Engaging Citizens for Resilience: Media, Messaging and Relevance in Urban Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The media is an integral part of society and an indispensable tool that allows citizens to make informed decisions and participate in everyday life through the production and dissemination of objective and professional news. Using the flexible and multi-disciplinary stakeholder definition which defines resilience as " the ability of an urban system and all its constituent socio-ecological and socio-technical networks across temporal and spatial scales to maintain or rapidly return to desired functions in the face of disturbance, to adapt to change and to quickly transform systems that limit current or future adaptive capacity" (Meerow *et al*., 2016:39), this article assesses the relevance of media messaging on flooding in urban areas to promote urban resilience. Through a qualitative content analysis of selected news articles focusing on all urban areas in Zimbabwe, this article analyses how the stories on flooding helped promote urban resilience. This was done to recommend the best media that can be a useful tool in enhancing urban resilience in Zimbabwean urban settings. Results indicate that the media lacks a proper orientation on urban resilience in its reportage and needs capacitation.

Keywords: *urban, news, social responsibility, citizens, local authorities.*

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INTRODUCTION

Urban flooding has persisted and has become a source of violation of human rights every rainy season. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC), in 2017, noted with concern the violation of environmental and related rights due to the flooding. The Commission noted that the flooding pointed to inept management of the urban space by local authorities as a result of the flooding:

> The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) ……is further concerned by the flooding experienced in some parts of the country and in particular areas, such as Harare's Glen View, Mbare and Budiriro suburbs that have given rise to water-borne diseases and threatened the enjoyment of the right to health by the residents of those suburbs. These floods have also damaged and destroyed people's hard-earned assets (Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission; 23 January 2017).

The human rights body also raised concern that the flooding was violating Section 73 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the rights of citizens that provide for the right of citizens to an environment that is not harmful to their health and wellbeing. This environmental degradation also violated international law that guarantees the right to life and health, such as Article 24 of the African Charter on Human Rights that guarantees that people should have the right to a generally satisfactory environment that is favourable to their development.

The ZHRC also noted with concern the failure by local authorities to adhere to key provisions of the Urban Councils Act and the Environmental Management Act that compel them to construct and maintain proper sewer and drainage systems. In addition, the human rights body also blamed local authorities and land barons for unplanned allocations of residential stands which resulted in flooding and loss of property.

In the ZHRC recommendations, local authorities must adhere to the laws of the land and protect the rights of citizens concerning the environment and health, ensure holistic, continuous and effective service delivery to avert flooding. It also urged citizens to avoid activities that lead to

drainage blockage and forge an alliance with local authorities in dealing with flooding challenges.

The ZHRC highlighted issues that point to a lack of urban resilience preparedness on the part of local authorities. The media thus need to play a critical role in articulating such issues for desirable and appropriate action to be taken by all stakeholders as part of its messaging. The analysis of the media articles will be informed by the need to judge the extent that these articles promote the urban resilience agenda that the human rights body clearly articulated.

The responsibilities of journalism or media to society are aptly captured by McQuail (2013) who argues that society expects journalism to circulate perceivably accurate information on public matters to all, connect citizens to government and vice versa, support the routine work of the main institutions of society, respect the reigning values and norms of culture and society, serve national interests and to be available at times of crisis or emergency. Floods or flooding are national emergencies or crises that need proper management and to ensure the restoration of normalcy. The media is critical in the management of emergencies and their aftermath as part of the critical communication infrastructure through its normative roles of informing, educating, advocacy and watchdog roles. This article analyses the role that the media plays in dealing with flooding crises that unfold in Zimbabwe's urban settings from an urban resilience perspective. Urban resilience in this context is defined as the ability of a system or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effects of a hazard promptly and efficiently by preserving and restoring essential basic structures (UNISDR, 2011b).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This article is informed by some aspects of the social responsibility theory, McQuail's (2013) ideas about societal expectations from journalism and Kovac and Rosentiel's (2007) ideas on the primary purpose of journalism in society. Normatively, apart from being a business, media has added layers of social responsibilities. According to McQuail (2005), the social responsibility theory stipulates that the media has a responsibility to resolve conflicts through discussion and promote public opinion,

