

Making sense of New-Generation Transnational Municipal Networks: Lessons from 100 Resilient Cities

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Abstract

This paper argues that a new kind of Transnational Municipal Network (TMN) has entered the global scene to help cities fight urban environmental issues. These new-generation TMNs are different in how they govern compared to earlier and particular European TMNs studies in the early 2000s. Instead of being inclusive, voluntary, self-governed and horizontal, new-generation TMNs are exclusive, ambitious and reflect a hybrid form of governance where private and corporate powers partake in the development and framing of tools and processes used to govern urban climate action in member cities. By studying global TMNs and their governance tools through a case study of the 100 Resilient Cities initiative, a TMN created in 2013 by the Rockefeller Foundation, we show that a new-generation TMN is an exclusive and highly coordinated institutionalised group of cities and private partners benefitting from a variety of member activities. In turn, member cities adopt new sets of governance tools and become subject to several membership rules. This subscription to a hybrid form of governance shifts power from the public to the private sphere and frames the solutions to climate change that are developed and practised at the urban scale.

Introduction

While nation states continue to disagree on major global issues, local and regional governments are positioning themselves as new important global political actors (Sassen 2013; Curtis 2015). Transnational Municipal Networks (TMNs) have entered the global scene to facilitate this city action on a variety of urban issues. These are transnationally operating organisations that offer network-like infrastructures to local governments that want to coordinate their actions. These

alliances of cities have caught the interest of researchers from multiple disciplines. The TMNs engaged in global climate governance are the ones we focus on in this paper.

Scholars began to study city networks targeting climate change in the early 2000s with a specific focus on characteristics, functioning and impact of these initiatives on higher levels of governance (Andonova et al. 2009; Betsill and Bulkeley 2004, 2006; Bulkeley et al. 2003; Le Galès 2002). Based on theories of transnational networks (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 1999) and multilevel governance (Betsill and Bulkeley 2006; Kern and Bulkeley 2009), these studies see TMNs as voluntary, self-governed and polycentric institutions that challenge traditional understandings of global divisions and distributions of power (Andonova and Mitchell 2010; Betsill and Bulkeley 2006; Gordon 2013; Bulkeley and Newell 2015; Busch 2015). However, recent TMNs, founded from the mid-2000s on, seem to divert from the characteristics we just enumerated. Cities and their networks are increasingly being recognised as important actors or frontrunners on climate change action by both state and non-state actors. Mayors are declaring themselves climate heroes of the world, and using their role as ‘implementers’ of state policy to draw attention and renegotiate their position in the global climate regime (Johnson 2017). This powerful narrative is used to justify additional support from state actors but also to justify support from external actors such as private foundations, cooperate actors and NGOs. New TMNs often rely on support of private actors, they tend to select members carefully, and they provide member cities with particular tools for organising and orchestrating climate governance within the member city. An important pattern of differentiation between traditional decentralised networks and newer more centralised networks is thus that new-generation TMNs dedicate a significant role to corporate partners and practises and public-private partnerships (Haupt and Coppola 2019).

In this paper, we investigate these recent institutional arrangements gaining more and more popularity among cities. We analyse 100 Resilient Cities (100RC), a TMN created in 2013 by the Rockefeller Foundation, as an example of what we term a new-generation TMN. Similar to the few existing studies of 100RC and other new-generation TMNs, we identify a top-down governance style, a careful selection of members and a very strong tie to private foundations and interests (Bellinson, in Hughes et al. 2018; Bulkeley and Newell 2010; Tyler and Moench 2012). These characteristics all seem to deviate from ideas of flat, inclusive and self-governed networks described in the literature on TMNs.

By approaching TMNs from an empirical grounded perspective, this article contributes to the existing understanding of cities as transnational actors by uncovering the characteristics of new institutional arrangements that guide local governments as they enter the global scene. Firstly, the paper addresses the specific role and significance of the private and cooperate channels that increasingly partake in TMN governance. We argue that the private sector plays a critical role in new-generation networks and questions if these types of institutions are networks as portrayed in the academic literature on TMNs. Through the case of 100 Resilient Cities, we show how new-generation TMNs are in fact highly coordinated organisations, which are managed through a centralised and hybrid form of governance, where private and cooperate actors play a comprehensive role.

