Philanthropic Organisations and the Global Circulation of Urban Resilience Practices – The Case of 100 Resilient Cities

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Abstract

The policy rhetoric of urban resilience has spread rapidly across the globe in recent years, including the scholarly debate and networks of globally oriented practitioners. Despite its success, consensus regarding its theoretical understanding and operationalization into strategies, policies, and actions is still far-off. Particularly successful in globally circulating urban resilience thinking was the 100 Resilient Cities initiative (100RC hereafter). The initiative was promoted by the Rockefeller Foundation (RF hereafter) through a significant deployment of financial and organizational means. During its existence between 2013 and 2019, 100RC was joined by cities that differed significantly in size, institutional capacities, and available resources to design and implement urban resilience strategies while putting in place "Chief Resilience Officers" within their operations. The initiative's focus was on resilience, seen as a process of overarching change in governance and institutional practices to be achieved through a highly pre-designed process involving private partners – particularly globally operating

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consultancies – and standardized procedures. The chapter looks at the trajectory of the initiative locating it in the context of debates regarding global urban governance, transnational municipal networks, and policy mobilities. It is argued that the nature of the initiative signaled a relevant change in the nature, level of ambition, and investment in global urban governance projects and practices, and also that such highly predesigned approaches have clear limits once they encounter the highly variegated and porous realities of the different localities involved.

1   Contested, Fuzzy but Highly Mobile: The Globalization of the Urban Resilience Discourse

The concept of and discourse on resilience, particularly urban resilience, has spread rapidly across academic and policymaking circles. The new buzzword has penetrated the jargon of policy areas such as international relations, energy, trade, climate change, and, ultimately, urban policymaking. This increasing diffusion has come hand in hand with a redefinition and pluralization of its initial understandings. More in particular, in mainstream discourses, there has been a shift from an "engineering" or "bounce-back" approach to an "evolutionary" or "bounce-forward" one, which embraces uncertainty, transformation, and the idea of multiple, complex equilibria (Baravikova et al. 2021). This has come hand in hand with a growing emphasis on interdependencies between socio-ecological and socio-technical systems (Coppola 2016) and the need to understand urban resilience as a highly cross-sectoral, governance-minded ambitious policy approach (Meerow et al. 2016; Sharifi et al. 2017; Coaffee et al. 2018; Baravikova et al. 2021). In so doing, urban resilience has been increasingly understood as a quality of the models of collective action to be achieved in normative terms by actors in local governance systems (Coppola et al. 2020). However, despite this reframing and widening of its initial conceptualizations, the concept appears to be still heavily contested from a variety of perspectives.

The success of urban resilience as new policy rhetoric is to be explained in the context of broader structural and cultural changes at a planetary scale. Stronger perceptions of the complexity of urban societies and the exogenous and endogenous factors that preside over their transformation make concepts and discourses attempting to grasp such complexity increasingly successful (Coppola 2019). Furthermore, the growing planetary interdependence and uncertainty associated with the advent of a "global risk society" (Beck 2012) have turned urban regions into the points of maximum exposure to risks of different nature, impact, and levels of calculability. In this context, the design of new models of "anticipatory" and "far-sighted" governance that assume disorder as an enabling condition for public action

promoting principles of adaptability and flexibility has become a global and local urgency (Pellizzoni 2011; Coppola 2016). In the perspective of the so-called "neoliberalisation of nature" (Pellizzoni 2011), risks become politically and technically manageable through innovations such as market-based solutions and voluntary policy tools, which become opportunities for generating public and private benefits.

