

What is meant to be a deposit that would be repaid later often turns out to be a bribe to brokers, who guaranteed the traders entry to the market in return. This practice of paying bribes to land brokers first and foremost serves Bangladesh's political parties for whom the land brokers mostly work (Eisenberger/Keck 2015, Keck 2016).

### Conclusion

The two case studies show that redundant business networks and the institution of mutual trust are basic elements that allow entrepreneurs of Dhaka's informal economy to successfully organise their businesses' adaptive resilience, i.e. to 'get by' in the face of crisis. At the same time, however, our discussion has made clear that most informal economies command only restricted access to important resources and are bound to pursue harmful production practices and exploitative employment schemes to keep their costs low. In consequence, they have only limited potential for building transformative resilience in order to 'get ahead'. This lack of transformative resilience has negative consequences for society as a whole. (1) With no filters in use the brick sector contributes greatly to the environmental pollution in the country. (2) Being excluded from the formal banking system, Dhaka's fish traders rely on informal credits under onerous terms. In addition, they are forced to pay bribes to land brokers in order to enter markets. Both practices end up negatively impacting the poor as these additional costs are passed on to the consumers. (3) Low payment and the absence of insurances and social safety nets make the workers who carry the bricks and food for the entire city on their shoulders most vulnerable to food insecurity and ill-health. Against this background it is important to understand that working for the resilience of Dhaka's informal economies in the end serves the common welfare of the entire urban population.

### 3.4.5 Urban Transformations and Differentiated Resilience: Internal Assets and Modes of Coping

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Under comparable conditions, individuals and social groups differ in their sensitivity and vulnerability to certain types of events, as well as in their perceptions, interpretations, emotional responses and reactions. Urban transformation processes such as changing access for the urban

poor to public space in Dhaka (cf. Hackenbroch 2013b), urban fragmentation due to commodity housing in the Pearl River Delta (cf. Breitung et al. 2013) and the transformation of urban villages by internal or international migrants in Guangzhou (cf. Wehrhahn et al. 2008, 2014) cause multiple effects. The (dialectic) interactions and feedbacks of these processes are far-reaching and characterised by multi-scale temporal and spatial variability. One key project with major effects for future city development and local living conditions has been the construction of the South Railway Station in Shibi Village, 17 km south of Guangzhou's central business district, which started in 2004. It is the largest and most modern passenger railway station in Asia; consisting of 28 railway tracks. The first part of the railway station was opened in 2010. Against this backdrop of rapid urban expansion and the conversion of farmland into infrastructural uses, the inhabitants of Shibi Village (about 20,000 in 2011) have had to face profound impacts on their local person-environment relationships such as land expropriation, uncertainty about resettlement and compensation fees, in-migration, and change of employment and income structures.

In this regard, it is highly relevant to ask why some people show adaptive functioning in the face of adversity while others do not. In particular, the identification of individuals and groups who are able to 'deal with' (uncontrollable or ambiguous) exposure to adversity without changing the 'reality' of their stressful person-environment relationship raises important issues regarding environmental and person-related factors and processes that lead to and strengthen resilience. People think and act and thereby change their person-environment relationship by either acting on the environment (e.g. building houses to rent out to migrants) and/or themselves (e.g. developing new skills, reconstructing goal hierarchies). In addition to macro-level analysis, there is a vital need to engage directly with local inhabitants and groups since they are often best placed to inform and provide knowledge about the (differently appraised) impacts of urban transformations on their livelihoods and coping options. Taking the subjective process of appraising into account, Lazarus (1999) argues that a person is under stress only if events negate or endanger important personal goals and commitments. In consequence, vulnerability is thought of as potential threat that is transformed into active threat when that which is considered of importance is jeopardised. In line with this conceptual position, the exposure

to risk or adversity constitutes a necessary (but not sufficient) component in resilience research. Individuals or groups must have been exposed to risk or stress that increases the likelihood of a negative consequence to instigate the study of resilience. Additionally, one cannot talk about resilience in the absence of positive adaptation (Rutter 2006). In this sense, resilience is regarded as a two-dimensional construct subsuming two distinct dimensions – significant risk/adversity and positive adaptation – and thus is never directly measured, but is indirectly inferred based on the direct evaluation of the two subsumed dimensions (Luthar 2006). A risk factor is considered in terms of an indicator for (potential) maladjustment and positive adaptation related to resistance, sustained effective coping, and recovery. Individual resilience thereby refers to the dynamic and domain-specific interplay of a) positive adaptation, b) different coping modes and c) external and internal risk factors (e.g. institutional ambiguity, hopelessness) as well as external and internal protective factors (e.g. institutional reliability, optimism) that mediate, exacerbate, mitigate or stop stress experiences (see also Bercht/Wehrhahn 2010, 2011; Strohschön et al. 2013).