consumer action, private rights and important social interests. Some of the basic principles of the social responsibility theory are that the media must meet some of its obligations by setting high professional standards in terms of providing, truthful, accurate, objective and balanced information. Another key aspect of the theory is the principle that journalism must serve the interests of the people by providing a forum for discussion and act as watchdogs – playing an oversight role on powerful groups or institutions in society. In short, a socially responsible press should provide,

> a full, truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the days' events in a context that provides them meaning, serves as a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism, a common carrier of public expression, provide a representative picture of constituent groups in society and present and clarify goals and values of society (McQuail, 2010: 170).

The media must try to present and interpret news in ways that allow readers and audiences to fully comprehend issues. The media, through its reports must offer a full, truthful, impartial and comprehensive account of issues. However, social responsibility theory is a normative theory, an ideal expectation for the media but the media should be judged even by what it does and not what it says it will do (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). This is because media organisations often offer lofty ideals in their mission statements but do the opposite mostly in pursuit of profit or due to other ideological influences. Thus, the social responsibility theory is critical in the study of messaging in urban resilience that is part of its responsibilities in cases of emergencies, such as floods. The critical question that needs to be asked is how the media sets the urban resilience agenda in Zimbabwe and how its messaging is informed by resilience principles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban resilience is the:

> "ability of an urban system and all its constituent socio-ecological and socio-technical networks across temporal and spatial scales to maintain or rapidly return to desired functions in the face of disturbance, to adapt to change and to quickly transform systems that limit current or future adaptive capacity (Meerow *et al*., 2016:39).

This definition underlines the fact that urban resilience is dynamic and offers multiple pathways to resilience, such as persistence, transition and transformation. Another aspect that is clear from this definition is that resilience is an explicitly desirable state and that the urban system is complex and adaptive, composed of socio-technological networks that extend across multiple and spatial scales.

Climate change has become a challenge for many cities and resilience or fostering it has now become a multi-disciplinary study and important goal. Climate change has a compounding effect on the risk of floods from sea level rises and changing rainfall patterns and more storm surges. From 1990 to 2018, there has been a huge increase in urbanisation from 10% to 50% (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA, 2019). Resilience translates into a new paradigm for urbanisation and influences the management and understanding of urban hazards and planning.

Resilience has emerged as an attractive perspective concerning cities and is often theorised as a highly complex adaptive system (Batty, 2008; Godschalk, 2003), It also provides practical rules that guide stakeholder decisions to incorporate management of disasters and climate risks into urban investments. Another factor that makes resilience an important aspect is that although urban areas cover less than 3% of the earth's surface, they are responsible for an estimated 71% of global energy-related carbon emissions (International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2014). In future, it is anticipated that the major driver of the increasing damages and loss from disasters will be due to the growth of people and assets in harm's way mostly in urban areas (IPCC, 2012). By 2050, the United Nations estimates that 80% of the world's population will be living in urban areas (Jha and Bretch, 2011). As cities grapple with uncertainties and challenges, such as climate change, urban resilience has become an increasingly favoured concept (Leichenko, 2011).

According to Star and Griesemer (1989), resilience has a conceptual fuzziness that is beneficial in enabling it to function as a boundary object, a common object or concept that appeals to multiple social worlds – that,

therefore, fosters multi-disciplinary scientific collaboration. The meaning of resilience is thus malleable and that allows stakeholders to come together around a common terminology without requiring them to necessarily agree on an exact definition (Brand and Jax, 2007). However, this vagueness makes resilience difficult to operationalise or to develop generalisable indicators or metrics (Gunderson 2000; Pizzo, 2015; Vale, 2014). Resilience has, thus, been defined mainly from a disciplinary perspective (Table 1).

