Building Resilience: An Art–Food Hub to Connect Local Communities

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Abstract: Resilience thinking is an appropriate framework when assessing the transitional potential of complex urban systems. The transformation of abandoned spaces into local hubs attracting new and innovative activities and events promotes a socioeconomic renaissance in urban communities, by stimulating adaptation to change, enhancing local resilience and strengthening urban–rural links. Under the conceptual umbrella of resilience thinking, the present study illustrates the outcomes of an integrated program of research-action aimed at urban regeneration in a medium-sized, economically disadvantaged city in Southern Italy (Battipaglia, Campania). The transformation of an abandoned building into an 'Art–Food Hub'—a multi-purpose and creative cultural space—based on resilience thinking was the specific case analyzed in our study. Appropriate stakeholders were identified and involved in a series of field activities and workshops, with the final objective of informing a comprehensive strategy strengthening awareness to change and capacity building. More specifically, stakeholder involvement was carried out with two aims: first, to make stakeholders active participants in co-designing a Strategic Urban Planning Document for Battipaglia and, second, to evaluate to what extent the proposed initiative contributes to building local resilience. By explicitly considering cross-scale drivers of community resilience, the results of this study show how the concept of resilience can be practically applied to policy formulation and implementation.

Keywords: resilience; food; rural development; food/arts nexus; urban–rural linkages

1. Introduction

Sustainable governance for resilient local systems promotes balanced development [1] and a continuous evolution towards more integrated, polycentric and equitable settlement models [2]. In this perspective, cities look beyond their administrative borders and focus on functional regions, including their peri-urban neighborhoods [3]. Its fundamental principles include coordination, proportionality, subsidiarity, cooperation, multi-actorship, transparency, participation, policy efficiency, and social cohesion. Multi-level governance assumes a measurable influence of territorial actors on development issues, creating a common ground for the exchange of theoretical knowledge, innovative policy solutions, and best practices [4]. At the same time, polycentric systems have been demonstrated to have a higher degree of adaptive capacity than mono-centric or centralized structures, resulting in improved social and environmental performance [5–7]. Theoretically, polycentric policy and management structures should provide sufficient regulatory oversight, resources and information anticipating and facilitating informed decision-making when sudden shocks and cumulative stressors threaten the socio-ecological system [8].

The present paper illustrates an example of participatory urban planning in Campania—an economically disadvantaged region of Southern Italy—that led to the definition and final approval of a Strategic Urban Planning Document (Documento di Orientamento Strategico, DOS) for a medium-sized city (Battipaglia, Salerno). The DOS illustrates an Urban Integrated Plan (UIP) including guidelines set out for a sustainable urban development path under Priority Axis 10 (Urban Development, Integrated Plan for Sustainable Cities) of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Operational Plan for Campania region (2014–2020). Within this plan, funding under Axis 10 was dedicated to 19 medium-sized cities including Battipaglia, and promotes long-term strategic urban planning. The DOS was aimed at addressing the most critical issues facing local areas; it was finalized after extensive public consultations aimed at debating environmental and socioeconomic problems of interest for urban planning.

Since its foundation in 1929 under the Fascist regime, the city of Battipaglia (more than 50,000 resident inhabitants at 2011 census) has acted as an attractor within the surrounding district of 'Piana del Sele' (Salerno province) because of its specialisation in intensive agriculture and the food industry. Despite the fact that Battipaglia has the highest number of registered businesses in the district, high youth unemployment and an increase in the number of families below the poverty threshold have been observed in recent times. To better adapt to these challenges, the socioeconomic functions of the city needs fully rethinking, with the aim of responding more effectively to policy stimuli (e.g., European structural funds) and to mitigate the impact of significant factors behind the most recent recession. This requires a re-design of the city's relationship with the surrounding rural areas, and solutions to contain outmigration and economic marginalization. By re-designing the role and functions of cities, a greater interdependence between urban and rural systems could become an effective factor to increase resilience in regional socio-ecological systems. This process is particularly effective within local communities (both rural and urban) that are flexible enough to adjust to uncertainty and are able to exploit positive opportunities [9,10].

Assuming that inclusive decision-making can guarantee more effective urban interventions [11,12], two prominent ideas on how to better connect cities and the surrounding rural areas have emerged in the stakeholders' debate: first, the restructuring and reorganisation of food production, supply and consumption networks [13,14]; second, the use of art, in all its forms, as a means of activating processes of development in both urban and rural areas [15,16]. Food systems' design—which carries implications in terms of public health, social justice and environmental protection [17]—and the use of art as a tool to build inclusive communities, are both strategies that implicitly or explicitly act to strengthen urban and rural resilience. Based on these premises, the present study illustrates the outcomes of a research-action that promotes stakeholder involvement in co-designing the Battipaglia DOS. More specifically, the study analyses to what extent a specific initiative of urban regeneration (transforming an abandoned building into a 'art–food hub') contributes to building the awareness of local communities to socioeconomic change. By strengthening local communities' ability to learn, adapt and reorganize to meet urban challenges, the participatory process analysed in this study is exemplificative of collective social learning, adaptation to change and resilience building.

