Conflicting Policy Objectives

Urban resilience and disaster management

Fredrik Bynander
Center for Societal Security

CRISMART

Policy coordination, instrument of power

- **Core question: Top-down or bottom-up?**

- **Today's plans all too often create the illusion of coordination, and thus the illusion of control, which may undermine the preparation for, and response to, disruptive events.**

- **The greater an event, the lower effectiveness of top-down coordination (initially).**

CRISMART

Imposing coordination, tolerating self-organization?

- **Bottom-up perspective has greater support – "ad hoc teaming" and self-organization.**

- **Works the best in "emergent coordination" (Faraj & Xiao)**

- **But, overburdened in acute phase, crumbles in the face of reconstruction challenges.**

- **"Top support" needed.**

CRiSMART

Central levels in acute disaster response

- Supporting communication, "sense-making", situational awareness

- Muster external resources

- Support local, regional coordination

- Plan transition to top-down

- Plan for strategic priorities on reconstruction

- Participate in processes of accountability and learning

CRISMART

Disaster response to resilience policy

- **Mitigation, prevention ➔ resilience**

- **Same networks, problem ownership**

- **"Strategic" dimension of emergency preparedness politically indistinguishable from resilience**

- **Same dynamics top-down/bottom-up (scalability, silos, emerging actors)**

- **Formal democratic process vs. autonomy/self-reliance**

CRISMART

Centralization

- **Immense pressure to centralize in major events.**

- ***Always* politicized**

- **Top decision-making levels already own response and failures as post-event begins**

- **Self-organized parts of networks often fall apart**

CRISMART

Trends in Policy Coordination

- Political fragmentation – repoliticization

- Buck-passing

- Coordination without mandate

- Single agency reforms

CRISMART

More trends

- ⊙ **Recentralization**

- ⊙ **Deprivatization(?)**

- ⊙ **Securitization**

- ⊙ **"Semi-authoritarian" administrative leadership**