The spread and development of so-called urban resilience strategies, actions, and tools are of great importance in this regard. However, despite the growing efforts of scholars and international practitioners, the actual operationalization of urban resilience remains a largely unresolved issue (Chelleri et al. 2015; Meerow et al. 2016; Baravikova et al. 2021). The way urban resilience is operationalized – how it is defined and measured and through which kinds of frameworks – shapes how it is integrated into local policymaking processes, the policy goals and actions associated with it, and their implementation's distributive profiles. By setting up platforms for practices' circulation and exchange and advancing frameworks and measurement strategies, international and transnational organizations are increasingly playing an important role. Among them, so-called transnational municipal networks (or TMN) have proven to be particularly influential. Although their exact definition has become contested in recent years (Haupt and Coppola 2019), criteria for defining a network as a TMN traditionally include being a formal organization (Kern and Bulkeley 2009; Busch 2015; Haupt and Coppola 2019); to dispose of an organism responsible for decision-making (Kern and Bulkeley 2009; Haupt and Coppola 2019); and to be based on the membership of cities (Kern and Bulkeley 2009; Busch 2015; Haupt and Coppola 2019). TMN with a distinct focus on climate governance can be defined as transnational municipal climate networks (Busch et al. 2018; Gesing 2018; Haupt and Coppola 2019). However, the actual framing of climate engagement can vary from TMN to TMN. This mainly depends on the importance of mitigation, adaptation, and other issues and on the relation to broader framings such as climate resilience (Haupt and Coppola 2019).

The rise of TMN has to be also understood in the context of broader processes of state restructuring. In recent decades, deep transformations of statehood and capitalism regulation have resulted in fundamental rescaling processes that have turned cities and regions into "strategic subnational spaces" (Brenner 2004: 15). Resulting from these processes are complex, highly interpenetrated scalar arrangements that can be seen as instances of the rise of the "glocal" and as "new assemblages of territory, authority and rights" (Sassen 2008). Such assemblages have been characterized by the appearance of an array of nonstate actors that, also through the development of private authority and global law, have led to an alteration of the "historically produced distinction between the public and private domains" (Sassen 2008).

In the case of the European Union (EU), the redefinition of the powers of cities and regions has played a strategic role in shaping the EU multilevel governance system, resulting in broader responsibilities in spatial planning and development policy for them (Hooghe and Marks 2001; Kern 2019). Cities have also become actors in structuring new global governance arenas (Hewson and Sinclair 1999; Rosenau 2009), and more specifically, global urban governance arenas. In short, global urban

governance thematizes the growing importance of local policymakers on the global level (Sassen 2004; Barber 2013; Acuto 2020). More in particular, cities have become essential players in transnational exchanges that can be characterized as a form of governance with "regular interactions across national boundaries when at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an international organisation" (Risse-Kappen 2009: 3). Looking at the emerging issue of climate change and moving away from traditional, state-centered models of global governance, scholars have more and more underlined that most local governments are actually "motivated by internal goals and are taking independent action to advance their climate agendas" (Anguelovski and Carmin 2011: 169). Cities have seen their role accrued in climate diplomacy (Bulkeley et al. 2012; Bulkeley and Castán Broto 2013) and thus combining, sometimes in a conflictual way, approaches of nation-states and supranational or international organizations. This raises questions about the strategic positioning of cities to better address a variety of global crises and challenges (Sassen 2004; Glaeser 2011; Barber 2013).

In this context, TMNs can also be understood as a strategic tool in the making of urban policy mobilities, a critical resource in global urban governance (McCann 2011; Peck and Theodore 2010; Baker and Temenos 2015). Going beyond previous and more state-centered concepts of policy transfer (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; James and Lodge 2003), scholars have moved to enquire into a variety of ways in which policies travel between different scales and localities (see McCann 2011; McCann and Ward 2012; Crivello 2015; Baker and Temenos 2015). The literature on urban policy mobilities emphasizes the mobile and changeable character of policies, assuming that "policies rarely travel as complete 'packages,' and instead move 'as selective discourses, inchoate ideas, and synthesised model' arriving 'not as replicas but as policies already-in-transformation'" (Peck and Theodore 2010: 170). TMN are not the only tools through which such circulation by transformation can happen, but they are among the most relevant ones as they act as platforms for the sharing and dissemination of knowledge and policies among their member cities (Kern and Bulkeley 2009; Feldman 2012; Fenton and Busch 2016; Mejía-Dugand et al. 2016; Haupt et al. 2020). This happens in both informal and formal ways through processes of policy learning (Dunlop and Radaelli 2013) or city-to-city learning (Fisher 2014; Haupt 2019), which has become one of the major rationales of cities' participation and support to networks (Haupt et al. 2020).