2. Resilience: A Conceptual Framework

Resilience is considered a hegemonic concept when assessing the ability of systems, entities or individuals to withstand or adapt to change [18]. Its increasing application in social science, and across a multitude of disciplines, has led to a myriad of different interpretations, sometimes leading to conceptual ambiguity. Davidson et al. [19] pointed out that this ambiguity is problematic, particularly in terms of operationalizing resilience within policy-making and proposed the classification of resilience definitions into five domains: ecological resilience, socio-ecological resilience, disaster resilience, urban resilience and community resilience. The core conceptual elements that characterize each domain and its evolution over time were identified by three defining 'resilience ideal-types': (i) a "basic resilience" with four core elements (persistence or resistance, absorption of disturbance, recovery or bouncing back to a

previous stable state, and retention of system identity); (ii) an "adaptive resilience" including some or all elements found in the basic resilience type, with characteristic self-organization and adaptability; and (iii) a "transformative resilience" that incorporates some elements from Type 1 and Type 2 resilience, with characteristic transformability.

As far as urban resilience is concerned, the 'engineering' definition of resilience has been traditionally applied in the context of economic crisis, focusing on a city's ability to return to its pre-crisis state. However, adapting the engineering resilience notion to cities has proved to be highly problematic as the equilibrium paradigm at the heart of the engineering resilience definition was often considered inappropriate for socially complex, dynamic urban systems [20,21]. Approaches based on non-equilibrium theories—such as the evolutionary resilience concept—assume change, adaptation and transformation within systems to be inevitable. These approaches have increasingly emerged to better take account of the geographical diversity, variety, and unevenness of local resilience [22,23] and the ability of urban systems to adapt and adjust to changing conditions [24]. As a consequence, a more comprehensive, holistic strategy for resilience may inform urban planning in the definition of priorities and policy interventions [25,26].

Similar to urban resilience, the main focus of community resilience is risk and hazard management (i.e., the ability of a community to bounce back to a pre-existing state after a shock) [27]. A broader definition of this resilience type includes the community's ability to work toward a common objective [28,29], build self-reliance and the capacity to reduce its intrinsic vulnerability to shocks. This definition was accepted widely, given that community resilience draws heavily from disaster management research [29], particularly in terms of the role of collective resources (capitals) that enable individuals to respond to change, and the supporting collective processes (e.g., governance arrangement) [30]. Community resilience also draws from social resilience research [31–33] investigating the attributes that make communities resilient to social, economic or environmental changes. Emphasis on the potential effects and the role of collective learning and social memory to form successful mitigation strategies is particularly evident in recent studies [30,34].

Chaskin [35] explores the idea of a community related to the resilience notion by viewing local communities as a unifying context (i.e., the local socioeconomic profile, institutional structures, human capital and social networks providing a set of risk or protective factors to community well-being). A set of collective factors that exhibit intrinsic resilience by self-organizing and responding to external shocks were identified in order to adapt to (or solve) complex problems and improve (or maintain) community well-being. Resilience-building in local communities reflects economic diversification and the crucial role of social networks. In this regard, social and economic resilience cannot be easily separated, and a greater economic resilience will usually translate into a greater social resilience [36]. Although the resilience notion has been adopted for a wide range of environmental issues examining various expressions of change, the same cannot be said for social sciences, where the adoption and spread of this concept has proved to be relatively much slower [37]. As a matter of fact, only a partial consensus has been reached on the idea that the 'ecological' definition of resilience can be applied to social systems [38,39]. Concerns also emerged in the resilience debate, since the interpretative framework has failed to properly account for inequality and power imbalances [40], and agency and structural variables [41], in its application. To avoid overlooking the centrality of social system processes [27], an analysis of the impacts of external disturbances is crucial to this framework. Criticisms are also centred around the idea that resilience is an inherently conservative notion being used to justify projects based on neo-liberal ideas of community responsibility that aim to decrease state involvement [18].

Another field of criticism toward the use of the resilience concept in social systems' analysis argues that it is a "neutral" and politically "empty" term, since it does not consider the effect of human actions, social conflicts or political debate. The reference to "returning to a previous state" (bouncing back) can assume, in political debates, connotations of maintaining the status quo even if it is inefficient or simply unjust. Indeed, the use of the resilience concept has politically conservative connotations in

that its point of reference is system equilibrium, which assumes the lack of political debate or action to change the status quo. According to Mackinnon and Derickson [18], resilience is too often an objective defined and imposed from the top, being sometimes used to defend the neo-liberal development model, as this concept seems to have "certain ontological commitments that make it ideally suited for neo-liberal forms of governance" [42]. In the face of these criticisms, some scholars proposed a radical rethinking of the concept through an evolutionary interpretation (bouncing forward) of the dynamic processes that help systems to face disruptive events and achieve new and more sustainable states. Shaw [43] and Davoudi et al. [26] re-framed resilience as a conceptual base for policies that do not necessarily mean a return to the status quo preceding the crisis (bouncing back), suggesting de-centralized, de-commodified and decarbonised alternatives [27].