Table 1: Disciplinary Perspectives on Resilience

Social science	The capacity of a city to rebuild from destruction (Campanella, 2006:141)
Environmental sciences	The ability …. to withstand a wide array of shocks and stress (Leichenko, 2011:164)
Engineering	Encompasses the idea that towns and cities should be able to recover quickly from major and minor disasters (Lamond and Proverbs, 2009)
Agricultural and biological sciences	The general capacity and ability to withstand stress, survive, adapt and bounce back from a crisis or disaster and rapidly move on (Wagner and Breil, 2013: 14)

What is clear from all these definitions is the desirability of urban resilience or the ability of an ecological system, such as cities to continue functioning or persist when changed but not necessarily remain the same (Holling, 1996).

Climate change and urbanisation will continue to worsen the already unstable nature of cities.Urban resilience operates in a state of non–equilibrium whereby resilience reflects a system's capacity to maintain key functions but not necessarily return to a prior state. Resilience is thus viewed as a normative vision or agenda that cities should strive for (Weichselgartner and Kelman, 2014).

Resilience is viewed as a positive concept that contributes to sustainability (Leichenko, 2011). Urban resilience has the ability not only to maintain basic functions, but also to improve and prosper (Brown *et al.,* 2012).

However, this positive concept has been questioned if it is understood as the ability to return to normal after a disturbance (Companella, 2006; Coaffee, 2013; Lhome *et al.,* 2013). Questions that have been asked on returning to normal revolve around issues, such as "what if the original state is not desirable, such as poverty, dictatorships, fossil fuel dependence and these are desirable yet quite resilient (Scheffer, Foley and Walker, 2001; Gunderson and Holing, 2002;Wu and Wu, 2013).

In most cases, not all stakeholders will benefit equally from resilience-based actions and on the flip side, resilience may be used to promote a neo-liberal agenda or retain systematic inequality (Joseph, 2013; Friend and Moench, 2013). The key questions that social theorists also ask is, resilience for whom and for what to what (Davoudi *et al*., 2012; Vale, 2014). Power of inequality can also determine whose resilience is prioritised (Cote and Nightingale, 2011). There are three main pathways to urban resilience: persistence, transition and transformation (Chelleri, Waters, Olazabal and Minuccu, 2015; Chelleri and Olazabal, 2012; Elmquist 2014; Matyas and Pelling, 2014). This is based on the engineering principle that systems should resist disturbance, such as buildings being robust to withstand storm impacts and trying to maintain the status quo (Chelleri, 2012). Urban resilience also deals with adaptability – the flexibility that is necessary for confronting unexpected hazards (Carpenter and Brook, 2008). Resilience thus is a desirable state that decides what is desirable and for whom and it is shaped by who defies the agenda, whose resilience is being prioritised and who benefits or loses as a result.

A critical feature of a resilient city is the speed of action and recovery. Cities would prefer rapid re-establishing of critical functions following a disturbance, instead of experiencing long delays or a return to the pre-disaster stage and rapid evolution to a new stage of operations. Building resilience requires investments decisions that prioritise activities that offer alternatives that perform well in different scenarios and the need for longterm views to anticipate, defend against and build resilience in the face of future hazards.

Governments must protect citizens and, by putting resilience measures in place, governments will thus be seen as promoting a public good (Lall and Deichman, 2009). Cities and municipalities also need to ensure planning development that provides safe and affordable infrastructure and services, regulation of hazardous activities, encouraging and supporting households and community actions to reduce risk and putting in place effective disaster early warning preparedness and response systems. All these functions can be realised if the media plays its watchdog and developmental roles by ensuring that set standards are adhered to, highlighting where things are going wrong and warning of complacency.

