



Social sustainability in a renovation context

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Research(er) background

- PhD from KTH (2009-2015 in Real Estate and Construction Management, specialization in RE economics)
 - Thesis: "Building Sustainability - Studies on incentives in construction and management of real estate"
- Mainly focused on sustainable renovation (mixed renovation, incremental renovation) – from energy efficiency to more holistic interpretation of sustainable
- SIRen (Sustainable Integrated Renovation) strong research environment
- Current paper: What is meant by social sustainability in a renovation context? A proposed framework



Project background

- Housing shortage (esp. affordable housing)
- Large renovation needs (“hump”) in post-war housing
- Many challenges
 - Technical
 - Environmental
 - Economic (“business-like”, rent control system)
 - Social (housing shortage, “renoviction”)
- (Socially) sustainable renovation – catchword, no one definition
- Need for framework
 - policy analysis + evaluation
 - research



Aim and research questions

Aim: to create framework for policy and research

RQ1: How is Social sustainability currently being understood in a renovation context in research and industry?

RQ2: How do these interpretations fit into said framework?



Method and data

- Workshop on Social sustainability in a renovation context with researchers and industry representatives (developers, consultants, municipalities, housing firms) (March 2015)
- Anthology documenting current interpretations and use in industry, academia and other organizations (see Lind & Mjörnell ed., 2015)
- Create needs matrix to perform analysis of data



Literature review (LR)

- Social sustainability is under-theorized (Åhman, 2013; Littig & Griessler, 2005), used as a container for other more established concepts (Davidson, 2010) and used differently in different contexts (Weingaertner & Moberg, 2014).
- Either addressed by naming characteristics of a socially sustainable state or process (Barron & Gauntlett, 2002; Colantonio & Dixon, 2011; Weingartner, 2010; Abbas, 2012) or by using broad definitions (Åhman, 2013; Ghahramanpouri et al., 2013).



LR: definitions (examples)

- *Social Sustainability is: a positive condition within communities, and a process within communities that can achieve that condition (McKenzie, 2004)*
- *Social sustainability is a quality of societies. It signifies the nature-society relationships, mediated by work, as well as relationships within the society. Social sustainability is given, if work within a society and the related institutional arrangements a) satisfy an extended set of human needs b) are shaped in a way that nature and its reproductive capabilities are preserved over a long period of time and the normative claims of social justice, human dignity and participation are fulfilled. (Littig & Griessler, 2005)*

LR: Themes and qualities

- Examples from literature include:

Basic needs

Justice

Poverty

Participation

Social mixing

Access

Security

Diversity

*Demographic
challenges*

Education and skills

Human rights

Social equity

Empowerment

Identity

Services

Social capital

Tolerance

*Sustainability of
community*

Work

Gender issues

Quality of life

Social cohesion

Culture

Health

Well-being

Governance

Democracy

- ...and have shifted over the years towards “soft” themes (Åhman, 2013; Dempsey *et al.* 2011; Colantonio & Dixon, 2011)



LR: Social aspects of sustainable housing development

- Based on principles of sustainable buildings and social sustainability *the social dimension of sustainable housing includes:*
 - the social preconditions that benefit production and consumption of environmentally friendly dwellings,
 - a fair distribution and consumption of housing resources and assets,
 - harmonious social relations within the housing system and
 - an acceptable housing standard (Chiu, 2003).



Based on LR, a proposal:

- Use the Needs Matrix as a framework based on human needs that are “finite, few and classifiable” (Max-Neef *et al.*, 1991)
- UN (1987) ”Sustainable development is development that meets the **needs** of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”
 - What is meant by needs?

Max-Neef's matrix of needs and examples of satisfiers

	Being	Having	Doing	Interacting
Subsistence	Health			
Protection			Co-operate	
Affection				Home
Understanding			Educate	
Participation	Trusting	Rights		
Leisure/idleness				Social arena
Creation			Work	
Identity		Norms		
Freedom				Plasticity



About needs and satisfiers

- Scale: individual, neighbourhood or society level
- Being – personal or collective attributes
- Having – goods, services and institutions, norms etc
- Doing – actual doing or possibility to
- Interacting – spatial or temporal locations/settings

- (There are satisfiers for one/more needs, satisfiers can also counter needs (of others) or pseudo-satisfy ones needs)



What needs are relevant in a renovation context?

- **Subsistence:** healthy housing, affordable housing (to also afford other satisfiers), job creation, public expenditures
- **Protection:** safe housing & neighbourhoods (from “renoviction”, crime), social security, social networks
- **Affection:** for which home is an important arena (mostly before/after renovation, not so much during renovation)



Needs and renovation II

- **Understanding:** in general, schools; about specific situations (like upcoming renovations), communication
- **Participation:** processes and arenas for democratic/societal participation and engagement before/during/after renovation
- **Leisure:** everyday life, peace of mind, landscaping



Needs and renovation III

- **Creation:** possibilities for (before/during/after renovation), jobs
- **Identity:** people's stories, neighbourhoods' history, neighbourhood/community, norms, habits, diversity, tolerance
- **Freedom:** independence, temporal and spatial ability to change and grow together



Results:

current interpretations and use in Max Neef's framework

	Being	Having	Doing	Interacting
Subsistence	Health	Job		
Protection		Rent control		
Affection			Bonding	
Understanding		Education	Communicate	
Participation		Influence	Dialogue	
Leisure				Arenas
Creation		Skills	Engage	
Identity	Pride			
Freedom				Plasticity



Preliminary conclusions

- For renovation purposes, status analysis of (unfulfilled) needs necessary on a neighbourhood basis *before* renovation can help guide the process
- A holistic view and collaboration are necessary
- Dialogue key tool to
 - satisfy needs like participation and understanding and
 - reveal other needs



Extra: empirical results, problem analysis (the "before" status) by Swedish actors

- Monotonic architecture / little variation, vandalism, poor access / services
- Unemployment, low income levels, poor school results, ethnical segregation, crime, feelings of unsafety, "renoviction", gentrification, unequal health,
- ...but also existing values to care for



Extra: empirical results, current interpretations of social sustainability in industry, academia and organizations

- Forms of communication – collection of views, provision of information, dialogue, etc.
- Influence, participation & engagement
- Variation in housing
- Limit technical alterations
- Prevent radical rent increases
- Employment and education
- Collaboration within and between organizations