In particular, the consideration of emotional and cognitive coping modes in dealing with ambiguous person-environment relationships, such as resettlement in Shibi Village, broadens the analytical perspective on resilience. The majority of farmland including fish farming (see Fig. 3.4.5) was sold by Shibi's village committees to the government in 2008 due to the construction of the South Railway Station in Shibi. Villagers thus lost their basic source of income from farming. The village committees have not provided any information to the local inhabitants on the extent to which the residential area might be affected by the railway construction site (status as of 2011). However, the demolition of houses, located directly beside the station and further constructions of motorway access roads and shopping areas suggest that more of the residential area will be converted to urbanised land use patterns in the near future. Shibi's inhabitants fear resettlement, are unable to anticipate concrete future events and have difficulty in readjusting to the changes, particularly due to a lack of financial pay-offs from the committees.

Against this background of agonising future uncertainty, the reconstruction of goal hierarchies, for example, – 'Whenever I make myself aware that we are still doing well in spite of everything I

feel happier and much better' (interview with a local resident in 2008 who worries deeply about resettlement and financial insecurity) – represents an offensive cognitive coping mode. She addresses the problem and consciously reminds herself of what she considers most important in her life which is, above all, the prevailing cohesion and health of her family. Her coping behaviour is emotion-focused because she changes the relational meaning but not the reality of her troubled person-environment relationship. She reappraises her situation and constructs a goal hierarchy that provides her with a new basis for evaluating personal harm and benefit. The protective mechanism lies in the flexibility of commitments that enables internal functioning. It thus reflects the domain of cognitive resilience which stands for the individual's intrinsic capacity to change ways of thinking and the focus of attention (Bercht 2013b; Cooper et al. 2010). In contrast, emotional resilience refers to the ability not to let negative emotions dominate or control person-environment relationships. For instance hopelessness is likely to demotivate positive adaptive action and displays an internal risk factor.

Additionally, modes of beliefs are closely linked to individual resilience. Beliefs refer to how people conceive themselves and their place in the environment and form expectations about what is likely to happen in a concrete situation (Lazarus 1999). People with an internal locus of control believe that certain events can be influenced by their behaviour. They are more likely to appraise a demanding and ambiguous encounter as controllable and as less stressful than people with an external locus of control. The latter regard events as contingent not upon their actions, but upon luck, fate or destiny. A 34-year-old interviewee, for example, was unemployed because her farmland had been sold to the government (interview, 2009). However, she did not make any serious effort to look for a new job. As an extensive narrative interview revealed, she was characterised by an external locus of control which, in terms of an internal risk mechanism, prevents her from changing this stressful person-environment relationship and developing features of resilience. In her opinion, finding a new job was outside her personal control and personal qualifications but was related to destiny. In comparison, a 36-year-old interviewee had a predominantly internal locus of control that evoked protective mechanisms. He actively tried to change his life situation by seeking work as a day labourer at different building construction

sites in Shibi Village and pinning his mobile number on various informal job notice-boards.

These examples illustrate that the analysis of person-related dispositions and internal assets such as beliefs, commitments and goals contributes to an overall understanding of why urban inhabitants differ in resisting, effectively coping with or recovering from stress experiences (cf. Bercht 2013a,b; Bercht/Wehrhahn 2011 for more details). In relation to resilience building, it is important to identify people with an external locus of control and to show them possible ways of taking influence on their concrete person-environment relationship, for example by (jointly) surveying labour market options and disclosing access modalities. In particular, the appraisal of profound uncertainty about the city's future development, lack of transparent policies and controllability, knowledge gaps and restricted access to reliable information (e.g. in regard to anticipated resettlement) have strong implications for stress experience and adaptation processes (cf. Bercht 2013a,b for more details). Resilience building is especially enhanced when people face different options for action, reliable information policies, and non-arbitrary

institutions, even when problem-focused coping options are limited. This implies a time-consuming but crucial need for in-depth and far-reaching dialogues between different stakeholders such as the local population, urban planners, and political as well as economic decision-makers.

### 3.4.6 Female Sex Workers with Migration Backgrounds and Vulnerability and Risks Regarding the Spread of STD and HIV/AIDS

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In present-day China, there is a large and increasing number of female sex workers (FSWs). According to the Chinese Public Security Office, the number of female sex workers increased 160-fold between 1985 and 2000 (Trucker/Henderson et al. 2005). Depending on the definition used, the number of FSWs varies from less than half a million to as many as six million (Zhou 2006). Sexual transmission has become a crucial pattern of HIV infection and the sex industry has produced a pattern of high HIV infection rates and high incidences of sexually



*Photo 3.4.5* Fish breeding stations in Shibi Village make way for the Guangzhou South Railway Station

*Photo: Anna-Lena Bercht*