Secondly, it offers an in-depth qualitative analysis of 100 Resilient Cities: A new-generation TMN that has become well-known for its work with city governance over the past six years. It also provides insight to a TMN, which is global in character and thus expands our understanding beyond European networks that most academic literature continues to be based upon.

In the next section, we present the existing literature on TMNs and discuss how scholars have traditionally studied them through network perspectives. We then present an in-depth case study of 100RC based on an intensive document analysis and thirty-eight interviews conducted with staff members of six 100RC cities (Vejele, Chennai, Porto Alegre, Mexico City, Toronto and Montreal), 100RC partners and the 100RC main organisation. We conclude by discussing the implications of these new-generation TMNs to our understanding of transnational governance and point to future research on these transnational actors.

Making Sense of TMNs

The Current Understanding of TMNs in the Literature

Networks have increasingly become an important object of study, although scholars seem to have different understandings of what they are. Scholars of global governance have often imported theories from other disciplines to account for networks. They commonly use a generic definition of networks that depicts those as sets of interconnected units, or nodes, linked by one or several relationships, or edges (Wasserman and Faust 1994). Yet this definition does not say much about their functioning. More precise definitions, however, deal with specific kinds of networks. For

instance, Powell, a prominent sociologist, defines networks in opposition to markets and hierarchies (1990). He underlines the horizontality of networks in contrast with hierarchies, and the commitment among parties and interdependence of actor choices in contrast with markets. The opposition of hierarchies and networks highlights the self-governance of networks. Nevertheless, Kadushin (2012) contends that hierarchies and markets can be considered networks, hence the specificity of the networks Powell refers to. Contrastingly, in policy studies, scholars have pictured policy networks as arrangements that underline the intertwining of the government and civil society in the making of public policies (Pal 2006). Like other network scholars, Pal underlines the lack of hierarchy inside networks, arguing that “The key point about networks is that they are systems of mutual interdependence where no one actor—including government—can dominate the rest.” (2006: 272) Furthermore, in a seminal International Relations (IR) work on transnational advocacy networks, Keck and Sikkink (1998, 1999) understand networks as voluntary, reciprocal and horizontal, thus characterising the relationships between actors of the structure. Again, this definition is specific to a certain kind of networks. Indeed, networks can also be directed, meaning that the relationship between two actors comes from one of them specifically. Therefore, reciprocity is not a necessary characteristic and only applies to certain types of networks. Synthesising the different visions of networks in IR, Kahler highlights the speed, inclusiveness and ability to go across different jurisdictions and focus on specific issues of networks (2009: 17).

Although they apply to distinct kinds of networks, all these definitions have visibly influenced the study of TMNs. Scholars broadly define TMNs as spaces that cities from two or more countries create and/or integrate to exchange on a variety of urban issues (e.g. Bansard et al. 2017; Busch 2015; Giest and Howlett 2013). Gore, when discussing city networks, thus claims that: “In theory, networks are collaborative, nonhierarchical, flexible, and potentially inclusive insofar as they connect participants who otherwise may not interact” (2010: 35). Several other studies have highlighted these diverse elements. Authors often put forward the horizontal and nonhierarchical nature of TMNs (Andonova and Mitchell 2010; Busch 2015). They depict TMNs as autonomous, polycentric and voluntary institutional arrangements where members directly implement the decisions made in the networks through principles of self-governance and self-execution (Kern and Bulkeley 2009). Scholars thus emphasise the absence of a superior authority and, once again, the horizontality of relations among members, also implying a process of self-organisation common in

networks. In addition, they show that participating in a TMN is an independent decision where cities are free to opt in and out of the network. One example of a TMN reflecting these characteristics is the Climate Protection program (CCP). In their 2006 article, Betsill and Bulkeley show how the CCP transcends classical ideas of scale based on hierarchical governance by creating an institutional space for local governments to report on climate change action. The CCP bypasses nation states by giving cities the chance to take their own stance on the matter. It also creates its own governance structure by creating norms and rules for following network goals and targets and means to establish a common language for environmental governance.