The success of TMN is also relevant for the shaping of local governance systems, particularly for the spread of discourses and practices of so-called network governance (Sørensen 2002; Davies 2012; Khan 2013; Nochta and Skelcher 2020). Governance scholars have paid great attention to forms of looser governance, with diverse sets of actors, such as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or civil society (Sørensen 2002; Pierre and Peters 2000; Bogason and Musso 2006), private enterprises and knowledge institutions (Haupt and Coppola 2019), and with a more decentered role of the state. Critical readings of these developments have underlined how this variety of actors includes only a small number of democratically legitimized officials. This has raised concerns about a form of urban policymaking that is increasingly influenced by nonelected elites (Khan 2013; Montero 2017; Haupt

2021), and how the flattening of power imbalances and the decline of the central role of the state promised by so-called post-traditionalist readings of network governance did not indeed materialize (Davies 2012). By promoting network governance-based policymaking, which is typical of urban regions in the Global North (Bansard et al. 2017; Hsu et al. 2018), and by directly pluralizing the set of actors involved in local policymaking through mechanisms of urban policy mobilities (Fisher 2014; Haupt et al. 2020), TMN have become a significant force also in local governance dynamics.

While contributing to the widening of actors and the multilevel restructuring of local governance systems, TMN themselves have broadened the range of actors involved in their operations. From their initial focus on local, regional, and national policymakers, government agencies, and NGOs (Feldman 2012; Haupt and Coppola 2019), some have more and more involved the private sector in the form of companies, consultancies, and knowledge providers (Lidskog and Elander 2010; Mejía-Dugand et al. 2016, Haupt and Coppola 2019; Nielsen and Papin 2021). The development of urban resilience thinking as an emerging object within some TMN has further advanced a network governance agenda. In particular, the 100RC initiative has ostensibly focused on local institutional change and on new ways to conceive and operate urban policymaking as crucial strategic goals (Papin 2019; Coppola et al. 2020; Nielsen and Papin 2021).

Scholars working on the implementation of the urban resilience discourse have repeatedly questioned the rationals, processes, and actors involved in the making of related strategies and tools (Evans 2011; Davoudi et al. 2012; Leitner et al. 2018; Meerow and Newell 2019). It is essential, in this perspective, to study how policies that circulate within TMN are concretely translated into local policies, how local factors contribute in determining outcomes, and how network organizations, and the urban policy mobilities they promote and facilitate, adjust to local differences (Coppola et al. 2020). This is why the design, implementation, and dismissal of 100RC are of great importance for scholars of urban policy mobilities, global urban governance, and urban resilience. Indeed, despite a growing body of literature and case studies on 100RC, relatively little attention has been devoted to its significance in global urban governance and urban policy mobilities. Nevertheless, such a perspective is needed to sharpen our understanding of increasingly influential global initiatives such as 100RC and the various (private) partners involved.

2   A Highly Designed Global Urban Governance Project: The Origins, Ambitions, and Demise of the 100 Resilient Cities Initiative

100RC was set up in 2013 and has existed until the year 2019. The initiator and donor of 100 Resilient Cities, the New York City-based Rockefeller Foundation (RF henceforth), has a long record of involvement in urban issues. More specifically, the engagement with climate resilience issues dates back to Judith Rodin's presidency (2005–2017). Rodin was part of a committee for the post-Sandy recovery in

New York state (Rodin n.d.) and authored "The Resilience Dividend" (Rodin 2014), a book promoting urban resilience as a new paradigm for urban policymaking. Before launching 100RC in 2013, RF had already established another TMN with a resilience focus in 2008: the Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN). However, other than 100RC, ACCCRN was not a global TMN and had only 12 member cities in South and Southeast Asia (Haupt and Coppola 2019).

