

## Developing places for human capabilities

### Understanding how social sustainability goals are governed into urban development projects

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sustainability goals are governed  
into urban development projects

**Céline Janssen**



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# Developing places for human capabilities

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Understanding how social  
sustainability goals are governed  
into urban development projects

Dissertation

for the purpose of obtaining the degree of doctor  
at Delft University of Technology  
by the authority of the Rector Magnificus, prof.dr.ir. T.H.J.J. van der Hagen  
chair of the Board for Doctorates  
to be defended publicly on  
Monday 15 January 2024 at 12:30 o'clock

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“Don’t forget that a PhD is an education program”, was what my promotor told me at the first meeting we had at the very start of my PhD journey. “Allow yourself the freedom to discover, to be confused and to be lost, and trust on us that we will pull you back on track”.

Throughout the years, I have come to realize more and more that confusion is at the heart of being an academic. At the very start, one expects that taking a deep dive into a topic and collecting lots of information will make oneself automatically a confident expert. Perhaps cliché but true for me, the opposite is real: the more one reads, hears, and sees, the more doubts arise about how to make sense of reality.

Being trained in how to deal with the many complexities of, and insecurities in, the world that we live in is probably a more valuable outcome of this PhD journey to me than having found answers to my research questions.

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# Summary

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## [Towards a new evaluative approach](#)

Although social objectives are frequently part of the pursuit of sustainable urban development, how such social sustainability goals can be achieved in urban development practices remains a largely unsolved puzzle. While scholars increasingly acknowledge that urban social sustainability is a plural concept that needs to be specified in different situations, thus far very few social sustainability studies have focused on the processes in which such specifications take place – i.e., the implementation processes in which policies are brought into practice in urban areas or neighborhoods.

This dissertation develops an understanding of how institutionalized governance processes affect the implementation of policy goals related to social sustainability in area-based urban development projects. The research draws on Sen's Capability Approach (CA) to construct a capability-centered evaluation of such efforts. More than other normative approaches that primarily focus on the distribution or quality of spatial goods, the principles of the CA focus on the fact that different people have different experiences. Unique personal, social, and environmental circumstances per individual imply that people have different *capabilities*: the actual freedoms to do or be what one considers valuable for a dignified life. A promising role is reserved for the CA to investigate how exactly the diversity of human beings can be incorporated into urban development and planning processes. This provides a sincere response to the calls of social sustainability scholars that more 'human-centered' approaches are needed.

The dissertation hypothesizes that governance processes around urban development projects hold various elements that affect the implementation of social sustainability in contemporary cities, and subsequently, influence whether 'capability-centered urban outcomes' are achieved or not. In that way, this dissertation analyzes how governance *processes* in urban development practice relate to capability-centered *evaluations* of urban social sustainability outcomes. Whereas these two aspects are often investigated separately – i.e., studies often either focus on analyzing the mechanisms within governance processes *or* on describing and evaluating social outcomes in the urban environment – this dissertation explicitly brings these together. The governance process is investigated from a collaborative governance perspective to analyze which activities and interactions between the different

stakeholders affect capability-centered social sustainability outcomes in urban environments, and complementary, from an institutionalist perspective that explores what less-visible, yet structural elements of governance condition the emergence of capability-centered governance activities.

## Research findings

The research consists of four different studies representing four papers that were published during the PhD trajectory. The first study (Chapter 2) concerns an exploration of policy operationalizations based on existing empirical literature. The three studies that follow (Chapters 3-5) represent three sets of case study analyses around urban development projects. Each study has a unique (qualitative) research design – depending on the specific question that the study addresses – and focuses on a slightly different unit of analysis within the urban development projects. The projects investigated are Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam, Nieuw Crooswijk in Rotterdam (both in The Netherlands), Aspern Seestadt in Vienna (Austria), and DrottningH in Helsingborg (Sweden).

Chapter 2 discusses three examples of dimensions of social sustainability policy operationalization in Dutch planning practice in light of the Capability Approach. The study distinguishes two approaches to social sustainability operationalization in urban development – a resource-centered and a capability-centered approach – and compares them to each other. The chapter argues that, although a resource-centered approach oriented towards the delivery of spatial interventions is currently dominant in planning and development practice, a capability-centered approach broadens the operational meaning of social sustainability and offers an empirically more accurate definition of what it is essentially about. By pointing out the gaps that the Capability Approach can fill, the chapter positions the evaluative approach as a basis for the following case studies in this research.

Chapter 3 presents a single-case study analysis within the urban development project Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The study analyzes how social sustainability goals for the urban development project were envisioned by planning professionals, and juxtaposes this to an evaluation of how social sustainability outcomes were experienced by residents living in the urban areas. The study reveals a discrepancy between the planners' conceptualization of social sustainability – i.e., as one comprehensive, causal picture of how social sustainability comes about – and a high variety of how different people value, interpret, and 'perform' social sustainability on the ground. The study also shows how different individual persons make different value judgements about what important urban

functionings for social sustainability are. Moreover, the paper uncovers how people experience various enabling or constraining factors to convert urban resources into personal capabilities, e.g., to convert a physical community space (resource) into the actual opportunity to interact with other neighbors (personal capability). This high degree of variation underscores the importance of capturing social sustainability outcomes in local areas not only through the availability of realized design interventions, but through the evaluation of the relational conditions between individuals and their living environment.

Chapter 4 consists of a comparative case-study analysis within two urban development projects in the Netherlands: Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam and Nieuw Crooswijk in Rotterdam. The study focuses on the relations between collaborative governance situations around the projects and the achievement of capability-centered social sustainability outcomes in the urban areas – defined as the ways how residents convert place interventions into their personal capabilities. The analysis discovers how certain elements of the governance situations were influential for achieving capability-centered outcomes, namely: negotiating about the design and operation of place interventions between developing and utilizing actors, upholding social principles in the transition from realization to utilization phase, and setting jointly shared goals during the initiation phase of projects. By discussing these empirical findings in light of wider urban debates, the chapter concludes with three principles for a capability-centered governance for a capability-centered governance in urban development: (1) integrating human logic into urban governance situations, (2) balancing strong goal commitment with experimentalist governance, and (3) institutionalizing social sustainability implementation.

Chapter 5 presents a comparative case-study analysis around the urban development projects Aspern Seestadt in Vienna and DrottningH in Helsingborg and focuses on the institutional landscapes around these projects. The study identifies institutional conditions that explain why capability-centered governance practices (i.e., a 'Dialogue Approach' and a 'Neighborhood Management') took place within the two projects. The study finds that such practices do not necessarily benefit from highly formalized rules that prescribe specific localized social activities. Instead, it is found that particular institutions – those that (1) position the actors responsible for performing capability-centered activities clearly, (2) define strong socially-oriented and innovation-oriented scopes of these activities, and (3) enable funding that upholds long-term public interests within the market dynamics that co-shape the projects – are conditional for the capability-centered practices to take place. Such institutions can take shape both as formal rules or as strongly-embedded norms or shared strategies, and emerge depending on the traditions of the specific place.

## Main conclusions

Altogether, this dissertation shows how a capability-centered approach to social sustainability provides new insights that spark a fundamental re-interpretation of governance processes around urban development projects. The research brings a new set of variables to light that carry explanatory power for understanding to what extent socially sustainable urban outcomes are and can be achieved, acknowledging that each person experiences urban social sustainability in a unique way. This insight has implications for what we may expect from urban development efforts to contribute to people's quality of life. The findings imply that social sustainability is a phenomenon that cannot be fully controlled through urban development projects. After all, there is simply no single 'end picture' of a socially sustainable urban environment that can be 'created'. Nevertheless, the findings still point out that social sustainability *can* be steered toward in urban development practices – as described above, several governance elements are identified that lead to capability-centered social sustainability outcomes.

From a capability-centered approach, implementing social sustainability does not per se center around the realization of new spatial resources. Instead, the main challenge of implementing social sustainability goals in urban development practices lies in understanding the capabilities of people in local urban areas. This requires an organization of collaborative activities among urban actors in such a way that they construct local understandings about what is exactly needed for different residents to live a valuable life in cities. In doing so, it is essential for actors to continuously evaluate their governance-activities, and to act upon new insights about how place interventions correspond with the experiences of the ones living in the area that is undergoing (re)development.

The dissertation recognizes that the 'embedded reflexivity' found and proposed makes the relation between governance processes and social sustainability outcomes seem somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, concrete solutions for urban interventions need to be kept as open as possible – sometimes challenging prevailing institutions – to be able to adapt to emerging human needs in a neighborhood or area. On the other hand, governance activities oriented towards capability expansion may not take place, or do not lead to equal capability outcomes if they are not embedded in institutional landscapes around these activities. Governance towards social sustainability in urban development, therefore, proves to be a balancing act between reflexivity in terms of situated governance activities on the one hand, and institutionalization in terms of social principles, responsible actors, and the capacity to fund the public interest on the other.

Most essential in all this is the concern to put human capabilities at the normative heart of the policy implementation process. Although it is self-evidently not feasible to tailor social policy interventions to every single person's needs, it is essential for all governance situations to *start* from an individual capability perspective, and design spatial resources and other spatial interventions only if they enhance desired human functionings. Amidst the many different interpretations and operational shapes that social sustainability may take in local situations, human diversity and real opportunities are the central principles that must be sustained during all development phases of urban development projects.



# Samenvatting

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## Een nieuwe evaluatieve benadering

Wereldwijd maken sociale doelstellingen zoals inclusie, welzijn en leefkwaliteit steeds vaker deel uit van het streven naar duurzame stedelijke ontwikkeling. De vraag hoe dergelijke sociale duurzaamheidsdoelen geoperationaliseerd kunnen worden blijft echter grotendeels onbeantwoord. Wetenschappers erkennen in toenemende mate dat sociale duurzaamheid een breed concept is dat gespecificeerd dient te worden in verschillende situaties, maar slechts weinig studies richten zich op de processen waarin deze specificaties plaatsvinden - de implementatieprocessen die nodig zijn om beleid voor sociale duurzaamheid in gebieden of buurten tot realisatie te brengen.

Dit proefschrift creëert inzicht in hoe geïnstitutionaliseerde sturingsprocessen de implementatie van sociale duurzaamheidsbeleidsdoelen in gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten beïnvloeden. Het onderzoek maakt gebruik van Sen's Capability Approach (CA) om een 'capability'-gerichte evaluatie van dergelijke inspanningen te construeren. In tegenstelling tot andere normatieve benaderingen die zich primair richten op de herverdeling of kwaliteit van ruimtelijke voorzieningen, richten de principes van de CA zich op het feit dat verschillende mensen verschillende ervaringen hebben. Unieke persoonlijke, sociale en omgevingsomstandigheden per individu leiden tot verschillende *capabilities* van mensen: de daadwerkelijke vrijheden om datgene te doen of te zijn wat iemand belangrijk acht voor een waardig leven. De CA leent zich uitstekend om te onderzoeken hoe stedelijke ontwikkelings- en planningsprocessen rekening kunnen houden met de inherente diversiteit van mensen. Daarmee doet het ook recht aan de behoefte in de wetenschap aan meer 'mensgerichte' benaderingen in stedelijke ontwikkeling.

Het proefschrift veronderstelt dat verschillende elementen in de sturingsprocessen rondom gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten de implementatie van sociale duurzaamheid in hedendaagse steden beïnvloeden - en dat deze elementen bepalend zijn voor het al dan niet bereiken van 'capability-gerichte' uitkomsten in steden. Op deze manier slaat dit proefschrift een brug tussen de *processen* rondom gebiedsontwikkeling en de capability-gerichte *evaluaties* van sociale duurzaamheidsuitkomsten in gebieden en buurten. Terwijl deze twee aspecten vaak apart worden bestudeerd - d.w.z. studies richten zich vaak *ofwel* op het analyseren van de mechanismen binnen



sturingsprocessen, *ofwel* op het beschrijven en evalueren van sociale uitkomsten in de stedelijke omgevingen – brengt dit proefschrift deze expliciet samen. Het sturingsproces wordt bestudeerd vanuit twee perspectieven. Ten eerste vanuit een *collaborative governance*-perspectief. Het gaat er dan om te analyseren welke acties en interacties tussen de verschillende belanghebbenden van invloed zijn op capability-gerichte sociale duurzaamheidsuitkomsten in stedelijke omgevingen. Ten tweede vanuit een *institutioneel* perspectief, complementair aan het eerste perspectief, dat onderzoekt welke minder zichtbare, maar structurele elementen de opkomst van capability-gerichte sturingsactiviteiten conditioneren.

## Onderzoeksbevindingen

Het onderzoek bestaat uit vier verschillende studies die elk als paper zijn gepresenteerd. De eerste studie (hoofdstuk 2) betreft een verkenning van beleidsoperationalisering op basis van bestaande empirische literatuur. De drie studies die volgen (hoofdstukken 3-5) presenteren drie verschillende casestudie-analyses van gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten. Iedere studie heeft een unieke (kwalitatieve) onderzoeksopzet – afhankelijk van de specifieke vraag die in de studie aan de orde komt – en analyseert een specifiek element binnen de gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten. De onderzochte projecten zijn Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam, Nieuw-Crooswijk in Rotterdam (beide in Nederland), Aspern Seestadt in Wenen (Oostenrijk) en DrottningH in Helsingborg (Zweden).

Hoofdstuk 2 bespreekt vanuit de Capability Approach drie voorbeelden van sociale duurzaamheidsoperationalisering in de Nederlandse planningspraktijk. Op basis van deze bespreking onderscheidt de studie twee benaderingen om sociale duurzaamheid in stedelijke ontwikkeling te operationaliseren – een op *voorzieningen-gerichte* en een op *capability-gerichte* benadering – en vergelijkt deze met elkaar. Het hoofdstuk betoogt dat een op voorzieningen-gerichte benadering gericht op het leveren van ruimtelijke interventies momenteel dominant is in de plannings- en ontwikkelingspraktijk, maar dat een op capability-gerichte benadering de operationele betekenis van sociale duurzaamheid verbreedt. Empirisch gezien biedt deze benadering een nauwkeurigere definitie van dat waar sociale duurzaamheid in essentie om gaat. Door aan te tonen welke hiaten de capability-gerichte benadering kan opvullen, positioneert het hoofdstuk de evaluatieve benadering als basis voor de volgende casestudies in dit onderzoek.

Hoofdstuk 3 presenteert een enkele-casestudie analyse binnen het gebiedsontwikkelingsproject Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam, Nederland. De studie analyseert hoe planningsprofessionals de sociale duurzaamheidsdoelen voor het gebiedsontwikkelingsproject conceptualiseren, en plaatst dit naast een evaluatie

van hoe bewoners in het gebied de sociale duurzaamheidsuitkomsten ervaren. De studie toont een discrepantie aan tussen hoe planners sociale duurzaamheid conceptualiseren - namelijk als één allesomvattend, causaal beeld van hoe sociale duurzaamheid tot stand komt - en de grote variëteit in hoe verschillende mensen sociale duurzaamheidsfuncties in de praktijk ervaren. De studie toont ook aan hoe verschillende individuele personen verschillende waardeoordelen vellen over wat belangrijke stedelijke functies voor sociale duurzaamheid zijn. Bovendien onthult het hoofdstuk hoe mensen diverse stimulerende of beperkende factoren ervaren om stedelijke hulpbronnen om te zetten in persoonlijke capabilities, bijvoorbeeld om een fysieke gemeenschapsruimte (hulpbron) om te zetten in de feitelijke mogelijkheid tot interactie met andere burens (persoonlijke capability). Deze grote geobserveerde variatie onderstreept het belang van het evalueren van sociale duurzaamheidsresultaten in lokale gebieden op basis van hoe individuen zich tot hun leefomgeving verhouden - en dus niet alleen op basis van de beschikbaarheid van gerealiseerde ontwerpinterventies.

Hoofdstuk 4 bestaat uit een vergelijkende casestudie-analyse van twee gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten in Nederland: Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam en Nieuw-Crooswijk in Rotterdam. De studie richt zich op de relatie tussen de *collaborative governance*-situaties rondom de projecten en het bereiken van capability-gerichte sociale duurzaamheidsuitkomsten in de gebieden. Deze uitkomsten zijn gedefinieerd als de manieren waarop bewoners gebiedsinterventies omzetten in hun persoonlijke capabilities. De analyse laat zien hoe bepaalde governance elementen van invloed waren op het bereiken van capability uitkomsten. Deze elementen hielden in: het onderhandelen over het ontwerp en de uitvoering van interventies tussen ontwikkelende en beherende actoren, het handhaven van sociale principes in de overgang van realisatie- naar beheerfase, en het stellen van gezamenlijk gedeelde doelen tijdens de initiatiefase van projecten. Door deze empirische bevindingen te bespreken aan de hand van bredere ruimtelijke discussies, concludeert het hoofdstuk met drie principes voor een capability-gerichte governance in stedelijke ontwikkeling: (1) het integreren van menselijke logica in stedelijke governance-situaties, (2) het balanceren tussen sterke doelvastheid en experimentele sturing, en (3) het institutionaliseren van sociale duurzaamheidsimplementatie.

Hoofdstuk 5 presenteert een vergelijkende casestudie-analyse van de gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten Aspern Seestadt in Wenen en DrottningH in Helsingborg en richt zich op de institutionele landschappen rondom deze projecten. De studie benoemt institutionele condities die verklaren waarom twee capability-gerichte governancepraktijken (een 'dialoogbenadering' in Helsingborg en een 'wijkbeheerteam' in Wenen) konden plaatsvinden binnen de twee projecten. Uit de

studie blijkt dat dergelijke praktijken niet noodzakelijkerwijs baat hebben bij sterk geformaliseerde regels die specifieke activiteiten in de lokale gebieden voorschrijven. Bepaalde andere instituties zijn daarentegen voorwaardelijk voor het plaatsvinden van capability-gerichte praktijken. Dit zijn instituties die (1) actoren positioneren die verantwoordelijk zijn voor het uitvoeren van capability-gerichte activiteiten, (2) sterk sociaal-georiënteerde en op innovatie-gerichte kaders van deze activiteiten definiëren en (3) financiering mogelijk maken die lange-termijn publieke belangen handhaaft binnen de marktdynamiek die de projecten mede vormgeeft. Dergelijke instituties kunnen zowel de vorm van formele regels aannemen als van verankerde normen of gedeelde strategieën, en hangen af van tradities van een specifieke plek.

## Hoofdconclusies

Al met al laat dit proefschrift zien hoe een capability-gerichte benadering van sociale duurzaamheid nieuwe inzichten oplevert die aanzetten tot een fundamentele herinterpretatie van governanceprocessen rondom gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten. Het onderzoek brengt een nieuwe set variabelen aan het licht die verklarende kracht hebben om te begrijpen in hoeverre sociaal duurzame stedelijke uitkomsten kunnen worden bereikt – daarbij rekening houdend dat elke persoon sociale duurzaamheid op een unieke manier ervaart. Dit inzicht heeft implicaties voor wat we mogen verwachten van gebiedsontwikkeling om bij te dragen aan de leefkwaliteit van mensen. De bevindingen impliceren dat sociale duurzaamheid een fenomeen is dat niet volledig gecontroleerd kan worden door middel van gebiedsontwikkelingsprojecten. Er is eenvoudigweg niet één ‘eindplaatje’ van een sociaal duurzame stedelijke omgeving dat kan worden ‘gecreëerd’. Desalniettemin wijzen de bevindingen erop dat sociale duurzaamheid toch zeker wel gestuurd kan worden via stedelijke ontwikkeling: de verschillende, hierboven omschreven elementen leiden immers tot capability-gerichte sociale duurzaamheidsuitkomsten.

Vanuit een capability-gerichte benadering draait de implementatie van sociale duurzaamheid niet per se om de realisatie van nieuwe ruimtelijke voorzieningen. In plaats daarvan is de belangrijkste uitdaging van sturen op sociale duurzaamheidsdoelen in stedelijke ontwikkeling, het *begrijpen* van de capabilities van mensen in lokale gebieden. Dit vereist een zodanige organisatie van samenwerkingsactiviteiten tussen stedelijke actoren dat zij lokale inzichten opbouwen over wat verschillende bewoners precies nodig hebben om een waardevol leven in steden te leiden. Het is daarbij essentieel dat actoren hun governance-activiteiten voortdurend evalueren en handelen vanuit steeds nieuwe inzichten over de mate waarop gebiedsgerichte interventies overeenkomen met de ervaringen van degenen die wonen in het gebied dat wordt (her)ontwikkeld.

Het proefschrift erkent dat deze 'ingebede reflexiviteit' die wordt voorgesteld de relatie tussen governance-processen en sociale duurzaamheidsuitkomsten enigszins paradoxaal maakt. Aan de ene kant moeten concrete oplossingen voor stedelijke interventies zo open mogelijk worden gehouden – soms tegen gevestigde instituties indruisend – om zich te kunnen aanpassen aan nieuw-onstaande behoeften van mensen in een buurt of gebied. Aan de andere kant zullen governance-activiteiten die gericht zijn op capability-uitbreiding mogelijk niet plaatsvinden of niet leiden tot gelijke uitkomsten als ze niet zijn ingebed in institutionele landschappen rondom deze activiteiten. Governance voor sociale duurzaamheid in stedelijke ontwikkeling bewijst dus een balanceer-act te zijn tussen reflexiviteit op het vlak van gesitueerde activiteiten aan de ene kant, en institutionalisering op het vlak van sociale principes, verantwoordelijke actoren en de capaciteit om het publieke belang te financieren aan de andere kant.



# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Research field

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### 1.1.1 A new call for social policies in urban development

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Within human societies, cities form strategic places for people to interact with others. Cities are places where human beings can perform particular functionings, i.e. activities that are important to us, such as establishing relationships, doing business, performing politics, or exchanging knowledge and ideas. In the fields of urban planning and development, it is often assumed that (the design of) physical space can improve the quality and functioning of human life. Professional actors like planners, architects, and real estate developers often believe that 'better cities lead to a better quality of life'. Indeed, planning history shows that the introduction of sanitation systems, the construction of public transportation lines, and the continuous improvement of housing quality in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century have certainly improved people's living conditions in many cities around the globe.

In a rapidly urbanizing world (UN, 2018), however, the question is raised whether cities can guarantee a good life for everyone. Cities everywhere are facing increasing inequalities among people who have more access to urban services than others (OECD, 2016, 2018). In Europe specifically, there are concerns about people living in poverty and risking social exclusion (Andersen & Van Kempen, 2019; Eurostat, 2022; Fredriksen, 2012). Increasing disparities between urban and rural areas and socio-economic segregation within cities (Kenny & Luca, 2021; Musterd et al., 2017) are also being reported. These concerns stand in stark contrast to the economic wealth accumulated in European cities. Over recent decades, the performance of cities in terms of employment levels, productivity, education, and innovation has been thriving (European Investment Bank, 2018).

While cities are thus promising places to achieve a better quality of life through access to education, employment, transportation, food, and housing for some people, they turn out to be less promising places for others (Kotzeva & Brandmüller, 2016). To address or prevent issues of social deterioration that result from this, urban policymakers have recently started to make the social ambitions for their cities much more explicit. Policymakers operating on international, national, regional, and local levels are now calling for more ‘inclusive’, ‘accessible’, ‘just’, ‘diverse’, and ‘socially resilient’ urban environments (College van Rijksadviseurs, 2023; EUROCITIES, 2021; European Commission, 2019, 2023; Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koningsrelaties, 2022). Similarly, private stakeholders in urban development are developing social ambitions too. This, at least in part, is due to increased attention to the ‘S’ in ESG directives<sup>1</sup>, and the widespread attention for creating “social impact” or “social values” in corporate strategies (Urban Land Institute, 2021).

Although social policy goals in urban development are certainly not something new in practice and research, how to achieve those goals in real-life city-making remains largely unclear. While social housing traditions (Whitehead & Scanlon, 2007), national urban development programs (Vranken, 2005), and neighborhood upgrading programs (Atkinson, 2008; Van Gent, 2010) are examples of social policy implementation in Western European welfare states, the observed shift from ‘government’ to ‘governance’ (Harvey, 1989; Van Loon et al., 2019) has considerably changed ‘the game’ of how urban areas here are being developed. As a result of privatization and decentralization processes in the 1980s and 1990s, many governments in European countries have eased their control over local urban development practices. The role of the private sector, but also of civic groups and other civil society actors in urban development practices has grown. Amidst this reality, cities are no longer ‘planned’ but rather evolve through situated processes of governance, i.e. a complex mosaic of (inter)actions between a diversity of urban actors and institutions. In such governance processes, technical reasoning like ‘by improving places, we improve people’s lives’ no longer applies.

To address this issue, policymakers and other professionals in urban planning and development need to critically rethink what the newly emerged social policy goals in European cities exactly aim for. As goals such as ‘inclusion’, ‘well-being’, and ‘quality of life’ can each be interpreted in many different ways, their implementation in urban

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<sup>1</sup> ESG stands for using Environmental, Social, and Governance factors to assess the sustainability performance of companies such as real estate investors (Directorate-General for Financial Stability, 2023).

development practice is far from clear-cut. Compared to improving social conditions in terms of hygiene, infrastructure, and housing quality over the previous century, contemporary social policy goals are much more abstract, and oriented towards the diverse personal lives of urban inhabitants. What exactly desirable outcomes of the new social policy goals are often remains unclear in both urban research and practice.

Given the complexity of the governance processes that shape urban planning and development practices, and the abstract nature of contemporary social policy goals, the question emerges of what type of governance is needed to make cities better for people. To answer this question, this dissertation addresses the various emerging social policy goals in urban development by drawing on the umbrella concept of urban social sustainability. This dissertation first deconstructs the concept of social sustainability as it relates to urban policy-making, planning, and development, thereby connecting to the wider pursuit of sustainable urban development. Why this policy frame is particularly relevant for understanding how cities and neighborhoods can be developed in a more social way, is discussed in the following.

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### 1.1.2 Pursuing urban social sustainability

Since the 1980s, global policy-making has been strongly influenced by the notion of sustainable development. It was first introduced in the Brundtland Report, written by the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), and later developed via World Summits into the Millennial Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals (Handl, 2012; Sachs, 2012; United Nations, 2015b). Anticipating several global environmental problems, among which the gap in the Ozone-layer and disappearing rainforests, the policy goal of sustainability specifically orients itself towards the collective future of human beings ('our common future') on planet Earth. It calls for development that does not only aim at fulfilling the needs of those who live now, but at warranting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Subsequently, many urban scholars have been inspired to think of principles for 'sustainable cities' (Haughton & Hunter, 2004; Satterthwaite, 1997), 'biophilic cities' (Beatley, 2011), or 'the limits of the city' (Bookchin, 1975). Defined as a development that 'seeks to create cities and towns that improve the long-term health of the planet's human and ecological systems' (Wheeler, 1996), sustainable urban development became a commonly-applied norm in both local, national, and transnational urban policy-making.



Social objectives are frequently part of the pursuit of sustainable development, especially objectives concerning equity and inequality. In policy for example, the Millennium Development Goals expressed goals on poverty reduction, universal primary education, or improving maternal health (United Nations, 2015a). In academic debates, the argument appears that something sustainable is not necessarily *just* - especially when the effects of environmental policies are not equally distributed (Haughton, 2021; Marcuse, 1998). The presence of these two noble ambitions, as well as various others, point out that sustainable urban development is not one universal goal but consists of various dimensions that can be interpreted and weighted in different ways. Indeed, many scholars have explained urban development as a conflict-laden arena in essence, in which different economic, democratic, and other matters eventually need to be balanced (Campbell, 2006; Marcuse, 1998). This line of thought corresponds with Elkington's (1997) popular 'triple-bottom-line' understanding of sustainability, where it is understood as a condition consisting of multiple dimensions that need to be equally addressed (i.e., mostly referred to as environmental, economic, and social dimensions).

Amidst the intended integrality of sustainable urban development, social sustainability developed in literature as an autonomous concept that is specifically concerned with people-oriented objectives. Although most of its elements have been long known in city-making – the question of how to maintain social life in cities for example – (Davidson, 2010), scholars generally agree that it hitherto remains an ambiguous concept and least-understood dimension of sustainability (Manzi et al., 2010). Social sustainability is conceptually interpreted in different ways – ranging from seeing social sustainability as a positive condition within communities (McKenzie, 2004) to seeing it as a strategic policy tool (Boström, 2012) or as the lack of certain hindrances in society (Missimer et al., 2016). The research in this dissertation adheres to the conceptual understanding of social sustainability as the pursuit of maintaining people's well-being, now and in the future (Chiu, 2003). It thus does not focus on the connection to environmental sustainability, but emphasizes the normative pursuit of a 'better' quality of life for all. Within this pursuit, however, again a wide range of criteria emerge: ranging from social cohesion, collective well-being, and safety, to diversity, democracy, social justice, and individual well-being (more about this in Chapter 2).

It is not hard to imagine that the diffuse interpretations of social sustainability impede a clear-and-cut operationalization in practice. A main operational challenge relates to the concept's situation-dependency. Increasingly, scholars underline that social sustainability is an interpretive concept that needs to be specified in specific contexts (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017). Even more, because urban development is situation-dependent practice – each urban area is different than one other –, the meaning of

social sustainability can differ from place to place. For example, it can be imagined that 'feeling of community' holds a different meaning for a local community that shares hundreds of years of history, than for a fresh community in a new residential area. Finally, another operational challenge relates to social sustainability's normative content. Compared to sustainability goals that scientists generally agree upon<sup>2</sup>, such as reducing CO2 emissions and preventing sea level rises, goals around social sustainability are inherently political (Davidson, 2010). For various valid reasons, for example, ambitions for social justice or well-being can be articulated from different points of view. Rather than being a fixed target, social sustainability is thus a plural concept that can have different meanings in different situations.

The plurality of social sustainability complicates its implementation process in urban development practices when the concept's meaning needs to become more concrete. Various challenges may occur in this process. When implementing operational interventions in a development practice, for example, softer social goals such as well-being may be neglected over 'harder' goals such as the number of affordable housing units - because social outcomes are more difficult to measure. Alternatively, more fundamental goals such as social justice and equity may be replaced by more pragmatic ones such as cohesion because they better connect the different interests of the various stakeholders involved (Davidson, 2010; Elander & Gustavsson, 2019). Social goals may also simply fade into the background of stakeholders' priorities throughout the duration of a project (Langergaard, 2019).

Thus far, very few urban social sustainability studies have focused on the process in which urban areas or neighborhoods are developed as policy goals are implemented – the process from planning to realization. It is this process, however, where it is decided on operational interventions and where the eventual social outcomes begin to take shape. For pursuing urban social sustainability in policy, it is therefore crucial to assess what exactly happens during this implementation process in urban development practice. For such an assessment, however, it is first needed to deal with the above-described plurality of social sustainability. Based on what type of social outcomes should the implementation process be evaluated? In other words, analyzing the implementation of social sustainability involves more than investigating its process alone. It also requires taking a normative position vis a vis social sustainability based on which processes as well as outcomes of social sustainability can be assessed, i.e. the governance around urban development practices as well as the social effects that they produce.

