience as outcomes

- Valuing diversity
- Supporting adaptive capacities
- Strengthening assets and capitals

- Challenging – as may not lead to the outcomes ‘we’ want