3. Study Area

The city of Battipaglia in Salerno Province (Campania) is a fairly new city in Southern Italy. Since its foundation as an autonomous municipality (by Royal Decree in 1929), Battipaglia has attracted populations from all across the nearby coastal plain of the Sele river, thanks to its proximity to the city of Salerno (Figure 1). Battipaglia and the 'Piana del Sele' district together constitute a complex urban system, currently undergoing rapid expansion into a traditional rural environment. In little more than a few decades the area has been transformed from a farming culture and economy to an industrial and tertiary sector hub. However, local socioeconomic dynamics still show signs of fracture in its model of territorial development. The area's first period of rapid development was between the 1930s and the 1950s, when the reclamation of the wetlands gave rise to flourishing agri-food industries (canning industries, sugar refineries, and tobacco factories), which created the foundations for the current industrial system. In this period, Battipaglia also saw huge urban expansion without any planning regulations or landscape protection measures, which resulted in a rapid increase in productive and residential areas, and a decrease in public areas and attractive landscapes. In 1950, a new legislation (the so-called 'Legge stralcio') paved the way for Italy's post-war Agrarian Reform: land was expropriated from large hereditary landowners and divided into small plots allocated to small-scale farmers. Furthermore, the reform saw the construction of a dense network of irrigation canals and roads connecting neighbouring farms, creating a modern, specialized and intensive system of agricultural production. In this period, Battipaglia also started to become an economic growth pole, thanks to massive state investments under the Italian Government's post-war reconstruction policy to build infrastructure in the underdeveloped south of the country. The first modern industrial hub in the area was consolidated in the steel sector, promoting the continuous development of the high-tech sector—from electric cables to fibre optics and telecommunications.

As a result of industrial growth, surrounding inland towns and villages experienced high levels of out-migration towards the inner city of Battipaglia and the surrounding coastal plain, leading to huge rates of land consumption for housing and rampant property speculation as demand outstripped supply. Large social housing tower blocks were also constructed near the city centre. This rapid process of industrialisation—driven by a policy strategy oriented toward development and consolidation of growth poles—did, however, soon clash with the rural nature of the local territory and with the traditional agricultural industry, leading to a subtle crisis in the industrial district. After the closure of the sugar refinery and the waning of the local tobacco industry, tensions escalated and culminated in Battipaglia's workers revolt (April 1969), that ended in tragedy with two protestors shot dead and over 200 people injured.

This crisis was, in part, overcome by the creation of an industrial area after the Municipality of Battipaglia was included in the Salerno province's development plan as an Area for Industrial Development (the so called 'Area per lo Sviluppo Industriale', ASI). On the one hand, the industrial area led to the closure of many historic agri-food processing industries; on the other hand, the new status as an ASI attracted new economic sectors to the city, such as the plastic industry, that helped to absorb the excess workforce from the agri-industrial sector and started a phase of social and economic

restructuring. In the years that followed, the city switched to a district-based model, oriented toward a new urban, social, economic and productive structure around the ASI area, still nearby—but physically distinct—from the city centre.

In 1972, a General Urban Development Plan was approved but, in practice, it was not able to control the expansion of urban settlements during the 1980s. This trend continued over the next decade, leading to urban voids and evident social fractures. After a long period of population growth, the city entered a phase of demographic stability in the early 1990s. In recent years, the more evident transformations have involved manufacturing areas, with new municipal land entering the ASI area; infrastructure, thanks to the "interport project" (the creation of a freight logistic centre); vast improvements to the city's motorway junction; as well as the redevelopment of the main railway station. These transformations have determined a concentration of construction in infrastructural hotspots and along the coast—a location with high rates of tourist accommodation. Urban sprawl has gradually reduced farmland, rendering residential areas built on land unfit for purpose, often without the necessary infrastructures for essential services or environmental conservation.