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<sup>2</sup> Although moral choices in environmental sustainability policy implementation can also be discussed.

### 1.1.3 Principles of the Capability Approach

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To construct an understanding of the value-laden and situation-dependent character of social sustainability, an evaluative framework will be of help. This dissertation draws on the Capability Approach (CA) (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1999b) as an evaluative framework to understand the implementation of social sustainability in urban development practices. The CA is a well-known normative framework that devises an idea of social justice and enables the evaluation of human welfare and development (Sen, 1979, 2005, 2009). It assumes that what matters in questions around social justice, well-being, and quality of life, is the freedom of a person to live a worthy and dignified life. While the Capability Approach has inspired scholars in economics, political philosophy, human development studies, and various other disciplines, it has recently also penetrated urban debates that call for more just, inclusive, and 'human-centered' cities (Anand, 2018; Basta, 2016; Deneulin, 2014; Fainstein, 2014; Frediani, 2021). So, the CA became an interdisciplinary approach that has been applied in a broad variety of fields, such as poverty development (Alkire, 2005), sustainable development (Frediani, 2010; Gasper, 2007), education (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007) - and also increasingly in the built environment (Biagi et al., 2018; Brummel, 2017; Cao & Hickman, 2019). Before explaining why the CA was particularly selected as a framework in this dissertation, the key principles of the approach will be introduced.

Initial ideas on human capabilities were pioneered by political economist Amartya Sen. He developed these ideas as a critique of measurement approaches in welfare economics. These ideas are rooted in social choice theory, in which Sen (1970) criticized the use of utilitarian approaches to evaluating societal outcomes ("the greatest good for the greatest number"). According to Sen, societal outcomes are much richer than the outcomes of rational systems such as perfect markets. By showing how the influential Pareto principle in economics (aimed at collective efficiency) conflicts with the principle of minimal liberalism (aimed at individual freedom), Sen (1992) demonstrated the conflict between utilitarianism and the libertarian principle that every person has a right to choose. For that reason, the Capability Approach argues that the proper space to evaluate society's 'state of development' should not concentrate on utilitarian measures such as a GDP, but should incorporate the freedom a person has to make their own choices in life. As a moral principle for equality, Sen argues (1979), it is eventually not equality of utility or equality of goods that matter, but equality of *capability*, i.e., a person's concrete freedoms to do and be the things he/she has reason to value in life. As such, human beings are conceptualized as being inherently diverse and, at the same time, also orientated toward their self-development and well-being.

Sen's (1999a, 1999b) ideas about capabilities are thus strongly influenced by liberal thought<sup>3</sup> that puts moral emphasis on the individual as an end in itself – next to the instrumental argument that utilitarian approaches often do not apply in social evaluations because human beings are fundamentally diverse. The so-called ethical individualism does not necessarily ignore the fact that people live in societies and relate to other people, instead, it implies that the life of an individual person is what eventually *matters* – i.e., every person has the right to live a worthy life. This principle also became highly influential in the work by philosopher Martha Nussbaum, who continued to develop the Capability Approach in the direction of political philosophy and human rights (Nussbaum, 2003; Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). Although her work covers a wide range of topics stretching from human flourishing and capabilities to emotions and animal well-being, she became particularly known for her list of ten central capabilities<sup>4</sup> (Nussbaum, 2000) that every individual has a right to exercise. Although she argues that without such a list, it is impossible to achieve justice, Sen himself rejected the existence of such a list because he argues that the definition of what relevant capabilities are, very much depends on the situation of assessment (Sen, 2009).

The CA can be seen as one of today's prevailing theories about justice next to Rawls' (1971) prominent theory on Justice as Fairness (Brighouse & Robeyns, 2010). Sen (2009) was strongly influenced by Rawls' liberal egalitarian principles that every person has the right to claim the basic principle of justice and liberty, and that more equality can be achieved by improving the conditions of the worse-off in society. While ideas on justice in urban discourses are also generously fueled via critical urban theory on for example the Right to the City developed by Henri Lefebvre (1967) and David Harvey (2003), and further urban debates on spatial justice (Dikeç, 2001; Soja, 2013), the Senian approach puts a different emphasis to the question of justice. While Harvey's discourse moved toward the existence of a collective 'right to the city', and focuses on how the suppressed can undertake collective action to reclaim power in society (Basta, 2017), the Capability Approach focuses on what principles or rules of coexistence in society could ensure equal capabilities of different individual persons.

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<sup>3</sup> In his writings, Sen mentions to be inspired by, among others, Adam Smith, Kenneth Arrow, and John Rawls.

<sup>4</sup> Nussbaum's (2000) ten central human functional capabilities include – in short – 1) Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length, 2) Being able to have good health, 3) Being able move freely from place to place, 4) Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason, 5) Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves, 6) Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life, 7A) Being able to live with and towards others, 7B) Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation, 8) Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature, 9) Being able to laugh, to play, and to enjoy recreational activities, 10A) Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life, and 10B) Being able to hold property.

Moreover, the CA differs from the many distributive justice approaches existing in critical urban theory because it does not intend to form an ideal theory of justice, but as a metric to evaluate real situations in society. While Sen explains Rawls' Justice as Fairness as a transcendental theory that describes how primary goods (including rights, liberties, and opportunities) should be *formally* distributed, he explicitly points to the situation that this does not say anything yet for what people experience in real life – i.e., the formal right to vote does not mean that one actually exercises it (Basta, 2017; Sen, 2009). The Capability Approach considers it more valuable to compare real-life situations, to discover capability inequalities, and to know where to start to make societies more just, than continue developing ideal situations that only apply in theory. In this way, the CA thus differs from spatial justice debates that tend to focus on how spatial goods should be ideally distributed. The normative principle of the Capability Approach implies that in questions of justice or human well-being, one should strive for equality of people's effective opportunities that they have to live a worthy human life (Robeyns, 2006).

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#### 1.1.4 The merit of the Capability Approach for social sustainability

A central proposition of this dissertation is that CA's evaluative orientation towards individual well-being is promising for a better understanding of how social sustainability is pursued in contemporary urban development practices. While social sustainability encompasses a broad range of values that address both individual and collective interests (i.e., the value of collective well-being vs. the value of individual well-being), urban development research and practice tend to focus more on collective ones. For instance, planning practices oriented towards social issues such as public spaces, water infrastructure, and social housing are traditionally focused on collective groups rather than individuals. From a distributional point of view, such impartially distributed public goods that are equally available to everyone may be seen as a way to achieve just outcomes. Paradoxically, however, as contemporary political scientists argue, equal provision of such goods (also called: resources) to the collective may, in fact, support inequalities, or in a worse case, repression of certain groups. As pointed out by Nussbaum (2003, p. 35), "individuals need differing levels of resources if they are to come up to the same level of capability to function". In a similar line of thought, Young (1990) argues for a politics that recognizes differences between people rather than seeing civic actors as universal and unified – and that certain groups may be treated differently in public policy than others if this leads to more just outcomes.

Today, issues of recognition, diversity, and identity are strongly promoted among influential political scientists, philosophers, and feminist scholars such as Nussbaum (2000, 2003), Young (1990; 2015), Fraser (2000), and Fukuyama (2018). It has only been relatively recent, however, that people's inherent diversity is also gaining serious attention in urban research. Fainstein's work (Fainstein, 2005, 2014) was influential in this by defining diversity as one of the three fundamental dimensions of 'the Just City' – next to equity and democracy. Although Fainstein brings forward the Capability Approach as a tool to deal with these three incompatible dimensions and as a useful way "to devise rules that can govern the evaluation of urban policy" (2014, p. 13), the Just City model does not elaborate on this in great detail. This dissertation starts from the proposition, however, that a promising role is reserved for the CA, particularly to investigate how exactly the diversity of human beings can be incorporated into urban development and planning processes. More than other normative approaches that primarily focus on the distribution or quality of spatial goods, the human-centered principles of the CA focus on the fact that different people have different experiences. This provides a sincere response to the calls of social sustainability scholars (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017; Woodcraft, 2016) that more 'human-centered' approaches are needed. In that way, the Capability Approach offers a solution to particularly focus on the individual-related dimensions of social sustainability – that are least understood in urban research and practice.

Another main reason in this research to adopt the Capability Approach is its critical-pragmatic nature, making it relevant to the implementation question that is central to this research. While 'ideal theories' of justice such as spatial justice lend themselves well to evaluating whether policy outcomes are just or not, they often do not provide concrete directions on how to improve practices beyond suggesting policy advice or planning principles. Implementation is concerned with what happens in real life when intended planning goals and ambitions are brought into realization. Because of the Capability Approach' explicit focus on real-life situations and on people's concrete freedoms to function, the approach lends itself well to investigating problems and solutions that occur beyond the realm of written policy. In that way, the CA has the potential to not only define what 'socially sustainable' urban areas from a capability-perspective are but also to function as a framework for finding out how social sustainability can be advanced in situations of urban development practice. Moreover, the Capability Approach is generic enough to be applied to the concept of social sustainability in all widths. Capability scholars usually do not see the CA as a theory that defines relations between specific aspects but as a metric for evaluations in which specific aspects still need to be defined (Alkire, 2005; Robeyns, 2017; Sen, 1999b). This broadness can be seen as an asset since it provides the tools to assess social sustainability not only in terms of – for example – public participation or socio-economic segregation, but in terms of all its aspects that are relevant to the built environment.

### 1.1.5 **Research focus: governance processes around urban development projects**

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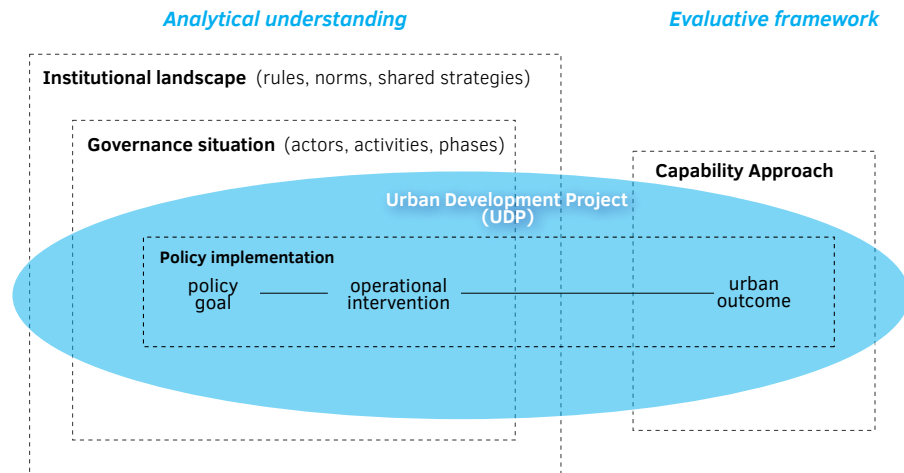
What does it take to implement social sustainability in urban development practice? This dissertation addresses this question from the perspective of the Capability Approach and does so by focusing on area-based urban development projects (UDPs) and, more precisely, on the governance processes that occur around and shape them. As a research object across the disciplines of urban planning, economics, and politics, UDPs are ‘large-scale transformations of urban land through real estate development ventures, often implemented by a partnership arrangement between the public and the private sector’ (Kim, 2023, p1) where urban land is – different than in large-scale infrastructure projects – produced for human occupation. Since in UDPs different public and private actors interact and strive after certain goals – either collectively or individually, either explicitly or implicitly –, UDPs can be seen as local vehicles of governance through which public policy goals are implemented in concert with private and civic objectives. In this dissertation, the governance processes around urban development projects are thus zoomed in on as an example of urban development practice. The decision to focus on UDPs as a research object resulted from the two following considerations.

First, focusing on urban development projects corresponds with the empirical reality in Europe that, in practice, urban planning and policy implementation efforts take place as part of wider and complex processes of governance that involve a wide variety of actors. Scholars have largely acknowledged that European planning practices have moved in the direction of strategic spatial planning (Albrechts, 2010; Healey, 2004). This would make it naïve to focus on social sustainability’s implementation purely from a government action perspective. In line with seeing urban development projects as strategic devices that “attempt to settle or to stimulate certain joint courses in individual actions” (Salet, 2006, p3), this dissertation looks at UDPs as place-based vehicles of governance in which public actors interact, negotiate, and collaborate with market actors (Gualini & Majoor, 2007; Van den Hurk & Tasan-Kok, 2020), and increasingly, with civic actors.

Moreover, the area-based scope of urban development projects lends itself well to observing specific challenges of social sustainability’s implementation. The local scale of UDPs makes them suitable research objects to observe how other actors than planners, architects, and real estate developers influence social sustainability in urban areas – such as NGOs, local companies, or residents themselves. In addition, UDPs take place in geographically-demarcated areas where different policies come together, yet they are limited in terms of space. This implies that dilemmas may occur about how different operational approaches can go together in the same area.

Since goals for social sustainability thus have to compete with other policy goals within a UDP, it is assumed that the many (inter)actions and institutions that shape the governance process will influence how social sustainability is operationalized and what social sustainability outcomes are eventually achieved.

Although the nexus between social sustainability implementation, urban development projects, and the Capability Approach is - as far as known by the author - unexplored in literature, this dissertation hypothesizes that governance processes around urban development projects hold various elements that explain the implementation of social sustainability in contemporary cities. To do so, the governance process is analyzed through two complementary theoretical lenses on governance. Firstly, the process is understood from the perspective of collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson & Gerlak, 2014; Emerson et al., 2012; Healey, 1998). This lens is found particularly useful for explaining which activities and interactions between the different stakeholders involved in urban development projects are important for urban social sustainability. Second, the governance process is understood from an institutionalist perspective (Healey, 1999; Ostrom, 2009; Polski & Ostrom, 1999; Sorensen, 2017) and complements the collaborative lens by focusing on how individual actions and interactions relate to enduring structures in society, i.e., institutions. This lens is found particularly useful for exploring what less-visible, yet structural elements of governance condition the emergence of capability-centered governance activities.



**FIG. 1.1** Research framework - an analytical understanding and evaluative framework for understanding governance towards urban social sustainability within urban development projects



Altogether, Figure 1.1 visualizes how the different concepts form the research framework for this dissertation. The left side of the framework presents the analytical understanding of the governance process around urban development projects. The figure shows how urban development projects are seen as a process of policy implementation in which policy goals are operationalized, i.e., translated into a set of operational interventions, and lead to certain urban outcomes (i.e., outcomes in the urban environment). The figure also shows how urban development projects are seen as a governance situation consisting of different actors, activities and phases. This situation is embedded in a wider institutional landscape consisting of longer-lasting rules, norms, and shared strategies. Together, the governance situation and the institutional landscape thus form the 'governance process' that is center of attention in this research.

Finally, the right side of the figure visualizes how the research evaluates urban outcomes based on the framework of the Capability Approach. This evaluation forms the basis for interpreting the processes of governance and policy implementation in a capability-centered way, and so, to analyze how elements of the governance process relate to the policy implementation of social sustainability goals.

## 1.2 Research questions, scope and contributions

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### 1.2.1 Aim and questions

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This research aims to develop an understanding of how institutionalized governance processes affect the implementation of policy goals related to social sustainability in contemporary area-based urban development projects by constructing a capability-centered evaluation of such efforts.

The research aim is achieved by finding answers to the following main questions:

- 1 What are the features of a capability-centered operationalization of urban social sustainability, and how do they relate to prevailing operational approaches in contemporary urban development practice?
- 2 What are capability-centered urban social sustainability outcomes, and to what extent do planning goals and interventions in urban development projects correspond with these outcomes?
- 3 How do collaborative governance situations around urban development projects affect the implementation of capability-centered urban social sustainability outcomes?
- 4 What institutions condition the capability-centered governance activities that shape urban development projects that pursue policy goals related to social sustainability?

### 1.2.2 Research scope

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As becomes clear from the questions defined above, this research addresses the question of social sustainability and institutionalized governance processes from a broad, comprehensive perspective. This has been an explicit choice due to the exploratory character of the research. Rather than starting with assumptions about specific actors or activities that are important for sustainability's implementation in urban development practice, the comprehensive view enables the research to explore which aspects of governance are most relevant to this implementation process. Although the researcher is aware of the consequence that a broad perspective implies that certain aspects cannot be investigated in depth, inventoring the most relevant aspects of governance was found necessary *first* before analyzing them in detail.

Moreover, the geographical scope of the research is limited to Northwestern Europe. The researcher is aware that the pursuit of more socially sustainable urban areas is relevant for many contexts all over the world including the Global South. From a scientific point of view, however, policy implementation processes can be best studied in situations where policy goals have actually been implemented, and can thus be assessed. For the topic of social sustainability, this was considered most likely in countries that have traditions in social urban policy, for instance in the Netherlands, Austria and, Sweden. Cases were selected in several countries to be able to compare different institutional landscapes with each other. Detailed explanation of the case selections is provided in the method sections of the different studies (3.3, 4.3, and 5.3).

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### 1.2.3 Scientific contributions

The key contribution of this research is that it connects governance processes in urban development practice with capability-centered evaluations of urban social sustainability. Whereas these two aspects are often investigated separately – i.e., studies often either focus on analyzing the mechanisms within governance processes *or* on describing and evaluating social outcomes in the urban environment –, this dissertation explicitly aims to bring these together. The research in this dissertation first critically assesses the meaning of social sustainability to local residents living in urban areas, and subsequently, investigates how these outcomes were shaped through the activities of different actors in urban development. By identifying the governance elements and institutional conditions that form these relations, – that thus affect the social outcomes observed in local neighborhoods –, the research develops an understanding of how social sustainability can be steered towards through urban development practice.

By doing so, the research makes various analytical, conceptual, and normative contributions. First, it contributes to an analytical understanding of governance that is oriented towards urban social sustainability. So far, much of the urban research on social sustainability that engages with planning and governance processes is conducted from urban policy perspectives *alone* (i.e., Colantonio, 2011; Elander & Gustavsson, 2019; Hamiduddin, 2015; Holden, 2012). Alternatively, urban social sustainability research very specifically focuses on the role of citizen engagement (i.e., Bouzguenda, Alalouch, & Fava, 2019; Chen et al., 2022; Fernandez Milan, 2016) or collaborative housing initiatives (i.e., Bailey, 2010; Lang, 2019). Although these different strands of research are in itself undoubtedly valuable, few studies provide comprehensive, nuanced pictures of how the various types of urban actors, including

real estate developers, housing companies, and governmental organizations, collaborate in practice on the actual development of a local place. This dissertation sketches such a picture by focusing on the governance processes around urban development projects.

Moreover, by devising an evaluative framework, this dissertation contributes to a novel conceptual understanding of social sustainability in urban development. Compared to the economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability, the social one is least touched upon in urban research (Dempsey et al., 2009; Dixon & Woodcraft, 2013; Shirazi & Keivani, 2017). While social sustainability literature presents divergent frameworks encompassing various values, aspects, and indicators that in general relate to the built environment, little scholarly effort is put into developing interpretations of what social sustainability means for people actually living in urban areas. Scholars call for investigating operational approaches that are context-sensitive and pay more attention to local neighborhoods (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017) and have more anthropological awareness (Woodcraft & Smith, 2018). In other words, approaches that give particular attention to what social sustainability in a local place means for people. It is this scientific lacuna that, through its attention to individual diversity and the contextual conversion factors, the Capability Approach can help to fill.

Altogether, the research contributes to an improved normative understanding of how social sustainability in the built environment can be *advanced*, i.e., how to make people's lives in cities 'better'. While normativity is traditionally seen as a threat to a researcher's objectivity and validity, it is increasingly acknowledged that research can help to explicate the implications of different normative positions for policy (Buitelaar, 2020) or to map out how different value judgments are taken by urban actors (Herzog et al., 2022). In this research, ideas from the Capability Approach are used to introduce normative principles that facilitate the evaluation of policy implementation efforts. The dissertation thus helps to specify the direction that urban professionals strive for when they pursue urban social sustainability – namely, this direction should center around the end goal of human capability expansion.

Finally, next to investigating social sustainability within an urban discourse, this dissertation is also relevant for human development debates that address the role of cities in the Capability Approach and for human development. While various capability scholars made important contributions to the cities-capability nexus during the recent two decades (Anand, 2018; Basta, 2016; Deneulin, 2014; Frediani, 2021; Simpson, 2022), it is also pointed out there are likely many structures and conditions to be identified in urban political economies and urban governance processes that are relevant to people's capabilities (Frediani, 2021).

## 1.2.4 Societal relevance

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This research is driven by the normative aim to advance social sustainability in cities. The urgency to take social sustainability seriously as a policy goal becomes clear from various trends observed in European societies. Increasing migration dynamics to and within Europe (McAuliffe & Khadria, 2020) for example raises concerns about social cohesion and identity. Aging, digitalization, and growing numbers of single households raise concerns about social isolation and loneliness. Although studies report that in many countries median levels of e.g., life expectancy, employment, and household income have been progressing (OECD, 2020), they also warn that the differences between different groups are growing – as is for instance the case for life expectancy (Forster et al., 2017). Moreover, studies point out that countries that are usually listed high in social justice or well-being indices, such as Sweden and The Netherlands (see e.g., Thorsten Hellmann et al., 2019), have seen little progress over the recent ten years, or have seen certain aspects decreasing (OECD, 2020).

The Netherlands is an example of a society that - despite being ranked high in terms of welfare and quality of life (OECD, 2020), faces a certain degree of social deterioration. Inequality between different classes remains persisting (Vrooman et al., 2023), processes of social-economic and cultural segregation are penetrating education (Vogels et al., 2021), and 1 out of 4 children is expected to live below the poverty standard in 2024 (Arts, 2023). Trends of social deterioration can also be observed in the built environment. The Netherlands is known as a country with extensive traditions in social housing (Elsinga & Wassenberg, 2014) and social urban policy programs (Van Kempen & Bolt, 2009). Between the period 2010-2022, however, social urban policy has been less on the agenda due to decentralization processes in spatial planning profession, legal restrictions for social housing companies, and a stop of neighborhood renewal programs. Studies report on increasing issues of safety and livability in certain areas (Leijdelmeijer et al., 2020), on increasing patterns of socio-spatial polarization within Dutch cities (Zwiers et al., 2015), and on unequal accessibility among groups of people to pivotal urban services (Raad voor de Leefomgeving en Infrastructuur, 2020)

As a reaction to the various social concerns, spatial debates in the Netherlands are currently calling for bringing back the ‘human scale’ in urban policy (LSA bewoners, 2021; Raad voor de Leefomgeving en Infrastructuur, 2020). At the time of writing this dissertation, several institutional changes took place in the Dutch urban planning and development landscape. A new ministry for Housing and Spatial Planning was established in 2022. This came along with various new policy interventions, among which are new institutional rules for social housing companies that enlarge their role in urban development, and the implementation of a new National Program

to address liveability and safety in deprived neighborhoods (Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 2021; Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koningsrelaties, 2022) Although social policy thus seems to be back on the national urban agenda, questions how such policies can be best implemented in urban areas remain unsolved.

It would be presumptuous to claim that this dissertation helps to solve all societal issues mentioned above. The trends, however, underline the urgency to take social sustainability goals in urban development seriously. Particularly in a place that typically ranks high in certain lists of international comparisons, the risk to overlook critical social issues that increase locally is lurking. This dissertation helps to critically assess the ‘current state’ of social sustainability in cities by focusing on people’s capabilities. It contributes to revealing urban capability inequalities among different groups of residents and to explaining why such experienced inequalities occur. By also focusing on how governance processes relate to such social outcomes, the dissertation provides directions on how to move towards more capability equality via urban development practice.

## 1.3 Research design

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After outlining the motivations behind and aims of this dissertation, this section describes how the research is conducted. The research combines theoretical and empirical literature with a vast amount of original empirical research based on a set of four different studies. Although each study has its unique research design, the findings from each study altogether contribute to the main aim of this research and to answering the research questions (see 1.2.1). How this is brought about – from adopting general scientific approaches and strategies to selecting methods for data collection –, is elaborated upon in the following.

### 1.3.1 Scientific approach

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The research adopts an interpretive scientific worldview of social science that conceives that understandings of human behavior are first needed before one can arrive at an explanation of it (Weber, 1947 in Bryson, 2016). As a common approach to many social sciences, interpretive worldviews build upon what Flyvberg (2001) explains as ‘phronesis’: the intellectual virtue of ethics and deliberation about

values regarding praxis, so, a virtue that is characterized as pragmatic, variable and context-dependent. Although the aim of this research brings forward an issue of causality by questioning the relations between urban social sustainability on the one hand, and the governance process around urban development projects on the other hand, this research does not search for cause-effect relations in a (post) positivistic way. Rather than articulating the relations between governance and social outcomes in urban areas as a direct causal relationship (“A always leads to B”), it is assumed that both the governance processes studied and the observed social outcomes are socially structured phenomena. This implies that they are formed by situated interpretations, values, and experiences of individual actors (Giddens, 1984; Schutz, 1972) and thus need to be interpreted.

By engaging with the Capability Approach, much interpretive effort in this research goes into understanding urban social sustainability. Because the CA proposes a normative standard on what is considered socially sustainable and what is not, this dissertation also - to a certain extent - adheres to an advocacy approach to science. It intends to address current social deficits in urban development and contribute to finding a way to make cities *more* socially sustainable. Rather than attempting to make this research completely objective, this dissertation follows the position that social sciences are not on the same page as natural sciences in the sense that normative positions about ‘what ought to be done’ do not necessarily need to be evaded (Sayer, 2009). To make the research sound, however, it is important that the researcher engaged in normative research has self-reflection and exhibits reflexivity (Bryman, 2016). This dissertation, therefore, devotes an extensive effort to explain and empirically prove the relevance of the normative principles that are adhered to (see Chapters 2 and 3).

### 1.3.2 **Research strategy**

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As an outcome of the above-outlined scientific approach adopted in this research, all studies of this dissertation are based on qualitative research strategies. Since few studies on social sustainability thus far focused on governance in the context of urban development projects -, this analysis has a highly exploratory character. Rather than focusing directly on specific elements of governance, it was considered first needed to investigate *what* governance elements and *which* institutions are particularly relevant for urban social sustainability implementation. In other words, because the exact elements of governance and urban social sustainability that might relate to each other are not known, nor hypothesized about yet, qualitative methods were considered more relevant than quantitative or mixed methods.

Accordingly, the research adopts an inductive strategy in which the general patterns and conclusions derive from empirical observations (see Figure 1.2 below). After formulating the research question based on the observation of new social policy goals in urban development practice (1), the research develops the understanding of social sustainability based on theoretical knowledge about urban social sustainability and the Capability Approach (2). This understanding forms the basis for empirical studies that evaluate policy outcomes in urban development projects (3), but also explore what governance variables around urban development play a significant role in achieving these outcomes (4). Subsequently, via a couple of iterative circles, the observations derived from the case studies are interpreted based on social sustainability theory, the Capability Approach, collaborative governance, and institutions (5). Finally, these iterations help to identify the units of analysis embedded in theory based on which the governance processes are eventually analyzed (6).

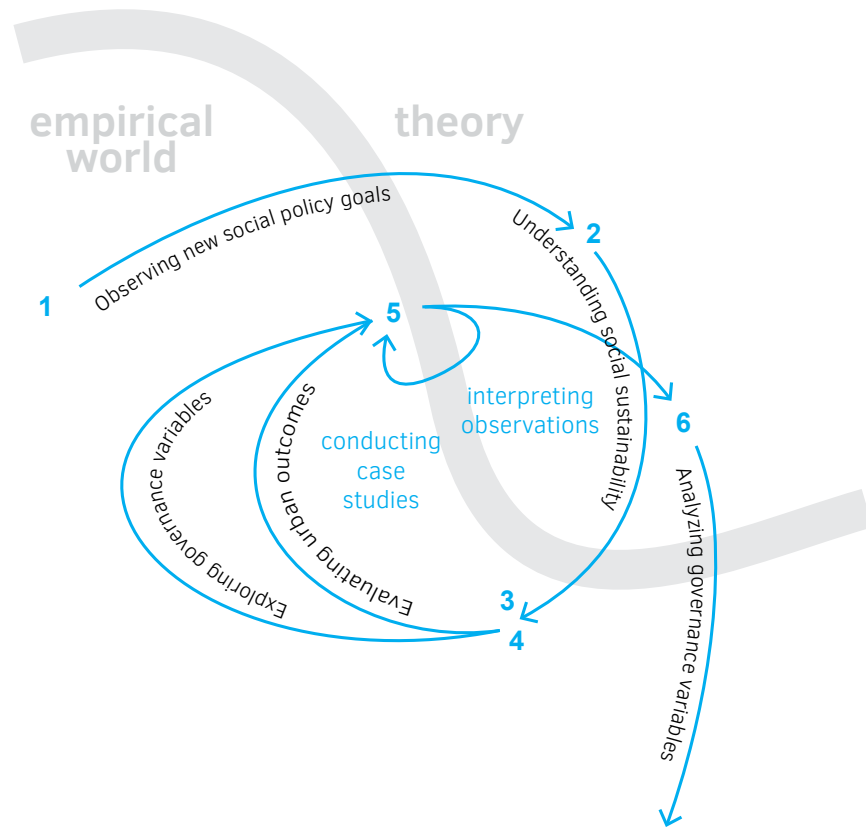
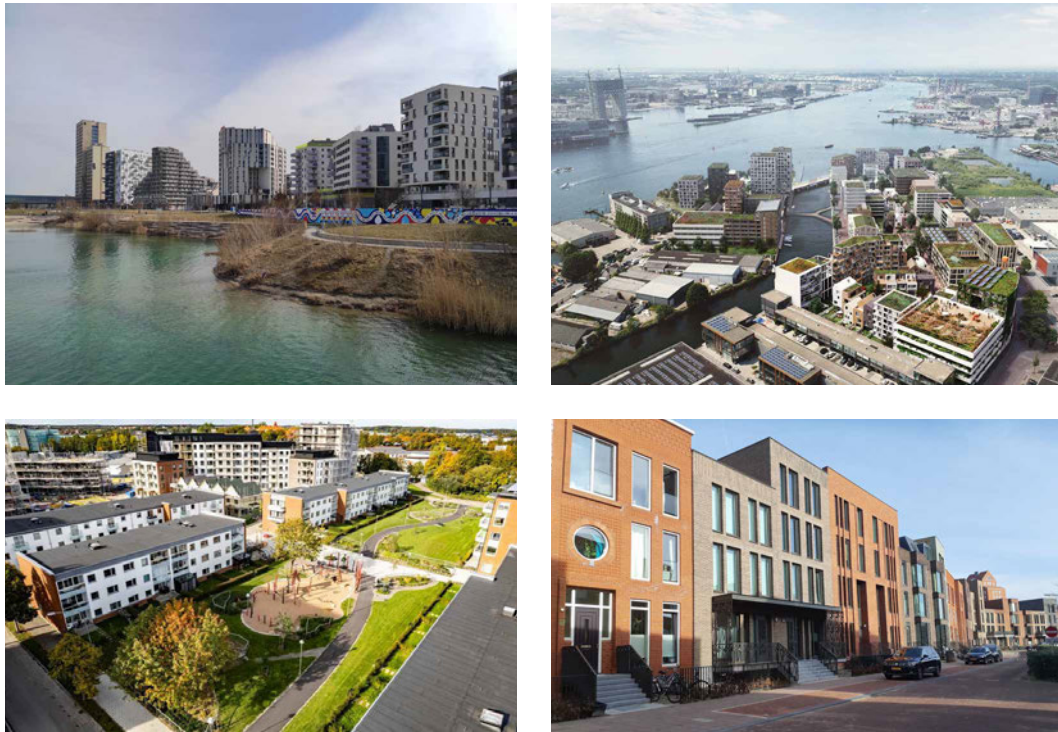


FIG. 1.2 Research strategy on how to draw on theory and empirical observations



### 1.3.3 A set of case-study analyses



**FIG. 1.3** The four selected urban development projects. Top left: Aspern Seestadt. Top right: Buiksloterham&Co (render). Bottom left: DrottningH. Bottom right: Nieuw Crooswijk

The research consists of four different studies that have unique research designs. The first study concerns an exploration of policy operationalizations based on existing empirical literature. This study forms a conceptual basis for the following three studies that follow, that each represent a different type of case study analysis. The research designs of the case studies are instrumentally composed (Stake, 1995), to let them serve the research questions as defined in 1.2.1. Before elaborating on the research designs in detail, it is explained why case-study research is selected as the main method for the empirical research in this dissertation.