The establishment of 100RC was the outcome of an intensive phase of design. In 2013, RF was assisted by the consultancy McKinsey and Company's to define the most suitable governance form for the management of the new program (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018). The establishment of a new organization and not the incorporation of a new initiative in existing RF's structures was finally seen as an appealing solution for its better ability to "recruit and mobilise staff with skills and breadth necessary for evolving work" (. . .); to "maintain entrepreneurial flexibility and risk tolerance associated with urban interventions" (. . .); to "deploy intensive resources to cities"; (. . .) and to "manage relationships across such a broad and geographically diffused population of cities" (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018: 94). While not all individual components of the initiative were utterly novel, what was new was 100RC's focus on pioneering a new all-encompassing approach aimed at a broad institutional change (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018) as both precondition and outcome of urban resilience. Urban resilience was defined as the ability to "increase the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience" (RCN n.d.). And it was seen as the new theoretical paradigm able to unleash a profound reform of policymaking and governance processes aligning cities with the needs and demands posed by an increasingly turbulent and risky reality. Following such positioning, 100RC had by far the broadest understanding of resilience of all TMN. While other TMNs focus on specific aspects of resilience such as climate or disaster resilience, 100RC aimed at covering a whole spectrum of realms that included social, economic, or physical resilience (Haupt and Coppola 2019).

As it attempted "to simultaneously alter cities' institutional structure and create a marketplace and professional network of resilience practitioners" (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018: 86), 100RC had to embark on a variety of actions engaging multiple actors at multiple scales. The critical task of a 100RC member city was developing and implementing a resilience strategy (Leitner et al. 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019; Coppola et al. 2020; Nielsen and Papin 2021; Moloney and Doyon 2021). Therefore, 100RC financed each participating city the position of a Chief Resilience Officer (CRO). In the understanding of 100RC, a CRO had to be a close advisor to the city mayor and an advocate for the mainstreaming of resilience within the city administration (Coppola et al. 2020; Haupt et al. 2020). At the same time, CROs would have contributed to creating a global community of practice on urban resilience, acting as "resilience champions" and living examples of a different way to frame urban problems and govern cities. The encounter between evolving city needs and the motives of private providers, orchestrated by the initiative's operations, would have pushed for the creation of an innovative marketplace of services and

products fueling change in objects and processes of city procurements. The combination of all these elements and the multiple feedbacks it would have determined were referred to as 100RC's "theory of change" (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018).

Ways 100RC would supervise the cities' strategy-making process were complex and involved dedicated staff from the regional and central offices and a strategic partner – usually a consulting firm or NGO – hired by the initiative (Haupt and Coppola 2019; Coppola et al. 2020). With these forms of support and based on established, highly defined procedures, cities would move step-by-step toward designing an urban resilience strategy. Such steps included the identification of acute shocks and chronic stresses, as well as their impact on critical assets, the gatherings of perceptions of local stakeholders on cities' overall resilience, and then the identification of some focus areas for the development of the strategy (Leitner et al. 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019; Coppola et al. 2020). The inputs of these activities would be qualitative – through desk research, workshops, and other forms of stakeholder engagement – and at times also of quantitative nature (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018).

Of great importance in the procedural engineering of the strategy-making processes was also the use across the Network of standardized frameworks and tools to conduct analysis, prioritization, and assessment exercises while gathering their outcomes. These tools were developed in collaboration with program partners – particularly globally operating consultancies – and cities and were understood as a "specific methodology or process, that is replicable and scalable, to urban resilience-specific concepts or theories to obtain a defined outcome" (RCN n.d.). The best known and most widespread among those tools was the "Urban Resilience Framework" developed by the consultancy firm Arup at the request of the RF (da Silva et al. 2010). This tool had to be applied by all member cities during the strategy-making process, and its main goals were to identify local perceptions of the city's resilience status and the needs and priority areas for increasing city resilience (Coppola et al. 2020). Tools were added and twisted along the way and included the following: the "Perception Assessment Tool" aimed at gathering mentioned stakeholders' perceptions, the "City Resilience Assets & Risks Tool" aimed at assessing the exposure and vulnerability of critical assets to certain shocks and stresses in the early phase of strategy-making, the "City Resilience Index" aimed at identifying strengths and weaknesses of cities and monitoring implementation progress; the "Resilience Screen" aimed at calculating and assessing the resilience value of specific infrastructure projects; or the "Resilience Lens" aimed at screening projects and city budgets based on the resilience strategy priorities and goals (Resilience Tools n.d.).