Additionally, to understand their effects on different agendas, scholars have intended to build typologies looking at the functionality of TMNs. This has particularly been the case within the field of global environmental governance, where scholars have sought to show how the network structure of TMNs facilitates action on green agendas. Keiner and Kim (2007) describe the variety of TMNs focusing mainly on their structure and scope. Despite its relevance, their typology lacks an analysis of the impact of a TMN having some characteristics instead of others. Furthermore, despite various attempts to coin the activities of TMNs, three main governance functions seem to reappear: information-sharing, capacity-building, and rule-setting (Andonova et al. 2009; Betsill and Bulkeley 2004; Bulkeley and Newell 2010; Busch 2015). As climate governance is usually not considered a city prerogative, the resources TMNs offer, mostly financial and information-related, are crucial. They are indeed prominent in explaining how TMNs can shape the ideas and behaviour of their members (Bulkeley and Newell 2010; Busch 2018; Hakelberg 2014). However, when looking at their potential for direct mitigation and adaptation, some argue the effects of TMNs are low. They might be able to help the cities that are already active in climate governance, but TMNs might not manage to affect the behaviour of cities that are harder to reach. They therefore remain “networks of pioneers for pioneers” (Kern and Bulkeley 2009). Besides, as TMNs tend to focus on soft mitigation measures, they may not reach bold quantified targets (Bansard et al. 2017).

Hybrid Forms of TMN Governance

This section focuses on how to meaningfully differentiate different types of TMN governance. This brief review of the literature shows that research on TMNs is already quite advanced. However, we need a larger analytical toolset to grasp the empirical developments as the diversity of the TMN

landscape increases (Busch et al. 2018). This includes the ability to assess certain organisational structures, the membership base and new types of enforcement practices. Research has missed out on some important aspects of these TMNs, such as the leverage of private foundations and the steering mechanisms guiding cities to comply with network goals. For instance, the C40, created in 2005, seems to be greatly influenced by Bloomberg Philanthropies, one of its most important funders, and Michael Bloomberg, President of the Board of Directors. Accordingly, the influence of these private actors has become an important characteristic of recent TMNs, with possible consequences on their functioning, goals and effects. Another characteristic of new-generation TMNs is how they select their members and partners. These TMNs accept cities according to multi-criteria processes, in some cases by invitation only or through a competition. Finally, new-generation TMNs seem to rely on different types of enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with network goals.

Research has mostly envisioned TMNs as networks, putting forward their horizontal, nonhierarchical, self-organised and voluntary approach. However, new-generation TMNs challenge this vision. The influence of private foundations seems to go against the attribute of self-governance of TMNs and networks in general. Besides, the increasing selectiveness partly contradicts the idea of cities voluntarily, freely and independently entering networks. Their exclusivity gives new-generation TMNs an elitist nature and centralised formulated network tools and goals question the horizontal depiction of TMNs.

In this context, Newell (2015) suggests an alternative way to depict TMNs through public, hybrid or private governance models. At one end of the spectrum are the highly decentralised networks, which are widely portrayed in the literature. They are public in the sense that municipalities, and only municipalities, constitute the network, it is inclusive, often financed through a (usually annual) membership fee that each municipality has to pay, and governed by cities themselves. The public model is a city network for cities made by cities. Networks such as ICLEI belong to this category. ICLEI's city programming includes a wide array of local and regional partnerships, which is primarily funded by national governments, international donors and city's themselves. All local entities across the world can join ICLEI for a yearly membership fee, and the TMN is formally governed through an executive committee, and a council, where positions are filled by mayors from member cities.

On the other end of the scale is the private model of city network governance, where the TMN becomes a partner to member cities or in most extreme cases a type of sponsor or donor. Within this governance model, cities receive funding that are tied to certain activities or outcomes. The programming is governed by foundations, private organisations or NGOs and the cities themselves do not partake in the formal decision-making or agenda-setting. This type of governance model often has a more restricted and exclusive membership base and is more centralised in terms of steering processes. Networks such as the ACCRN is a good example of this private governance model. ACCRN is founded by the Rockefeller Foundation and governed by an advisory body comprising of advisors from NGOs and the broader research community. It is a regional Asian network open to selected cities that show initiative towards creating climate resilience.