Case-study research is generally considered a preferred method for research that aims to explain present circumstances or processes that take place in a context where there are more variables than data points and where the investigator has little control over the events (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). It was thus selected as

a main method for this research to ensure an in-depth understanding of the complexity of the governance processes around urban development projects – or using Healey’s words (2019, p34), the complexity of “how the micro-politics of daily life-in-place generates an experience of living in wider worlds of complex multistrand struggles over values, resource flows and regulation”. The case studies in this research are intensive (i.e., as opposed to extensive) (Sayer, 2010) since they focus on understandings and causal explanations of certain objects or events in a limited number of cases. Although the limited number of cases in this research does not allow formal generalizability, the strategic selection of the cases (see below) (Flyvbjerg, 2006) ensures that the sets of case-study analyses contribute to the development of scientific knowledge about governance towards urban social sustainability.

Because the three case studies focus on different units of analysis, the ‘case’ is defined differently per study. In all studies, however, the cases concern units of analysis *within* area-based urban development projects – the research object for this dissertation as was introduced in section 1.1.5. The projects investigated are Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam, Nieuw Crooswijk in Rotterdam (both in The Netherlands), Aspern Seestadt in Vienna (Austria), and DrottningH in Helsingborg (Sweden). In this dissertation, the understanding of urban development projects follows the following conditions:

- The projects are contemporary urban development projects rather than projects that were completed more than 5 years ago, to be able to qualitatively collect the perceptions and experiences of (professional) actors involved in them.
- The projects include housing, to be able to research the experiences of residents living in urban areas, and not ‘users’ in general. For example, an urban area that was transformed into a business or recreational area was not taken into account if it would not include any people living in the area.
- The projects are large-scale (>10.000 m<sup>2</sup>) transformation projects with a mixed-use program.

Although the research designs of each study are described in detail in the different chapters of this dissertation (see sections 3.3, 4.3, and 5.3), an overview of the studies is provided below. Per chapter, it is described what research question the study answers, what unit of analysis or case(s) it focuses on, and how the study was performed. It is visualized how each study focuses on a different element of the research framework that was presented in Figure 1.1. Although the chapters can thus be reviewed as independent studies, they connect to each other through the wider framework that they are part of. Insights that were gained from one

study were used for the design of the next study. For example, the conceptual distinction between a ‘resource-centered operational approach’ and a ‘capability-centered operational approach’ that is made in Chapter 2 is used in the analysis of Chapter 4. The sequence in which the different studies are presented (Chapter 2 until Chapter 5) corresponds with the order in which the studies were performed.

## Chapter 2: Positioning the evaluative framework

**Research question:** What are the features of a capability-centered operationalization of urban social sustainability, and how do they relate to prevailing operational approaches in contemporary urban development practice?

**Method:** empirical exploration based on desk research

**Unit of analysis:** Dimensions of social sustainability policy operationalization in Dutch planning practice

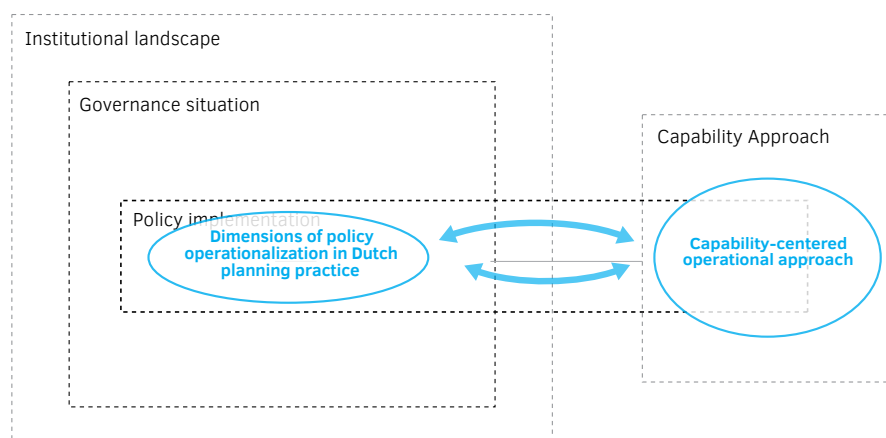


FIG. 1.4 Research scope Chapter 2

The study in Chapter 2 concerns an empirical exploration and serves as the first research question of this dissertation. This study does not contain original empirical work but draws on desk research of empirical literature on the Dutch planning practice. It focuses on three examples of dimensions of social sustainability policy operationalization and discusses them in light of the chapter’s conceptual arguments that are developed based on theory. It is discussed to what extent the examples adhere to the principles of the Capability Approach and what their implications are for urban development. By doing so, the chapter distinguishes two approaches to

social sustainability operationalization in urban development: a resource-centered and a capability-centered approach. These two approaches are compared to each other and an argument is made about which one is most suitable for operationalizing social sustainability in urban planning. In that way, the case study provides some empirical evidence of the gaps that the Capability Approach can fill, develops the conceptual arguments of this dissertation, and positions the evaluative approach as a basis for the following case studies in this research.

### Chapter 3: Evaluating social sustainability outcomes

**Research question:** What are capability-centered urban social sustainability outcomes, and to what extent do planning goals and interventions in urban development projects correspond with these outcomes?

**Method:** Single case study analysis

**Case:** social sustainability goals (i.e., planning goals and design interventions) and social sustainability outcomes (i.e., urban functionings and conversion factors) within Buiksloterham&Co (Amsterdam)

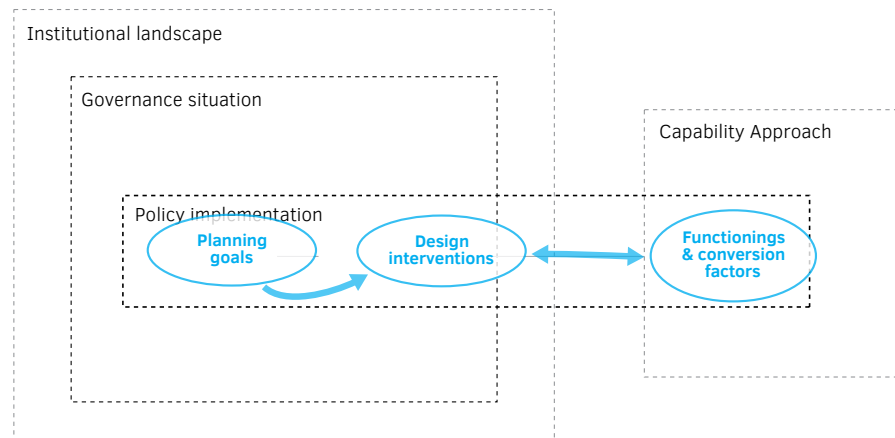


FIG. 1.5 Research scope Chapter 3

Chapter 3 presents a single-case study analysis within the urban development project Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam (The Netherlands) and serves as the second research question of this dissertation. The chapter aims to empirically test the relevance of the Capability Approach for evaluating social sustainability outcomes in urban development projects. To do so, the study analyzes how social

sustainability goals for the urban development project were envisioned by planning professionals, and juxtaposes this to an evaluation of how social sustainability outcomes were experienced by residents living in the urban areas. For the former, professionals involved in the project were asked about the goals for social sustainability and the design interventions to operationalize these goals. For the latter, an applied set of evaluative indicators had to be developed - as far as is known, no studies relating to the built environment provide evaluations of social sustainability outcomes from the perspective of the Capability Approach. Which indicators were precisely selected and how this was decided upon, is deliberated upon in detail in sections 3.2.2 and 3.3.3 in chapter 3.

## Chapter 4: Relating capability-centered social sustainability outcomes to governance processes

**Research question:** How do collaborative governance situations around urban development projects affect the implementation of capability-centered urban social sustainability outcomes?

**Method:** Comparative case study analysis

**Case 1:** the relations between governance activities (i.e., phases, actors & activities) and capability expansions within Buiksloterham&Co (Amsterdam)

**Case 2:** the relations between governance activities (i.e., phases, actors & activities) and capability expansions within Nieuw Crooswijk (Rotterdam)

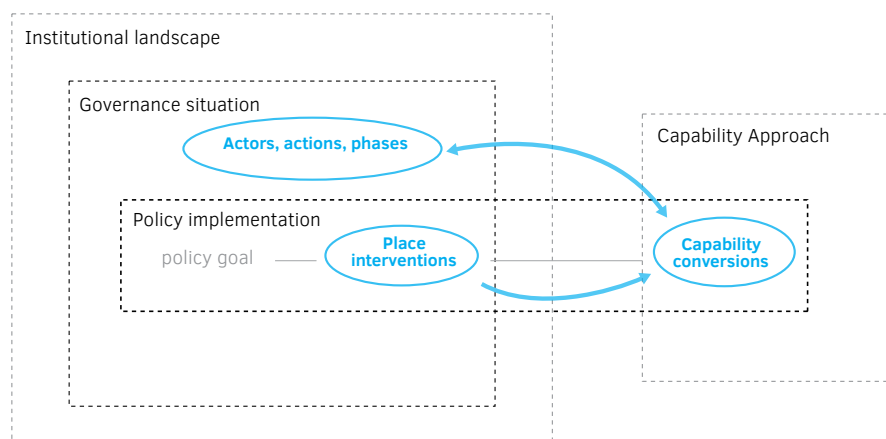


FIG. 1.6 Research scope Chapter 4

The analysis in chapter 4 serves the third research question and encompasses a comparative case-study analysis within two urban development projects in the Netherlands. The analytical scope of this study broadens toward the sphere of the governance process around urban development projects. The study focuses on the relations between governance situations and capability-centered social sustainability outcomes – defined as the ways how residents convert place interventions into their personal capabilities.

To do so, empirical material that was part of the evaluations of social sustainability outcomes in Buiksloterham&Co (Chapter 3) is re-used and complemented with similar empirical material in Nieuw Crooswijk in Rotterdam. The outcomes are not evaluated as extensively as is done for the purpose of Chapter 3, but center around a set of place interventions that both cases have in common. Here, the evaluations particularly focus on the extent to which residents are able to convert the generally-available place interventions into their personal capabilities. These outcomes are first compared with each other to define which place interventions were more 'successful' than others. Subsequently, the study investigates per case how the capability outcomes related to elements of the governance activities. Based on these findings, the cases are then compared to each other. The comparative analysis discovers how certain elements of the governance situations relate to more successful 'capability-centered social sustainability outcomes' and which ones to less successful ones. By discussing these findings in light of wider urban debates, the chapter concludes with three principles for a capability-centered governance.

How the cases were selected and how the information was collected and analyzed is elaborated upon in more detail in section 4.3 in Chapter 4.

## Chapter 5: Identifying institutions relating to capability-centered governance activities

**Research question:** What institutions condition the governance activities that shape urban development projects that pursue policy goals related to social sustainability?

**Method:** comparative case study analysis

**Case 1:** the relations between capability-centered governance activities within Aspern Seestadt and institutions around it (i.e., rules, norms, shared strategies)

**Case 2:** the relations between capability-centered governance activities within DrottningH and institutions around it (i.e., rules, norms, shared strategies)

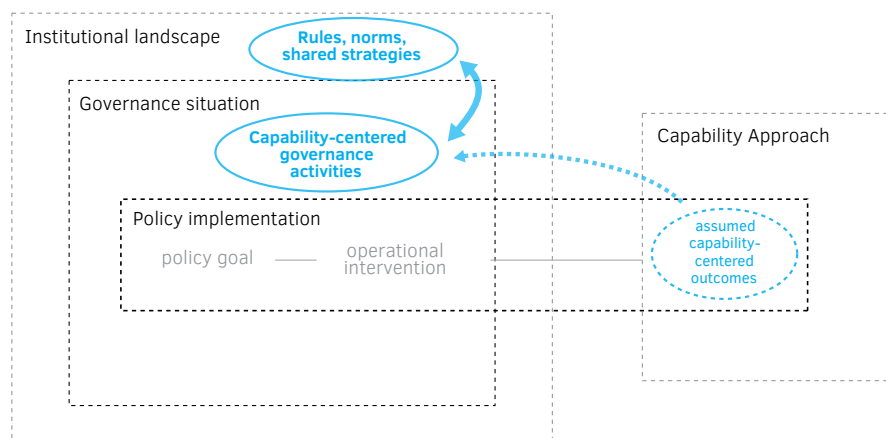


FIG. 1.7 Research scope Chapter 5

The final case-study in Chapter 5 serves the last research question and presents a comparative case-study analysis around two urban development projects in Austria and Sweden. This analysis addresses urban development projects from the widest analytical scope by focusing on the institutional landscapes around these projects. The aim of the study is to identify institutions that explain why capability-centered governance practices take place within the two urban development projects.

To avoid too far-fetched attempts to identify relations between the analytical scale of institutions and of locally experienced social sustainability outcomes, this chapter's study does not include an evaluation of social sustainability outcomes but focuses on governance activities that are already assumed to be 'capability-centered'. Two relatively similar practices were selected in different institutional landscapes (i.e., urban development projects in different countries). The study searched for

similarities in these landscapes as variables that explain why – despite the different institutional settings – relatively similar practices took place. Why Austria and Sweden were selected as countries in which the cases took place, and how the case comparison was conducted, is discussed in more detail in section 5.3 in Chapter 5.

### 1.3.4 Methods for data collection and analysis

The original empirical material thus concentrates on four urban development projects: two in the Netherlands (i.e., Buiksloterham&Co & Nieuw Crooswijk), one in Austria (i.e., Aspern Seestadt), and one in Sweden (i.e., DrottningH). Together, they form three sets of case-study analyses that were described above. Although the case-study analyses have their specific research design, they generally combined two parts: the evaluation of social sustainability outcomes on the one hand, and the reconstruction of the governance processes around the urban development projects on the other hand. These parts were investigated through different methods. The evaluation of social sustainability outcomes mainly drew on semi-structured interviews with residents (used in Chapters 3 and 4), whereas the reconstruction of the governance process was done through a combination of semi-structured interviews with professionals, planning document review, and field visits (used in Chapters 3, 4, and 5).

**TABLE 1.1** Applied methods for data collection per urban development project

Buiksloterham&Co	Nieuw Crooswijk	Aspern Seestadt	DrottningH
14 interviews with residents	12 interviews with residents	2 interviews with residents	4 interviews with residents
18 interviews with professionals	16 interviews with professionals	11 interviews with professionals	12 interviews with professionals
Day visits to the urban area (approximately 5-10)	Day visits to the urban area (approximately 5-10)	6-week visit to the urban area (of which 2 weeks residing in situ)	2-week field visit (residing in an urban area nearby)
Planning document review	Planning document review	Planning document review	Planning document review

Table 1.1 shows the methods applied per case. Altogether, in total 90 semi-structured interviews were conducted, multiple planning documents were reviewed and several field visits to all project locations were made for case-study analyses. This section describes in general how the data was collected and analyzed. Detailed descriptions of the methods undertaken per each case study are provided in separate methods sections per chapter in sections 3.3, 4.3, and 5.3. Moreover, detailed information about the interviewees, planning documents, and field visits is reported in Appendices 1-3.



## In-depth interviews with residents

Conducting individual semi-structured interviews was considered the most useful method for evaluating social sustainability outcomes. Such interviews leave space for respondents to elaborate on their perceptions, feelings, and experiences, and so, to capture the richness of real experiences that the Capability Approach promises. All interviews lasted approximately one hour, including outliers with a shortest duration of 30 minutes and the longest of 2,5 hours. Most interviews took place at the homes of residents, or in a public space nearby. A few interviews were conducted by telephone<sup>5</sup>. Before starting, interviewees were informed about the purpose of the study, their rights during the interview and the researcher's expectations. Interviewees were asked to give their consent to participate.

The interviews with residents in the urban areas of the Dutch projects (Buiksloterham&Co and Nieuw Crooswijk) formed a substantive part of the analyses in Chapters 3 and 4, for which these interviews were most extensively prepared and analyzed. The interviews with residents in Aspern Seestadt and DrottningH only served as a validation of some of the researchers' assumptions about the governance practices studied in the case analysis (explained in more detail in section 5.3 and Appendix 10). Therefore, the lines that follow below only apply to the interviews ones concerning the projects of Buiksloterham&Co and Nieuw Crooswijk.

Investigating residents' perceived experiences about urban social sustainability is challenging. While it requires in-depth conversations to bring up a person's value judgments, perceptions, and interpretations, social sustainability is a broad topic with different aspects that are relevant to people. It was thus a challenge to achieve sufficient depth while also covering these various aspects. As a supportive technique to structure the broadness of the research topic and the subjective responses by interviewees, the interview guides were inspired by the Q-sort-methodology (Stephenson, 1982). Q-sort-methodology is a method developed in psychology to investigate – beyond the dominant quantitative methods available in psychology – patterns of values, feelings, and perceptions among different people (Jedeloo et al., 2010). Although the method consists of two main steps (in which the second step concerns quantitative factor analysis), only the first step of the method was used in this research. In this step, interviewees are asked to respond to cards with value-laden statements and to put them in order from 'most relevant'

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<sup>5</sup> This was the case for only a few interviews that were already scheduled when new policy measures against COVID-19 were announced. After consulting the interview participants, it was decided to conduct the interviews via telephone.

to 'least' relevant (see Figure 1.8). The statements concern the research topic and are composed by the researcher – how this was done, is described in section 3.3 in Chapter 3. Interviewees were asked whether they agreed, did not agree, or were neutral with the statement or whether they had a neutral position. The cards thus mainly functioned as a communication facilitator that helped interviewees to reflect and left space for the conversation to develop naturally. The interview guide in which the valuation cards were integrated, is enclosed in Appendix 4.

The interviews with residents in the urban areas of Aspern Seestadt and DrottningH were not aimed at creating an overall picture of how residents perceived social sustainability. Alternatively, these interviews were more specifically aimed at collecting residents' experiences with the specific governance practice that was central in the case study analysis. The interview guide for these interviews is enclosed in Appendix 4.

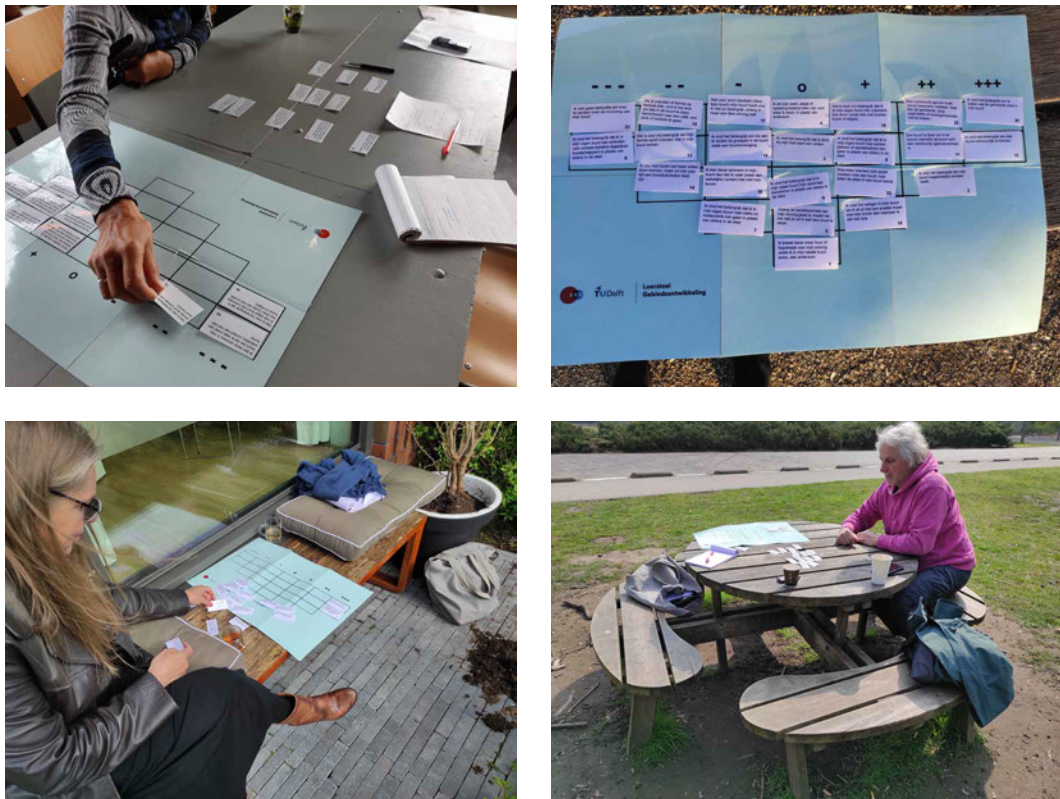


FIG. 1.8 Supporting the resident interviews with cards with value statements

## Reconstructing governance processes through in-depth interviews, field visits and planning documents

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The analyses of the governance processes (i.e., in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5) are also based on semi-structured in-depth interviews, yet data was also collected in a broader way. Planning documents were reviewed to collect information about the main goals and interventions in the projects, and field visits were made to the sites of the urban development projects. The data collection proceeded like a spiral in which newly-obtained information was used to refine the interview guides and to identify new interview participants, as is common in inductive research strategies (Hennink et al., 2020). Since urban development projects usually take a long period of 10-20 years, they encompass many different stakeholders that may also change over time. The researcher therefore did not strive for a complete overview of the entire process but for saturation of the information relevant to the research question (Hennink et al., 2020). Using the metaphor of the qualitative researcher as a detective (Johnson, 1997), reconstructing the governance processes resembled the work of a detective in which many different pieces of information (e.g., from different time periods, from different actor perspectives, from different disciplines) were brought together.

The interviews were conducted with professionals individually and dured approximately 50-60 minutes. The majority of the interviews were conducted online<sup>6</sup>, although sometimes on location or at an office.

In each case, the initial contact was made with the main developing actor of the project (i.e., social housing companies in Buiksloterham&Co and Nieuw Crooswijk, the developing consortium in Seestadt, and the municipality in DrottningH). Subsequently, further interview participants were selected based on their involvement that became clear from the planning documents, or through the snowballing effect from previous interviews. The interview guides included questions about how interviewees perceived goals for social sustainability in the project, about the operationalization of these goals into concrete design interventions, about the perceived impact of these interventions, about the collaboration with other actors in the projects, and about reflections on the process in terms of social sustainability. The general structures of the interview guides are enclosed in Appendix 4.

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<sup>6</sup> Conducting the interviews with professionals online was a result of the policy measures against the COVID-19 pandemic, due to which most professionals worked from home and not in their offices.

## **Data analysis and synthesis**

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All interviews were recorded and all but the ones with residents in Nieuw Crooswijk were transcribed. The latter interviews were analyzed directly while listening in the recordings. Because only a specific part of the content of these interviews was used in the analysis of Chapter 4 (elaborated upon in more detail in 4.3), fully transcribing the recording was not considered necessary for this set of interviews.

All other recordings were transcribed by the researcher herself with the help of student-assistants and the professional service TranscriptOnline. To secure safe data transfer between these different parties (see also Data Management in 1.3.6), the recordings and transcripts were shared via protected digital environments. Between the researchers and student-assistants, this concerned a protected data server provided by TU Delft. Between the researchers and TranscriptOnline, recordings and transcripts were shared via a protected online server provided by TranscriptOnline.

Transcripts and planning documents were stored and analyzed in the software program Atlas.TI. Data analysis took place based on thematic analysis in which the researcher searched for passages that exemplified the same theme. The themes refer to concepts belonging to the specific theoretical frameworks that are applied to each study (as introduced in sections 3.2, 4.2 and 5.2).

How exactly the data was analyzed and synthesized per study, is elaborated upon in the methods sections per chapter (3.3, 4.3, and 5.3).

### 1.3.5 Engaging with practice

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The research was conducted in a practice-oriented environment at Stichting Kennis Gebiedsontwikkeling (SKG). This is a Dutch foundation for knowledge on area-based urban development projects in which 50-60 public, semi-public, and private actors<sup>7</sup> of Dutch urban development practice are involved. Its mission to construct a strong connection between science and practice corresponds to what is in research called “grounded planning” (Chang & Huang, 2022). This term refers to grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and is used to describe a “co-construction of theory and practice between academics and practitioners to remedy the perceived gap” (Chang & Huang, 2022, p. 407) in which insights ‘from the ground’ are inductively collected and reflected upon.

For this dissertation, the relationship between science and practice was most dynamic in the early phase of the research. In this phase, interaction with members of the SKG foundation was influential in defining the aims and questions for this research. In the first year of the PhD (2019), a series of exploratory conversations were held with approximately 10 members of SKG that helped to inform about questions in practice. In addition, two thematic sessions were organized during the first two years in which the researcher explored the problem field. The sessions were semi-structured around questions on the implementation of social sustainability in urban development projects and included 15 (in 2020) and 16 (in 2021) participants who represented public and private organizations.

In later phases, the interaction between science and practice took place via the publication of various blogs<sup>8</sup> on the online platform [Gebiedsontwikkeling.nu](http://Gebiedsontwikkeling.nu) and through various practice-oriented masterclasses, workshops, and congresses. These activities did not directly influence the design of the scientific research, neither did they function as a form of data collection. In hindsight, the main contribution of engaging with practitioners was the opportunity it provided to test whether initial research insights were recognized by and relevant for practice. Publishing blogs and presenting research findings in workshops was a way for the researcher to structure initial data in a sketchy way, to reflect on its meaning and implications, and so, to iteratively develop the most relevant interpretations of the empirical material.

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<sup>7</sup> Among the members are local and national government organizations, private real estate developers, social housing organizations, and other actors such as national water boards or the national railway company

<sup>8</sup> Approximately 15 blogs (in Dutch) that can be found on [www.gebiedsontwikkeling.nu](http://www.gebiedsontwikkeling.nu) and in the list of publications at the end of this dissertation.

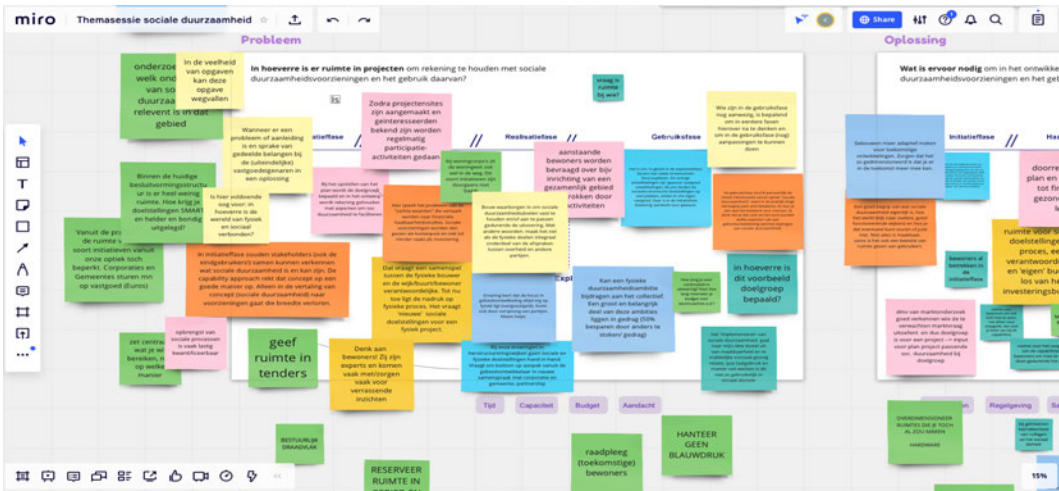


FIG. 1.9 Thematic session with practitioners in 2021, using the software of Zoom and Miro

### 1.3.6 Validity, bias, and data management

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The research designs of the different sets of case studies account for the internal validity of this research. Since all case-study analyses focus on relations between different units of analysis, internal validity – i.e., the validity of explanations about how event X relates to event Y – is of relevance in this research. The main tactic to address this was through performing comparative studies. Internal validity was ensured by searching for *differences* in *similar settings* (comparison between Buiksloterham and Nieuw Crooswijk in Chapter 3: explaining different outcomes in relatively similar urban development projects) or for searching for *similarities* in *different settings* (comparison Aspern Seestadt and DrottningH: identifying similar explanatory variables in different governance situations) (Johnson, 1997; Yin, 2009).

The research design also accounts for a potential unintended bias in this research. As this research is driven by a normative aim to advance social sustainability in cities, a potential bias concerns the assumption that social sustainability *is* governable, and that, therefore, positive relations between governance and social sustainability *will be* found. In the case study design of this research, this risk was covered through negative case sampling (Johnson, 1997). This implied that the selection of the urban development projects included one urban development project from which it was assumed that the social sustainability outcomes were hypothesized to be *not* successful (i.e., Nieuw Crooswijk). This allowed the researcher to verify whether certain related governance elements identified in a ‘positive case’ might as well be discovered in the ‘negative case’.

Other forms of validity that concern qualitative research are descriptive validity and interpretive validity (Johnson, 1997). In this research, descriptive validity, i.e., the factual accuracy of what a qualitative researcher reports on, is justified by recording all conducted interviews and by transcribing the vast majority of them. Data supportive to the analyses and the code book are provided in the Appendix. Moreover, supplemental data are stored in databases of the 4TU.Research.Data to allow other researchers to access the data. Interpretive validity, i.e., the degree to which a researcher interprets participants’ thoughts and viewpoints accurately, is insured in this research by the participant feedback (Johnson, 1997) during the interviews. This was particularly relevant in the resident interviews that served to evaluate people’s perceptions of social sustainability. After participants had answered the questions and responded to the valuation cards, the researcher reflected on a short summary and asked the participants for their feedback.