With 1488 beds and 90% of hotels with three or four stars (official data from the national Institute of Statistics referring to 2015), Battipaglia has a marked specialization in the tourism sector, operating during summer with most accommodation located along the coast. More than 2000 tourism activities and attractions were listed on Expedia (November 2019), including hotels, camping, and bed and breakfast accommodation. At the same time, Battipaglia and the surrounding district of Piana del Sele still show signs of economic vitality in the agricultural sector in comparison with the rest of the Salerno province. This district is home to a rich patrimony of cultural resources and has good production potential, not only in relation to intensive farming, but also as far as typical local agri-food products are concerned. There are projects underway to capitalize on these local resources, such as the restoration of the ancient Bourbon "masseria" farmhouses, built in the second half of the 18th century. Such areas can enact a rural development model based on complementary tourism, offering an alternative to the 'Beach & Sun' tourism model.
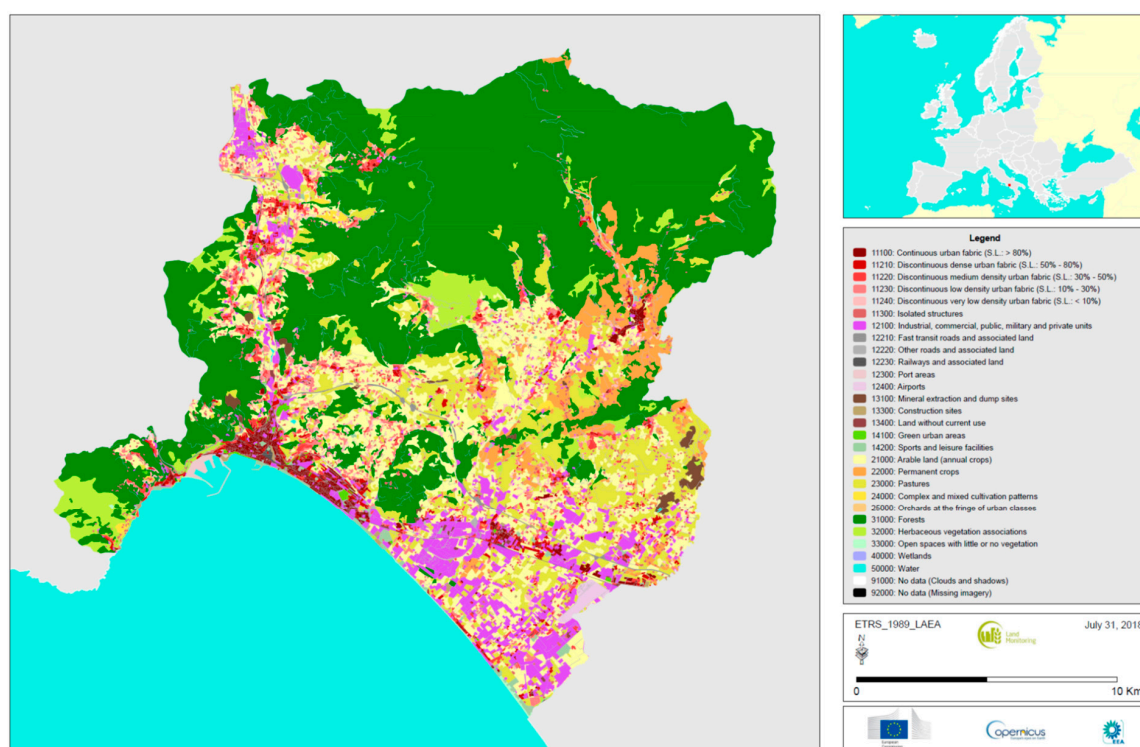

Figure 1. A land-use map of the urban conurbation Salerno–Battipaglia (2012); Salerno and Battipaglia cities are located respectively in the left and right part of the map. Source: GMES-Land Copernicus Urban Atlas.

4. Methodology

According to the regulatory framework of the Campania Region, urban planning procedures incorporate a public consultation phase. In the case for the urban planning of Battipaglia, this phase was held in January 2018, with the aim to solicit inputs for drafting a new master plan that included a strategic document (DOS) oriented toward resilience thinking. The outcomes of the public consultation were intended to identify significant issues in the relationship between urban and rural areas, allowing the definition of practical actions that may reinforce economic potential and social cohesion of local communities. The participatory process to urban planning was organized in two stages. During the first phase, local participants (identified through a public call for expression of interest) were invited to complete an online questionnaire. Almost 1.5% of the population took part in this survey (about 700 inhabitants overall). The results of this online consultation are not discussed in this study, which is instead focused on the second phase of stakeholder involvement. At this stage, a guided stakeholder consultation was organized in order to define common objectives and intervention strategies addressing the critical issues to be included in strategic planning. A total of 21 stakeholders were involved in the workshops, including representatives of local associations, authorities, research bodies, the agri-food and rural districts, consumer associations and farmers. Two stakeholder workshops were organized in Summer 2018 and Winter 2019.

During the first workshop, participants were engaged in a non-structured discussion focusing on four issues: (i) combating poverty and economic hardship, (ii) valorising the city's cultural identity and attractiveness to tourists, (iii) improving citizens' access to services and safety, and (iv) proposing actions and practical solutions for sustainable urban management. The second workshop engaged the stakeholders in a debate on a specific planning proposal prepared by the municipal council with support of a consultancy firm. The proposal was considered a first insight in the design of a local DOS, oriented toward resilience thinking and based on the stakeholders' feedback from the first workshop. This double consultation allowed the proposal to be more accurately addressed, incorporating requests and ideas from the local community. As discussed above, the "Bouncing forward" interpretation of resilience was adopted and a special emphasis was given to the centrality of agency and collective action because it was considered in line with the aims of the research.

Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) was used to better structure the debate and the stakeholders' inputs. REM is a participatory evaluation tool that uses mind mapping and qualitative data analysis to encourage stakeholders to collectively think about, and then visually map, all the intended and unintended potential repercussions—both positive and negative—of the proposal under discussion. REM is used to assess and analyse the steps a community has undertaken to enhance its resilience [44] and to identify growth, successes, challenges and concerns within the community as a result of specific initiatives, interventions and/or programs [45]. This approach is based on the concept of radiant thinking [46], which recognises that human minds do not naturally work in straight lines but rather respond better to making associations and connections that radiate out from a central point. For this reason, REM is an ideal tool for brainstorming, gathering and organizing stakeholder contributions in group interviews. The obtained ripple map data were classified on the base of the research dimensions illustrated in Table 1. For the REM approach, stakeholders are not required to be familiar with resilience thinking before creating their ripple map; they need to focus only on their own assessment of the proposed plan.

5. Results

5.1. A Brief Analysis of the Local Context

A widespread sense of abandonment and uncertainty emerged from the discussion held during the first stakeholder meeting, since all respondents ranked the quality of life in Battipaglia as low or very low. The stakeholders agreed that all citizens should have adequate access to services and that there should be a more equitable and widespread distribution of essential services across the territory

in order to tackle material poverty and poverty-driven crime, especially in the often overlooked and socially isolated peripheral areas of the city. Another issue raised in the first meeting dealt with city's environmental problems and their negative impact on life quality. For instance, Battipaglia experienced very heavy traffic, which increased pollution levels. The expansion of residential and industrial settlements led to a progressive loss of public green areas and landscape degradation. Finally, stakeholders argued that cultural identity and collective belief in the local potential (e.g., attractiveness to tourists) are very limited.

5.2. Prioritizing Research Dimensions

After this initial debate, the stakeholders prioritised the issues raised in the debate into the following hierarchy: (i) requalification and re-functionalization of existing buildings to improve the quality of the landscape, serving as a social space to build a greater sense of community; (ii) a greater support for existing micro-enterprises and creation of new enterprises, especially in innovative sectors; and (iii) smarter public–private partnerships, using the dense network of associations and charities that can successfully match business interests with the interests of the territory as a whole, by creating synergies between different productive sectors.

5.3. Ideas for a 'Food–Art' Hub

In the second meeting, the stakeholders were invited to give their opinion on the specific actions proposed in a preliminary draft of the DOS. The stakeholders' ideas were organised into a map, which summarises the ripple effect mapping exercise carried out during the workshop (Figure 2). A preliminary draft of the DOS proposed a set of possible actions with a specific ranking by relevance to the local context. The most important action was the requalification of a public school, which has been abandoned for years, and transforming the existing building into a hub to promote local agri-food products, crafts and art, whilst providing a public space to increase social interactions. Being located in the heart of the city, this building is strongly connected to the city's identity. Taken as a practical application of the evolutionary resilience principle discussed above, this action is particularly appropriate for analysis. The stakeholder response to the proposal included a series of actions trying to improve upon and contextualise the hub as proposed in the DOS. The stakeholders tried to map the potential "ripple effects" of each action, and the principal barriers and potential obstacles to the interventions. The actions proposed by the stakeholders address the territory as a whole (the city of Battipaglia, Piana del Sele district and the surrounding rural areas) and address together economic, social and environmental issues.

The stakeholders envisioned the hub as a multi-purpose cultural and creative space and as a home for a learning laboratory where people can better understand the historical links between the local territory and its food, farming traditions, industry and art. Interestingly, the stakeholder input placed emphasis on the synergy between art and food and proposed a more inclusive and participative management of the hub, suggesting the institution of a management committee that would represent different rural and urban participants (enterprises, consumers, associations, institutions). Stakeholders expressed a specific interest in an integrated plan that could help the city of Battipaglia to better interact with the surrounding rural areas, giving value to both tangible (e.g., artistic, architectural and environmental) and intangible (e.g., customs, festivals, historic memory, and traditional farming knowledge) assets. The approach proposed by the stakeholders was the first step in setting into motion initiatives to combine high quality local agri-food products with specific art exhibitions and events. In this regard, the farming sector's susceptibility to innovation could be improved by building a connection between art and food.

Figure 2. The ripple map applied to the case study.

Another ripple effect that stakeholders identified with the hub proposal was an increase in the number of tourists visiting the city, especially tourists looking for high-quality, environmentally and socially conscious food and wine products. This will give opportunities to strengthen ties between the city of Battipaglia and the surrounding towns and villages—where many of the resident population were originally born or brought up. This process could be particularly important to rebalance local settlements, since Battipaglia has experienced a vast population influx from inland areas. However, some stakeholders pointed out the danger that the hub could consolidate existing structural imbalances in the agricultural sector, with the most dynamic farms monopolising market opportunities. An additional stakeholder proposal was hosting an internationally inspired annual event at the hub that would promote "art in food" and "food in art" exhibitions with the involvement of neighbouring municipalities. The idea is that bringing artists and chefs together in the creative space of the hub would facilitate an exchange of ideas and build relationships that would last beyond the event itself and have a ripple effect on other businesspeople in the local area (especially those in the food and wine sectors)—encouraging other copycat initiatives. It is also plausible that this type of partnership could give the area a sort of "territorial brand" and unique identity.