Between these two almost ideal types exist various hybrid forms of governance models. The defining features of where a network belong on this continuum are to a very large degree to what extent the network in question is linked to private investments and partnerships. This link includes a) the funding used to sustain network activities and administration and b) the formal governance body of the network, and c) the organisational and economic assumptions that underlie the networks approach to urban governance (e.g. whose and what interests are promoted through a and b). Furthermore, an important governance feature is access requirements and membership rules (Haupt and Coppola 2019). This concerns how a municipality can join the TMN and includes a) access to the network, b) the degree of centralisation and hierarchy and c) obligations and sanctions.

Taking the complexity of these organisations into account, most networks are hybrid with elements of both private and public forms of governance. What we show in the next section is firstly that these hybrid governance models actually exist in the TMN landscape, and further that the current TMN landscape increasingly is reflecting hybrid-private forms of governance compared to the European decentralised networks, which current network definitions and typologies rely on.

The following section expands on this conceptualisation by exploring the 100 Resilient Cities as an extreme case of a new-generation TMN.

A New-Generation TMN: A Closer Look at 100 Resilient Cities

This study introduces the 100RC decision-making as a case of a new-generational TMN. We look specifically at the 100RC's formal decision-making processes and membership rules to understand the governance model.

Funding and formal decision-making processes

The Rockefeller Foundation established the 100 Resilient Cities initiative (100RC) in 2013 as a non-profit organisation with one core mission: increase city resilience worldwide (100RC 2018). On paper, this means that the 100RC is an independent organisation, however, in practise the Rockefeller Foundation continues to have strong ties to 100RC and sets the overall direction for the organisation. 100RC is officially led by a secretariat based in New York City and directed by a president hired by the Rockefeller Foundation. The president is formally co-signing the MoU made with all cities, when they are accepted as members. The daily management of the network is carried out by five different regional 100RC offices. Member cities have most of their contact with 100RC through these regional satellite offices. From 2017 onwards, a City Leader Advisory Committee has supported 100RC in identifying key issues to building urban resilience. This committee has 9 members, which are either mayors or chief executives in 100RC member cities. The committee officially meets once every year and was created to shape the 'resilient movement' in the coming years. The committee produces advice and does not have any formal decision-making power.

All 100RC activities refer to the concept of *urban resilience*. The TMN sees resilience broadly, as "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" (100RC 2018). This specific focus on resilience stems from a commitment made by the Rockefeller Foundation in 2007 to build climate change resilience (Spaans and Waterhout, 2017). In 2008, the Rockefeller Foundation initiated a 9-year programme named the Asian Cities Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN) with the goal of enhancing urban climate resilience in selected Asian cities by creating strategies for coping with climate change (Rockefeller Foundation 2015). One of the central goals behind the ACCCRN was to capture and learn from the various experiences in order to make the approach useful in other cities. There are thus clear similarities to the ACCCRN programme and the much larger 100RC initiative. In 2015, The Rockefeller Foundation published an evaluation report on the ACCCRN highlighting key lessons from the 2008 initiative

(Rockefeller Foundation 2015). Even though the report was published after the launch of the 100RC, it emphasises some important insights to what guides the management of the 100RC. It highlights the importance of a structured methodology with clear planning principles for advancing resilience. It further emphasises the benefits of stakeholder engagement as well as the value of facilitating partners who are able to guide and manage the process of designing and implementing a resilience agenda.

These lessons are clearly echoed in the governance model promoted by 100 Resilient Cities. Firstly, in an interview with a director from one of 100RC's regional offices, the interviewee distinguished between a political network and an implementation network to differentiate between the many kinds of network activities found across TMNs. The interviewee clearly places 100RC in the implementation category:

It is not a political network; it is an implementation network to a very large extent. And what do I mean by that? We try to help the cities change in the way they operate. Make them better equipped to deal with the challenges they identify. (Interview, Regional Director, 100RC).