The focus on processes and institutionalization also involved a stakeholder engagement dimension. However, its depth and relevance widely varied across member cities also depending on local legacies and conditions (Leitner et al. 2018; Martín and McTarnaghan 2018; Coppola et al. 2020; Roberts et al. 2020). Stakeholder engagement was deemed necessary in all strategy phases, from gathering local perceptions to designing strategic actions to be assigned to certain actors in the more comprehensive local governance system. In 100RC's "theory of change,"

stakeholder engagement was also declared necessary to include specific vulnerable social groups and communities, although the actual degree of involvement of such groups in local strategy-making processes was equally very variable (Leitner et al. 2018; Martín and McTarnaghan 2018; Coppola et al. 2020). Implementation was theorized to be built around solid collaborations between a variety of actors. In this context, a steering committee composed of key local brokers was seen as an essential tool for the success of the strategy implementation (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018).

Overall, critics have argued that the very predetermined and rather normative resilience framework has considerably limited local participation opportunities (Leitner et al. 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019). For the city of Jakarta, Leitner et al. (2018: 1282) have found that "the participatory element is dictated from above, in terms of both who gets to participate and how." Also, for cities belonging to the same national context, authors have found diverse patterns of stakeholder engagement and also changing over time and across political transitions (Coppola 2019).

Local variations in this as in other regards were no surprise. 100RC was a rather diverse and heterogeneous TMN, although with a striking overrepresentation of US cities (24) (see Fig. 1). In terms of size, the member cities were quite diverse as they included not only megacities such as Jakarta, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, or Lagos, and strongly internationalized global cities such as New York, London, Paris, Seoul, Singapore, or Sydney, but also small cities such as Boulder (Colorado), Norfolk (Virginia), and smaller towns such as Vejle (Denmark), Ramallah (Palestinian Territories), or Byblos (Lebanon). 100RC maintained a headquarters in New York City and three regional offices in London, Mexico City, and Singapore. Compared to most other TMN, 100RC employed a large staff, particularly in relation to the relatively small number of member cities (Haupt and Coppola 2019).

While several scholars have classified 100RC as a TMN (Haupt and Coppola 2019; Papin 2019; Coppola et al. 2020; Haupt et al. 2020; Nielsen and Papin 2021), the organization differed significantly from other networks. To join 100RC,

Fig. 1 100RC member-cities. (Source: https://resilientcitiesnetwork.org/network/)

interested cities had to go through a competitive multistage application process with procedures slightly changing across the three successive application rounds (2013, 2014 and 2016) (Papin 2019; Coppola et al. 2020). In the second round, 100RC also started conducting interviews with city mayors to receive a top-level commitment to the active involvement in the network activities, support strategy-making, and institutionalization of resilience (Coppola et al. 2020). In contrast to these practices, most other TMN are generally open to all cities that are willing to join (Kern and Bulkeley 2009; Haupt and Coppola 2019), although they variably imply that cities have to take specific actions such as the adoption of a climate mitigation strategy or a city council resolution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Haupt 2018; Haupt and Coppola 2019). Moreover, most established TMN are rather public-governance focused, whereas 100RC was established and managed by a philanthropic organization with an outspoken interest in public-private partnerships (Leitner et al. 2018; Haupt and Coppola 2019; Papin 2019; Haupt et al. 2020; Nielsen and Papin 2021). The organizational structure of 100RC can be considered hierarchical and – despite frequent assertions to the contrary – relatively top-down and normative. Support and direction were given to the member cities and mentioned strategic partners from the headquarters in New York and the regional offices in Mexico City, London, and Singapore. The internal governance of 100RC was mainly steered by the RF, 100RC-executives, and a so-called City Leader Advisory Committee consisting of nine city chief executives from the member cities.