To secure safe and respectful storage of the data collected for this research, a Data Management Plan (DPM) was composed and followed. The DPM was discussed with the data steward of the Faculty of Architecture, the researcher’s supervisors, and the

Human Research Ethics Committee of TU Delft. The data steward was consulted in May-June 2021 after which the DPM was corrected according to her bits of advice. Moreover, since the case study analysis in this research involves the participation of human beings, an Ethics Approval Application was applied to the Human Research Ethics Committee. In the proposal, it was enclosed that interviewees would be asked to give their consent before participating and that personal information of the resident interviewees, such as names and addresses, would not be shared with any person except the researcher herself. The application was approved by the committee on 23 July 2021. Personal data such as interview transcripts and recordings are stored at a protected server provided by TU Delft, just like the Data Management Plan and letter of Approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee. These materials can requested from the researcher.

## 1.4 Dissertation outline

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### 1.4.1 Dilemmas of a paper-based dissertation

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The research is presented via a paper-based dissertation building upon four papers presented in chapters 2-5. All papers were submitted to internationally-renowned journals and were double-blind peer-reviewed. At the time of writing this dissertation, three papers were published and one was under review (having received its first reviews). Although the paper-based structure helped improving the research through various rounds of feedback and revisions, it also brought along some challenges that should be reflected upon.

The first concerns a certain extent of overlap among the different chapters. For paper publication, it was necessary for each paper to reintroduce the general theoretical framework of this research. Some remaining overlapping information between the different chapters of this dissertation could therefore not be overcome. Since three out of four papers are already published and available under open access liabilities, it was decided to not majorly change them but instead to bundle them in their original forms. Some minor changes were made in the papers to create a complete, coherent, and convincing storyline throughout this dissertation. These changes are limited to adjusting titles and subtitles, changing introductory sentences, leaving out fragments that are too repetitive to this dissertation's introduction, and adding



some information that could not be used in the journal publications due to word count restrictions. Particularly the method, analysis, and conclusion sections of the paper chapters have been untouched. Moreover, the use of 'we' in the chapters has been unchanged. 'We' refers to the authors who the author of this dissertation and co-authors who contributed to the specific paper (paper references are mentioned in the beginning of each chapter).

Another challenge concerns the use of different terminology in the paper chapters. Not only did the papers use different terms to conform them to the scope of journal that the paper was submitted to, terms of concepts also developed throughout the research process according to the growing insights of the researcher. Some terms in the papers were adjusted for the purpose of creating a coherent storyline for this dissertation (for instance, the term 'people-centered planning practices' used in the original paper was changed into 'capability-centered governance practices' in this dissertation). Yet, due to the specific foci of the paper chapters, the key concepts of research framework in Figure 1.1 remain being specified in different ways per chapter. Table 1.2 provides an overview of the main concepts used per chapter. Other equivalent terms are also used throughout the dissertation, such as 'urban outcomes' is also referred to as 'social sustainability outcomes' or as 'urban social sustainability'. In addition, the concepts take different forms once they are interpreted through the Capability Approach. Elements of the governance and policy implementation processes are, for example, referred to as capability-centered operational approach, capability-centered policy implementation, and capability-centered governance (activities).

TABLE 1.2 Concepts used in different chapters, according to specific focus of the study

Key concept	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
Policy goal / social sustainability goal	Policy goal	Planning goal	-	-
Operational intervention / policy intervention	Operational form	Design intervention	Place intervention	Governance activities
Urban outcome / policy outcome / social sustainability outcome	Policy outcome	Urban functionings	Urban capability, capability outcomes	-
Governance situation / governance practice	-	-	Collaborative governance situation	Capability-centered governance practice
Institutional landscape	-	-	-	Institutions, institutional conditions

## 1.4.2 Chapter outline

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In total, the dissertation consists of six chapters. After this introduction, the second chapter will present the paper “*Planning for urban social sustainability - towards a human-centred operational approach*”. This chapter discusses the conceptual contribution of the Capability Approach to urban planning practices, and argues - illustrated by empirical examples - that the conventional approach to implementing social sustainability goals in Dutch urban planning practice is rather ‘resource-centered’ than ‘capability-centered’. Accordingly, the third chapter presents the paper “*Are good intentions enough? Evaluating social sustainability in urban development projects through the capability approach*”. This chapter contributes to the methodological application of the Capability Approach as an evaluative approach to urban development projects, illustrated by a case-study analysis of the Buiksloterham-project in Amsterdam. Thereafter, the fourth chapter presents the paper “*Governing capabilities, not places - how to understand social sustainability implementation in urban development*” and makes a connection between the capability-centered social sustainability outcomes and the governance process around urban development projects. Based on a cross-case comparison between the two Dutch cases – Buiksloterham&Co and Nieuw Crooswijk -, the chapter presents three principles for collaborative governance that adheres to human capability expansion. The fifth chapter presents the paper “*Understanding people-centered planning practice in Europe: an institutionalist comparison between urban development projects in Vienna and Helsingborg*” and zooms in on the wider institutional conditions that influence governance processes by cross-comparing two urban development projects in Austria and Sweden. After that, the sixth chapter draws the conclusions of this dissertation by constructing the answers to the research questions. It synthesizes the findings from the different papers, discusses the implications and contributions, and provides recommendations for urban development practice to govern social sustainability goals in urban development projects.



# 2 Towards a new evaluative framework in urban development practice

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This chapter includes an adjusted version of the paper that has previously been published as: Janssen, C., Daamen, T. A., & Verdaas, C. (2021). Planning for urban social sustainability: Towards a human-centred operational approach. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 9083.

**ABSTRACT** Social sustainability: what is it exactly and how should we understand it in urban contexts? Although various studies about social sustainability in the built environment have appeared over the recent decades, scholars agree that it is a highly complex and value-laden concept and that a single definition of it does not exist. How to operationalize social sustainability goals in urban practice, therefore, remains a black box in literature. This chapter discusses the conceptual understanding of social sustainability as a policy goal in urban planning practices and explains how different conceptions are possible during this operationalization that may lead to different 'desirable' urban outcomes. Illustrated by the empirical example of Dutch planning practices, the chapter continues to argue for one conception that is particularly helpful for a capability-centered operational approach to social sustainability outcomes in urban planning and development: Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (CA).

## 2.1 Introduction

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While much attention has been accorded to the economic and environmental aspects of sustainability in cities, the social dimension of urban sustainability has recently also started to receive its share of scrutiny in both research and practice. In Europe, concerns about social segregation and social stability in member states have led the European Committee (2019) to pledge for making cities more secure places to live by emphatically adopting the United Nation's sustainable development goals (United Nations, 2015b). The new policy objectives—for example on urban inclusiveness, safety and resilience—have accelerated efforts in academic and professional networks to better understand how these may be translated into context-specific approaches and operationalizations (e.g., EUROCITIES, 2021 and ULI, 2021).

Not only do European cities face socio-economic challenges, such as increasing spatial segregation between income groups (Musterd et al., 2017) and increasing economic inequality (Andersen & Van Kempen, 2019), they are also confronted with several social imbalances. In the Netherlands, for instance, citizens experience stronger tensions between 'the rich and the poor', and researchers have observed an increase in conflict between Dutch natives and people with a migration background (Wennekers, Boelhouwer, Campen, & Kullberg, 2019). Similar to other places in Europe, it is found that citizens more frequently express feelings of societal unease, and that polarization, 'hardening' and radicalisation are lurking (Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2021). The need for policy makers to address these issues has thus been mounting.

Although a vast number of studies on social sustainability in the built environment have emerged in recent decades (see e.g., Manzi et al. 2010 and Colantonio and Dixon 2009), only few have focused on how social sustainability, as a policy goal, might be operationalised in planning practices. Some authors claim that "despite the overall consensus about the significance of social sustainability in the sustainable development agenda, a common agreement on the definition and operationalization of this concept is still missing" (Larimian & Sadeghi, 2019, p. 623). But what this fails to consider is that perhaps the impossibility of finding such common ground is the very reason that few researchers have offered it. In contrast, we therefore assume that social sustainability, generally defined as maintaining or improving the well-being of people in this and future generations (Chiu, 2003), is an inherently pluralistic concept. This means that, while acknowledging the importance of the general concept anywhere, a wide range of possibly conflicting operationalizations may be both warranted and empirically sound, given their specific contexts. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is threefold.

First, we aim to make a conceptual contribution to the operationalization of social sustainability goals in cities by arguing, following Moroni (2019), that different conceptions to social sustainability in research and practice are inevitable, and that these logically result in different operational approaches. Second, we argue that applying a capability-centered conception, based on the key tenets of Amartya Sen's (1999b) Capability Approach, is a more comprehensive approach to social sustainability than what is currently common in urban research and practice. A capability-centered evaluative approach takes human and contextual diversity into account and, therefore, draws on a richer informational basis that is particularly helpful for conceptions of social sustainability that focus on human well-being-issues. Thirdly, after explaining our conceptual arguments, we will empirically explore three recent urban planning examples in The Netherlands. Assessing Dutch national policy programs for urban renewal, national regulations on the country's acclaimed social housing system, and a recent national measurement tool on liveability, we show that Dutch urban policy-making has mainly concentrated on spatial interventions that merely address the tangible aspects of social sustainability and, thus, largely miss the crucial intangible dimension of the concept.

The next section elaborates on the conceptual understanding of social sustainability and its operationalization in planning research or practice. Section 2.3 continues on the advantages of the Capability Approach as a new, alternative conception to social sustainability. Section 2.4 introduces recent Dutch cases of social sustainability operationalization in planning practice. Section 2.5 discusses the empirical results considering our capability-conception of social sustainability. The chapter concludes with the hypothesis that applying a new, capability-centered evaluative approach will be able to address social sustainability in a more comprehensive and effective way than currently common in practice.

## 2.2 Steps of operationalization: from a value-laden plurality to concrete indicators

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The growing number of studies on social sustainability have not led to a single definition of it, but rather to a comprehensive scrutiny of the values, principles and indicators of what social sustainability is about (Dempsey et al., 2009; Langergaard, 2019; Littig & Griessler, 2005). As Shirazi and Keivani (2017, p1539) identify, “different approaches to social sustainability have resulted in a fragmented, sometimes contradictory, body of literature.” Although some scholars warn that social sustainability, without including the key issue of social justice, is merely a container concept (Davidson, 2010), others explain that social sustainability can be seen as “a conceptual tool that policy makers and practitioners can use to communicate, make decisions, and measure or assess current developments, and that scholars can very well study and even refine” (Boström, 2012, p2).

**TABLE 2.1** Normative dimensions of social sustainability related to individuals versus to communities

Individual-related	Community-related
Social equity	Sense of community
Quality of life	Social cohesion
Diversity	Social capital
Individual well-being	Collective well-being
Social inclusion	Democracy

*Based on (Boström, 2012; Bramley et al., 2006; Chiu, 2003; Dempsey et al., 2012; Dixon & Woodcraft, 2013; Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017; McKenzie, 2004; Polèse & Stren, 2000; Rashidfarokhi et al., 2018; Shirazi & Keivani, 2019; Vallance et al., 2009)*

Dempsey et al. (2012) suggest that social sustainability is, in essence, about social equity and sustainability of community; Weingartner and Moberg (2014) mention social capital, human capital and well-being as central values for social sustainability; Rashidfarokhi et al. (2018) conclude on six fundamental values, namely, equity, social inclusion, social cohesion, social capital, community participation and safety. Reflecting on thirty years of research on social sustainability, Shirazi and Keivani observe that social sustainability is “neither absolute nor fixed” (2017, p1532), and that scholars simply use different meanings and indicators. Based on a metaliterature review, they list seven principles and key aspects that are commonly used to define and qualify social sustainability, namely, equity; democracy, participation and civic

society; social inclusion and mix; social networking and interaction; livelihood and sense of place; safety and security; and human well-being and quality of life (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017). In Table 2.1 above, an overview of individual- and community-related normative dimensions in social sustainability literature is provided.

While social sustainability, as a theoretical concept, includes a multiplicity of values, principles and indicators, these do not provide a rigid framework for applying it to practice. According to Shirazi and Keivani (2017), the relevance of social sustainability does not consist of a solid definition that is generally applicable, but of key themes and basic characteristics that should be specified in particular contexts. As Manzi et al. (2010, p21), explain: “social sustainability is often more useful as an ambiguous and poorly defined phrase that users can shape to their own circumstances.” In short, no universal operational definition to apply social sustainability in cities and neighbourhoods exists. Instead of seeing social sustainability’s abundance of aspects that are described in literature as a definition gap that should be filled, we consider the observed ambiguity inherent to what social sustainability conceptually is. This is not problematic in essence—rather, this is a characteristic to be considered when referring to operationalising it in practice.

In this research, we focus on social sustainability as (1) a policy goal in urban planning practices, and (2) its operational form in urban areas. Although research has addressed social sustainability in both functions, little research has focused on how these relate to each other—on how policy goals generate operationalizations and on how operationalizations conform to articulated policy goals. If policy-makers do not succeed in such alignment, they risk outcomes that do not correspond with intended policy goals, or might even oppose to them (Buitelaar, 2020; Jonkman & Janssen-Jansen, 2018).

In order to understand better the relation between goals and operationalizations, we here draw on Moroni’s (2019) distinction between concepts (i.e., general ideas including some principles that are generally acknowledged) and conceptions, i.e., the diverse, specific forms that the general concepts can adopt. In his perspective, “a concept constitutes an abstract ideal on which all participants in a discourse may agree and which can be developed argumentatively in different ways; the realisation and operationalization of a concept in this sense is achieved by means of a particular conception” (Moroni, 2019, p9).

More than in concepts, that are relatively little value-laden, the value-laden part mainly appears in conceptions, i.e., during the operationalization of a concept. Moroni refers to Davy (1997) in saying that policy makers either implicitly or explicitly decide on different conceptions when they realize a concept: “[t]his is inevitable. The question is therefore not whether [...] [the concept] is important



for urban policy and planning, but which conception [...] is chosen for their design” (Davy, 1997, p9-10). So, if a value-laden concept allows different normative perceptions, we should not pose the question which of them is most true in general, but which of them is most useful for policy.

From this perspective, we can understand social sustainability as a concept that includes a plurality of conceptions and indicators about people’s quality of life. These altogether form the criteria of social sustainability as a theoretical concept (see Figure 2.1). When we shift our focus to its operationalization, this provides the opportunity to specify its meaning to a specific context of application. In other words, the opportunity to develop a particular conception that is relevant for the issues, problems or questions that policy aims to address. Such conception frames the policy goal. The key point that we aim to stress here is that the conception logically interrelates with the operational form. We see operationalization as a process of defining operational approaches that support a specific normative conception of a concept. Operational forms thus do not serve as generally valid indicators, but as evaluative tools to the corresponding policy goals. Therefore, if social sustainability is to be applied to a specific policy context, we should not immediately concentrate on its operational indicators. What should first be addressed is what normative conception is regarded most useful for that policy context, and then, what corresponding operational approaches are.

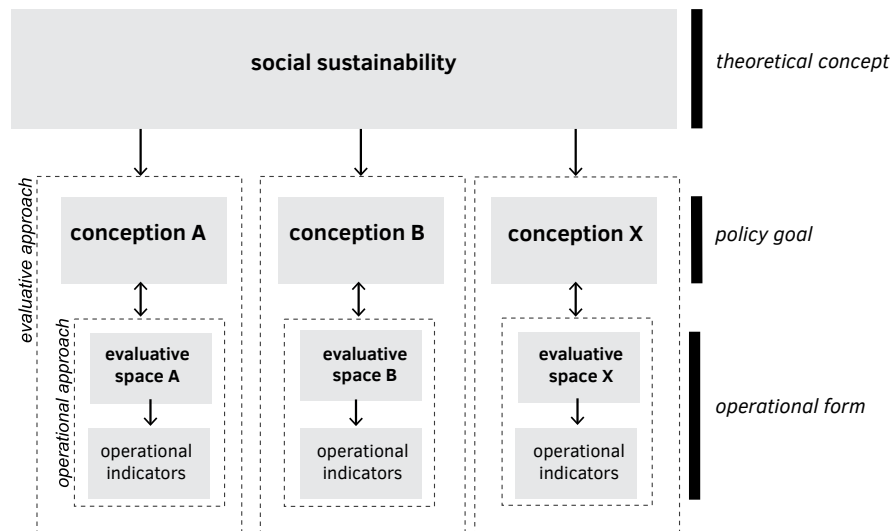


FIG. 2.1 Steps of operationalizing social sustainability

Research on social sustainability in the built environment has been concerned with the investigation of operational indicators that relate to social sustainability. Bramley et al. (2006) particularly studied the relation between urban form and social sustainability and found among others density, gardens, green space and nearness to bus services to be related to indicators such as safety, friendliness and pride in a neighbourhood. Hamiduddin (2015) discusses the relations between demographic compositions, spatial scales and social sustainability aspects. Dempsey et al. (2009) listed spatial factors of social sustainability, among which are urbanity, decent housing, accessibility and pedestrian friendliness. Similarly, Shirazi and Keivani (2019) define density, mixed land use, urban pattern and connectivity, building typology, quality of centre and access to facilities as the “hard infrastructure” of social sustainability in neighbourhoods.

Eizenberg and Jabareen (2017) warn that spatial indicators presented in studies are akin to general indicators of “good” planning, and that they can have contested effects in cities. For example, interventions to improve walkability in urban areas could lead to more gentrification. They argue that additional features must be added—social sustainability in the built environment is also about processes and social structures in communities “that will emerge within a community and ensure the satisfaction of its needs, which are ever-changing” (Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017, p3). Accordingly, most studies also include softer, intangible indicators, such as sense of attachment, social networking and interaction (Shirazi & Keivani, 2019), social capital and sense of community (Dempsey et al., 2009) and local governance structures and inhabitants’ perceptions of their influence over their living environment (Dixon & Woodcraft, 2013). An overview of the various operational indicators of social sustainability in the built environment has been listed in Table 2.2.

**TABLE 2.2** Operational indicators of social sustainability in the built environment

Tangible	Intangible
decent housing	social interaction
transport	social networks
daily facilities	cultural expression
recreation	feeling of belonging
jobs	feeling of community
schools	safety
public spaces	well-being
healthcare	existence of informal groups and associations
urban design	representation by local governments
	levels of participation
	levels of influence

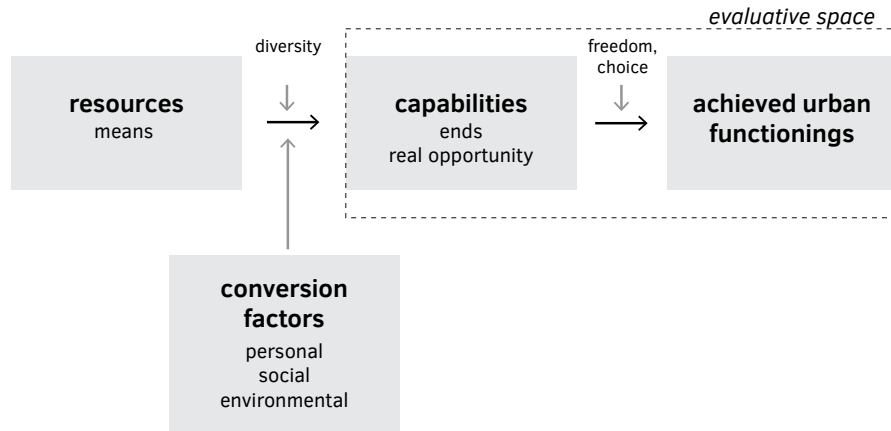
*Based on Dixon and Woodcraft (2013), Dempsey et al. (2009) and Shirazi and Keivani (2019). See full overview in Appendix 5.*

Urban studies have increasingly been including intangible indicators in the social sustainability debate. As Shirazi and Keivani (2017) observe, the focus of research has shifted from spatial, quantifiable aspects to more qualitative ones, such as sense of place or well-being. This shifting discourse of social sustainability from “hard, traditional themes” to “softer concepts” had already been mentioned by Colantonio and Dixon (2009), who pointed out that the shift towards qualitative indicators triggered the debate on what role policy-makers should play in delivering “softer” objectives.

However, they also warned that social sustainability had, until then, not been a serious approach to urban regeneration—opposed to for example cultural industries approaches, health and liveability perspectives and social economy approaches. Whereas such approaches certainly include aspects relating to social sustainability, Colantonio and Dixon argue they do not offer an approach in which social sustainability is a fully integrated dimension of sustainable urban development.

We add to this discussion by pointing at the conceptualization steps that are between understanding social sustainability as a theoretical concept on the one hand, and as an operational indicator on the other hand (see Figure 2.1). The remaining cloudiness about how to integrate both tangible and intangible aspects of social sustainability in urban planning practices might, in fact, be due to a misfit to an, either explicitly or implicitly applied, conception in policy-making. How much do we know about distinct normative conceptions of social sustainability in planning practices, and what are the options? Is the current search for operational indicators sufficient, or do we need to reinvestigate how distinct conceptions to social sustainability correspond to the various aspects, both tangible and intangible, of social sustainability? In the next section, we take one step back and concentrate on the Capability Approach as an operational approach for the understanding social sustainability in urban planning practices.

## 2.3 From a resource-centered to a capability-centered approach



**FIG. 2.2** A simplified scheme of the Capability Approach' evaluative framework, based on Sen (1999b) and Robeyns (2017)

The key asset of the Capability Approach relevant to the operationalisation of social sustainability is the strong normative positioning of the approach. As already addressed in the introduction of this dissertation, the CA sets forth the principle that in questions of justice or human well-being, one should strive for equality of people's effective opportunities that they have to live a worthy human life (Robeyns, 2006). Subsequently, the evaluative space of the CA concentrates on capabilities and functionings as the evaluative space of people's advantage on well-being<sup>9</sup> (Figure 2.2). Functionings are the doings and beings of a human being, for example traveling, sleeping, being educated and being nourished. Capabilities, then, are the substantive freedoms (i.e., real opportunities) that an individual person has to operationalise these functionings; is a person really able to achieve the functioning

<sup>9</sup> The Capability Approach is a broad framework that requires several operational choices when applied in studies (Robeyns, 2006, 2017), such as whether a study focuses on functionings or capabilities, or on agency or well-being, as evaluative space (Alkire, 2005). This dissertation focuses on the evaluative space as *well-being* freedom rather than *agency* freedom, as this was considered more relevant for the understanding of social sustainability as a condition of quality of life in urban environments.

that he/she has reason to value (Sen, 1999b)? If, for example, traveling is considered as a valuable functioning, the CA poses two evaluative questions: (1) does a person travel? (i.e., evaluating achieved functionings), and (2) if a person does not, could he/she travel if he/she wanted to? (i.e., evaluating capabilities). The CA positions resources as an important factor to achieve capability and functionings, however, it only sees them as means for people to enlarge their capabilities (i.e., ends).

This way of defining the evaluative space refers back to the CA's key principle that, as introduced in Chapter 1, human beings are inherently diverse. According to Sen (1999b), it is important to emphasize capability as the evaluative space of well-being because human beings are inherently diverse. Focusing on resources as evaluative space would not be fair because equality of resources does not automatically lead to equality of capability. For instance, a disabled person might not have the same access to public transport as an abled person, or two children in the same neighbourhood might not have the same career opportunities because they grow up in different families. An outcome of unequal opportunities despite equal resources is in the CA explained by the context. Sen (1999b) argues that each person has a unique set of conversion factors that influence how means lead to ends. Conversion factors are personal heterogeneities, environmental diversities, variations in social climate, differences in relational perspectives and distribution within the family. In addition to this, Robeyns (2017) distinguishes between personal, social, and, environmental conversion factors.

Subsequently, a capability-centered conception to social sustainability's operationalization implies an analytical distinction between resources as *means* and people's real opportunities as *ends* (1999b). Applying a capability-centered conception, social sustainability should not be narrowed down to lists of tangible resources because this way would step over the diverse, contextual factors that influence people's eventual capabilities, i.e., people's eventual well-being. The evaluative space of social sustainability should, in the spirit of the CA, focus on actions and possibilities of human beings. Basta (2017) suggests to start defining "urban functionings", and opportunities to actually accomplish them in real life. For instance, the social sustainability indicator "public space" could relate to various functionings and capabilities. From a capability-centered operational approach, this indicator could be concerned with the urban functioning "recreating in public space", "making use of public space", or "creating public space" or with the real opportunity to accomplish these functionings. In that way, a capability-centered approach broadens the operational definition of social sustainability and considers contextual factors that relate to human well-being before evaluation. As Robeyns (2017, p47) puts it, "in order to know what people are able to do and be, we need to analyse the full picture of their resources, and the various conversion factors, or else analyse the functionings and capabilities directly".

The analytical distinction of the CA, between resources and capabilities, allows us to disentangle two evaluative approaches to operationalise social sustainability: a resource-centered approach and a capability-centered approach. As mentioned earlier, current research on social sustainability stems from an initial focus on tangible, “harder”, aspects such as housing, jobs and public space. These aspects refer to indicators as if they are resources in the built environment—the availability of something that a person can make use of. Therefore, an operational approach that focuses on resources as outputs would be valid if the corresponding policy goals are eventually concerned with improvements that concern the built environment, such as urban liveability. If policies, however, eventually aim to achieve improvements around people’s actions and opportunities via the built environment, policy outcomes should rather be assessed in an evaluative space that concentrates on the question whether people are actually able to make use of urban resources. A capability-centered operational approach would then be a more valid approach.

## 2.4 Exploring social sustainability operationalization in Dutch planning practice

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So far, we have argued that a capability-centered conception has promising advantages to the operational understanding of social sustainability in the built environment. We have also articulated that this conception has been less explored in urban research and practice than a resource-centered approach. Next, we will empirically explore our conceptual arguments in the context of urban policy operationalization in The Netherlands, and question whether a capability-centered approach would, in this context, indeed be a better operational approach than a resource-centered one. The exploration is based on desk research of empirical literature on the Dutch planning practice and forms the basis for the case-study research on capability-centered operationalizations of social sustainability that are conducted in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

The Netherlands has traditionally often been referred to as a socio-democratic welfare state with a comprehensive integrated planning system, and has moved towards a more liberal approach in the last two decades (Nadin & Stead, 2008). Although many years of welfare policies have left their mark in current planning practices, concerning developments about social stability are currently observable

in Dutch society (Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2021; Wennekers et al., 2019). We therefore aim to investigate how previous planning practices have operationally been approached, and to what extent these practices have addressed social sustainability in its full width. We refer to three dimensions of policy operationalization in Dutch planning practice that concern social policy goals: (1) national policy programs for urban renewal, (2) national regulations on the country's social housing system and (3) a national measurement tool on urban liveability.

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#### 2.4.1 **National policy programs for urban renewal**

The first dimension concerns national policy programs for urban renewal. The Netherlands has a long tradition in investing in social goals through such programs. The first large-scale program was operated in the 1970s and mainly consisted out of spatial interventions—demolishing neighbourhoods with “slum” dwellings and rebuilding them with modern housing and public buildings (Schuiling, 2007). Later programs aimed to integrate social goals in urban developments. Two main programs were Grootstedenbeleid (Big Cities Policies), which aimed at long-term spatial, social and economic development in large cities between 1995–2009, and the Krachtwijkenbeleid (40 Neighbourhoods Policy), which aimed to improve forty specific “problematic” neighbourhoods in the Netherlands between 2007–2012 (Platform31, 2020; Uytterlinde et al., 2017). Krachtwijkenbeleid aimed at reducing the number of social housing dwellings in neighbourhoods, replacing rental dwellings to home-owner ones, improving liveability, developing neighbourhood centres, citizen participation and care for citizens with socioeconomic problems (Permentier et al., 2013). Despite billions invested in these programs, their impact in urban areas has been contentious. While reports conclude that Grootstedenbeleid has led to visible improvement of neighbourhoods (Uytterlinde et al., 2020), it can be criticized that these improvements have not been substantial enough. Economies had improved, criminality rates had decreased and housing stocks had diversified, but cities still coped with increasing inequality between the “better”- and the “worse”-off citizens and severe social problems among marginalized groups (Engbersen et al., 2007). In addition, Krachtwijkenbeleid has, according to the Social and Cultural Planning Agency (SCP), not led to measurable effects for people's income or for the area's liveability, and even led to a negative effect on the participation of citizens in neighbourhoods (Permentier et al., 2013).

The main point of critique on national policy programs is that these have focused on the quality of areas, which does not necessarily improve the quality of life of human beings. As Musterd and Ostendof (2008, p88) state, “[t]he history of urban policies in The Netherlands can be summarised as follows: a strong focus on area-based

approaches in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, aiming to change the housing stock in order to create a social mix". According to the authors, the area-based focus in policies was founded in beliefs that had drifted away from the real situation in practice. In contrast to the policy's aims on social mixing, statistical levels on ethnic- and socioeconomic-segregation levels were in fact not alarming in the Netherlands at that time. Tackling broader structural problems, such as unemployment, would therefore not be effective through area-based initiatives aimed at diversifying housing stocks (Musterd & Ostendorf, 2008). In short, the spatial rearrangements in urban areas, due to the urban programs, had little to do with the lives of inhabitants, in contrast to what the programs aimed to achieve. It is therefore implausible that the urban policy programs succeeded in comprehensively addressing both tangible and intangible aspects of social sustainability.

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## 2.4.2 Social housing sector

The second dimension concerns the use of the country's social housing sector as a tool of social policy operationalization. The first Dutch housing associations stem from the 1850s, when employers arranged housing for employees and when the "better-off" workers united themselves in housing cooperatives. Hoekstra (2017) describes how the social housing sector developed, from these initial forms, into housing associations, led by catholic or protestant initiatives in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and to an extensive social housing sector, subsidized by the government, between the 1950s and 1990s. In that post-war period, the number of social rent dwellings increased from 10% to 40% of the total Dutch housing stock. The government had strong control and influence on the sector, in order to cope with a large housing shortage. From the 1980s on, however, governmental subsidies disappeared and housing associations became more independent. Nieboer and Gruis mention how the role of housing associations became larger as they became more privatized in the 1990s, and how "the sale of both new and existing homes become more important as a means of financing housing development and as a vehicle for cross-subsidising social activities [i.e., welfare, care, local economy and education]" (Nieboer & Gruis, 2016, p. 278). In this period, housing associations served several societal purposes in neighbourhoods that went far beyond housing provision only.

This has changed, by several reforms, in the last decade. A new housing law, in 2015, prescribed that housing associations should focus on its primary task of housing, called Services of General Economic Interests (SGEI), and that they should transfer all other activities to commercial organisations (Hoekstra, 2017). This national regulation diminished the capacities of housing associations to engage in broader



social activities than housing. So, while housing associations previously fulfilled a role in advancing multiple social sustainability indicators, such as education and well-being, the national policy regulations restrained the social housing sector as a tool to operationalise merely one tangible aspect of social sustainability, namely affordable housing.