What the interviewee is referring to here, is the idea of having a strict methodology that guilds network action. She does not see the role of 100RC as creating political content as such, but rather to provide tools that help cities reach such policies.

Secondly, 100RC activities are firmly based on what interviewees refer to as a “consultancy dimension”¹. Every city is enrolled in an intensive resilience programme when accepted into the network. Here, the 100RC offers consultancy in terms of actual consultants' expertise, management frameworks and processes. There is a strong incentive for cities to cooperate by disseminating their knowledge, sharing best practices, and showcasing solutions. However, according to the 100RC this requires a clear understanding of the issues ahead and a common language in which to deliberate. This is where the consultancy dimension plays a crucial part for the 100RC network. In practice, consultancy services are carried out by conventional consultants such as

¹ Authors' interviews with 100RC staff and members of the staff of Vejle Municipality, London and Vejle, March, April and May 2017.

Arup, Accenture or Rambøl. However, consultants are also recruited from other TMNs such as ICLEI or C40, from international organisations such as the World Bank, from non-governmental organisations, local and global, as well as from universities. Consultants are thus not always ‘cooperate’ or associated with the private sector, and it is somewhat unclear when what type of consultant is prioritised in the specific cases.

Membership access

Membership in 100RC is not open to all cities that want to join in the sense that, ultimately, the TMN chooses who gets in. After the 100RC launch, cities were publicly invited to apply for a 100RC membership. A first group of thirty-two cities was accepted in 2013, a second group of thirty-five cities in 2014 and a third group of thirty-five cities in 2016 (100RC 2018). 100RC accepted cities with very diverse profiles. It includes the usual suspects such as Paris, London and New York City, present in a variety of other TMNs, but also smaller and more unexpected members such as Cali, Vejle and Kigali.

100RC publicly announced a call for membership application over three rounds from 2013 to 2016, through what it named the 100 Resilient Cities Challenge. Officially, about 1,000 applications were evaluated by a panel consisting of 100RC, and its partners and stakeholders, through predetermined criteria focusing on the city’s commitment to the resilience agenda. These include a strong political commitment, the ability to build partnerships with a broad range of public and private stakeholders as well as some experience with ‘shocks and stresses’ (100RC 2018). Cities’ resilience goals were also important. An interviewee from the City of Toronto explains that 100RC did not select their application at first probably because it focused too much on climate adaptation. After the TMN gave the city advice on how to improve it, Toronto became a member in 2016.² It seems fair to assume 100RC did not consult with every rejected city over how to improve their application and that they had a special interest in seeing Toronto join. Other informants indicate that the selection process contained additional criteria, particularly when the program was still in its early phase.³ Interviewees from Vejle believe 100RC selected their city because it was an

² Authors’ interview with a member of the Toronto Resilience Team, phone, August 2017.

³ Authors’ interview with three members of the staff of Montreal Resilience Office, online, March 2017.

‘easy case’ that could quickly be showcased,⁴ thus implying the official criteria were probably not the only ones considered in the selection. It appears that 100RC acted strategically to help certain cities become members.

Like networks, 100RC is voluntary, as cities are free to apply for membership and leave the program whenever they want. However, members must win the challenge to enter, and the entry cost is high. Firstly, they need administrative resources to fill out the application and, if successful, integrating the resilience program to their administrative structure, as expected by 100RC. Secondly, membership requires strong political commitment, as local political leaders must show engagement to the initiative by signing an MoU. Thirdly, it implies an indirect financial commitment through human resources and the funding of resilience projects. The 100RC membership is thus not open and inclusive, but closed and exclusive.