Furthermore, 100RC connected its members to a platform of private partners, including large corporations, consultancies, NGOs, and research institutions. Such entities were supposed to support cities in identifying innovative ways to pursue their goals while offering them limited services on a probono basis (Coppola et al. 2020). The role of corporations – some of them being large multinational companies – was met with criticism by scholars (Leitner et al. 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019). More specifically, philanthropic understandings of urban policymaking emerging from the program were criticized for placing too much weight on private partners and favoring them over public partners and citizen initiatives (Leitner et al. 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019).

Allegedly, in 2018 partners had been in the number of nearly 130 with a pledge of "over US$200 million in tools and services" with the establishment of "over 200 collaborations between these partners and member cities, totalling nearly US$12.5 million in solutions and services delivered to 100RC cities" (100RC 2019: 119). As mentioned, the goal of this private partner platform was double-sided. On the one hand, it was to provide private providers with a deeper understanding of cities' needs and, on the other, to support strategy implementation. However, the effectiveness of such partnerships was identified as one of the most relevant shortcomings in the initiative as a 2018 program assessment found little evidence of changes in the business practices of the entities involved and in cities' procurement practices (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018). Overall, not many cities had finalized partnerships with these entities, and confusion regarding the nature and terms of the potential relationship was voiced by many city representatives (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018). Moreover, several city case studies found mixed outcomes

in this regard, also based on different local legacies and practices of public-private partnership and procurement processes (Leitner et al. 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019; Coppola et al. 2020; Roberts et al. 2020; Moloney and Doyon 2021).

Regarding implementation, available data – provided mainly by 100RC – revolve around the number of strategies approved by the end of the program and the number of actions and actors involved (100RC 2019). Other studies underlined that actions that could be characterized as advocacy were quantitatively as important as investment in capital projects (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018). With the shift toward implementation, 100RC increased its engagement on funding and financing issues. A so-called "global resilience finance" team was established in collaboration with the RF and finance and insurance companies to identify innovative approaches to funding resilience-oriented critical infrastructures and insurance products (100RC 2018). This workstream aimed to build evidence and metrics to define a new "market standard for resilience infrastructure and demonstrate the value of the resilience dividend and mobilise private sector" in the construction of resilient infrastructures (100RC 2018).

Essential for the overall assessment of the initiative against its rationales and the critical discussion in the context of the urban policy mobilities literature, was the degree of institutionalization of 100RCs resilience thinking and operations within city administrations. An external assessment found consistent levels of success on both measures (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018). More in particular, based on 100RC data, in 2019, 78% of cities continued to fund the CRO positions after the 2-year grant period ended, and 89 CRO positions were active in cities, this despite 72 mayoral transitions having taken place in 62 of those cities (100RC 2019). Then again, city case studies found variable levels of institutionalization also in similar contexts (Coppola et al. 2020; Croese et al. 2020; Roberts et al. 2020).

In March 2019, the President of the RF announced the termination of funding to the program. According to media sources, this was due to cost reasons and changing priorities of the foundation set by its new leadership (Green 2019). The program – employing roughly 90 people at its closure – had grown costly over time in relation to expanding operative costs determined by the widening of the number of cities involved (Bliss 2019). Indeed, by 2019 the RF had spent around 164 million US dollars for the operation of 100RC (Bliss 2019; Green 2019). At the same time, the RF's focus allegedly shifted toward achieving "measurable results for vulnerable groups" (Bliss 2019), making the results of a program focusing on urban resilience in the form of institutional change hard to measure in that perspective. To most observers, RF's decision came as a surprise (Bliss 2019). However, the RF provided seed funding for the starting of two new projects promoted by 100RC employees: the Resilient Cities Catalyst (RCC henceforth) and the Resilient Cities Network (RCN henceforth) (Musulin 2020; Crowe 2021).