### 2.4.3 Leefbaarometer

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The third dimension concerns the Leefbaarometer (Liveability Meter) (Leidelmeijer et al., 2014), a state-developed measure instrument that is often referred to in Dutch policy-making discussions about social value in cities. Whereas this instrument has been criticized because it includes some elements that could be perceived as discriminatory (Hochstenbach, 2020)<sup>10</sup>, it is often applied in neighbourhood studies (Leidelmeijer et al., 2020; Uyterlinde et al., 2020) and has become a common tool for urban planning practitioners in order to monitor nonfinancial values in projects (Heurkens et al., 2019). When applying it however, one should not forget that the instrument's aim is to assess people's living environment, and that it does not evaluate people's quality of life (Leidelmeijer et al., 2014). Measuring liveability is not as far-reaching as evaluating social sustainability, as we can observe if we compare indicators of the Leefbaarometer with social sustainability indicators (Table 2.3). This table shows that the instrument mainly measures tangible indicators of social sustainability, such as the housing stock (e.g., housing quality, typology and tenure), amenities (e.g., proximity to healthcare and schools) and additional indicators about demographics and mutation rates. It does not include indicators that are concerned with social interaction, social networks, feelings of belonging or feelings of community.

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<sup>10</sup> A renewed version of the Leefbaarometer (3.0) was presented in 2022 after this paper was published. The renewed instrument does not include indicators in relation to residents' migration background (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koningsrelaties, n.d.).

**TABLE 2.3** Indicators of social sustainability compared to indicators of the Leefbaarometer. The indicators of the instrument listed here are a summary of the 100 indicators that the Leefbaarometer consists of. See full overview in Appendix 6

	Social Sustainability	Leefbaarometer
Tangible	decent housing	housing quality; housing typology; housing tenure
	transport	distance to train station and to highway;
	daily facilities	number of shops; distance to ATM
	recreation	day recreation facilities; number of cafes, restaurants and shops; distance to library; number of stages; distance to swimming pool; proximity to parks and natural areas
	jobs	-
	schools	number of primary schools
	public spaces	-
	healthcare	number of general practitioners; distance to hospital
	urban design	-
	-	demographics
	-	mutation rate
Intangible	social interaction	-
	social networks	-
	cultural expression	socio-cultural facilities
	feeling of belonging	-
	feeling of community	-
	safety	nuisance; order disturbance; abolishment; violent crimes; robberies; burglaries
	well-being	-
	existence of informal groups and associations	-
	representation by local governments	-
	levels of participation	-
	levels of influence	-

## 2.5 Discussion: complementing urban resources with urban capabilities

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The three dimensions of Dutch policy operationalization have in common that they mainly address the tangible aspects of social sustainability and scarcely tackle the intangible ones. To wit, the policy programs for urban renewal were centred around spatial, area-based interventions, a new housing law forced the social housing sector to focus merely on affordable housing provision, and the Leefbaarometer mainly focuses on housing and amenity indicators. Although these three examples do not represent The Netherlands' entire urban planning system, they are substantial operational elements of the Dutch urban practice that is concerned with social goals. The examples support the notion in research that intangible aspects of social sustainability have not become as much an integrated approach in urban practices as the tangible ones (Colantonio & Dixon, 2009; Shirazi & Keivani, 2017).

Our purpose here is not to label operationalizations that focus on area-based, spatial interventions as generally ineffective for social policy goals in urban planning. We want to emphasize that spatial interventions may contribute to some aspects of social sustainability, such as affordable housing or improved public space, but might by itself not be enough to advance social sustainability in the affected urban areas. As we learn from a vast body of research on neighbourhood effects (Ham et al., 2012), relations between area-based interventions and human-based improvements are delicate to prove. For instance, Cheshire (2012) concludes that studies have not led to ample evidence that living in a poor neighbourhood causes poverty, and that socioeconomically segregated neighbourhoods rather reflect economic inequality than cause it. So, when we evaluate operationalizations of urban policies, these evaluations go hand in hand with the question “what goals do policy interventions pursue?” Do they aim to address tangible goals, such as poverty rates in neighbourhoods, improved urban liveability or changed demographics, or do they aim to achieve more than that?

Currently, a shifting conception of social sustainability goals can be observed in The Netherlands. After a period in which policies have been predominantly operationalised by area-based interventions, more attention is currently called for individual, human-centred perspectives in urban policy-making (Raad voor de Leefomgeving en Infrastructuur, 2020). Reflecting on the previously applied national policy programs, Uytterlinde et al. (2020) conclude that spatial interventions, such as diversifying the housing stock or building new facilities, only add value to

neighbourhoods provided that spatial conditions are seen as a means to an end. Outcomes of policies should, according to them, eventually be concerned with opportunities of residents, as improving the liveability and safety of neighbourhood should go hand in glove with improving residents' societal opportunities and quality of life (Uyterlinde et al., 2020).

Centralizing area-based goals such as liveability echoes with a resource-centered conception to social sustainability, while focusing on human opportunities as outcomes of urban planning interventions complies with a capability-centered conception. The two approaches are not dichotomous but rather complementary. A resource-centered approach is legitimate because urban planning is a spatial practice that is professionally equipped to create resources in cities relevant to social sustainability, such as housing, schools, libraries, parks, infrastructure or community centres. Resources should not be belittled, also from a capability-conception—how to be educated without a school, or how to enjoy public space without a park? However, the argument of this chapter is that, by focusing on urban resources as operational indicators, a resource-centered approach only addresses social sustainability to a limited extent. It mainly touches upon social sustainability's tangible aspects and therefore steps over many other, potentially unexplored, aspects that are essential for social sustainability.

A capability-centered operational approach is complementary to the resource-centered approach because it can identify how different groups may have different access to, or make different use of such urban resources. Whereas a resource-centered approach seeks for resources as static entities that are generally applicable, a capability-centered approach focuses on the relations between human actions and their environment. For instance, the Leefbaarometer's indicator "number of primary schools" informs us about the availability of this resource in a specific area, but does not tell anything yet about a person's real possibility to send his/her child to a primary school. A new primary school might indeed contribute to increased well-being of local residents; however, it could also be possible that the nearby school has a waiting list for subscription, or that the new school offers a type of education that does not align with the (religious) beliefs of a family. So, although resources can certainly be effective in advancing social sustainability, the question is what other contextual factors affect people's actual opportunity to make use of social sustainability resources. A capability-centered approach thus shifts the evaluative space of what should be measured about social sustainability—it is not resources that define levels of social sustainability, but the relations between human beings and these resources.

Although the professional scope of urban planning practitioners is obviously limited and does not allow them to influence all possible contextual aspects that affect a person's capability, the conceptual starting point towards social sustainability makes a difference. Applying a capability-centered conception puts the urban planner in a better position to evaluate what role resources and other contextual factors play in achieving social sustainability as perceived by human beings. It makes room for situational flexibility in evaluations and room to specify social sustainability in specific places (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017), as it is, according to McClymonth, "a practical approach to judge outcomes and interventions in a range of places and times" (2014, p. 188). Because the capability-centered conception centralizes human well-being as the end goal of interferences, this provides the opportunity to go beyond spatial, socioeconomic or demographic aspects and to include more aspects that relate to social sustainability. The capability-conception addresses social sustainability from a broader perspective, and therefore, it is more accurate than a resource-centered conception.

## 2.6 Conclusions

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The aim of this chapter was to improve our understanding of the operationalization of social sustainability in urban planning practices. Our research shows that, between theoretical concept and operational forms, different evaluative approaches towards social sustainability may be taken. The chapter has argued for one of these—the Capability Approach—and has shown that, if we want urban areas to become more socially sustainable, it is promising to move from resource-centered to capability-centered thinking. Our exploration of Dutch policy operationalizations provides some concrete evidence of the gaps that the Capability Approach can uncover and fill by focusing on human-centred improvements instead of merely spatial, area-centred interventions. Exploring the implications of this approach is promising, because it improves our insight in the factors that influence the way how people use means (i.e., resources like affordable housing, schools and public spaces) for their ends (i.e., capabilities such as the real opportunity to feel part of a community in a neighbourhood). In conclusion, a capability-centered conception of social sustainability in cities broadens the operational definition that is currently dominant in urban planning practices, and offers an empirically more accurate definition of what social sustainability is essentially about. This improved understanding can facilitate urban professionals to align operational interventions with their goals around social sustainability, thus, to be more effective in realizing their articulated ambitions.

Complementing resource-centered conceptions with capability-centered thinking brings social sustainability more in line with the way economic and environmental goals are treated in urban research and practice. In research, it broadens our understanding of social sustainability and explains the diverse ways in which the concept may be applied. For practice, it offers a more comprehensive approach to socially sustainable city planning and acknowledges the context-dependency of its operationalization in policies and projects.

A risk of taking a capability-centered approach to social sustainability operationalization is that the link between the social dimension and other dimensions of sustainability may be overlooked. The Capability Approach adopts an anthropocentric world view and identifies human worthiness and dignity as the highest achievable good. Hence, we stress that the objective of making urban areas (more) socially sustainable stems from an overarching ambition for sustainable development in cities, in which economic, social and environmental dimensions should be equally addressed. This, unavoidably, creates tensions. In practice, urban development projects are vehicles of policy implementation in which various sustainability goals come together and compete, such as decreasing carbon-emissions, generating new jobs or building more affordable housing. Such projects typically span a long period of time. Sustainability goals may fade into the background as the projects are planned, prepared, and executed, either because they are drowned out by other, more dominant policy goals or because they are cancelled due to a lack of funding and/or attention. Next to improving our understanding of how sustainability goals can be comprehensively operationalised, we should thus also create more insight into the ways that goals compete, evolve and are met (or neglected) in real urban projects.

Capability-centered conceptions of social sustainability will likely take time and effort to adopt in policy and practice, as it requires in-depth, qualitative inquiry into the differences among the inhabitants of urban areas. However, we hold that a more comprehensive understanding of social sustainability in the built environment will help to identify more, underexplored, factors that affect social sustainability in urban areas. Perhaps the most valuable contribution of applying a capability-centered approach is that it opens the floor for discussion on new questions in the social sustainability debate, such as: what do spatial interventions in cities aim to achieve, who benefits from them, which inequalities in people's access to resources can we observe, are these inequalities problematic, and what personal, social or institutional factors cause them? Addressing these questions could provide policy-makers with more realistic insights on social sustainability in the built environment and, eventually, with operational tools to pursue more socially stable and vibrant spaces.



Wat voor soort identiteit (meer type buurt) mijn buurt heeft, vind ik niet zo belangrijk, zolang ik maar een fijne woning heb 17

Zolang de bereikbaarheid goed is, maakt het type buurt waar ik woon me niet zo uit 5

Een community-gevoel moet vanuit bewoners ontstaan, daar kan de gemeente, zorgorganisatie of woningcorporatie niet bij helpen 23

Ik heb geen behoefte om mee te denken over de invulling van mijn buurt 21

Ik ben wel bereid om te helpen om de buurt te verbeteren, maar ik heb geen idee hoe ik dat kan 15

Ik heb wel behoefte aan een plek waar ik kan wonen, maar ik heb geen idee hoe ik dat kan 1

Ik vind het belangrijk om me aan te sluiten bij groepjes in de buurt zoals een buurtvereniging 19

De buurt is belangrijk, maar ik heb geen idee hoe ik dat kan 1

De buurt is belangrijk, maar ik heb geen idee hoe ik dat kan 1

De buurt is belangrijk, maar ik heb geen idee hoe ik dat kan 1

# 3 Evaluating social sustainability outcomes: intentions and experiences

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This chapter includes an adjusted version of the paper that has previously been published as: Janssen, C., & Basta, C. (2022). Are good intentions enough? Evaluating social sustainability in urban development projects through the capability approach. *European Planning Studies*, 1-22.

**ABSTRACT** After Chapter 2 showed why the Capability Approach is a promising evaluative perspective to urban social sustainability, this chapter presents an empirical study that further explores the methodological contribution of the CA in the applied field of urban development projects (UDPs). Based on a qualitative case study of the urban development project Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam, the planners' perspective of social sustainability as a set of policy goals and place interventions is juxtaposed against residents' perspective towards social sustainability understood as a set of human capabilities. The study finds that the Capability Approach captures the diverse ways in which residents value different urban functionings and the different ways in which they are able to convert place interventions into personal capabilities. This 'capability understanding' of how social sustainability is perceived in local urban areas opens the door for questioning how planning processes can be designed in such a way that they do not only focus on delivering operational interventions as urban resources, but that are centered toward delivering urban outcomes as human capabilities (see chapters 4 and 5).



## 3.1 Introduction

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As became clear in the previous chapters, social sustainability strives to improve the life conditions for people who live now and who will live in the future (Chiu, 2003). It is a value-laden and multidimensional concept that incorporates multiple understandings and aspects of life. Social equity, diversity, inclusion, cohesion, participation, collective and individual well-being are examples of the many concepts that converge towards the idea of social sustainability.

To date, no consensus was reached on how social sustainability should be conceptualized and evaluated (Larimian & Sadeghi, 2019). As was also addressed in the previous chapter, the respective 'evaluative domain' – what socially sustainable arrangements consist of in concrete terms – has developed in different directions during recent years. Scholars evaluating the concept recognize a shifting focus from the more tangible aspects of social sustainability – such as employment and housing – to the more intangible ones like well-being and sense of community (Colantonio & Dixon, 2009; Shirazi & Keivani, 2017). Since these latter aspects cannot be evaluated independently from the specific contextual conditions of one's living environment, situated practices of social sustainability evaluation are now increasingly called for within this literature (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017).

Urban development projects (UDPs) represent a relatively unexplored domain within the application of these evaluation practices. UDPs are “large-scale transformations of urban land through real estate development ventures, often implemented by a partnership arrangement between the public and the private sector” (Kim, 2022, p1), where the land is – different than in large-scale infrastructure projects – produced for human occupation. Often, these transformative projects involve processes of place governance involving different stakeholders in the identification of the area's development-relevant-goals – from improving energy efficiency to promoting social inclusiveness – and throughout the phases of project conception, construction, and delivery (Adams & Tiesdell, 2012; Healey, 2010).

Goals like promoting social cohesion or well-being are often framed by planners under the umbrella term of urban social sustainability (Colantonio & Dixon, 2009). The same concept is also used to devise criteria and indicators of 'socially sustainable' urban environments. Therefore, in the framework of UDPs, the concept of urban social sustainability facilitates the formulation of a multiplicity of relevant goals, helping to identify relevant design interventions. At the same time, it supports the identification of indicators for evaluating a given project's social outcomes.

Using the metaphor of language, it could be said that in the notion of urban social sustainability both the practice of urban planning and of urban evaluation find a vocabulary suitable for articulating both the tangible and intangible social goals that UDPs are meant to pursue, and the indicators suitable for evaluating them.

By assessing on contemporary Dutch urban planning practices that relied on the concept of urban social sustainability to identify and implement such goals, this study addresses two methodological challenges. The first regards the challenge of converting the broad notion of urban social sustainability into the specific goals that different UDPs are ostensibly meant to achieve in the context of their realization. The multidimensionality and genericity – thus, also subjective interpretability – of the concept renders its translation into concrete urban interventions a complex endeavor. Subsequently, the actual outcomes of such interventions may not align with the original goals that these were meant to pursue, and may not correspond with the experiences of those who (will) reside in the developed areas.

The second challenge addressed by our study relates to the scarcity of analytical frameworks that can support the evaluation of urban social sustainability throughout the stages of project-conception (i.e., *ex ante*), project-development (i.e., *ex durante*), and project-delivery (*ex post*). While a vast literature on the operationalization of social sustainability in the built environment exists (see e.g., Dixon & Woodcraft, 2013; Hamiduddin, 2015; Langergaard, 2019), few if any studies have focused on the evaluation of the intended social sustainability goals throughout processes of urban transformation, up to including documentation of the lived experiences of residents regarding achieved (or unachieved) social sustainability goals.

This chapter documents the *ex post* evaluation of how the actors involved in one urban development project in northern Amsterdam have conceptualized, operationalized, and experienced a set of social sustainability goals. To do so, we devised a capability-centered evaluative framework to detect gaps between the 'intended' and the 'experienced' urban social sustainability outcomes. We mainly gathered data through semi-structured interviews with multiple parties involved in the project, including a significant sample of the current residents in the area. The interviews aimed to capture the (in)consistencies between how social sustainability goals were formulated by the urban planners in charge of the project, and how these were subsequently experienced by residents. By relating the findings of the interviews to a set of 'urban functionings' (Basta, 2017), the study shows the added value of applying a capabilities-based approach to the evaluation of urban social sustainability at the local level of UDPs – with ample attention for its crucial intangible dimensions.

The remainder of the chapter is divided into four parts. Section 3.2 elaborates on the conceptual intersection between human capabilities and urban social sustainability, and introduces the capabilities-based evaluative framework we designed using this intersectional understanding. Section 3.3 then discusses the application of the framework to the case study in Amsterdam, while section 3.4 presents the findings of the case study. Section 3.5 collects our concluding reflections, and discusses how the findings contribute to the overarching research question regarding ways to bridge the gap between desired and realized social sustainability goals in UDPs in the future.

## 3.2 Urban social sustainability through the lens of the Capability Approach

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### 3.2.1 The enabling relations between humans and their living environment

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The previous chapter (Chapter 2) positioned the Capability Approach a promising evaluative framework for social sustainability's operationalization in urban planning practices. This section goes deeper into the definition of the evaluative scope of the CA framework with the purpose of applying it in our case study on urban development projects as described in section 3.3.

As mentioned before, crucial for achieving well-being are the concrete freedoms that individuals have in their own context of life: human development requires, and is consequent to, freedom (Sen, 1999). While the centrality of freedom and of the related institutions and resources for individuals' self-realization is well-established in political philosophy (Rawls, 1971), Sen posed an unprecedented emphasis on the contextual factors that contribute to individual outcomes. He observed that the same rights and means, in different institutional or social contexts, may enable different functionings; at the same time, even in the same context, individual features like spatial and mental abilities may convert those resources into very different beings and doings. The idea of justice that permeates the CA is thus not focused on principles of distribution of basic resources à la Rawls, but on what such resources enable specific people to do and become. The following evaluative practice thus

expands the 'evaluative domain' of human welfare to conversion factors such as age, gender, intellectual abilities, and spatial impairments: in short, to the realm of one's individual circumstances. As such, the CA shifts the attention from institutions and means to the relations between humans and their unique context (Basta 2016).

In parallel, the junctures between individuals and their living environment have also been discussed in relation to the notion of urban social sustainability. Capability scholars have argued that in cities, "human well-being does not only lie in what each individual is being able to do but in the quality of his/her social relations" (Deneulin, 2014, pp. 7-9). Therefore, the evaluative focus of urban social sustainability does not only concern the human-spatial relation, but also particularly emphasizes inter-human relations, including the intangible qualities of one's living environment such as its peacefulness and sense of cohesion. Since social sustainability is ultimately about "how individuals, communities and societies live with each other" (Colantonio & Dixon, 2009, p. 4), most social sustainability scholars include the dimensions of social equity, social capital, and sustainability of community within their analyses (Dempsey et al., 2009; Glasson & Wood, 2009; Hamiduddin, 2015; Weingartner & Moberg, 2014; Woodcraft, 2012).

Net of their distinct emphases, the common denominator between the human capabilities literature focused on the urban realm and the urban social sustainability literature focused on the quality of interhuman relations are the 'enabling relations' between people and their living environment across its built, natural, and social dimensions. For the scope of this study, urban social sustainability was therefore articulated as the set of context-specific conditions that enable relations between citizens and their living environment conducive to individual and collective well-being. Consistent with this definition, the framework described in the following section places an evaluative focus on individuals, and on the 'enabling relations' that are conducive to pursuing their well-being in relation to urban space and with others<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> According to some scholars, a potential limit of the Capability Approach in informing the identification of indicators of social sustainability is its focus on the individual rather than on the collective 'scale' of the relevant evaluation (Deneulin, 2014; Pelenc et al., 2015). Such limitation is discussed in the studies that reflected on the notion of collective capabilities (Evans, 2002; Ibrahim, 2006). Whilst the relevant debate is out of the scope of this chapter, we find it important to emphasize that Sen's insistence on individuals as the proper 'unit of analysis' of human development and welfare is not intended to discard the relevance of collective agency and experience, but solely to valorize the uniqueness of each individual person and of her contextual, relational, circumstances. That is why this study embraced Sen's relevant position.

### 3.2.2 From urban social sustainability indicators to sustainable urban functionings

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The notion of social sustainability is often used as an ‘umbrella term’ in the framework of urban development projects by the actors involved in their realization of articulating relevant social goals. UDPs could therefore be seen as ‘local devices’ through which broader sustainability objectives are translated into concrete urban transformations. From the methodological viewpoint, such translation often implies converting ‘intangible’ social goals – e.g., fostering social cohesion – into a set of operationalizable criteria – e.g., people’s participation in social activities – and measurable indicators – e.g., a number of residents participating in local associations or in relevant initiatives.

While the identification of such indicators is essential to evaluate if social sustainability goals set and realized by UDPs are consistent with the experiences of citizens, few studies have proposed evaluative frameworks applicable to the neighborhood scale typical of UDPs. Tangible indicators like affordable housing, schools, grocery shops, as well as intangible ones like social networks and levels of participation are documented in literature (see previously presented Table 2.2 in Chapter 2) (Bramley et al., 2006; Dixon & Woodcraft, 2013), but are often too generic to capture the uniqueness that characterizes the relational conditions between individuals and their living environment in the context of a single urban development project. As argued by Shirazi and Keivani (2017), many studies on social sustainability assessment are not tailored to applications at the neighborhood scale, and tend to overlook the experiences of their inhabitants.

Based on these premises, Sen’s original articulation of the CA offers a useful starting point to assess the social sustainability outcomes of one urban development project in northern Amsterdam. More precisely, we use the CA-perspective to identify a set of qualitative indicators sensitive to both the tangible and the intangible ‘enabling relations’ between people and the immediate living environment constituted by the neighborhood object of renewal. Drawing on the concept of ‘urban functionings’ (Basta, 2017), which attends to the basic ‘doings and beings’ that constitute the urban dimension of people’s life such as inhabiting, moving, recreating, and socializing, and on an existing set of social sustainability indicators relevant to the built environment (Table 2.2), we identified the capabilities-based indicators reported in Table 3.1. Such indicators were then applied as reference indicators for performing the interviews reported in section 3.3. Here, the questions aimed to clarify whether an actual individual capability was realized in relation to a given general function – that is, if the interviewee experienced a real opportunity to, for example, interact with neighbors or people working in the area.

It is important to underscore that our capabilities-based indicators were articulated in such a way as to capture the relational conditions between these indicators and a sample of individuals living in the area. For example, the urban social sustainability indicator ‘public space’ could lead a researcher to measure the surface of available public space in the area. We rearticulate this indicator as ‘making use of public space’ in order to capture, through the interviews, whether and how different people actually make use of the space depending on their specific abilities and preferences. Extending this reasoning to all the urban social sustainability indicators in Table 3.1, we obtained the overview of urban functionings listed in the same table.

Re-articulating urban social sustainability indicators with the language of urban functionings and individuals’ respective capabilities shifts the evaluative focus of urban social sustainability from aggregate to individual experiences. By doing so, the framework documents how each person experiences and contributes to sustainable social outcomes. The added value of such a framework is that it enables us to detect the ways in which different people convert urban resources into individual capabilities depending on a broad set of personal features (Sen, 2009) and social and environmental factors (Robeyns, 2017). At the same time, the framework captures what value each individual attaches to the capabilities that they achieve, or would desire to achieve.

**TABLE 3.1** Converting urban social sustainability indicators into relevant urban functionings

	Urban social sustainability indicators	Sustainable urban functionings
Tangible	Decent housing	Inhabiting affordably and comfortably
	Jobs	Working at a viable distance from home
	Schools	Going to school at a viable distance from home
	Transport	Transporting yourself from home to another place
	Public Spaces	Making use of parks, squares, playgrounds and any publicly accessible space
	Recreation	Enjoying leisure according to one’s own preferences in the urban area examined
	Healthcare	Having adequate access to healthcare at a viable distance from home
	Urban Design	Benefitting from adequate architectural design in one’s surroundings

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**TABLE 3.1** Converting urban social sustainability indicators into relevant urban functionings

	Urban social sustainability indicators	Sustainable urban functionings
Intangible	Social networks	Building and maintaining social relations
	Feeling of community	Feeling part of and contributing to the community's life
	Social interaction	Interacting with people living or working in the area
	Safety	Being and feeling safe
	Well-being	Experiencing individual and collective well-being
	Feeling of belonging	Identifying oneself with the area's character and its social fabric
	Cultural expression	Participating in and contributing to valued cultural activities
	Existence of informal groups and associations	Joining informal groups as well as formal associations
	Representation by local governments	Being informed about and involved in local government initiatives
	Levels of participation	Being actively involved in initiatives for collective matters in the urban area examined
	Levels of influence	Accessing the means necessary for voicing one's own perspectives and stakes regarding local matters

## 3.3 Methods

### 3.3.1 Case: Buiksloterham&Co

Buiksloterham&Co is a mixed-use urban development project of 2,9 hectares that includes approximately 580 new dwellings, planned to be delivered between 2019 and 2024. The project is located in a wider area in development in the northern part of the city of Amsterdam (Buiksloterham), where 100 hectares of terrain are transitioning from a former industrial harbor to a multifunctional area (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020; Projectbureau Noordwaarts, 2007).

Endorsed in a manifest signed by 21 stakeholders (Gladek et al., 2015), the Buiksloterham redevelopment area was envisioned as a 'living lab' for circular urban development. The manifest contains multiple sustainability ambitions, ranging from achieving energy self-sufficiency and 'zero waste' material streams, to fostering diversity, inclusion, and livability. While Buiksloterham&Co engages with the general circularity goals set for the larger urban area, it also gives specific attention to

social sustainability goals, both in the formulation of wider planning goals (Gladek et al., 2015) and in the concrete urban design interventions (De Alliantie & Philadelphia, 2015; Studioninedots et al., 2015).

On the neighborhood scale, (i.e., the urban area of Buiksloterham&Co, excluded the wider area in development), the urban design consists of a high diversity of tenure types, income groups and dwelling typologies. For instance, seven-floor apartment blocks are placed next to townhouses, and social housing apartments are placed next to free-market apartments and houses for sale. Moreover, as part of the urban design, housing blocks are placed around collective gardens where homeowners share ownership of the gardens. These gardens are planned to be semi-publicly accessible, thus open for other residents in the area. At the time of conducting the interviews, the gardens had not been realized yet.

A specific aspect of the project to which our case study has dedicated particular attention is the realization of three social housing apartment blocks. Each block includes one collective facilities room. The three rooms are located at the entrances of the buildings and include laundry machines, book shelves, a coffee machine, plants, table and chairs, couches, and a bike repair service that every tenant of the apartment block may use. The realization of the three facilities rooms resulted from the collaboration between the social housing provider (de Alliantie), responsible for the construction of the social housing blocks, and the healthcare organization (Philadelphia), which is dedicated to people with minor mental disabilities. In the phase of project's conception, the latter organization pre-booked 24 social housing units to rent to their clients. It also assumed responsibility for the management and maintenance of the collective facilities, in return for using the rooms for day care activities of their clients (Klaassen et al., 2019). Moreover, the healthcare organization committed itself to guaranteeing the development of activities in the collective facilities rooms in such a way as to facilitate the process of community-building among the tenants of the social housing blocks. This was realized through the provision of coaches, i.e., health care professionals, in the collective facilities rooms for seven days a week, 10 to 12 hours per day, who also provided day care services for clients of the healthcare organization. Finally, immediately after the buildings had been delivered and the first tenants had moved in, the healthcare organization created and managed a WhatsApp-group for all tenants of the social housing apartment blocks.

Altogether, five main design interventions to advance social sustainability are observed in this project: the mixed urban design, the collective gardens, the collective facilities, the regular provision of coaches and the creation of a social media platform. Because of the explicit attention to socially vulnerable groups and for their integration



in larger urban development projects like the one examined here, Buiksloterham&Co is a project that exemplifies social sustainability goal-driven urban transformation. As such, it was identified as a suitable case study to investigate how such goals align with the sustainable urban functionings and enabled capabilities of residents in the area, with particular attention to the mix of residents in the social housing blocks.



FIG. 3.1 Collective facility room in social housing blocks in Buiksloterham&Co.

### 3.3.2 Data collection

Case study data were collected through the analysis of official project documents and semi-structured interviews with the planners and residents involved in the project. Among the documents were municipal planning reports such as a masterplan for the wider region (BVR & DRO Amsterdam, 2003) and the investment decisions for Buiksloterham&Co (Projectbureau Noordwaarts, 2007; Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020), the urban design plan for Buiksloterham&Co (Studsonedots et al., 2015), the legal contract concerning the common facilities between the housing developer and healthcare organization (de Alliantie & Philadelphia, 2015), and the vision document of the manifest (Gladek et al, 2015). While document analysis provided the generic information reported in the previous section, the information most relevant to the scope of our exercise was collected through interviews.

These were conducted between June and October 2020<sup>12</sup>, when the case study area was under construction. At the time, five residential buildings were already inhabited, including the three social housing buildings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine stakeholders involved in the project – namely, representatives from the social housing provider, the healthcare organization, the municipality, the urban design company, and a non-profit ‘citylab’ in the wider area under development – and with fourteen residents who had moved into one of the five residential buildings within the last 1,5 years (see roles and background information of interviewees in Appendix 1). All interviews were conducted individually.

The former group of interviewees was labelled as the planners’ group and the latter as the residents’ group. The sampling of the latter group was done in three distinct ways: a call to participate in the interviews was – with support of the social housing provider – posted in the residents’ WhatsApp-group, the same call was distributed on paper in the mailboxes of the surrounding housing blocks, and residents were approached ‘on the spot’ at the project location. No residents who responded to our call were rejected. The sole criterion for residents to participate in the interviews was to reside in the area of the project. As quota to arrive at a final, diverse selection of participants in the residents’ group, we checked whether our sample included at least two variations in the categories age, tenure, housing composition and occupation (see Appendix 1). Therefore, while our study did not aim to evaluate social sustainability specifically related to persons with mental disabilities, the interview sample included one resident who was a client of Philadelphia. Moreover, while the sampling of interviewees focused on the social housing dwellings in particular, it also included two interviewees who resided in the surrounding buildings. The majority of interviews were conducted at the housing blocks, either in one of the collective facilities room or in the interviewee’s apartment. By contrast, the majority of interviews with planners were conducted through online video calls. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed with Atlas.TI.

The content and the structure of the interviews were different for the two sub-groups of planners and residents. The interviews with planners were structured by means of an interview guide that included open-ended questions about their perceived goals of social sustainability for the urban area development (i.e., how they conceptualized social sustainability), and how these were advanced through the project’s interventions (i.e., how project goals were operationalized).

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<sup>12</sup> The data was collected in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although research activities such as site visits and on-site interviews were slightly constrained by the health measures in place, the data collection was relatively unaffected. Desirable, additional methods like participant-observations and focus-groups could, however, not be used.