An Excludable Access to Tools

The 100RC membership allows access to a range of material resources and benefits. When a city becomes a member, it enters a two- or three-year program designed to help cities act on the resilience agenda (100RC 2018). To complete the resilience program, cities receive direct funding to hire a Chief Resilience Officer (CRO), in charge of managing the city’s resilience agenda. 100RC emphasises that, as costs vary depending on the city, members get resources according to the local cost of filling the CRO’s position. Nevertheless, the overall support is estimated to be around US\$ 1 million per city. In Vejle and Chennai, the money covered the CRO’s salary and some resilience events and activities for three years. In Porto Alegre and Mexico City, the check was big enough to cover two full positions in the city government.⁵ The CRO is further trusted with a structured methodology with clear phases and planning principles to be carried out over the course of two to three years culminating with the release of a political resilience strategy. Furthermore, each city receives technical and strategic guidance from partners of the Platform of Partners as well as from the 100RC team itself. The Platform of Partners consists of private companies, universities, IGOs and NGOs who offer their expertise to help cities analyse and implement resilience projects as part

⁴ Authors’ interviews with politicians and members of the staff of Vejle Municipality, Vejle, March, April and May 2017.

⁵ Authors’ interview with a member of the staff of Mexico City Resilience Agency, online, February 2017.
Authors’ interview with a member of staff of Porto Alegre Resilience Office, online, May 2018.

of the program. Finally, 100RC creates an infrastructure for city-to-city collaboration and knowledge sharing and organises CRO summits for cities to meet and exchange knowledge and experience.

All these resources are exclusive to the 100RC members. Unsurprisingly, our interviews indicate that access to those is paramount for understanding why cities applied for membership in the first place. It is attractive for cities struggling with tight budgets and a diverse range of challenges to access funding, consultancy services and a broad and knowledgeable networks of peers.

In addition, the 100RC membership includes non-material resources in terms of branding and dedication to certain norms. 100RC is a wealthy and exclusive initiative sponsored and supported by the prominent Rockefeller Foundation. The former mayor of Vejle appeared proud to participate in a well-respected program the capital city of Denmark did not get access to.⁶ Our interviewees from Chennai and Mexico City positively acknowledge the brand of the Rockefeller Foundation, as it can help them attract other stakeholders.⁷ Members also enjoy greater recognition and reputation for being collaborating and associated with a worldwide renowned philanthropic organisation. The careful selection process and the restricted membership base, as only 100 cities can be part of the TMN, make the network even more exclusive to both existing members and outside cities wanting to become members.⁸

100RC offers the same resources to all member cities: the funding of a CRO, the access to consultancy services, and a methodology to steer cities towards resilience. Although our interviews usually emphasise collaboration when describing 100RC and the relationship to other member cities, they also reveal that access to resources is sometimes unequal. One example is Mexico City who managed to negotiate US\$ 750,000 of extra funding in the wake of the 2017 Central Mexican earthquake to support reconstruction efforts and long-term commitment to the resilience agenda and

⁶ Authors' interviews with politicians and members of the staff of Vejle Municipality, Vejle, March, April and May 2017.

⁷ Authors' interview with a member of the staff of Mexico City Resilience Agency, online, February 2017.
Authors' interview with a member of the staff of Mexico City Resilience Agency, Mexico City, July 2018.
Authors' interview with a member of the staff of Chennai Cooperation, Chennai, October 2017.

⁸ Authors' interview with a member of staff, New York City Administration, Copenhagen, June 2018.

to 100RC.⁹ Another example is the recently launched Resilience Accelerator, which is a partnership between 100RC and Columbia University helping cities accelerate their work with resilience building. Five cities in Miami-Dade County were selected to pilot the project. Many similar pilot projects and urban resilience experiments are carried out with selected members of the network. 100RC and the Rockefeller Foundation sometimes also organise informal and exclusive events to which they only invite certain city member mayors.¹⁰ Our interviews do not indicate there is competition between member cities to be part of one of the many 100RC projects, but those may still be considered resources to which members have unequal access, as they are not intended for every member to participate. This might suggest a pioneer network within the network as those cities that manage to attract more resources and funding are cities with the capacity to adopt pilot projects, or who have shown commitment and visible results¹¹.