The media also has a role in building social resilience – the capacity of a community or society to cope with and adapt to, disturbances or changes. This includes the ability of the community and society as a whole to absorb disturbances, self-organise, adjust to current and new stresses and build and increase capacity for learning and adaptation. It is also the role of the media to aid in fostering a resilient community that can respond positively to changes or stresses and despite them maintain its core functions as a community. Zimbabwe has never experienced a major disruption, such as an earthquake, that has tested its urban areas resilience. What has been very common in cities is the phenomenon of urban flooding that seem to pose challenges every rain season, stretching as far back as 2014. This article seeks to analyse whether or not the media is playing its key roles in fostering and advocating for resilience.

The Internal Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2017) identifies four critical awareness-raising activities for building urban resilience whose success requires the active role of the media as mass communicators. These activities are: public education and awareness, awareness of relevant rights and responsibilities, sensitisation efforts in the community and campaigning. These awareness-raising activities are important to tackle vulnerability if they place strategic attention on education and advocacy. The advocacy and education roles are core functions of the media too. The other roles that the media can play in urban resilience in the Zimbabwean setting will be through its ability to

set the agenda and effectively frame issues around risk reduction – reducing the exposure and vulnerability of the poor, risk mitigation – preparedness and capacity to respond and swiftly recover from its impacts. The media thus is expected to play a critical role in urban disaster resilience in Zimbabwe by playing advocacy and watchdog roles as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Resilience enhancement through media (Cutter, Burton and Emrich, 2010)

Infrastructural resilience	Community's capacity for response and recovery (sheltering capacity, healthcare facilities, vulnerability of buildings to hazards, critical infrastructure and the vulnerability of roads for evacuations and post-disaster supply lines).
Institutional resilience	Systems (governmental and non-governmental that administer a community).
Economic resilience	A community's economic diversity in such areas as employment, number of businesses and their ability to function after a disaster.
Social resilience	Demographic and social capital profile of a community (a sense of community and the ability of groups of citizens to adapt and a sense of attachment to a place)..

Zimbabwe has persistently grappled with urban flooding with no end in sight. What this article seeks to analyse is whether or not the media is playing its advocacy, watchdog and educative roles in building urban resilience in terms of flooding. While no studies have been conducted in this regard, the first step would be to analyse how the media has been messaging the issue and assess whether the reporting is informed by a deliberate attempt to foster resilience in any of the four categories outlined above (Infrastructure, institutional, economic and social). This will be done by conducting a qualitative content analysis on the framing of news articles on urban flooding as published by all media houses and that was accessible on a search on the internet by typing the words "urban flooding in Zimbabwe".

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative content analysis of purposefully selected articles from the internet searched using the words "urban flooding in Zimbabwe" was used. The research employed a purposive sampling method by selecting the most productive sample that answered the research problem (Silverman, 2000). The sample was made up of articles on urban flooding from the internet. The study employed the qualitative content analysis method to examine the selected news articles on urban flooding in Zimbabwe. Content analysis is a flexible method of analysing text data that can be used either as qualitative or quantitative (Cavanagh, 1997). Qualitative content analysis (QCA) is an approach of empirical, methodological analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules and step by step models without rash quantification (Mayring, 2000:2) QCA is unlike quantitative content analysis in that it is a dynamic form of analysis of verbal and visual data that is oriented towards summarising the informational contents of that data (Morgan, 1993; Altheide, 1996).

RESULTS

The QCA on media messaging on urban resilience was meant to assess whether or not the media covers issues on urban flooding in ways that show resilience awareness. The analysis was informed by three types of resilience; Infrastructure, Institutional, Economic and Social. The stories that were analysed covered either the whole country or two or more cities or specific cities. The stories were arrived at by searching on the internet.

Eight (8) stories published by different media houses were analysed to ascertain whether the reportage engages citizens and enhances urban resilience. The first story that was analysed is titled *"Urban flooding to drown Africa's aspirations" (The Herald,* 24 September 2020*)*. In terms of its messaging, the story has a picture of flooded urban houses. The publication of this picture is an important aspect of messaging as a picture can tell more than a thousand words. Readers will quickly understand the gravity of urban flooding by looking at the picture. Furthermore, the picture has a caption that reads "urban flooding has become a major problem in many parts of the world due to poor planning of cities and adverse effects of climate change". This message of urban flooding is a

global threat and mainly as a result of poor planning and climate change highlights the importance of urban resilience.