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By comparison, the residents' interviews were structured on the basis of the sustainable urban functioning indicators reported in Table 3.1. When applying these indicators in the context of the interviews, we simplified the language to make them clear to participants. For example, 'being actively involved in initiatives for collective matters in the urban area examined' became 'taking initiative for one's own neighborhood'. Furthermore, some functionings were split into a few more concrete ones ('enjoying leisure according to one's own preferences in the urban area examined' became, among others, 'making use of cafes or restaurants' and 'doing sports'). In addition, select functionings with high-level genericity which were not considered relevant to the sampled residents and to the scope of our exercise were not included in the interviews (e.g., 'benefitting from adequate spatial design in the urban area examined'). An overview of this 'adjusted' list of sustainable urban functionings selected for the case-study is provided in Appendix 7. Finally, to facilitate the articulation and interpretation of how the resident interviewees valued the set of functionings relevant to the area examined, we composed one or more propositions per functioning that were submitted to interviewees. While composing them, the propositions were tested with two neutral test persons, after which the propositions were improved. Interviewees were asked to react to them by 'agree, disagree or neutral' and to explain their judgements. The propositions corresponding to the adjusted urban functionings are also listed in Appendix 7.

### 3.3.3 Data analysis

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Since the scope of the interviews was different for the sub-groups of planners and residents, the two sets of transcripts were analyzed differently. The transcripts of planners' interviews were descriptively coded based on the elements 'goals of social sustainability' and 'project interventions for social sustainability', and subsequently analyzed based on the linkages that the planners made between them during the interviews. This analysis is illustrated in the following section in Figure 3.2, which captures how the realized interventions in the case study project relate to the planners' conceptualizations of social sustainability goals.

The analysis of the residents' interviews instead focused on the valued urban functionings, and on the 'enabling relations' between individual residents and their living environments conducive to social sustainability outcomes. Subsequently, we related this analysis to the outcomes identified by planners in terms of project interventions realized in the developed urban area. In this way, we reconcile the

‘planners’ perspective with the ‘residents’ perspective: our analysis assesses the extent to which the designed interventions, related to planners’ conceptualizations of social sustainability goals, meet residents’ actual experiences of social sustainability.

To emphasize the merits of our capability-centered evaluative framework, the findings of our analysis underscore the diversity of ways in which different residents articulated their valued functionings. We captured this diversity by detecting the ‘interpersonal variation’ and the ‘interpretive variation’ in residents’ value judgments, which emerged while analyzing the interview transcripts. The results of this analysis are reported in Table 3.2. Building upon this, we also noted how the interviewees converted their valued functionings into actual capabilities. To do so, we identified each interviewee’s conversion factors—that is, each individual’s capacity to function in the valued way depending on extrinsic (e.g., the urban environment and other human beings in one’s living environment) and intrinsic (e.g., personal) features. Such factors are illustrated in the following section in Figure 3.3.

Taken together, this analysis sheds light on the gap between planner-led interventions aimed at enhancing social sustainability, and the valued functionings and capabilities conducive to social sustainability understood from the perspective of residents. For practical purposes, the overview of the conversion factors is limited to the four sustainable urban functionings that residents lingered the most during the interviews. These functionings are therefore not the most valued functionings per se, but those that emerged as the most relevant to illustrate the discrepancy between ‘intended’ and ‘experienced’ social sustainability outcomes. This and other results are reported in the following section.

## 3.4 Findings

### 3.4.1 How social sustainability was intended: goals and interventions

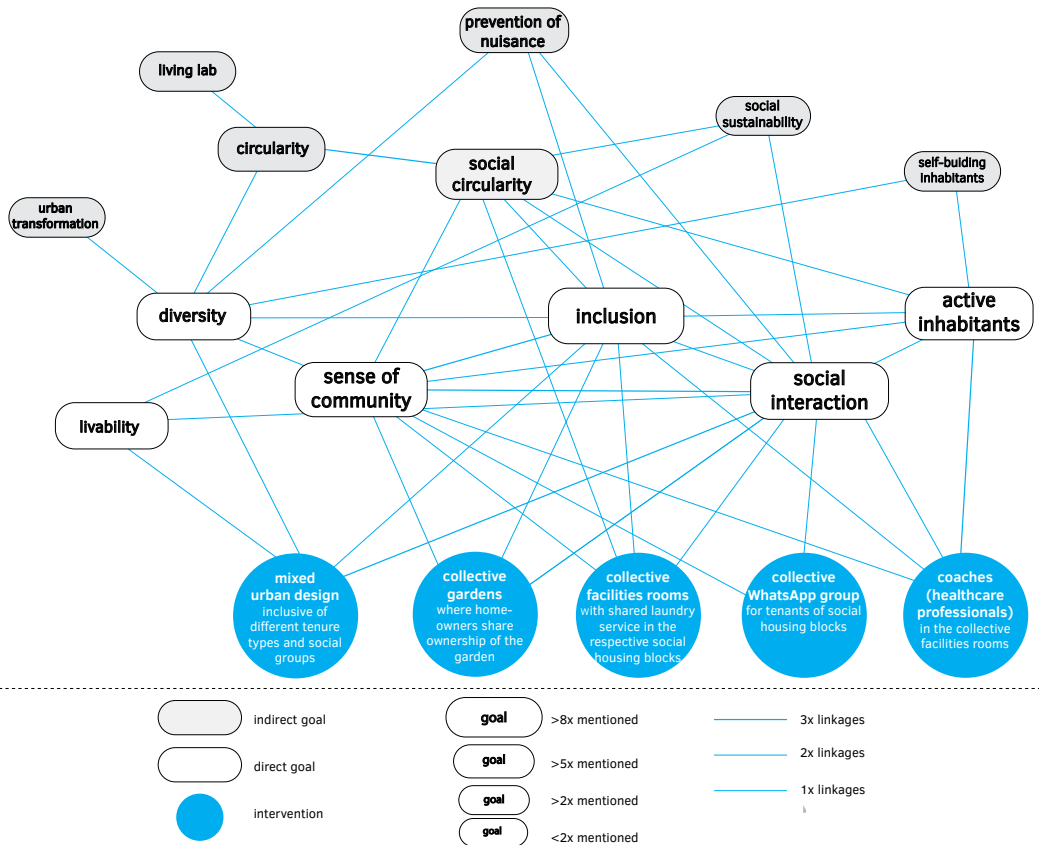


FIG. 3.2 Linkages between interventions and project goals for social sustainability according to the sub-group of planners involved in the Buiksloterham&Co project

The analysis of the interviews revealed how planners framed social sustainability goals and how these goals were translated into five concrete interventions in the area, such as the collective buildings' facilities. This conceptualization is illustrated in Figure 3.2 below. The five interventions refer to the ones listed in the case description in 3.1. The thirteen distinct goals result from the interviews with the planners subgroup. The figure illustrates the social sustainability goals mentioned by interviewees, as well as the frequency of their mention. It also shows how planners expected specific interventions to directly affect the underlying goal (e.g., 'social interaction') and, directly or indirectly, another goal for social sustainability (e.g., 'social inclusion').

A first observation regarding the project goals is that social sustainability was not frequently mentioned as a goal as such. Instead, the interviewed planners articulated social sustainability ambitions by referring to multiple notions like 'social interaction', 'sense of community', and 'social circularity', an interesting term that some of them used to describe the practice of exchanging social services among neighbors such as babysitting or doing the laundry. Moreover, a second general observation regarding the five project interventions is that they include both 'spatial-oriented' interventions – like the different types and tenure of housing and the collective facilities – and 'relational-oriented interventions' – like the establishment of connectivity between the residents in the area by means of social media tools and the provision of coaches. As such, it can be observed that both tangible and intangible aspects of social sustainability were explicitly accounted for by the interviewed planners in the phase of the project's conception.

Regarding the linkages between the goals and interventions, we observe that planners envisioned that social sustainability would be advanced through the mutual enforcement of the various interventions and the effects that these could produce. When explaining the aims behind one of the project interventions, interviewees frequently gestured towards underlying goals that they expected to be met as a side-effect of the other goals. This led to a chain of intended effects around one single intervention, as became evident from this planner's perspective on the common facilities rooms:

*“By means of a lot of integration, a lot of interaction, you can soften the invisible wall around an area that says ‘those people are the trouble-makers’. It makes it easier to talk to each other, and easier to solve problems when they occur” (BSH-soc.hou.org.-3)<sup>13</sup>.*

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<sup>13</sup> Citations were translated from Dutch to English by authors



Similar intended mutual enforcements were observed between goals such as ‘social inclusion’ and ‘social circularity’, or between ‘diversity’ and ‘sense of community’.

This particular conceptualization and operationalization of social sustainability is permeated by notions of diversity and relationality. The envisioned diversity is understood to emerge concretely from the mix of tenure types, social groups, and dwelling typologies included in and made accessible by the project. The underlying idea was that the resulting living environment would

*“really become a mix. It should not be like “look, that is where the social housing tenants live”, but that it really becomes inclusive and that everybody feels welcome and happy” (BSH-soc.hou.org.-1).*

The envisioned relationality instead emerges from the provision of collective spaces in combination with other, relational-oriented, interventions such as the coaches present in the collective facilities:

*“because we are there, we know about certain ideas among residents. ... we can be the ‘lube oil’ for such initiatives to actually take place, we have been dedicated time to support them” (BSH-healthcare.org.-1).*

The operationalization in Buiksloterham&Co was thus guided by the normative idea that interaction between and ‘activation’ of residents could emerge as a result of designed relations between physical space and human-based support provided in the new urban area. Such an operationalization seems to address the ‘enabling relations’ that, as we previously argued, are essential for a capability-centered understanding of urban social sustainability (section 3.2). Yet the envisioned relationality observed among planners’ conceptions of social sustainability was potentially overestimated in the conceptualization phase. For instance, whereas a dominant line of reasoning among planner interviewees was that ‘diversity of people leads to social interaction, this interaction leads to sense of community and social cohesion, and finally, this altogether leads to so-called ‘social circularity’, this is no guarantee that such a relationality is actually experienced by the ones for which such social sustainability goals are defined. In the following section of this analysis, our capabilities-based framework focuses on the experiences of residents living in Buiksloterham&Co for a set of sustainable urban functionings.



Collective garden in social housing block in Buiksloterham&Co

### 3.4.2 How social sustainability was experienced: valued functionings and conversion factors

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In contrast with the planners' articulation of social sustainability, which was driven by criteria such as diversity, inclusiveness and relationality, the capabilities-based frame adopted for the analysis of the residents' interviews sheds a contrasting light on the social sustainability outcomes of the project. Concerning how the interviewed residents valued our proposed set of sustainable urban functionings, two main variations emerged. The first ('interpersonal variation') relates to the extent to which certain functionings were valued by different residents (e.g., 'doing sports' was valued by one resident but not by the other). The second regards how these functionings were enabled in practice according to each individual's interpretation, e.g., whether a valued interaction would consist of 'smiling to other neighbors while passing by' rather than 'having activities together'. This latter variation sums up to the 'interpretive variation' mentioned in section 3.3, and it is the most relevant to our findings and conclusions.

Remarkably, relatively few functionings scored 'high' on 'interpersonal variation', meaning that there were only a handful of situations in which the participants judged the importance of a functioning differently. More than whether a given functioning was important or not to a participant, the notable variation regarded the actual interpretation of a functioning. For instance, while nearly all participants indicated that 'feeling part of a community' was a valuable functioning, it differed greatly among participants whether this meant, for instance, 'having a feeling that you could ask your neighbors a favor sometimes' or 'actively being involved in community activities'.

This variation can be interpreted in different ways. First, the articulation of some functionings – e.g., 'identifying yourself with the neighborhood' – gave room for more interpretation than others – e.g., 'doing sports in one's own neighborhood'. Second, in line with Sen's respective formulation, generally one's valued functionings reflect one's own individual values and priorities, and as such, society's inherent pluralism (Sen, 2009). For instance, while the functioning 'interacting with neighbours' was typically valued by all participants, some attached 'contour conditions' to it like 'as long as I can also stay somewhat anonymous.' Likewise, the functioning 'taking initiative for the neighborhood' was typically followed by a condition 'as long as I don't have to be part of a formal group with expectations.' These answers highlight how the criteria of relationality – much valued by the interviewed planners – may be experienced very differently 'on the ground': privacy and anonymity may be valued more than social interaction. Likewise, contributing to a collective aim may be valued as much as preserving one's own independency. This and other observations are collected in Table 3.2.

**TABLE 3.2** Variations in value judgements about sustainable urban functionings according to the sub-group of residents in the area of the Buiksloterham&Co project.\*

Sustainable urban functioning	Inter-personal variation	Inter-pretive variation	Typical quotes
Going to school, internship, or work at an accessible distance from home	Low	High	BSH-resident-1: "It would be nice if it is somewhat nearby, but it is not necessary" BSH-resident-9: "I don't mind to travel a bit. I find "what" more important than "where" BSH-resident-2: "I just prefer to have it close to home, preferably in Amsterdam-Noord".
Transporting yourself from home to another place	Low	High	BSH-resident-8: "Here it is very badly accessible, definitely. The ferry runs only up to 7 o'clock" BSH-resident-4: "What I really like here, is the ferry, it is only 200 meters from here"
Making use of parks, squares, playgrounds in the urban area examined	Low	Low	BSH-resident-3: "Yes, that is important. That you don't have to leave your neighborhood for parks and squares"
Doing shopping (besides groceries) in one's own neighborhood	Low	Low	BSH-resident-9: "No that is not needed, I can take my bike for that."
Doing sports in one's own neighborhood	Medium	Low	BSH-resident-1: "Yes, I find it important to do that close to home" BSH-resident-9: "No, I can also bike a bit for that.. .. Quality is more important than the location"
Participating in cultural activities in one's own neighborhood	High	Medium	BSH-resident-6: "Yes, absolutely. Isn't it nice, to have some creativity around?" BSH-resident-4: "Maybe it is nicer if it is somewhere else, so that you can visit another place. I don't need a national museum in my neighborhood"
Engaging with own social contacts in the neighborhood	Medium	Low	BSH-resident-13: "No.. If friends come here all the way to Amsterdam, they come to eat and drink here, so we don't need to go out" BSH-resident-10: "Yes, I even have two bikes here so that we can go a bit further too"
Feeling part of a community	Low	High	BSH-resident-2: "Still, it is sort of nice if you feel that you know some people, that it feels safe, and there is some social control" BSH-resident-2: "I am sort of a community-building person myself, I cook 4-5 times per week for the neighbors" BSH-resident-7: "On the one hand I like the dynamics, on the other hand I am happy to live in a large city with some anonymity"
Interacting with neighbors	Low	High	BSH-resident-7: "Yes, it is nice. We don't need to visit each other all the time, but just knowing a little bit what is happening" BSH-resident-8: "I prefer to be anonymous. ... The people who live next to me, that is important, to drop my keys in case that I lose them" BSH-resident-6: "Look, you don't need to know each other's life history. But just to making a chat, that I find important"

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**TABLE 3.2** Variations in value judgements about sustainable urban functionings according to the sub-group of residents in the area of the Buiksloterham&Co project.\*

Sustainable urban functioning	Inter-personal variation	Inter-pretive variation	Typical quotes
Identifying oneself with the neighborhood	Low	High	BSH-resident-3: "What I find important, is that it is clean. No garbage in the street." BSH-resident-6: "The circular aspect appealed to me"
Joining groups or initiatives in one's own neighborhood	Medium	High	BSH-resident-8: "No, not at all, I am not a group-person" BSH-resident-10: "For a while, maybe yes, but I don't want to have to stay forever. A singing workshop for example I could do." BSH-resident-4: "On the one hand I like to be involved. But really joining, no, because I don't want any obligations anymore"
Being informed by the local government	Low	Low	BSH-resident-12: "Because many things are happening here, any it is your living environment, it is nice to know what is going on."
Taking initiative for one's own neighborhood	Low	High	BSH-resident-9: "I would like to do those kinds of things, but I have many other things to do, so it has to fit within what you are doing already."
Influencing the urban environment in one's own neighborhood	High	Low	BSH-resident-1: "Yes, I would like to do that. As long as I don't have to spend too much time into it" BSH-resident-7: "Well... I assume that urban designers and architects have well thought about it."

\* The supporting quotes are a selection of the most illustrative ones. An overview of all coded quotes is available open access at the repository of 4TU.ResearchData (DOI 10.4121/0bb448f0-e0d7-40b5-bd6d-109ba7474f1b.v1)

Beyond the value judgements regarding the relevant urban functionings, Figure 3.3 presents the conversion factors that we found to be crucial to enable residents to perform four specific functionings. The figure conceptually distinguishes between the five project interventions as resources on the one hand, and all other factors relating to the enablements from resources to capabilities as conversion factors on the other. Here, our analysis explores how a person's capabilities relate to factors in the urban environment (i.e., spatial resources and spatial conversion factors), to the ways that the urban environment is managed by humans (i.e., organizational resources and organizational conversion factors), to other humans in the urban area developed (i.e., social conversion factors), or to specific personal conditions (personal conversion factors).

The main contribution of Figure 3.3 is that it sheds light on how the realized project interventions affect the capabilities of residents in different ways. For instance, the figure reveals a diversity in the ways that residents convert a resource into a performed functioning. While for some residents the laundry service in the collective facilities rooms indeed had the effect as intended by the planners –

*“you will have a chat once in a while that you would not have otherwise” (BSH-resident-1)*

–, others did not experience this effect:

*“Going to do the laundry downstairs and having a chat? Not the case. Besides, I would not even desire that. I mean, I am just doing the laundry, I am wearing my sweatpants and slippers, you know” (BSH-resident-7).*

In addition, by distinguishing between spatial, organizational, social, and personal conversion factors, the figure provides insight about how distinct functionings relate to people’s living environment in specific ways. For instance, the functioning ‘feeling part of a community’ reveals the most linkages to organizational conversion factors, which in turn relate to the work that was done by the coaches in Buiksloterham&Co. In contrast, the functioning ‘interacting with neighbors’ shows a stronger connection to spatial conversion factors, such as the architectural form of the building block (i.e., a square-shaped balustrade around a common courtyard) and an attractive interior design. These differences thus reveal how the project interventions affect the distinct sustainable urban functionings in different ways. Finally, by including other factors than the provided project interventions in the analysis of conversion factors, Figure 3.3 provides information about what functionings are less affected by project interventions, and more dependent on other, social or personal, conversion factors. For instance, whether residents would actually ‘join a group or initiative in the neighborhood’ is determined more dominantly by personal factors such as whether a person has time or whether it matches the specific interests of that person, than the availability of the collective facilities rooms per se.

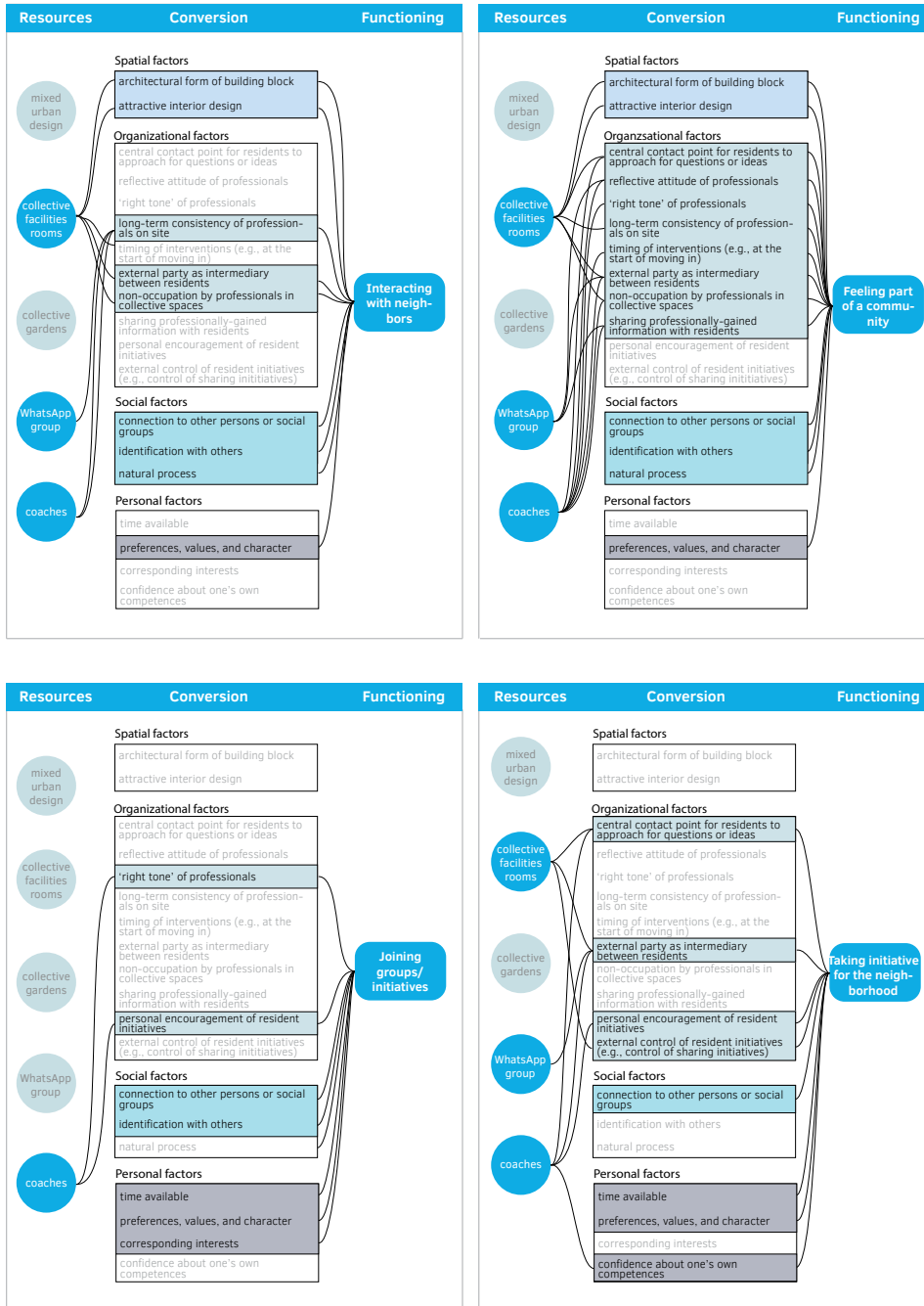


FIG. 3.3 Conversion factors that inhabitants experienced between resources and actual performance of four functionalities (see supporting quotes in Appendix 9)

## 3.5 Conclusions

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The title of the paper that this chapter is based on started with the question ‘are good intentions enough?’. The phrase refers to the methodological question regarding how the translation of the broad notion of social sustainability into specific goals and interventions within the local context of an urban development project (UDP) can find correspondence with the experiences of those living in the developed areas. Our case study of the Buiksloterham&Co UDP in northern Amsterdam applied a capabilities-based analytical framework to evaluate how social sustainability goals were conceptualized by the planners in charge of the project, how these converged into the operationalization of specific project interventions, and how these interventions then played a role in the experiences of social sustainability by the residents living in the project area. These findings enable us to reflect on the theoretical relevance and analytical robustness of the capability-centered framework we devised.

By referring to a set of relevant sustainable urban functionings in the evaluation of social sustainability outcomes, we were able to identify variations in which such functionings are valued and interpreted at a local level by different residents, and in which residents in the urban area examined convert project interventions into enhanced performances. Juxtaposing the analysis of the resident interviews to the analysis of how planners envisioned the realization of social sustainability reveals some significant differences. The relationality between different goals and interventions observed in planners’ conceptualization of social sustainability – i.e., as one comprehensive, causal picture of how social sustainability comes about – was not experienced as such by residents living in the urban area. In fact, among residents, distinct functionings of social sustainability did not necessarily relate to one another: a person could value ‘feeling part of a community’ while not valuing ‘participating in neighborhood activities’. Rather, relationality was observed in the different ways that provided resources enabled residents to actually perform their valued functionings. These enablers related to multiple contextual factors, ranging from spatial aspects such as the architectural form of a building, to organizational, social, and personal aspects such as ‘the right tone’ of professionals, ‘the connection to other persons living in the area’, or ‘personal preferences.’ While some of these aspects referred to the realized project interventions in the case study area, the high degree of variation in experiences underscores the importance of capturing social sustainability outcomes in local areas not only through the availability of realized design interventions, but through the evaluation of the relational conditions between individuals and their living environment.



The insight into how the capability-centered evaluation is distinct from how planners perceive social sustainability opens the door for questioning how the CA could be prescriptive for re-designing operationalization processes in UDPs in order to incorporate social sustainability goals in a more resident outcomes-attuned way. Unlike seeing project interventions as the mere operational form of social sustainability goals, the CA includes both interventions, residents' functionings, and the conversion factors between them in its framework. The richer picture this produces is useful for designing planning processes because it gives hints about the extent to which certain intended outcomes can actually be achieved. For example, the analysis revealed the limitations of what is 'designable' – a personal conversion factor such as a resident's 'available time' is simply out of reach for planners. A better understanding of what factors, other than spatial design interventions, are influential to experience social sustainability is relevant because it can lower the expectations of social investments done in projects. In addition, it can enable thoughtful discussions about what resources should be invested in within UDPs and what should not. Finally, the approach can encourage the design of innovative solutions in urban development projects that tackle the conversion factors that inhabitants experience. For instance, if residents appear reluctant to maintain a collective garden because they are insecure about their planting skills, a simple solution could be to inform residents about garden maintenance (and not to pave the garden because it is underutilized).

Applying the Capability Approach to urban development projects also raises new questions about the improvements that could be made within UDP processes to expand people's performed functionings (or capabilities) in urban areas, beyond merely providing spatial resources in urban areas. Such improvements could be the result of 'local capability studies' in the early planning phases of UDPs. Indeed, governance processes around UDPs can be designed in such a way that residents' views on valued 'urban capability' are incorporated early on, making project investments more effective and evidence-based. In other words, the contribution of the CA to UDPs stretches further than merely an evaluative perspective on social sustainability outcomes in urban areas. Instead, it provides a novel 'language' for translating the broad concept of social sustainability into specific, locally-dependent goals and interventions. In order to understand better how this could work, further research can focus on the analysis of the governance processes around UDPs, and on the question what role 'urban capability' could play in them.

The study presented in this chapter has limitations. The empirical research is of a qualitative nature and includes a small number of residents, who are not representative for the entire Buiksloterham&Co project or any other urban area. Moreover, a certain bias on behalf of the researcher was not preventable in the research – another researcher could have arrived with different interpretations of participant experiences. For these reasons, the findings should be seen as an initial exploration for social sustainability’s operationalization in urban development projects. Future research may find that more urban functionings are important for social sustainability than the ones identified in this research, or that other conversion factors are essential in achieving social sustainability.

The contribution of this study is thus mainly a methodological one, related to how to apply a capability-perspective to social sustainability goals in urban development projects. Our study is not meant as a definitive evaluation of social sustainability in the Buiksloterham&Co project, or as a final definition on social sustainability’s operational form in the built environment. Instead, we hope to inspire further research and academic debate that contributes to the challenge of planning and developing (more) socially sustainable urban areas. Because the Capability Approach interprets social sustainability based on people’s inherent diversity and unique circumstances, it offers a way to fill the operational gap between the general notion of social sustainability and its specific interpretation in specific urban areas. Only when such a comprehensive and interpretive perspective to social sustainability is incorporated in planning processes can intentions for social sustainability be on track to become ‘good enough’.



Collective garden in housing block in Nieuw Crooswijk

# 4 Collaborative governance situations relating to capability outcomes

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This chapter includes an adjusted version of the paper that has previously been published as: Janssen, C., & Daamen, T.A., & Verheul, W.J., *Governing capabilities, not places: how to understand social sustainability implementation in urban development*. *Urban Studies*. 00420980231179554.

**ABSTRACT** How can planning professionals steer towards human capabilities as outcomes of urban development projects? While the previous two chapters have provided conceptual and methodological arguments for applying the capability approach as an evaluative approach to urban development projects, the next two chapters will focus on empirically analyzing the relations between governance processes in UDPs and capability-outcomes in the urban areas of those projects. This chapter presents a comparative case-study analysis of two urban development projects in the Netherlands (Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam and Nieuw Crooswijk in Rotterdam). The study analyzes how the governance situations of the two projects (i.e., activities, actors, and phases) relate to how residents converted place interventions (such as community buildings or shared gardens) into their personal capabilities. As a result, the chapter presents three collaborative governance principles that can stimulate implementation processes of social sustainability goals that are oriented towards capability expansion.

## 4.1 Introduction

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As mentioned in earlier chapters, renewed attention to social goals is emerging in urban policy-making. This is apparent from e.g., the widely supported notions of inclusiveness and equality in global or regional policies (European Commission, 2019; United Nations, 2015b). These social policies are responding to globally increasing urban inequalities, manifested through e.g., a lack of access to urban services in the global south (Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2012) and increasing socioeconomic segregation and social exclusion in the global north (Musterd et al., 2017; Andersen & Van Kempen, 2019). While cities have been addressing the latter issues via urban policy interventions such as regeneration programs, improved public spaces, and social mixing, their various effects have long formed a center of critique in urban studies, (see e.g., Harvey, 2003; Hochstenbach & Musterd, 2018; Van Gent et al., 2017). Indeed, enduring processes of displacement and gentrification give valid reason to dispute whether social policy interventions are achieving what they intend to achieve.

Complementing enduring urban debates on the effects of different social policies on people's lives, the notion of 'urban sustainable development' offers an alternative conception towards more inclusive cities (Elkington, 1997; Marcuse, 1998; Satterthwaite, 1997; Tang & Lee, 2016). While often understood as one of the conditional dimensions of sustainability, social sustainability is a plural concept containing various value-laden criteria such as social equity, human well-being, and quality of life (Dempsey et al., 2009; Rashidfarokhi et al., 2018). Its 'sustainability' part emphasizes longitudinality: not only should we care about the needs of people who live in cities now, but also of the ones in the future (Satterthwaite, 1997). In other words, social sustainability does not necessarily strive after immediate policy outcomes, but rather after a positive condition in urban spaces that also very-well develops 'by itself' (Boström, 2012).

Because of these characteristics, the pursuit of social sustainability in urban development does not align with urban policy goals as static, tangible objectives, but instead as dynamic and ever-changing targets that adapt according to changing generations of residents in urban areas (Dempsey et al., 2009). This conception challenges conventional policy implementation rationales in which policy interventions are designed, realized and evaluated in linear and controllable ways (Hill & Hupe, 2002). Instead, social sustainability "requires a focus on [...] on-going processes and interactions which continuously constitute the social life in a neighborhood and the relations between the residents" (Langergaard, 2019, p. 468).