A Mix of Self-Governance and Enforcement Mechanisms

Where the literature on TMNs highlights the features of self-governance and self-execution of city networks, compliance mechanisms are crucial for effectiveness according to 100RC staff. For 100RC, resilience is best implemented with a specific methodology and planning process that have some degree of flexibility allowing for local particularities. To that end, the TMN has created several tools and compliance mechanisms that strengthen the membership benefits. The hiring of a CRO, the use of the resilience methodology and the development of a resilience strategy are all obligatory elements of the membership. As interviewees explained, members officially hire their CRO themselves. However, 100RC closely observes the process, as it sees that position as crucial for ensuring progress in cities.¹² For the 100RC President, Michael Berkowitz, “we can’t run our cities without a CRO”.¹³ 100RC thus seeks to ensure that the right person is hired. The TMN also offers a resilience methodology—leading to the development of the resilience strategy—under

⁹ Authors’ interview with a member of the staff of Mexico City Resilience Agency, Mexico City, July 2018.

¹⁰ Authors’ interview with a member of a partner organization of 100RC, online, August 2017.

¹¹ Authors’ interview with a member of the staff of Mexico City Resilience Agency, Mexico City, July 2018.

¹² Authors’ interview with a member of staff, 100 Resilient Cities, online, April 2018.

¹³ See Henk Ovink’s tweet quoting Berkowitz’s speech during the 2017 100RC summit: <https://twitter.com/henkovink/status/889492879042805760> (last accessed August 15, 2018).

flexible conditions. The methodology, officially named the City Resilience Framework, is a very specific approach to developing a resilience strategy. A private consultancy, Arup, designed it to map out and understand the vulnerabilities and potentials of urban systems (100RC 2018). Our interviews show that cities find the methodology generally helpful, but also rigid and unnecessarily time-consuming at times.¹⁴ Then, throughout the monitoring process associated with the methodology, cities must report and evaluate their progress with the program by filling out formulas and spread sheets. Some of our informants consider the tool to be bureaucratic and extensive.¹⁵

Besides using a monitoring process, 100RC steers its members through the threat of a possible exclusion from the program. Although instances are quite rare, the example of Alameda, United States, shows a member being sanctioned for not complying with the 100RC rules. The city wanted to hire a CRO that did not fit the profile envisioned by 100RC. After some unsuccessful exchanges, 100RC eventually decided to end Alameda's membership.¹⁶ Even though that case is more obscure, it seems that Enugu, Nigeria, was also excluded, owing to its inaction.¹⁷ Accordingly, membership exclusion is a central sanction mechanism that motivates members to follow the rules and norms in place.

These enforcement mechanisms enable 100RC to offer reputational benefits linked to its creation of public goods. They indeed guarantee that members actively seek urban resilience. Thanks to these reputational benefits, members are considered resilient cities as soon as they enter, because of the highly selective process, and further on, because they are believed to comply. Therefore, the enforcement tools ensure that cities are following the path towards urban resilience, as understood by two of its major advocates, 100RC and the Rockefeller Foundation.

100RC might first appear like any other TMN described in the literature. Nevertheless, it builds on a different institutional set-up and subscribe to an almost private governance model, where private and corporate actors are funding, framing and steering network activities. As Bellinson argues, 100RC has, in a sense, a rather top-down leadership style (in Hughes et al. 2018).

¹⁴ Authors' interview with three members of the staff of Montreal Resilience Office, online, March 2017.

¹⁵ Authors' interviews with members of resilience staff, Vejle Municipality, online and in Vejle, June 2017, June 2018

¹⁶ The Alamedan, April 15, 2015.

¹⁷ PM News Nigeria, December 2017.

100RC closely monitors membership and exclusion is a very real possibility if members do not follow the rules.

The programming promoted by 100RC reflects a very instrumental understanding of politics, where policy formulation is clearly separated from implementation efforts. It also reflects an understanding where technical or methodological assistance is apolitical. However, even though the 100RC intends to provide methodology and guidelines to assess urban resilience, these are embedded in a wide range of political assumptions that at very least co-constitutes what resilience is and how we should act on it. The critical point here is that these consultancy services are far from value neutral. Rather there is a risk of not only depoliticising the inherent political struggles of what constitutes a resilient city, but also to create an unnoticed arena-shift (reference), where politics is suddenly negotiated by actors that are neither elected nor representing the urban constituencies of member cities.