The hub was also identified as a potential vehicle for promoting the Mediterranean diet, healthier eating and more environmentally conscious food choices. This was seen as a great opportunity for designing a food strategy for the local territory. Battipaglia is close to the well-known Cilento district which inspired the notion of 'Mediterranean diet' for the first time in history. The hub was also considered as a platform for a range of initiatives promoting a circular economy in the food supply chain. Stakeholders highlighted the role of Battipaglia as a link between rural and urban areas, promoting healthy life-styles, food quality and sustainability. Proposed actions were aimed at spreading good practice to reduce food waste and the loss of natural biodiversity and cultural diversity, mitigating climate change and social inequality at the same time. The benefits an effective food strategy would bring in terms of the environment, public health and social costs are evident. However, it was pointed out that consumer's access to alternative food options could be a problematic issue. As a matter of fact, smaller players could easily be squeezed out of the market by pre-dominant, existing food suppliers with greater buying power and better logistics. A suggested way to overcome this barrier to entry is to include schools and suppliers of school lunches in a short-range market based on local products. The intrinsic link between the Mediterranean diet and the survival of inland

farming areas was made clear in the stakeholder's discussion. Stakeholders agree that measures to reduce depopulation and the deactivation of farming activities in these areas are urgently needed. To organise artistic events throughout the year in the smaller rural towns around Battipaglia was proposed to complete the exhibitions' program at the hub. In this regard, the stakeholders recognised the fundamental role of subsidies for small farmers and small-scale food processors in the local area, but believed that specific funding should be closely linked to the social and environmental values of their products.

Another stakeholder proposal was to set up a canteen and an environmental/agronomic observatory inside the hub. The former could help in attracting people into the hub, while the latter could carry out historic/scientific research informing more effective landscape protection measures. This idea was closely linked to the perceived need to reconnect the hub proposal with traditional local memory and culture, e.g., by introducing younger generations to the wealth of traditional knowledge in the area—in the hope that new start-ups can build on and re-interpret that knowledge in innovative ways. The proposed observatory was also seen as a support mechanism for participatory planning, acting as a contact point for local farmers, agri-food product manufactures and managers of protected areas. Furthermore, the observatory could help meet the objectives of a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) by acting as a driver of economic activities in disadvantaged and depopulated areas.

5.4. The Role of Local Associations

The stakeholders recognised the role of local associations in a future strategy for a creative city rooted in social initiatives. A specific proposal encompassed theatre, art, and the city's history, reaching specific user's categories to make the city's public places truly open and enjoyable. Current initiatives were considered too fragmented and required a more systemic vision. Therefore, the stakeholders proposed a network initiative to link common initiatives and to formalise the partnerships existing between local authorities, associations, the tertiary sector, university and research bodies, businesses, and foundations. The network initiative was aimed at better exploiting synergies between sectors and, more importantly, at increasing the effectiveness of initiatives in terms of their tangible impact on the local context.

The hub was finally identified as an ideal location to promote local development initiatives, acting as a start-up incubator, a home for art studios and labs for learning a trade, a local market for zero-miles agricultural products and a centre for teaching and promoting Agriculture 4.0 strategies. Initiatives fostering public–private partnerships, and better training that reflects the reality of the employment market and assets of the local area, are necessary to allow the hub to act as an engine of local development. These kinds of initiatives are aimed at improving the quality of human capital and fostering greater entrepreneurialism, balancing private and collective interests. The final suggestion from stakeholders was to strengthen the possible synergies between the hub and other centres for social innovation in order to improve the city's relationship with the wider rural district.

5.5. A Summary View

The ripple map data were then categorised according to their (positive or negative) influence on the conceptual elements of resilience. This assessment was inevitably a subjective one, although every attempt was made to authentically represent the discussion that took place between the stakeholders. Empirical connections between stakeholders' ripple effects and resilience conceptual elements are shown in Table 1. This table outlines the conceptual elements used in the stakeholder meetings with the aim to assess implications and repercussions of the strategic plan on the socio-ecological system of Battipaglia.

Table 1. Identification of stakeholders' ripple effects and contextual problems/practical solutions suggested by stakeholders and basic conceptual elements of resilience thinking.