The story warns that flooding will aggravate the already precarious situation on the African continent as they battle the COVID-19 pandemic. To amplify the menace of flooding, the story argues that Sudan is the worst-hit country in Africa where 100 people have been killed and 500 000 displaced since 1988 and many more expected to be homeless. In terms of urban resilience, the story provides stern warnings that are meant to strengthen resilience planning that cities that face renewed devastating floods could find themselves submerged if proper planning in urban centres is neglected.

The story further accuses urban planners of failing to appreciate what may become of African cities if no action is taken to work towards eco-friendly planning in light of the adverse effects of climate change. The story argues that flooding is isolated in rural areas and concentrated in urban areas due to the failure of authorities to do proper planning. Some of the institutional resilience factors that the story identifies as causing flooding include illegal parcelling of land, change of land use and haphazard planning of residential hubs in most African countries. According to the story, the unprecedented demand for residential land in urban areas has led to poor planning by local authorities who allocate pockets of open spaces that are unsuitable for housing. In Zimbabwe, most cities find themselves under siege from floods due to the construction of houses on wetlands, riverbanks and near-water sources. Examples that are given in the story include Chitungwiza which is reported to have parcelled out land for houses with most of them built on drainage and sewer pipes, causing endless bursts. The story also reports that in 2017, Harare was hit by floods that caused power outages, road gridlocks, damages to buildings, vehicles and personal belongings.

The story *"Urban flooding to drown Africa's aspirations" (ibid.)* identifies the following resilient measures that urban areas in Zimbabwe can adopt:

- Urban planners to make cities habitable and eco-friendly through systematic planning;
- Stamping out corruption in land allocations, redesigning ditches, canals, culverts and building new ones in critical locations;
- Reallocation of all unplanned developments such as those which fall within the flood plain and street networks to safer places;
- Regularisation and construction of proper drainage structures in residential areas that are haphazardly planned to ensure water movement is not restrained; and
- Reallocation of residential stands that come in harm's way to higher and safer lands to avert major disasters.

Other stories, such as "*Floods ravage Harare as heavy rains pound Zimbabwe" (*4 February 2015*)* also identifies poor planning, lax enforcement of urban planning laws, damaged watersheds, illegally built structures, neglect of drainage systems and decisions by local authorities which are based on political expediency as the main causes of flooding. The story identifies institutional weaknesses in terms of resilience, such as poor funding of the Civil Protection Unit which results in humanitarian disasters. Other issues identified as weaknesses in terms of resilience include lack of preparation for the flooding, clogged drains and uncollected garbage, lack of routine replacements of screen nets and narrow V drains which are overwhelmed by water The Sunda Mail ("*The curse of city flood,"*24 January 2021*)*.

Stories, such *as "Massive flooding hits Gweru areas" (Chronicle,*12 January 2021*)"Bulawayo Floods Attributed To Unserviced Stands, Pre-Cast Walls" (New Zimbabwe.com,*9 December 2020*),"Government to act on Chitown flooding: Moyo" (NewsDay,*February 1 2021*),"Flooding impacts urban agriculture in Zimbabwe" (*11 January 2017*)and "Torrential rains in Zim inflict untold misery on residents" (Zimbabwe Independent,27* January 2017*)* echo the same sentiments outlined in the stories analysed above in terms of the causes of urban flooding as summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Causes of Urban Flooding and Link to Urban Resilience (Source: Summary derived from the selected analysed stories)