To some degree, however, it does also look like a public governance model. Indeed, cities partly self-govern and self-execute the collective decisions by using the tools provided and adjusting them. They are also 'free' to leave as there is no legal contract binding them to 100RC. Cities also partake in sub-projects with decentralised character and participate in events and workshops with deliberation and networking purposes. Cities are thus not helpless receivers of a donation from a powerful foundation. They are strategic and capable when they navigate and negotiate their membership. The public network framework thus remains useful for the analysis of new-generation TMNs, however, in combination with a greater sensitivity towards more private and hierarchical types of governance models with particular focus on markets and private-public partnerships.

Conclusion

In this article, we have argued that new-generation TMNs have different characteristics from traditional TMNs, or at least from how the literature on TMNs has understood them, underlining general network attributes that do not fit new-generation TMNs. We have showed that new-generation TMNs are more exclusive and apply steering logics that are more centralised and hierarchal in nature. Both scholars and practitioners should therefore be careful when systematically treating new-generation TMNs as inclusive, voluntary, self-governed and horizontal networks

arrangements. Research questions based on assumptions found in the network literature have inherent risks of overseeing crucial elements about these actors and the interests that govern them. Contrastingly, referring to hybrid and private forms of governance to analyse new-generation TMNs has several benefits and opens up new important questions of power, legitimacy and authority.

Firstly, new-generation TMNs such as 100RC makes us question where and when network power meets cooperate power. It is questionable that the 100RC will persist as something close to its current form when the Rockefeller ends its funding in 2019. The network is too closely tied to interests, money and the organisational structures designed by the Rockefeller Foundations and its closets partners. In this sense, 100RC was never a network but a public-private partnership that provided a certain amount of resources to 100 strategically chosen cities. New-generation TMNs challenge the position of authority portrayed in the network literature. In the case of 100RC, authority is neither polycentric nor horizontally distributed among members. When member cities do take decisions on how to implement the 100RC tools and adapt them to local contexts, they also have to follow a set of rules, set by 100RC. 100RC is not entirely characterized by a centralized or hierarchical governance structure. However, decision-making processes are not just happening within or between cities. We should thus further study the implications of philanthropic foundations and question the impact of their agenda on global climate governance. As argued by Chu (2018), TMNs like 100RC have their own platforms and goals. Their vision of a successful resilience strategy and its implementation might differ from what cities have in mind. They might seek to limit the agency of cities to a greater extent than the TMNs described in the network literature. There are strategic interests at stake, often focused on a selected group of cities, which are often members of more than one traditional or new-generation TMN. We need to conduct more comparative studies to fully understand the consequences.

Secondly, we should consider other understandings of legitimacy when assessing TMNs, such as the procedural legitimacy Gampfer (2016) discusses, and questions of equity. In that sense, we should identify who gains and who loses from new-generation TMNs. Previous studies have documented that even when TMNs are open and inclusive, they often become “networks of pioneers for pioneers” (Kern and Bulkeley 2009). Are such structures reinforced? If so, to what extent and with what implications for non-members? We should wonder whether new-generation TMNs might create a ‘city elite’, wealthier, more attractive and more resilient than non-members. If

this proves to be true, are those cities almost inevitably global cities (Lee 2013)? What are the consequences for the cities not involved and the people living in non-member cities? The question of procedural legitimacy refers to whether new-generation TMNs are circumventing the decision-making infrastructure put in place by nation states and thus by our nationally elected politicians. Is the fact that new-generation TMNs, which are largely influenced by private actors, are bypassing UNFCCC by governing climate change through transnational arrangements problematic (see Gampfer 2016)? In the same line, we should put in perspective our findings on new-generation TMNs and studies on orchestration which show how international actors use these TMNs to achieve their goals (Gordon and Johnson 2017, Ven et al 2017) and compare the agendas of these distinct actors.

Shifting focus from classic network characteristics to hybrid forms of governance raises other questions for future studies to consider. These include the question of what successful transnational cooperation looks like. Are TMNs successful when creating steering logics that accommodate the right balance between effectiveness, legitimacy and polycentrism? If so, what does this balance look like? Overall, distinguishing new-generation TMNs from older TMNs and acknowledging their diversity proves to be a promising work for scholars of transnational climate governance, urban political ecology, and for all researchers interested in the role of non-state actors in global climate governance.

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