Social sustainability is therefore also often seen as the process to achieve its desirable condition (Boström, 2012; McKenzie, 2004). Just as scholars have been arguing that sustainable development requires new ways of collaboration (Kotzebue, 2016; O'Toole, 2004), social sustainability's implementation is a complex endeavor that demands alternative forms of governance with new interdependencies between public, private, volunteering, and civic actors (Manzi et al., 2010)

In this study, we draw on Sen's Capability Approach (2009) to offer a conceptualization of dominant policy-implementation-outcome rationales in urban practices that does not only focus on the realization of spatial interventions – such as mixed housing or improved public spaces – as desired policy outcomes. Instead, as argued before, the Capability Approach provides a promising evaluative perspective on social sustainability's implementation as a governance process that is oriented towards the expansion of human aspirations and opportunities (i.e., capabilities) as actual end goals. We specifically zoom in on urban development projects (UDPs) as governance vehicles of urban policy implementation, as such projects can be seen as “strategic devices... [that] attempt to settle or to stimulate certain joint courses in individual actions” (Salet, 2007, p3). Thus, we consider UDPs in this study as situations of collaborative governance in which 1) public, private and civic actors work together towards common goals (Fainstein, 2008; Healey, 2006) and 2) in which social sustainability goals undergo a process in which abstract policy ambitions are translated into a set of concrete place-based policy interventions (i.e., place interventions).

Our aim is to better understand social sustainability's implementation by analyzing how exactly collaborative governance situations around UDPs relate to expansions of residents' urban capabilities. Through an interview-based qualitative case-study analysis, we compare two UDPs with social sustainability goals in the Netherlands, first evaluating how residents were able to convert implemented place interventions into capabilities, and second, analyzing the respective governance situations in these UDPs related to these conversions. Subsequently, we reflect on our empirical findings and identify three principles for collaborative governance that advance a 'capability-centered' approach to social sustainability's implementation.

The next section connects theoretical concepts of the Capability Approach with urban development projects and collaborative governance, and results into the empirical question for our case analysis. Section 4.3 then elaborates on the analytical framework, case selection and methods. Section 4.4 presents the empirical findings of the case analysis, which are subsequently discussed and interpreted in section 4.5. Our final conclusions and reflections are collected in section 4.6.

## 4.2 Expanding capabilities through collaborative governance

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The relevance of the evaluative scope of the CA for urban social sustainability was proven in the previous chapters. Applied to the urban field, this idea resonates in studies defining evaluative space as ‘spatial capability’ (Shin, 2011), ‘opportunities to travel’ (Cao & Hickman, 2019), or ‘housing capability’ (Kimhur, 2022). In the same line of thought, we here define social sustainability outcomes as ‘urban capabilities’, e.g., the opportunities an individual person has to perform those functionings that he/she has reason to value for a worthy life in the urban place where he/she lives.

This section will show how the CA is not only useful for evaluating urban outcomes, but also promising for evaluating governance processes around the development urban spaces. Because the Capability Approach incorporates the many diverse individual circumstances of a person, e.g., gender, age, cultural background, and social environment (Sen, 2009), it is sensitive to the complexity in which social injustices occur in real situations in daily life. The acknowledgement of the contextual conditions affecting a person’s life makes the Capability Approach highly relevant for the implementation of social sustainability goals in urban development. These conditions explain, for example, why place interventions do not always lead to intended social outcomes. For example, when a new public park is realized in a neighborhood, this does not necessarily mean that residents of that area equally experience increased well-being. A young boy who first needs to cross a dangerous road to arrive there, a teenager who sees the playground continuously being occupied by small children, or an adult that simply does not care about green spaces, may not experience any impact on their lives because of the new intervention.

It is thus not the place intervention itself that should be evaluated, but the conversion into capabilities that a resource like a park evokes for different types of individuals. For this reason, Robeyns (2005) argued that capability studies should not only focus on personal abilities and aspirations, but also pay attention to institutional circumstances, such as social norms and traditions. Next to personal abilities and characteristics, these embedded collective structures greatly affect the way that people convert resources into capabilities (Biggeri & Ferrannini, 2014; Deneulin, et al., 2006; Frediani, 2021). If places are understood as productions of not only spatial but also particularly also social processes, many new conditions could be discovered inside the political-economic and institutional-historical processes that relate to people’s access to and agency in cities (Frediani, 2021).

The governance processes that shape urban development projects - understood as planned and organized place interventions that involve numerous relational efforts (Adams & Tiesdell, 2012) - are full of place-specific institutional and political-economic conditions that function as enabling or disabling factors for people's urban capabilities. Indeed, scholars have shown how places are increasingly shaped through assemblages of activities between the realms of urban politics, planning, real estate, and civic engagement (Healey, 2006). These practices may be critically understood to reflect a shift from 'government to governance' in urban practices (Harvey, 1989; Taylor, 2007), but, more recently, as collaborative efforts that pragmatically strive to balance market logics with public policy and local civic objectives through place-based interventions (Kim, 2022). Seeing UDPs as collaborative governance processes (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012) thus implies that urban transformations are not only the result of 'planned' policy interventions, but also shaped by many other non-governmental processes.

The potential of collaborative governance for social sustainability's implementation lies in the possibility to, through collaborative efforts, create the specific conditions that can function as enabling to human capabilities. Collaboratively delivered UDPs create the opportunity to have more inclusive deliberation processes (Ansell et al., 2020; Kim, 2016) and so, may lead to more inclusive urban outcomes. Although disadvantages of collaborative governance - such as higher transaction costs, the threat of reducing the quality of deliberation (Ansell et al., 2020), or the risk of ignoring an unequal distribution of power between participants (Swyngedouw, 2005)— have been marked in literature, its democratic potential, as well as its instrumental asset to "substantively better, more widely supported, more robust and innovative processes and solutions" (Ansell et al., 2020, p. 570) are widely acknowledged (Ansell et al., 2020; Emerson & Gerlak, 2014; Healey, 1998).

Despite its potential, the question remains how precisely collaborative governance can play a role in expanding human capability through urban development. Acknowledging that the more participation is not per se the better (Ansell et al., 2020), we raise the empirical question how collaborative governance situations around UDPs relate to the way that people are enabled to convert place interventions into capabilities: who have to collaborate with whom, through what kind of activities, at what moments?



## 4.3 Methods

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This study addresses the relations between the governance situations around urban development projects and residents' conversions of place interventions into expanded capabilities. We decided to perform an interview-based qualitative case-study analysis of two urban development projects in order to build detailed insights into how the activities of different actors led to these specific urban outcomes. This section elaborates on how the case studies were selected and conducted.

### 4.3.1 Analyzing social sustainability implementation in UDPs in the Netherlands

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We conducted our analysis in the Netherlands, which can be seen as an example of a context where urban development projects typically address, among others, social policy goals. Comparing to cities in Anglo-Saxon nations, scholars have exemplified Dutch cities for their governmental commitment to public benefits (Fainstein, 2008) and to issues such as livability, diversity and multiplicity (Healey, 2006). In addition, UDPs in the Netherlands typically emerge as processes of collaborative governance. Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, regulatory changes and spatial policy reforms diminished the role of the national government in urban development and the responsibilities of regional and municipal governments grew – mirroring a shift in the wider political economy from a social welfare state to a more liberal model (Van Loon et al., 2019). After the financial crisis in 2008, Buitelaar & Bregman (2016) explain how the pillars under the Dutch 'planner's paradise' were trembling, and how a lack of integration of land uses, actors and financial sources changed the practice of UDPs into a landscape of incremental development initiatives with a greater role for individual private initiatives. Currently, a reappearance of state control dominates planning debates in the Netherlands, as new relationships between tiers of government, private actors and third sector organizations are being contemplated (Verdaas, 2019).

The case-study presented in section 4.4 is analyzed through the framework in Table 4.1. We developed this framework based on a common understanding of UDPs in the Netherlands (Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management) that distinguishes four governance phases to which specific activities and actors belong. These elements form the governance situation around a UDP, which we will analyze in section 4.4.2. We should note that this framework does not necessary imply

linear progress - the four phases may overlap or iterate in practice. In addition, the framework incorporates the typical urban outcomes that are produced per phase. In our evaluative analysis in section 4.4.1, we focus on the conversions between the outcomes in the realization and the utilization phases (i.e., place interventions and urban capabilities). For this study, we thus interpret urban capabilities as people's actual opportunities to utilize implemented place interventions in UDPs. Although we recognize that other interpretations of urban outcomes - such as people's capability to co-produce development plans in the earlier phases - are also highly relevant for achieving more socially sustainable urban developments, we left this interpretation outside the scope of our research.

TABLE 4.1 Framework for analyzing social sustainability's implementation in UDPs

Governance phase	Initiation	Operationalization	Realization	Utilization
Governance activities	Defining the problem and setting the goals	Designing place interventions	Realizing place interventions	Managing and operating the place
Governance actors	<i>Planning actors</i> (e.g., planning agencies, local authorities, property developers)	<i>Developing actors</i> (e.g., property developers, housing organizations) <i>Designing actors</i> (e.g., architects, urban design firms)	<i>Developing actors</i> (e.g., property developers, housing organizations) <i>Executing actors</i> (e.g., construction companies)	<i>Utilizing actors</i> (e.g., residents, visitors, local companies, civic organizations, public service companies)
Urban outcomes	Development vision	Operational decisions	Place interventions	Urban capabilities

### 4.3.2 Cases: Buiksloterham&Co & Nieuw Crooswijk

As cases, we selected two UDPs that had explicit policy goals complying with the concept of social sustainability, to analyze how such goals were translated into specific place interventions. One project is Buiksloterham&Co in Amsterdam, a brownfield development in a former harbor area that is part of a wider transformation zone (i.e., Buiksloterham) and allocated as an experimental area for 'circular urban development' (Gladek et al., 2015). The second project is Nieuw Crooswijk in Rotterdam, a regeneration area with mostly social housing, where the main goals concerned housing diversification and improvement of safety and livability in the area (Bureau Herstructurering Nieuw Crooswijk, 2003; OCNC, 2005).

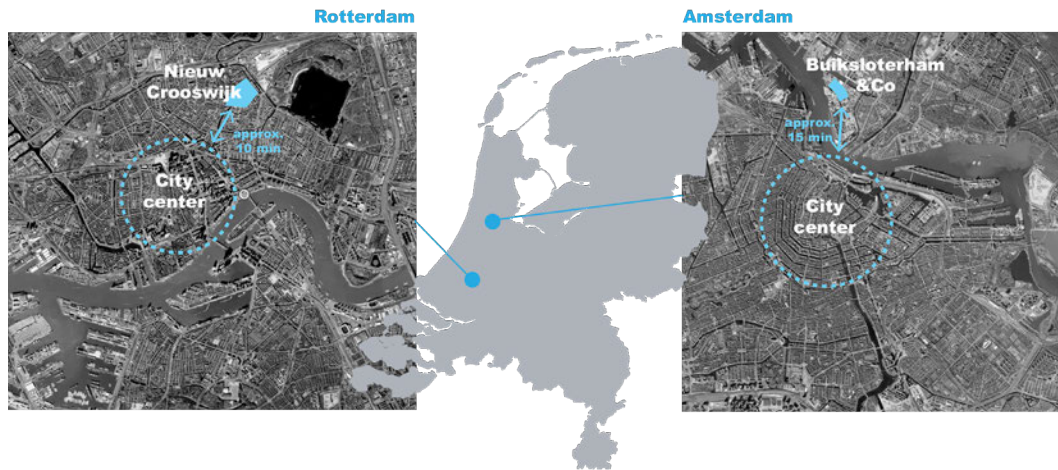


FIG. 4.1 Locations of case study areas within their cities and the Netherlands (maps are not scaled)

Both cases are large-scale UDPs that were carried out in the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The plan for Buiksloterham&Co included a mixed-use program with approximately 500 new dwellings for different income groups combined with office spaces and social facilities such as healthcare and cafes (Studsoninedots, 2015). The plan for Nieuw Crooswijk encompassed the demolition of approximately 1,700 (mainly social housing) dwellings and the rebuilding of a similar number of owner-occupied buildings. In 2012, this plan was adjusted towards a larger share of renovation instead of demolition.

Moreover, both projects are examples of ‘concessions’ in which social housing organizations—in the Netherlands, these are state-supported non-profit companies—developed the land in collaboration with private developers, facilitated by the local government. In Buiksloterham&Co, the social housing organization acted as the main developer of the land and subcontracted a private real estate developer to develop one-third of the land. In Nieuw Crooswijk, the social housing organization formed a consortium with two private real estate developers to develop the area. In 2012, however, the social housing organization left the consortium and instead took a leading role in managing the renovations.



FIG. 4.2 Left: new-built houses in Nieuw Crooswijk. Right: collective garden in housing block



FIG. 4.3 Left: Buiksloterham&Co under construction. Right: collective garden in social housing block in Buiksloterham&Co

### 4.3.3 Data collection and analysis

The case-study material comprises information in the projects' planning documents and semi-structured interviews with relevant actors. Between June 2020 and June 2021, 61 interviews were conducted with professionals involved in the UDPs (18 in Buiksloterham&Co and 16 in Nieuw Crooswijk) and with residents living in the urban areas of the project (14 in Buiksloterham&Co and 12 in Nieuw Crooswijk). Most interviews with professionals were held online, while most interviews with residents were held on-site at the homes of participants or in public spaces near to it. Interviewed professionals were selected based on an assumed representation of the different actors involved in the governance processes: among others the municipality, social housing organizations, real estate developers, urban designers,



Newly built houses for sale in Nieuw Crooswijk



healthcare organizations, and civic groups. Interviewed residents were selected based on the sole criterium that they lived in the urban area of the project, thereby leaving room for a diverse representation in terms of age, gender, and social, economic and cultural background. Different entry points were used to recruit interview participants, such as through personal references by professionals of the social housing organization, the 'snow-balling' effect of asking participants to ask their neighbors, addressing persons on the streets, posting a call in a local runners' group on social media, and by putting flyers in mailboxes of houses.

The aim of the interviews with professionals was to bring the governance situation of social sustainability's implementation in the UDP to light by structuring the interviews around questions how professionals defined the project's goals for social sustainability, how these goals were translated into place interventions, and how they perceived collaborations with other actors. In contrast, the aim of the interviews with residents was to analyze how residents experienced the place interventions and to what extent these contributed to residents' expanded capabilities.

The analysis presented in the next section consists of two main steps. The first concerns the evaluations on residents' conversions of place interventions into expanded capabilities. Based on general information in planning documents and the interviews with professionals, we identified four main place interventions for social sustainability in Nieuw Crooswijk and five in Buiksloterham&Co. Accordingly, while listening in the recordings of the resident interviews, all quotes in which residents referred to those interventions were collected, leading to an overview of the diverse capability outcomes and conversions that residents experienced (presented in section 4.4.1).

As a second analytical step, we used the interviews with professionals to analyze the governance situations around the UDPs. As the cases were too large to reconstruct a complete picture of the governance situations for all interventions, we decided to focus on the place intervention of 'community meeting spaces'. We selected these spaces because they well-illustrate the analytical distinction between the place intervention, e.g., the actual building or room, and the capabilities that such spaces facilitate, like increased opportunities to meet new neighbors. For this analysis, we transcribed the interviews with professionals and collected quotes about the governance situation around the community spaces in Atlas.TI. This resulted in a narrative description of the implementation processes (section 4.4.2.1) and an analysis of how the different activities, actors and phases related to residents' conversions of the community spaces into expanded capabilities (section 4.4.2.2).

## 4.4 Findings

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The findings of the case-study analysis are presented in two parts. The first part focuses on the evaluation of urban outcomes by providing empirical evidence of how residents' conversions of different place interventions into human capabilities took place. The second part discusses the governance situations around a selected type of place interventions, and describes in detail which elements of these situations related to the conversions observed.

### 4.4.1 Evaluating urban outcomes: place interventions, conversions and capabilities

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Based on the resident interviews, Table 4.2 lists examples of how residents in the two urban areas were able or unable to convert place interventions into capabilities. Per place intervention, the table lists one or multiple capability outcomes - i.e., how residents perceived the impact that the place interventions had on their personal lives - and the conversions that played a role in these outcomes.

An important finding is that the place interventions led to distinct capability outcomes—both positive and negative – for different groups of residents. In some cases, such as example 7 in Table 4.2, this diversity relates to individual preferences: whereas some residents saw the realized shared facility rooms as a way to meet neighbors, others mentioned that they simply did not prefer to socialize in such rooms and prefer meeting others in alternative ways. In other cases, however, such as example 4, the distinct capability outcomes more evidently relate to the selective scope of the place intervention. Here, the closed fence around the collective gardens facilitated additional freedoms for the residents of the housing block, but not for residents of other parts of the neighborhood. In other words, the design of this place intervention yields an unequal expansion of resident capabilities:

*"These people do not live in Nieuw Crooswijk, they just live in their building block. Their children play in their inner garden and do not meet with our children" (NC-resident-13)<sup>14</sup>*

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<sup>14</sup> See overview of quotations by residents in Appendix 10



Selective and therefore unequal outcomes were more often observed in Nieuw Crooswijk (see examples 2, 3, 4, 5) than in Buiksloterham&Co. This can partly be explained by the fact that Buiksloterham&Co was still under construction at the time of data collection, while the transformation Nieuw Crooswijk was almost finalized at that time – in later stages, distinct effects might be observed in Buiksloterham&Co too. Nonetheless, it became clear from the interviews that residents in Nieuw Crooswijk felt affected by the emerging inequalities in the area, – in particular between ‘existing’ and ‘new’ residents – due to the design of the masterplan. The decision in this masterplan to demolish a large part of the existing social rental housing stock and to reconstruct the area with owner-occupied dwellings (see example 1), induced strong feelings of displacement amongst residents:

*"I participated in many working groups... Particularly while making the structural vision, there was a good relationship with the municipality... but at the end of the presentation, it became clear that everything would be demolished. It was like having an ice-cold bucket of water shoved in your face" (NC-resident-8)*

Subsequently, the impact of this intervention continued to dominate residents' perceived evaluations about other place interventions, such as the shared gardens (example 4), the café (example 3), and the municipal budgets for resident initiatives (example 5). Since the transformation area in Buiksloterham&Co was previously non-residential, displacement issues here played much less of a role.



FIG. 4.4 Coffee cafe Croos in Nieuw Crooswijk

TABLE 4.2 Case examples of conversions from place interventions to capability outcomes (see supporting quotes in Appendix 10)

Place intervention	Conversion	Capability outcomes
Nieuw Crooswijk		
1 Masterplan with demolition, reconstruction, and renovation	The sudden and non-negotiable announcement of a large-scale demolition of the neighborhood's housing stock caused a shock among existing residents (though formal relocation procedures were arranged by the social housing organization).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Residents experiencing a lack of opportunity to have a say in the neighborhood's demolition plans</li> <li>- Residents who had been collaborating in preliminary studies of the UDP feeling being fooled by the authorities</li> <li>-Some residents experiencing feelings of mistrust towards 'new' residents who replaced the 'old' ones</li> </ul>
2 Primary school with intended multiple-function purpose for the neighborhood	After the change of school operator, rooms inside the school building were not used for neighborhood initiatives anymore.	-Residents not experiencing an additional functioning of the school for the neighborhood
3 Subsidized café with intended functioning for the neighborhood	The central location in the neighborhood makes the café very visible, however, the utilization as a regular café does not necessarily facilitate other neighborhood functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Some residents having the opportunity to fulfil an active role in the UDP and to realize their personal dream</li> <li>-Residents who are not interested in (the style of) the café not experiencing any effect by the intervention</li> </ul>
4 Collective gardens within new-built building blocks	The closed fences around the inner gardens of the new-built building blocks make the gardens inaccessible for non-residents of those blocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Residents of the new-built building blocks having the opportunity to let their children play safely in the gardens, and experiencing a feeling of cohesion</li> <li>-Surrounding residents of the newly-built building blocks lacking the opportunity to access the inner gardens</li> </ul>
5 Municipal budgets to facilitate self-organized initiatives by residents	A municipal area networker connects residents to the local area council ('gebiedscommissie') that is authorized to distribute municipal budgets among citizen initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Residents feeling being supported in their initiatives by the area networker</li> <li>-Residents who are not capable or willing to form a formal citizen group feeling left out in their opportunity to make use of municipal budgets for self-organized initiatives</li> </ul>

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TABLE 4.2 Case examples of conversions from place interventions to capability outcomes (see supporting quotes in Appendix 10)

Place intervention	Conversion	Capability outcomes
Buiksloterham&Co		
6	Urban design plan with mixed housing types (i.e., tenure and price)	- not observed yet
7	Shared facility rooms including laundry machines in social housing blocks	- Residents doubtfully waiting how the integration between residents with a lower and higher incomes will work out
8	Shared gardens for social housing blocks and self-managed semi-public inner gardens for homeowners	-Residents experiencing increased opportunities to interact and engage with neighbors - Some residents not experiencing any social effects by the intervention
9	Coaches allocated in facility rooms in social housing blocks as community-builders	-Residents not feeling welcome in semi-public gardens and worrying about the lack of green space to let their children play outside
		-Residents feeling supported in their own initiatives and questions -Residents appreciating that they have a central contact point to approach and an external party that looks after the neighborhood cohesion -Some residents not experiencing any effects by the coaches

#### 4.4.2 Governance situations: actors, activities and phases

The evaluations above show how implemented place interventions led to both successful and failed conversions for residents. It is therefore crucial to assess what specific conditions in the UDPs affect one or the other. To do so, we reconstruct the governance situations of both cases and analyze how these situations related to the capability outcomes. We focus on a selective set of place interventions (examples 2, 3, 7, and 9 in Table 4.2), which are forms of ‘community meeting spaces.’ First, section 4.4.2.1 describes how these community spaces were implemented throughout the different phases of the project, and which actors were involved. Accordingly, section 4.4.2.2 assesses how precisely the configuration of governance activities, actors and phases in both projects related to the conversions observed around the community spaces.

#### 4.4.2.1 Implementing community spaces

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In Buiksloterham&Co, the eventual realization of the shared facility rooms in the social housing blocks where coaches are located (examples 7 and 9 in Table 4.2) can be traced back to the design of several 'urban activators' in the operationalization phase by the urban designer. These activators were envisioned as buildings that provide clustered office spaces for societal, non-commercial service providers (Studioninedots et al., 2015). In the transition from operationalization to realization phase, however, the idea turned out not to be financially feasible for the social housing organization. As an alternative, during the realization phase, the social housing organization started to collaborate with a healthcare organization that was selected to rent a number of apartments in the new social housing blocks. They negotiated that, if the social housing organization created community meeting rooms on the ground floors of the buildings, the health care organization would operate these rooms in the utilization phase and allocate coaches to them who perform community-building support for all residents, including other residents in the neighborhood. In return, the healthcare organization was allowed to use the rooms as a daycare facility for clients who did not necessarily live in the neighborhood. The shared facility rooms were realized and operated as such.

In Nieuw Crooswijk, the school building and the café in the urban area (examples 2 and 3 in Table 4.2) were the results of different implementation processes. The school building can be traced back to the initiation phase in which early planning documents already included an idea of a centrally-located, 'multifunctional' primary school building that serves multiple educational, pedagogical and communal functions (Bureau Herstructureren Nieuw Crooswijk, 2003). Accordingly, this idea was integrated into the masterplan during the operationalization phase and was successfully constructed in the realization phase. Because of a delay in housing construction due to the global financial crisis in 2008 and subsequent economic recession in the Netherlands, the school operators changed in the utilization phase. Few new families had arrived to the area, for which the first operator faced a lack of children and the municipal education department decided to change the operator to one that was in more need of space.

Parallel to this, the social housing organization came up with an idea during the realization phase, after the social housing organization had stepped out of the developer's consortium and wished to strengthen the dialogue with residents. The social housing organization commissioned a resident architectural research consultant to conduct a study on local needs in the area, which eventually led to a café run by three residents. During the utilization phase, the social housing organization facilitated this café by offering below-market rents in the first years of operation.



FIG. 4.5 Left: Eventually realized school in Nieuw Crooswijk. Right: fenced collective gardens in Nieuw Crooswijk

#### 4.4.2.2 Governance situations affecting capability conversions

As shown in Table 4.2, the implemented community spaces in the UDPs led to both positive and negative capability outcomes. In this section, we assess which elements of the governance situations precisely related to the successful or failed conversions observed around these spaces. Following our framework in Table 4.1, we draw out the specific configurations of governance activities, actors, and phases related to these conversions.

A first general observation is that particularly negotiations between developing actors and utilizing actors about the design and operation of place interventions were fruitful for achieving resident capability conversions. In Nieuw Crooswijk, the collaboration between the social housing organization (as a developing actor) and a resident architectural research consultant and local residents (as utilizing actors) led to new possibilities for residents to participate in the project and to realize their own ideas for place interventions (namely, the café). In Buiksloterham&Co, the negotiation between the social housing organization as a developing actor and the healthcare organization as a utilizing actor led to an intensive management of the facility rooms through the availability of coaches 7 days per week, 10-12 hours per day. This created the opportunity for them to observe locally-emerging needs and to provide tailored-made support that facilitated capability conversions (example 9 in Table 4.2). Such support consisted of practical things such as a laptop that enabled a resident initiative to start language lessons in the facility rooms, or personal conversations to motivate residents to realize their ideas. From a capability perspective, our findings thus show that not only large policy efforts, but small-scaled interventions also particularly make a difference in people's lives and their communities.

Second, we observe that socially-principled collaborations stretching over the realization and utilization phase were advantageous for capability conversions. In such collaborations, the intended social principles behind a place intervention are warranted in the transition from its realization to its actual utilization. This was e.g., the case in Buiksloterham&Co, where the health care organization was enabled to perform activities after the spaces were realized, and in Nieuw Crooswijk where a lower rent during utilization enabled residents to run the café. Moreover, an observed advantage of stretching socially-principled collaborations over the realization and utilization phases, was that this created the possibility for developing actors to adjust design decisions according to the perspectives of actors who later utilized the intervention, such as the health care organization that helped to design the interior of the shared facility rooms. Opposed to those examples, the school building in Nieuw Crooswijk provides evidence of a collaboration between actors in the realization and utilizing phase where the intended social principles were not warranted. After the school's construction, the developer's consortium delivered and transferred it to the municipal education department. The subsequent decision by this department to change the school operator was fully reasoned from this actor's perspective, who did not have a specific interest into the goals of the urban development project. As a consequence, the new operator was a school with a religious profile that attracted children from all over the city – not necessarily from the neighborhood – and the school building was run as a regular school without the intended 'multifunctionality' for the neighborhood (see example 2 in Table 4.2).

Our final observation is that goal-setting activities in the initiation phase influence whether place interventions lead to resident capability achievements or not. This became clear from the differently-phrased ambitions and the eventually-realized place interventions in the two projects. In Buiksloterham&Co for example, interviewees emphasized that they were only able to realize the facility rooms with the coaches because the team was kept small and the project was kept 'under the radar' of the larger project administration. While the professionals thus feared the initiative to fail if it had to be justified by 'higher-level' decision-makers, an earlier manifest in the initiation phase helped them in this justification. Because it was signed by 21 organizations, the manifest created a strong commitment among project actors to innovate (and experiment) on sustainability and circularity goals. On the contrary, Nieuw Crooswijk showed that too narrow or not commonly shared definitions of social sustainability goals in the early project phases withheld developing actors to implement interventions that could support capability outcomes. As the project goals resonated with a municipal policy to attract higher income households to the city by improving the livability of urban areas and diversifying the housing stock, interviewed developers defended their place interventions by arguing that improving individual life situations had never been a goal of the project.

## 4.5 Discussion: towards principles for capability-centered collaborative governance

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The case comparison presented above provides a number of insights about the relations between governance situations in Dutch urban development projects and residents' conversions of place interventions into capabilities. The findings reveal that for pursuing urban outcomes as human capabilities, - thus not only as delivering place interventions -, several collaborative governance activities are pivotal, namely: negotiating about the design and operation of place interventions between developing and utilizing actors, upholding social principles in the transition from realization to utilization phase, and setting jointly shared goals during the initiation phase of projects. These empirical insights allow us to reason more generally on how the implementation of social sustainability in urban development can be effectively governed. By discussing our findings in light of wider urban debates, we here present three principles of a 'capability-centered governance' for social sustainability in urban development.

## Principle 1: Integrate human logic into urban governance situations

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On the most fundamental note, our empirical findings reveal a disparity between the logic of the governance situation around a UDP on the one hand, and the logic of what is needed for a person's quality of life on the other hand. By identifying the shortcomings in how implemented place interventions in urban projects impact the lives of residents, our analysis proves the relevance of a capability-centered evaluative perspective to urban outcomes. Although our analysis reveals examples of how such a perspective can be pursued through small-scale, tailored support additional to planned place interventions, it also showcases the formal barriers in the governance processes to actually provide such support. When reflecting on our interview questions, interviewed professionals brought forward various procedural, financial and administrative obstacles to realizing interventions that were not formally planned for in the UDP. For example, when residents asked for a small budget to create a small self-managed garden in public space, the municipality found it difficult to do so since it was not formally owning the space during the UDP. Moreover, whereas our analysis points out how especially utilizing actors who manage or operate places, such as schools, healthcare professionals, social workers or residents themselves, play a crucial role for providing such tailored support, these actors were not formally part of the governance situations around the UDPs studied.

Fundamental questions about whether cities cater the actual needs of people (Cardoso et al., 2021) or whether the locus of social policy should be shifted towards more people-centered objectives (Lees, 2008) keep returning in urban debates. The position that we take here is that, if human needs are effectively addressed through the activities of actors that actually utilize the urban spaces developed – i.e., those who act according to 'human logic' –, these activities should become an integrated part of the various political, economic and juridical governance activities that shape an UDP. Indeed, building on critical urban theorists who showed how structural forces of capitalism and neoliberal politics use UDPs as conduits of capital accumulation and urban consumerism (Swyngedouw et al., 2002), it can be argued that the collaborative model is overestimated as long as such forces “produce endemic social conflict and domination by the powerful” (Fainstein, 2000, p455 in Kim, 2016, p3548). Certainly, the governance situations we studied also show clear power imbalances among actors. It is particularly for that reason that take a critical-pragmatic position and pursue the question how a capability perspective can improve the existing political-economic play of prevailing actors in urban governance situations.



## **Principle 2: Balance strong goal commitment with experimentalist governance**

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Second, our empirical results signal a tension between, on the one hand, encouraging flexibility in the governance situation around a UDP in order to adapt place interventions according to emerging human needs, and on the other hand, having a strong commitment to pre-defined goals. Due to the diverse ways in which people convert place interventions into capabilities, it is a misconception that one can 'predict' urban capabilities in the early phases of a UDP. As often mentioned in studies on collaborative approaches (Kim, 2016, Gaete Cruz et al., 2022) incrementally integrating knowledge about local needs into decision-making processes is key to serving human- or community-based goals. While it may therefore be tempting to assume that 'the more flexibility, the better', our empirical findings also revealed the relevance of defining clear goals at the early stages of a UDP. The cases showed how developing actors in fact searched for ways to embed their innovative practices in the already-established governance structure around the UDP in order to justify unplanned investments. Similar dynamics are identified as a 'double bind' dilemma of social innovations in urban governance by Bartels (2020): while innovations typically intend to challenge conventional systems, they often have little chance to survive if they do not give in with the prevailing order.