Resilience type	Resilience aspects highlighted	Resilience action suggested
Institutional	• Urban planners are failing to appreciate what may become of African cities if no action is taken to work towards eco-friendly planning, in light of the adverse effects of climate change. • illegal parcelling out of land, change of land use and haphazard planning of residential hubs in most African countries is causing flooding. • Chitungwiza municipality parcelling out land for houses on top of drain pipes, causing sewer and water systems to burst, thousands of houses built on wetlands. • In 2017, floods hit Harare causing power outages and road gridlock, buildings, vehicles and personal belongings were damaged in Borrowdale and Kuwadzana. • Damaged watersheds. • Poor funding of the Civil Protection Unit by the government, leading to humanitarian disasters. • Failure to follow simple engineering procedures. • People settled on wetlands by politicians during election periods. • Poor planning by local authorities. • The previous council allocated land and infills that were waterways and wetlands. • Unserviced stands are the most affected by the floods.	• Government must stop wanton distribution of land. • Haphazard planning in cities must be curbed. • Redesign ditches, canals, culverts (including building new ones). • Development of a Wetland Management Policy (to curb wetland abuse). • Restoration of sanity in local authorities and co-operation with vendors and general public.

Economic	• Huge influx to cities from rural areas in search of better opportunities leads to unprecedented demand for land to build houses and local institutions not planning for such developments. • Allocating land on pockets of open spaces that are unsuitable for housing. • Urban influx is being accommodated without strategy or plan in place. • Loss of livelihoods. • Damaged homes and businesses. • Food and medicines lost.	• Re-allocation of all unplanned developments (those who fall within the flood plain and street networks that cross flood plains in cities).
Social	• Loss of livelihoods. • Injuries and death to people. • Urban residents who rely on urban agriculture for sustenance will sink further into poverty and become food insecure as they have no alternatives in terms of food provision. • Desperate residents of the Riverside suburb tried to put barricades on the road to divert water from flowing into their homes. • Fear of electrocution. • Children may drown in huge pools in the backyards. • Floodwater brings all sorts of garbage (used diapers and sanitary pads).	• Conscientious people not to settle, cultivate or carry out human activities in areas that are deemed to be ecologically sensitive as it is unlawful. • Residents pile sandbags to prevent water from getting into theirhomes. • Water still gets into the homes.

Infrastructural	• Cities find themselves under siege from floods. • Houses built on wetlands, riverbanks and near water sources with no drainage systems. • Illegally built structures. • Neglect of drainage systems/no routine clearance. • The scale of floods on roads and homes increased (due to clogged drains and uncollected garbage). • Flashfloods in residential areas are due to settlements built on water routes. • CBD screening nets that protect litter from blocking drains get old and were never replaced or in some instances removed by vendors. • Runoff has nowhere to flow and ends up flooding residents, streets and homes. • Flash floods caused by poorly drained perimeter walls that do not have water drains.	• Urban planners must make cities habitable and eco-friendly through systematic planning. • Regularise and put proper drainage structures in residential areas that are haphazardly planned to ensure water movement is not restrained. • Decisively deal with corruption in local authorities • Need to widen V- drains that have been overwhelmed by large volumes of water in cities. • People living in low lying areas, wetlands, riverbanks, waterways, streams to immediately evacuate without further delay. • Open blocked drains. • Perimeter walls should have an opening for water into flow to drain systems. • Residents urged not to dispose of waste into the city's drainage systems. • Keep city drains clean • Consistent garbage collection. • Redesign drains. • Redo the pipework. • Drain clearing must be systematic.

The news stories do not show a deliberate bias towards building resilience, are cast in everyday reporting schedules and the effort may be accidental. Some of the stories contain elements of resilience that people go through in face of urban flooding, like a Chitungwiza woman who was quoted saying,

> It is a nightmare when the rains start pouring. We dash to switch off the electricity as all the rooms can be affected by the water that in some cases can rise to a metre, covering all the plugs we move our belongings to higher ground and there is so much labour involved. It is such a relief to see the sun again at least we sleep peacefully(https://www.theindependent.co.zw/ 2017/01/27/torrential-rains-zim-inflict-untold-misery-residents/).