RCC was launched by former 100RC president Michael Berkowitz and former RF president Judith Rodin, with the financial support of companies such as Facebook and Hilton (Carey 2020). Designed as a consultancy, RCC planned to offer fee-based services focusing on implementing resilience measures (Carey 2020). RCN is much closer to the original 100RC Network than RCC. Indeed, differently from RCC, the

RCN presented itself as a network of cities, essentially the cities that were members of 100RC plus a limited number of new cities (RCN n.d.). Nevertheless, contrary to 100RC, the new Network would come with a stronger emphasis on specific local particularities of each city instead of a "one-size-fits-all approach to urban resilience" (Musulin 2020), as highlighted by the managing director of RCN, Eugene Zapata. Still, not differently from 100RC, to be part of RCN, cities need to employ a CRO. RCN includes 83 original 100RC-CROs – the majority of which are paid by the member cities – plus a few additional CROs selected by the cities that had not been part of 100RC (RCN n.d.). Moreover, RCN works together with a series of partners that, not differently from 100RC, are supposed to collaborate with cities on designing and implementing policy solutions (RCN n.d.).

RCN's activities are based on four principles: (i) being city-led, (ii) stimulating direct participation of cities through their CROs and including them into the governance of the Network, (iii) focusing on the direct impact on city dwellers, and iv) being somewhat flexible to regional and local diversity (RCN n.d.). RCN announced new partnerships, including the Development Bank of Latin America, Shell City Solutions, the multinational consulting and engineering company WOOD Plc, and the philanthropic CITI Foundation (RCN n.d.). These partnerships should enable collaborations on topics such as resilient energy, mobility, and infrastructure (RCN n.d.). In terms of governance, RCN has saved some of the elements of 100RC, although somehow also revised them accordingly to the mentioned principles. A global steering committee is now in place, involving ten CROs representing the five regions of the Network: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America (each region holds two seats). Furthermore, a board of directors has been put in place. The current chairman is the mayor of Houston, a former 100RC-member city. The board consists of seven members, including city executives, corporations, NGOs, and international organizations. These are, namely, the cities of Sydney and Rotterdam, Cemex (a private equity firm), RMS (a risk management firm), the Asian Venture Philanthropy Network, and the World Bank (RCN n.d.). Following a model already set up during 100RC-times, the Network has also activated so-called communities of cities, i.e., thematic groups sharing the same resilience challenge and/or engaged in similar policies and practices. Moreover, an alumni network was established that includes all former CROs. Staff is currently made of roughly 20 members (RCN n.d.). Some of the features of RCN seem to represent a response to issues that emerged during the existence of 100RC, which were also mentioned in official evaluation reports. These include the limited tailoring of the program to vast local and regional differences (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018) and the limited agency of cities in the workings of the network organization. This latter issue, in particular, put into question if 100RC was to be considered a TMN or not (Haupt and Coppola 2019).

3   Moving the Global Urban Governance and Policy Mobilities Agenda Forward: Why Was the 100RC Important and the Need of Articulating and Situating Inherited Concepts

The 100RC initiative was a very ambitious endeavor. The analysis and discussion of its trajectory certainly contribute in relevant and original ways to the scholarly work on urban policy mobilities and, more at large, the changing forms of global urban governance. In this perspective, some key learnings from the case are identified below.

First, the trajectory of 100RC confirms that urban resilience is still a variably contested and variably appropriated concept. Rather than a closed system of meaning associated with a mature, shared, and steady operationalization model, it is – more a discursive field able to mobilize certain actors around a variety of rationalities. The use of urban resilience as the frame to legitimize a global urban governance/policy mobility project focusing on a wholesome model of institutional change, with its vast array of discourses, frameworks, and practices, and not on specific policies as in other TMNs (Martín and McTarnaghan 2018; Coppola et al. 2020), is one more proof not only of this persistent condition of fuzziness, but also of the strategic opportunities that such fuzziness can represent for different projects and rationalities.