Conceptual elements	Ripple Effects
Shock/Vulnerabilities	Identification of shock/disturbance factors affecting local communities (degradation and loss of green spaces, uncontrolled construction, sprawl, inadequate public services, marginalisation of immigrants and vulnerable groups, post-industrial abandoned areas, progressive restriction of the public use of urban spaces and green areas, poor accessibility/absence of essential services, socioeconomic hardship, soil, air and water pollution, vulnerabilities exacerbated by the unequal distribution of resources)
Transformability/transformation/ innovation/Capitalize on new opportunities	Creativity in combining food and arts in an innovative way (take advantage of new touristic demand; ask for innovation)
Resilience building	Maintaining diversity (natural, cultural, social, economic, institutional) to increase options (combining different types of knowledge for learning, and providing opportunities for self-organization through cross-fertilization among sectors)
Collective capacities	Availability and awareness of local resources both tangible and intangible: Mediterranean diet and arts (favouring the accessibility to these resources and providing support to fragile consumers and marginal farmers, encouraging access to arts through cafeterias and/or canteens)
Collective processes	Willingness to take part in governance processes, active engagement in planning, community decision-making and initiatives (hub conceived as a multifunctional space to activate skills and capacities; public–private partnerships; networking of communities initiatives)
Panarchy	A two-way relationship with surrounding areas, flow of resources in and out of the system (localised food network; connection with other systems through the hub network)

Source: authors.

6. Discussion

The negative implications of accelerated urbanization in both advanced economies and emerging countries require practical solutions in light of more integrated planning visions referring to the concept of urban resilience. The present paper analyses the process of participatory planning for implementation of an Integrated Plan for Sustainable Cities in a medium-sized town of Southern Italy that is currently re-thinking its internal functions and those related with the city's wider sphere of influence. The empirical results of our work indicate that stakeholders' contribution to urban planning in the case study addressed the following issues: (i) a more systemic—hopefully more effective—approach to territorial governance; (ii) a refined "network" linking the array of local business and cultural associations under one institutional "umbrella"; (iii) improved coordination among stakeholders supporting the practical implementation of the DOS, e.g., building creative and collaborative future public/private partnerships; (iv) public venues for social interaction and information exchange that build social and cultural capital, strengthening community resilience and attracting innovative economic activities [47–50]. In these regards, the idea to connect food and art from a multi-purpose perspective was specifically based on a hub designed to become a flexible and creative cultural space—an interdisciplinary laboratory which combines food, traditions and the area's cultural patrimony, so as to showcase excellent of local art, tourist attractions, food and wine. When analysing the pre-existing barriers and potential obstacles to the successful implementation of the actions proposed, what becomes immediately clear is the central role of participatory planning, providing decision makers with the necessary feedback to design practical measures and strategic policies that increase community resilience.

Considering the results of the stakeholder workshops, and using the basic resilience concepts drafted in Table 1, a series of reflections emerge that, first, will contribute to implementation of the plan, and, second, may outline a potential future path for the community in the medium-long term. The lessons learnt from the Battipaglia hub, although based on a specific socioeconomic context, can be applied to other areas that share similar characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic marginality, urban shrinkage, poorly participated planning)—suggesting approaches that identify and internalise factors and elements

of territorial resilience. In this study, the method of a ripple map was used as a qualitative framework illustrating the main idea raised by the public consultation and the interviews, and the possible linkages with resilient thinking. The restricted sample of interviewed stakeholders allowed us to formulate a qualitative scenario, constructing a framework oriented toward a sustainable development path for the study area. Contributing to a wealth of theoretical literature on urban resilience, this study brings out an example of the practical translation of urban planning initiatives toward resilient thinking. While being illustrative of a specific socioeconomic context, the approach can be applied to other, similar contexts in Italy, and more generally in Europe, suggesting how a plurality of particular case studies, experiences, and narratives may exemplify—likely better than quantitative approaches such as models' results and outcomes of statistical analysis of appropriate indicators—the intimate complexity of an effective resilience thinking translation into practice.

Results of our study may confirm the increasing role of panarchy in socioeconomic resilience [19]. As a matter of fact, stakeholders expressed the importance of cross-scale interactions by emphasising the role of central cities in relation to a wider rural area, and by underlining the importance of networks for the successful implementation of the hub. These results are in line with what was highlighted by Wilson [32,51] and Singer et al. [52]. These scholars argued that exogenous drivers acting across multiple institutional scales (from local to regional levels) can either strengthen or weaken some capitals that are important for community resilience. This may be significant for the practical application of resilience thinking, because these drivers can affect policy corridors, and therefore transformational pathways for local communities. Furthermore, cross-scale interactions can significantly affect community economies, cultural practices, and social networks—meaning that those with particular capitals become more or less vulnerable than others [52] and that some communities, or social groups within communities, are better able to take advantage of change than others.

Agri-food supply chains are examples of cross-scale interactions and their redesigning and re-territorialisation which are increasingly associated with having huge potential for improving resilience [53]. As the case analysed shows, building local supply chains is a strategic option that pursues economic, environmental and social objectives. Local supply chains can reduce dependency on external supply, contributing to preserve bio-diversity, production and cultural diversity, and promoting an equal distribution of value and greater cooperation between the different participants in the chain. High connectivity between members in the chain (e.g., producers–suppliers and suppliers–consumers) and strong feedbacks (e.g., consumption–production) are both considered instruments required to improve system resilience. The stakeholders recognise these advantages, stressing the need for interventions to strengthen the linkage with rural areas. This way, urban resilience is intended as somehow dependent on the resilience of a wider region.