The above sentiments highlight various ways in which residents cope with urban flooding and in a sense, the media helps to highlight some of these resilient measures and at the same time expose the ineptitude of local authorities in dealing with urban flooding. What is also clear is that as part of its news values – reporting on humanitarian issues and disasters, the media may champion urban resilience and the economic losses that citizens incur due to poor service delivery by the local authorities. By bringing people's daily struggles in terms of urban flooding, the media set the agenda for action by responsible authorities who should be vigilant in enhancing resilience. The media also managed to expose the failed engineering by urban authorities, such as Chitungwiza, where it is reported that efforts by Chitungwiza Town Council and China Geo-Engineering to rehabilitate the sewage system made things worse as it destroyed what was left of the drainage system. As one of the residents pointed, local authorities are failing in building resilient infrastructure,

> We are surrounded by floods both at front and back of our yards. We are just caught in between and there is nothing the council does. We live in the same street with a council engineer and he is also putting sandbags to prevent flooding (https://www.theindependent.co.zw /2017/01/ 27/torrential-rains-zim-inflict-untold-misery-residents/)

What the above sentiments reveal is the dire situation that residents find themselves in and are stuck in resilient systems characterised by poor service delivery and corruption. What the media has done here is to expose the shortcomings of local authorities, including providing solutions.

DISCUSSION

The media has a role to educate and inform. This entails that the media be an important part of building urban resilience. The question is how can the media build this resilience? The analysis of the news articles on urban flooding has revealed that, indeed, the media is playing an indispensable part in building urban resilience through coverage of the flooding issues.*[What the results also point to is the fact that the way the media is reporting ranges from the mere announcement in the traditional way of writing news and most cases the news whether it is hard news or in-depth writing, the focus is not mainstreamed consciously to enhance resilience.]*(revisit) The main framing of the stories borders more on fault finding and blame game although there are suggestions or reports on how the situation can be improved. Media reportage on the flooding in Gweru was the most informative in that the actual resilience messaging was conveyed, such as:

- The measures that were being put in place to avoid flooding;
- Engagement of workers to clear blocked storm drains;
- Set targets for drain clearing;
- Residents are given contact details and places to evacuate to; and
- Warnings to residents to be cautious during the rainy season.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What has emerged from the qualitative content analysis of the stories on urban flooding point to a scenario where the messaging on resilience is not specifically mainstreamed as the reports are incidental and follow basic news reporting guidelines. What, therefore, becomes evident is that in most of the stories, the actual resilience actions are not prioritised and the stories do not go beyond reporting the disasters. There is no follow-up on what the citizens and the urban authorities do to ensure that the situation goes back to where it was or how it gets transformed by the new circumstances according to various definitions of resilience. The stories did not satisfy the basic tenets of resilience, such 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'. The media messaging reported only on what went wrong and what needs to be done, but did not show the actual resilience of the cities. All stories analysed in this article are framed from a name-

and-shame perspective where they seek to find who is to blame for the flooding, although they sometimes proffer solutions. It might also be possible that media practitioners may have little or no orientation on their roles in terms of urban resilience or the understanding of the term and practice itself. This, therefore, calls for pro-active and deliberate efforts on those who advocate for effective messaging to capacitate and focus the media practitioners to the desired ends.

Media messaging remains a critical factor in ensuring urban resilience by playing the watchdog and advocacy roles. In light of the shortcomings of the media reportage on urban resilience and the general lack of a clear bias towards it, the following recommendations are made:

- Deliberate capacitation of media practitioners on urban resilience and the roles they must play;
- Capacity-building workshops for media editors who make editorial decisions on which stories and how they are covered;
- Capacitate municipal reporters on urban resilience and the need to mainstream it in their everyday reporting;
- Develop a media messaging toolkit and resources for media practitioners; and
- Develop mechanisms for monitoring cities resilience procedures and processes.

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