Second, it shows that we should probably unpack inherited overarching understandings of TMNs, and one key reason for doing this is that organizational forms depend on the goals and rationalities of the projects in which they are embedded. 100RC's ambitious endeavor was necessarily linked to a specific organizational project different from more classic public governance-focused TMN (Haupt and Coppola 2019). That implied a higher level of financial investment, organizational centralization, procedures and practices' standardization, and expected results. Compared to the approaches of older TMN, the design and implementation of such a model were the outcomes of a resolute top-down process orchestrated by a solid philanthropic organization with a decisive role for globally operating consultancies (Leitner et al. 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019; Coppola et al. 2020). Also, the change in discourses – and, allegedly, practices – of the RCN toward a more traditional TMN approach signals that global urban governance has achieved a certain level of maturity and pluralization. And that asks for new ways to grasp the diversity of organizational forms and their relations to changing projects and their rationalities.

Third, as the initiative went beyond both traditional global consultancy and TMN approaches, it also signaled an increase in expectations and ambitions on urban global governance projects and the policy mobilities that are embedded into them. 100RC put forward the idea of a new setting in which to combine forms of active political participation of city leaderships around a particular discourse able to produce, on the one hand, identity, legitimacy, and active mobilization by mayors and other involved elites and changes in the workings of governance systems, on the other. More in particular, this came with the idea that a new configuration made of city governments and various global operations was the most strategic scalar

arrangement for tackling emerging governance challenges. In this regard, it is important to stress that, other than the several rather public governance-focused TMN, 100RC was not subject to any specific policy goal or international agreement involving national state or supranational legislation (e.g., on the EU-level). As an example, the Covenant of Mayors was an initiative to support municipalities' contribution to the EU 2020 and later EU 2030 climate and energy goals. Nothing as such applies to 100RC. Instead, 100RC has acted entirely outside of any kinds of national or supranational frameworks or agreements: Legitimacy was not coming from states and international agreements, but from global actors and operations and from the interest that mayors could find in building relations with them and among them.

Fourth, it shows that the most ambitious and top-down approaches to global urban governance are likely to experience implementation turbulence if not limited success. 100RC's model found itself quickly coming into conflict with the very diverse conditions of the localities included in the initiative. As underlined by both the academic and evaluation literature, issues of translation of a one-size-fits-all strategy-design and institutionalization models – in the case of 100RC heavily shaped on US mayor-centered governance models – into cities with diverse political, economic, and regulative contexts rapidly became evident during the implementation of the program (Leitner et al. 2018; Martín and McTarnaghan 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019; Coppola et al. 2020; Roberts et al. 2020). More in particular, the variability of political conditions and mayoral legitimation strategies, levels of institutional capacities, legacies in policy areas that are critical for urban resilience, and differences in local governance cultures have been recognized as essential factors in the variable penetration of the 100RC model (Leitner et al. 2018, Martín and McTarnaghan 2018; Fastenrath et al. 2019; Coppola et al. 2020; Roberts et al. 2020). Also, the relative lack of success in implementing partnerships between cities and private partners indicates the relevance of local frictions that highly designed and widely supported neoliberal agendas built around the role of major private corporations inevitably meet. The establishment of public-private partnerships clashes against a set of different (local) political cultures and understandings of the role of businesses and procurement regulations in specific places. At the same time, the will and ability of such companies to venture into research-oriented partnerships are in discussion as well. In this context, also highly praised experimental types of governance in which all participating actors are willing to get past business as usual and instead jointly coproduce solutions may be harder to achieve (Bulkeley and Castán Broto 2013; Evans and Karvonen 2013; Voytenko et al. 2016; Kern and Haupt 2021).

In sum, new configurations of global urban governance through policy mobilities as ways to experiment with forms of anticipatory governance (Pellizzoni 2011) of an increasingly risky planet will likely arise in the coming years. The history and development trajectory of 100RC shows how, in this regard, the success of different projects will continue to be shaped by a great variety of conditions. To study such conditions and the role they play in outcomes on the ground (e.g., policy

implementation) will be as important as to make sense of the ideological background of each specific new project.

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