This principle can be linked back to collective capacities, i.e., the resources local communities have to respond to change. Our study demonstrates that the surveyed stakeholders were aware of the amount of (environmental, economic, and cultural) resources locally available, as well as aware that these resources were unevenly distributed within the community. In fact, stakeholders repeatedly stated the need for interventions enhancing socio-spatial cohesion. This is particularly evident in a suggestion to adopt a new food strategy that reflected the traditional Mediterranean diet or to make the hub and its activities accessible to all citizens.

Stakeholders' concerns were specifically directed toward the improvement of local conditions for families from disadvantaged backgrounds, assuming that less-educated households face difficulties in following a healthy diet or buying local organic products [54]. Similarly, stakeholders expressed concerns about the risk that the proposed plan, involving various initiatives around food and art, could accentuate the city's existing social disparities and further marginalise vulnerable people. Whilst we can talk about the power of art to transform communities or societies, we should also consider who effectively has access to the arts (Balfour et al. [15]). The cultural capital demised by formal schooling, education and the family, is distributed unequally across local communities and perpetuates social differences [55]. Many of those with low cultural capital perceive a psychological

barrier of elitism that prevents them from entering, e.g., an art gallery. The stakeholder suggestion to add a café/restaurant inside the hub could help break this barrier and would help in attracting marginal parts of the local society to engage in building cultural capital with the types of informal communication and interaction that enhances not just the individual but the social aspects of community and relational networks as a whole [49,56]. The collective processes to mobilise community capital envisioned by the stakeholders are based on a strong sense of inclusiveness and should be oriented towards systemic action.

In these regards, the art–food hub was conceived as a multi-functional space acting as education/training centre and incubator of locally-based entrepreneurship. For this reason, the choice to promote food and arts together is seen as a way to engage communities by developing a stronger sense of place, increasing individual confidence and reducing isolation [56–58]. Reference to a more incisive role of local authorities in promoting public–private partnerships reflects the increasing need for a developmental model that enhances community participation [16,58–60]. The stakeholders ask for networking initiatives and practical solutions grounded on bottom-up approaches that give value to community resources [61]. According to stakeholders, collective processes should definitely involve rural communities as privileged partners in building the relationship between food and art, instead of being considered as (inactive) recipients of urban initiatives.

As for the potential for transformability, the stakeholder contribution has shown that although the hub plan potential is based on existing community resources (food and culture), the community is able to look at the potential of these resources in new and dynamic ways, the most obvious example being the identified potential for increased attractiveness to tourists. Emphasis was placed on creativity and innovation as instruments to foster greater community entrepreneurialism and a willingness to explore new pathways. Recent literature shows that establishing, renewing or maintaining a creative context and a greater collaborative capacity is one of the key strategies to cope with change in disadvantaged local contexts [50,58]. This strategy exposes community members to a series of new experiences that require open-mindedness and flexibility, and offers an alternative to consolidated points of view, promoting different types of knowledge exchange, diversity, all of which contribute to resilience building [62–65].

The empirical results of the present study indicate about one can learn from a concentrated effort to study the institutions that have evolved for their governance and management over time. The stakeholders' vision of the specific dimensions of resilience thinking and the suggested practical implementation of a master plan—even for a particular case such as the food–art hub in Battipaglia—provide some suggestions on how to improve our practical understanding of how local institutions work and the potential of individuals to change their own institutions or to adapt to more critical conditions. While specific case studies alone are not sufficient for the development of a broader theory of institutional arrangements related, e.g., to the effective governance and management of common-pool resources, as clearly highlighted by Ostrom [66], a comparative analysis of similar information from other settings is the empirical base necessary for the effective translation of theoretical concepts to practical resilience thinking.

7. Conclusions

The empirical results of our study show the crucial role played by an ex ante assessment of the potential impacts of urban planning on resilience building. This assessment is valuable to decision makers—who can better plan policy and implement multilevel governance processes—and the community alike, who are involved in the definition of policy actions from the very beginning. The process described in this work is also important in terms of social learning, since co-planning processes may led to increased awareness of the initiatives promoted by local municipalities, and their wider implications for urban areas and the surrounding rural communities. The translation of theoretical resilience theories into a more practical thinking is likely a weak point in resilience science, and the validity of interpretative models oriented towards a more generalized resilience thinking should be extensively investigated in

future studies. Passing from isolated descriptions of (meaningful) case studies to a more comprehensive conceptualization of a practical resilience thinking in local communities, in line with, e.g., participatory planning, is particularly appropriate. Further investigation should finally clarify the role of formal and informal responses of individual and collective stakeholders to external shocks and more volatile contextual settings in a truly resilient planning vision.

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