The tension between flexibility and room for innovation on the one hand, and the necessity to embedded incremental changes in existing structures on the other hand, call for reflexive governance that leaves room for experimentation. Without substantive changes in the relational dynamics of governance, Bartels (2020) argues, the experimental learning that is so typical of innovative practices fades away in attempts to embed it in the daily practices signified by "hierarchical policy making, competition over funding and status, and engrained routines and knowledge" define the status quo (2020, p3800). Indeed, as some argue, the adoption of an 'experimentalist governance process' (Sabel & Zeitlin, 2012) remains politically challenging if public bodies in institutionally weak environments do not have the capacity to act accordingly (Morgan, 2018). More than organizing one-off reflection moments, an experimentalist approach to the governance of UDPs thus requires specific institutional capacities. According to Frediani (2021), embedding critical urban learning in urban development would imply to deepen urban diagnoses, promote collective analytical exercises, re-examine the nature of planning practice, co-produce situated strategies, and even, to facilitate a "reflexive and empowering ethos of city-making practice and collaboration" (2021, p143). This latter point touches upon the empirically observed importance of strong commitment to pre-defined goals in UDPs. In fact, the Capability Approach carries the potential to provide a solid ethical ground in urban development processes to justify the flexible, experimentalist approaches that come along with the highly value-laden and interpretive character of social sustainability's implementation.

### **Principle 3: Institutionalize social sustainability implementation**

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Finally, our empirical findings point out that the pursuit of inclusive policy outcomes in cities demand a certain institutionalization of social sustainability goals in the governance situations around UDPs. In both cases presented in this chapter, the most innovative place interventions emerged as unplanned, self-initiated ideas by small groups of professional actors within the UDPs. While such emergent initiatives may be expected because they form a flexible response to locally emerging needs - they also lead to rather vulnerable urban outcomes. In both cases, these place interventions only addressed a selected area or group of people, resulting in unequal capability expansions. Although it may be inherent to implementation processes that broad, idealistic ambitions need to be brought down to practical proportions, it is crucial that the impacts that these interventions generate are being critically assessed. On whose lives do new place interventions have no impact? Do some groups gain more benefits than others? And: at what point does this become unjust?

Following Sen's (1999b) original intention, the Capability Approach sets out a normative principle for comparative exercises to spotlight the most severe inequalities in society, and to determine where to start to make them more just. It is particularly the connection between this critical outlook on local urban outcomes and the wider structural drivers that relate to them (Biggeri & Ferrannini, 2014; Frediani, 2021) that we think is central in a capability-centered governance of social sustainability in urban development. Indeed, the often-heard critique of trusting in local collaborative initiatives is that this ignores systematic issues and in fact creates a "belief in a better urban futures while perpetuating spatial and social injustices" (Cardoso et al., 2022, p2644). In line with scholars arguing for the embeddedness of civil society in multi-scalar democratic governance (Gerometta et al., 2005) or for 'bottom-link-approaches' (Eizaguirre et al., 2012), we agree that discussion on institutional design is crucial to not let collaborative governance be overshadowed by issues such as opaque systems of representation, asymmetrical power distributions or favoritism (Kim, 2016), but instead, let its many proven advantages thrive.

## 4.6 Conclusions

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The overarching aim of this study was to better understand the implementation of social sustainability ambitions in contemporary urban development. By analyzing the relations between the governance situations of two Dutch urban development projects and residents' conversions of place interventions into capabilities, our case-study analysis has provided empirical evidence about the specific conditions in collaborative governance processes that help to achieve more socially sustainable urban outcomes, i.e., outcomes meeting the standards of the Capability Approach (Sen, 2009). These conditions enabled us to propose three general principles for a 'capability-centered governance' of social sustainability in urban development: 1) integrate human logic into urban governance situations, 2) balance strong goal commitment with experimentalist governance, and 3) institutionalize social sustainability implementation.

We conclude that social sustainability's implementation requires a conceptualization in which improvements in people's lives are not seen as the self-evident consequences of a set of place interventions, but instead as a guiding principle that should continuously be reflected upon and learned from during the different governance phases in urban development processes. Whereas our study showed that the utilization of place interventions is not necessarily governed in urban development projects, it is particularly in this 'utilization phase' that residents' actual needs for social sustainability can be properly understood. Connecting the activities of utilizing actors who manage or operate places such as schools, healthcare organizations, local companies, and residents themselves, with the activities of planners, designers and property developers is therefore crucial to embed social sustainability goals in urban development. More than technical sustainable urban development goals such as energy-efficiency, social sustainability is concerned with a high diversity of personal values and needs, and therefore yields uncertainty about 'the right' interventions an urban place needs. It is this normative and dynamic character of social sustainability, as well as the meager institutionalization of its goals in the governance situations around urban development projects, that makes the concept currently vulnerable in implementation processes. We therefore argue that serious attempts to further institutionalize social sustainability in existing governance structures are needed, if socially sustainable urban development is to empirically emerge.

How exactly such institutionalization should take place can differ from place to place. In institutional contexts where public actors play strong roles in urban development, developing participatory or intermediary practices as part of planning procedures may be a way to go, whereas in private sector-led development contexts regulations that favor, for example, corporate social investment can be more impactful. Moreover, enlarging the financial and organizational capacities of self-organized community initiatives is an evident and often-investigated way relevant to many urban contexts. Finally, in light of our empirical findings, developing procedures to continuously monitor the effects of collaborative activities throughout the different phases in urban development projects may very well function as a way of institutionalizing social sustainability goals in governance practices. After all, designing and implementing the place-based policy interventions for communities is one thing, but to make them appropriate for local residents in a socially sustainable manner requires a much more reflexive and on-going commitment among all actors involved.



DrottningH employees in front of the 'dialogue caravan' during the H22 exhibition

# 5 Institutions shaping capability-centered governance practices

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This chapter includes an adjusted version of the paper that is currently under revision in *Planning Practice & Research*:

Janssen, C. (2023). Understanding people-centered planning in urban development projects: an institutional comparison between Vienna and Helsingborg.

## ABSTRACT

This chapter continues on the question of how capability-outcomes can be steered through the governance of urban development projects. Whereas Chapter 4 focused on the governance situation of UDPs as a local arena in which actors (non-) perform different activities – i.e., the ‘visible part’ about how the game is being played –, chapter 5 focuses on the wider institutions that are underlying to these situations – i.e., the ‘invisible part’ defining the rules of the game. This chapter analyzes what kind of institutional conditions play a role in governance practices of UDPs that pursue capability-centered urban outcomes. Through an international case-study analysis of two ‘capability-centered governance practices’ that took place within contemporary urban development projects in Sweden and Vienna, the analysis compares the patterns in which the locally applied governance practices were affected by wider institutional conditions such as urban policies and political climates. In that way, the analysis provides an insight into what type of institutions are particularly relevant for the successful implementation of social sustainability goals in UDPs.

## 5.1 Introduction

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In recent years, the right evaluative direction of urban theory and practice is increasingly being questioned. Dominant economic imperatives are being challenged by scholars arguing to re-envision cities as being places or local economies that should in the first place cater to the equal satisfaction of human needs (see e.g. Cardoso et al., 2021; Franz & Humer, 2021). Subsequently, the local scale is often seen as the proper scale to address people's needs. A growing body of research on local economies, communities, neighborhoods, and grassroots forms of power indicates a 'localist' turn in urban studies (Davoudi & Madanipour, 2015). In European planning, this resonates in localist planning approaches occurring at multiple levels, such as Community-Led Local Development taken up by the EU (Servillo, 2019), neighborhood planning in the UK (Vigar et al., 2017; Wargent & Parker, 2018), and widely-applied participatory approaches by many local governments (Fischer, 2012).

Urban social sustainability is one of the fields that promote localist planning practices. As argued before, social sustainability encompasses many value-laden and interpretive criteria such as social cohesion, diversity, inclusion, and well-being - making its operationalization in planning practices a complex endeavor. Moreover, while the scholarly focus has evolved from harder themes - such as employment and education - to also softer ones - such as well-being and social cohesion - (Colantonio, 2011; Shirazi & Keivani, 2017), the necessity to include situated conditions that affect human quality of life is increasingly articulated in social sustainability debates (Janssen et al., 2021; Shirazi & Keivani, 2017). Indeed, the extent to which people are able to convert spatial resources such as housing, public spaces, and infrastructure into their personal (urban) capabilities depends on the specific circumstances, preferences, and values belonging to individuals (Janssen & Basta, 2022). Referred to as 'capability-centered governance practices' (CCPs), this chapter zooms in on localist planning practices that incorporate those conditions and that perform activities not only focused on improving urban space, but particularly on improving human life. Such practices can be recognized in for example placemaking initiatives, social innovations, participatory projects, or neighborhood upgrading programs.

The high dependency of CCPs on specific (individual) situations raises an important methodological question of to what extent they can be steered through urban governance. On the one hand, it is argued that social innovations coming from the ground need to be embedded in wider existing structures in order to sustain them (Bartels, 2020). Particularly under a project-rationale that is currently dominant

in European planning, scholars point at wider political-economic and institutional structures that unmistakably influence local projects and practices (Blanco et al., 2014; Parés et al., 2014). On the other hand, it is also argued that ‘globally traveling ideas’ about policies for people-centered practices need to be adapted to contextual conditions (Ahn et al., 2023). Whereas ‘contextual awareness’ is thus called for at both the level of local practices and the level of policy design, studies often remain implicit about what type of contextual conditions exactly need to be taken into account. To avoid ending up in relativist positions that CCPs cannot be planned for because they depend on the situation, further understanding of how they fit in the wider play of public, private, and civic actors prevalent in planning practice is necessary.

Pursuing capability-centered practices thus demands a better understanding of how structures and conditions in urban governance - i.e., ‘the context’ - relate to their operationalization. This chapter contributes to this understanding by drawing on Ostrom’s (2009) Institutional Analysis and Design (IAD) framework. As institutional theory in planning research has manifested since the 1980s, many invisible structures underlie the directly observable behavior of actors in governance situations (see Healey, 1998; Moroni, 2010; Ostrom, 2005, 2009; Sorensen, 2017). These structures can be referred to as institutions, i.e., “the prescriptions that humans use to organize all forms of repetitive and structured interactions including those within families, neighborhoods, markets, firms, sports leagues, churches, private associations, and governments at all scales” (Ostrom, 2005, p. 3). Rooted in an understanding of society in which structures are shaped and reshaped by individual actors and the interactions among them (Giddens, 1984), institutions have a vast potential on explaining relationalist planning practices - going beyond understanding institutions as merely external conditions that define the contours for planning activities (Salet, 2018).

This chapter aims to understand from an institutionalist lens how capability-centered practices take place as social sustainability operationalizations within European urban development projects. Urban development projects (UDPs) are temporarily- and spatially-demarcated situations in which actors collaborate via partnership arrangements for the common goal of urban land transformation through real estate development ventures (Kim, 2022). They are interesting units to observe actor-institution relations because in such projects actors from various planning levels - local, municipal, regional, national- interact. Moreover, in a European context where strategic spatial planning (Albrechts, 2010) is often-adhered in practice, UDPs can be seen as place-based vehicles of governance in which public actors interact, negotiate, and collaborate with market (Gualini & Majoor, 2007; Van den Hurk & Tasan-Kok, 2020), and increasingly, civic actors.



The chapter presents an international case comparison of two capability-centered practices within European UDPs (i.e., Neighborhood Management in Seestadt in Vienna and a Dialogue Approach in DrottningH in Helsingborg) that aimed to operationalize social sustainability goals. Based on in-depth interviews with involved actors and field visits to the urban areas, the study analyzes how the institutional landscapes of the cases relate to the performed capability-centered activities. The chapter is structured as follows. Section 5.2 provides theoretical background and presents the analytical framework for the case-study. Section 5.3 introduces the selected case studies and elaborates on the methods of data collection and analysis. Section 5.4 presents the empirical findings and section 5.5 reflects on them. Last, section 5.6 collects the final conclusions.

## 5.2 Institutions of capability-centered governance practices

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Over the recent decades, the rise of new institutionalism contributed to the explanatory analysis of urban governance and planning practices (Gualini, 2018; Healey, 1998; Salet, 2018; Sorensen, 2017). Healey (1999) refers to Giddens in her definition that institutions are “the more enduring features of social life. In speaking of the structural properties of social systems, I mean their institutionalized features, giving “solidity” across time and space (Giddens, 1984, p. 24), thereby stressing that institutions are human-made structures that are more or less fixed for a longer period of time. In general, institutional theory aims to understand how specific (individual) behaviors and interactions of actors relate to (social) structures in society (Giddens, 1984; Healey, 2019; March & Olsen, 2010; Moroni, 2010; North, 1991; Sorensen, 2017). However, having its roots in different economic and sociological branches causes slightly different definitions and focus points within institutionalism<sup>15</sup>. While rational choice institutionalists typically refer to institutions as the structured constraints within which individuals behave as rational actors pursuing their preferences and maximizing their interests (i.e. the game and the rules of the game) (North, 1991), the sociological approach rather focuses on how institutions are constructed through the social interaction between individuals, and on how institutions accordingly influence individual behavior (Giddens, 1984; Healey, 1999).

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<sup>15</sup> See Sorensen (2017) for an overview of rational-choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism

This study builds on the IAD framework developed by Elinor Ostrom and the Bloomington School of Political Economy (Cole & McGinnis, 2017; Ostrom, 1986, 2009; Polski & Ostrom, 1999) for the reason that this framework was particularly designed for shedding analytical applications of different institutional scholars under a common language. Ostrom's work is appreciated for reconstructing institutionalism's dominant economic framework in a social and political way in which the individual actor is not only capable of economic rationalization but also driven by values (Salet, 2018). Moreover, Ostrom's understanding of institutions covers a broad range of different layers that consist of universal components and that structure behavior of individuals and the outcomes they achieve.

In understanding UDPs as vehicles of governance, the institutionalist lens thus implies that projects cannot be properly understood if one only focuses on the actors and their interaction, i.e., the 'visible game' (Buitelaar, 2019), 'governance episode' (Healey, 2019), or 'action arena' (Ostrom, 2005) – the level that this research refers to as the 'governance situation'. Planning studies have been applying the IAD framework to explain how these arenas are shaped through institutions (see e.g., Van den Hurk, et al., 2014; Van Kernenbeek & Janssen-Jansen, 2018; Wang et al. 2022). While these studies often focus on institutions as rules, understood as formal or informal 'physical laws' (Ostrom, 2009, p138) prescribing what ought to be done or achieved, institutional statements also exist as norms and shared strategies. These are cultural prescriptions relating to the attributes belonging to the community operating in the governance situation – and norms distinguish from shared strategies based on their deontic character (Ostrom, 2009).

Incorporating norms and shared strategies is particularly promising for explaining CCPs as social sustainability operationalizations. While planning studies on social sustainability often focus on evaluating urban outcomes (Rashidfarokhi et al., 2018) or analyzing professionals' conceptions of social sustainability (Valdes-Vasquez & Klotz, 2013), they implicitly assume that the way to solve urban problems is through finding the 'right' planning rules. Institutional perspectives explicitly oppose this (Salet, 2018) because they believe that urban outcomes are shaped by many other social constructs, such as explicit or implicit values in society. Particularly for analyzing policy issues in complex social situations, it is argued to be more relevant to bring input from multiple disciplines and levels of activities together than attempting to explain the respective issue from a single perspective – despite the prone impossibility of reaching the exact number of all variables (Ostrom and Polski, 1999; Ostrom, 2005). While it would thus be valuable to understand what other variables than planning rules play a role in social sustainability operationalization, few if any studies offer such comprehensive, multilevel, and institutional perspectives.

Figure 5.1 presents an adjusted version of the IAD framework serving this chapter's aim to understand the institutional landscape of CCPs in the empirical context of UDPs. The figure follows Polski & Ostrom's (1999) analytical understanding of governance situations as consisting of actors, positions, information, control, scope, cost and benefit, and outcomes<sup>16</sup>. Although governance situations and institutions mutually influence each other, the purpose of this chapter's analysis is to 'go backward' (Polski & Ostrom, 1999) and to identify which institutions define governance situations. To do so, institutions are distinguished from non-institutions based on their repetitive character – e.g., a rule exclusively designed to steer a specific project is not considered an institution but an individual project decision. Moreover, the framework includes spatial, social, and economic location characteristics as other non-institutional exogeneous variables that may define governance situations. How the framework is used in the case analysis will be elaborated on in the following.

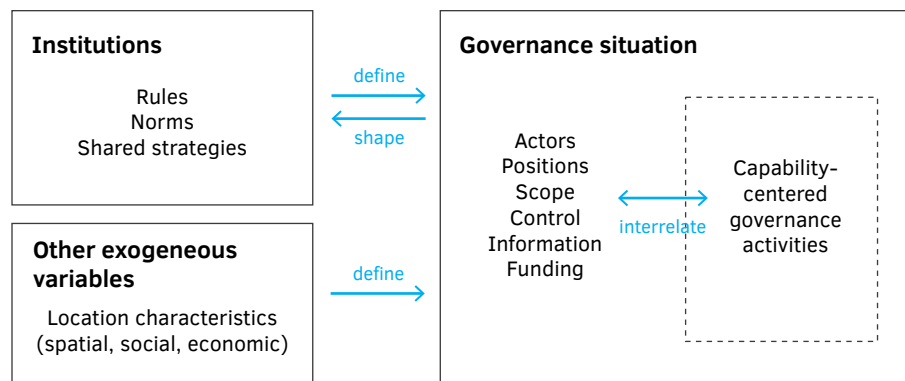


FIG. 5.1 Institutional landscape of capability-centered governance practice: analytical framework inspired by the IAD framework (Polski & Ostrom, 1999; Ostrom, 2005)

<sup>16</sup> Since the cases will be selected based on their outcomes (i.e., performed capability-centered activities, see section 5.3), outcomes is left out as a governance element in Figure 5.1.

## 5.3 Methods

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The empirical study aims to identify institutions that explain capability-centered activities within urban development projects. Qualitative case-study analysis (Yin, 2009) was considered the most suitable method to obtain in-depth explanatory knowledge on the complex process of governance. Moreover, as it can be difficult to observe institutions because they are the 'invisible' social constructs embedded in larger systems of society, it is argued that institutional analysis can be best done through intertemporal or international comparisons (Buitelaar, 2019). For those reasons, the study comprehends an international case comparison between two CCPs in two different European countries.

### 5.3.1 Cases

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The selected cases are capability-centered practices within the urban development projects Aspern Seestadt in Vienna (Austria) and DrottningH in Helsingborg (Sweden). A first selection criterion was to only include CCPs as local planning practices - and not as non-planned practices such as self-organized or grassroots initiatives - to connect to this study's scope as outlined in the introduction. A second criterion was that, although many UDPs might perform capability-centered activities to a certain extent (e.g., through participation procedures), the CCPs had to form a substantial part of the UDP. A final criterion was that UDPs were at least partly realized so that the CCPs had been brought into practice.

While these conditions already significantly limited the case options available, it was decided to focus on Northwestern European<sup>17</sup> countries with relatively similar governance contexts to increase the likeliness of discovering institutional similarities relating to capability-centered practices. Sweden and Austria are both known as having comprehensive-integrated planning systems that 'explicitly seek[s] to provide a measure of horizontal and vertical integration of policies across sectors and jurisdictions' (Nadin & Stead, 2008, p. 39). Moreover, both countries have neo-performative governance systems that adopt binding zoning plans but assign development rights only after project proposals are controlled and approved by public authorities (Berisha et al., 2021).

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<sup>17</sup> Although Austria is geographically located in central Europe, its history as the Western part of the Iron Curtain and its orientation to Germanic culture give reason to categorize Austria as Northwestern Europe (following Knieling and Othengrafen, 2009)



Central square in Aspern Seestadt with Neighborhood Management Office



SEESTADTLounge

While Berisha et al. distinguish Austria as ‘development-led’ from Sweden that is ‘state-led’, the particular planning system of Vienna is more state-controlled than Austria in general (Dangschat & Hamedinger, 2016, p. 95), and Sweden is meanwhile becoming more led through private developers-collaborations (Zakhour & Metzger, 2018). The countries’ welfare systems also show similarities. Although Austria’s corporatist system has different characteristics than Sweden’s socio-democratic system (Nadin & Stead, 2008), the ‘extreme case’ of Vienna’s socio-democratic political stability (Kadi & Suitner, 2019) move the two cases closer to each other. Similar to Sweden’s strong focus on consensus and finding ‘middle-ways’, Pojani and Stead (2018) point out that conflict avoidance and consensus building are important features of Viennese political culture<sup>18</sup>.

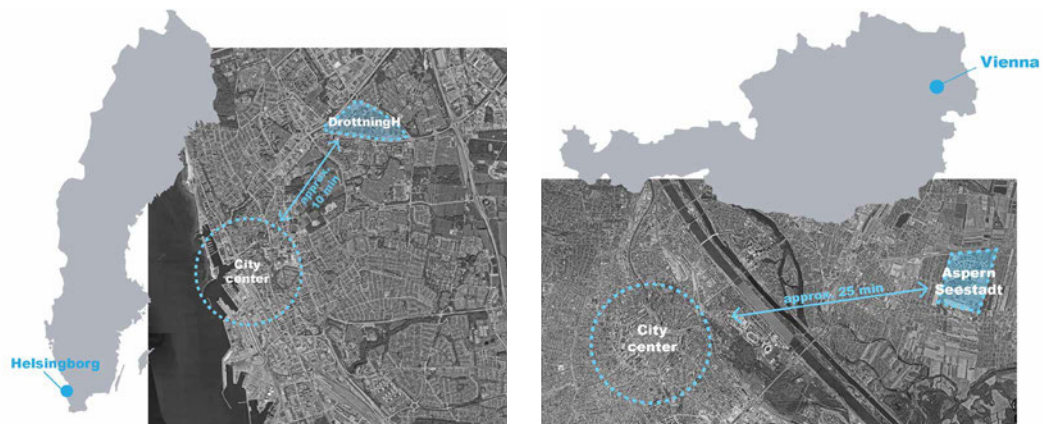


FIG. 5.2 Locations of casestudy areas within their cities and countries (maps are not scaled)

After assuring a certain degree of similarity concerning the governance contexts, it was decided to select two capability-centered practices that took place within contrasting UDPs. As will be elaborated upon in 5.3.2, it is particularly this diversity that makes the cases relevant for institutional analysis. First, however, the two cases are introduced in more detail.

<sup>18</sup> Although they also note that Austria’s strong influence of ‘clientelism’ remains a barrier in developing real participatory innovations.

## Neighborhood Management in Seestadt

Aspern Seestadt (short: Seestadt) is a brownfield development on the outskirts of Vienna, planned as a satellite town to connect the northeast part to other city districts (Krisch & Suitner, 2020). The City of Vienna allocated the former airfield as an area to facilitate the city's population growth and to develop a new 'central business district' as part of a stronger metropolitan area connected to the nearby city of Bratislava in Slovenia (City of Vienna, 2005, 2014). With the intention to be one of Europe's largest UDPs, Seestadt is envisioned as an urban neighborhood with a lot of public space that is well-connected to infrastructure and nature (City of Vienna, 2018). As a precondition for the UDP to start in the 2010s, the City of Vienna invested heavily in new infrastructure connecting the area to other parts of the city (Krisch & Suitner, 2020).



FIG. 5.3 Playground within collaborative housing block (left) and Neighbourhood Management office (right) in Aspern Seestadt



FIG. 5.4 Street (left) and playground underneath metroline (right) in Aspern Seestadt





New playground and renovated houses in Drottninghög



Seestadt's Neighborhood Management (NM), or Stadtteilmanagement in German, follows the tradition of 'gentle urban renewal' – a development approach in Vienna since the 1970s focused on upgrading neighborhoods through small-scale interventions without replacement of inhabitants, managed through decentralized public administration authorities in local districts (Novy & Hammer, 2007).

Also applied as a planning practice of Community-Led Local Development in other countries (Verga, 2017), Neighborhood Management often operates in local offices in neighborhoods where professionals intermediate between planning actors at higher public administration levels and residents living in the urban area (Grandel, 2021; Novy & Hammer, 2007; Verga, 2017). In Seestadt, the NM facilitates and initiates various local urban activities and functions as 'the open ear' for residents. Examples of the NM's daily activities are organizing weekly breakfasts, distributing a neighborhood budget of 3,000 euros among projects that residents submit, providing a welcome package to new residents, maintaining a physical meeting space that is available for resident initiatives, coordinating a 'Regionalforum' where different UDP stakeholders come together to discuss the project, and supporting small companies through a project to motivate residents to buy and consume in Seestadt.

## **Dialogue Approach in DrottningH**

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Opposed to the large-scale tabula rasa in Seestadt, DrottningH is a smaller regeneration project of the neighborhood Drottninghög in Helsingborg. As one of the neighborhoods part of Swedish Million Dwellings Program in the 1970s (Hall & Vidén, 2005), Drottninghög today faced issues such as relatively high numbers of criminality, unemployment, and low household incomes. To improve residents' quality of life, the local municipal housing company initiated change and the City of Helsingborg developed a plan to transform the area (City of Helsingborg, 2012). The area's spatial transformation consists of renovation of the existing housing stock, densification, and demolition and renewal (City of Helsingborg, 2012; City of Helsingborg, 2018). Private investors were attracted and implemented new housing concepts to diversify the housing stock.

DrottningH's Dialogue Approach refers to two large-scale dialogue projects in which the municipal housing company investigated the needs of their tenants through in-depth interviews. The first was undertaken in 2013 and consisted of approximately 350 interviews (Helsingborgshem, n.d.), where residents were asked about their comfort in their own homes. The second was undertaken in 2020 and 2021 and included 250 interviews, where residents were asked about

their wider experiences and preferences in the neighborhood. The Dialogue Approach also refers to multiple subprojects in which residents are involved. These are, among others, a greenhouse that the City of Helsingborg developed and that is maintained by a resident association, a local market venue developed as a career 'stepping stone' for unemployed residents (DoMore Ikea), a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) project (SafeGrowth) that trains local residents to find design solutions for the neighborhood, and the citywide H22 exhibition (City of Helsingborg, 2022) where residents were recruited as hosts of the exhibition. DrottningH also included a larger employment project (Rekrytera) where the City of Helsingborg opened a recruitment office in Drottninghög to support residents in finding employment.



FIG. 5.5 Events during the H22 exhibition part of the Dialogue Approach in DrottningH



FIG. 5.6 Renovated and new buildings (left) and a new gardening house (right) in DrottningH

**TABLE 5.1** Main capability-centered activities in Seestadt and DrottningH

	Neighborhood management in Seestadt	Dialogue approach in DrottningH
Observing locally emerging needs of residents and other users	x	x
Initiating and facilitating community projects	x	x
Facilitating network platforms for project actors	x	x
Distributing neighborhood budget among residents	x	
Recruiting residents to become part of the urban development project		x

**TABLE 5.2** Basic information about the two UDPs within which the capability-centered practices took place

	Seestadt (Vienna)	DrottningH (Helsingborg)
<b>Type</b>	Brownfield; new-built development	Urban regeneration; renovation and densification
<b>Size</b>	240 hectares	40 hectares
<b>Densification</b>	From 0 to 20,000 residents in 2050	From 1,000 to 2,700 dwellings in 2035
<b>Initiating actor</b>	City of Vienna	Municipal housing company (Helsingborgshem) + City of Helsingborg
<b>Main developing actor</b>	Development agency (public-private consortium Wien3420 AG)	DrottningH (project group consisting of City of Helsingborg & Helsingborgshem)
<b>Project developing actors</b>	Private developers, housing cooperatives, municipally-owned housing companies	Private developers, municipally-owned housing company
<b>Former land owner</b>	City of Vienna	Municipal housing company & City of Helsingborg
<b>Duration*</b>	2007-2030	2012-2035

\* Duration from approval masterplan until intended completion

### 5.3.2 Data collection and analysis

Comparing institutional landscapes between different countries comes along with methodological challenges. Next to practical challenges such as accessing equivalent sorts of information and dealing with different linguistical and conceptual expressions of similar phenomena, Nadin and Stead (2013) explain how validity questions emerge when policy practices and systems are deeply rooted in socio-political contexts, language, and models of society. On the other hand, it is also argued that such wide scopes of analysis and high number of variables are particularly relevant for systemic understandings (Nadin & Stead, 2013), and that - more than merely comparing formal frameworks -, planning cultures and multiple planning scales should explicitly be included in international comparisons (Getimis, 2012). To build a firm informational basis for the international comparison, the following methods were undertaken.

The case-study material comprises planning documents about the two UDPs, 29 semi-structured in-depth interviews with project actors (see interviewee information in Appendix 1), and field visits to both project locations between March and July 2022. Since the research was conducted by a single (non-Austrian and non-Swedish) researcher, the field visits took place in sequential order. The first visit to Vienna covered a longer period (six weeks) than the field visit to Helsingborg (two weeks), but the time in Vienna was also spent on specifying the research problem and questions. In Vienna, the researcher resided in Seestadt for two weeks and performed various daily activities such as supermarket visits, informal talks with residents, and a dinner with a collaborative housing group. In Helsingborg, the researcher did not reside in Drottninghög but visited it frequently. As the visit took place during the H22 exhibition and Drottninghög was one of the main exhibition areas, several informal talks could be held on the street with both professionals and residents.

Most of the interviews were conducted during the field visits but some of them were conducted online afterwards. Interviewees were asked about the project's goals for social sustainability, the operational strategies to achieve them, the performance of the capability-centered activities, and - most relevant for this study - their explanations of why it had succeeded to realize the capability-centered activities. In addition, per case three or four residents were interviewed with the purpose to validate the selection of the cases as 'capability-centered practices oriented towards human lives'. Although some negative or critical perspectives toward the practices came to fore, the intended effects of the development activities were generally confirmed by the interviews residents (see overview of resident quotes in Appendix 11). All interviews were conducted in English, which was for both the researcher and nearly all interview participants in a non-native language. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed in Atlas.TI.

The analysis first compared the governance situations of the two cases based on information obtained from the planning documents and the interviews. The situations were analyzed following the elements in Figure 5.1 and led to the findings reported in section 5.4.1. Second, specific fragments of the interview transcripts that included explanations for the capability-centered activities were coded (in-vivo) and grouped into sets of explanatory variables per case. Subsequently, it was analyzed per case 1) which element of the governance situations this variable affected, and 2) whether these variables could be seen as institutions, i.e., as a rule, norms or shared strategy. Finally, comparing the findings of the two cases resulted in four relevant institutions that define capability-centered activities - presented in section 5.4.2.

## 5.4 Findings

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This section presents the results of the case comparison. Section 5.4.1 first reports on the similarities and differences between the two governance situations by describing the main actors and their positions, the control over and scope of the capability-centered activities, information exchange, and funding arrangements. Subsequently, section 5.4.2 identifies a set of institutions that both cases had in common and that played a significant role in defining the capability-centered activities.

### 5.4.1 Governance situations of capability-centered activities

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The governance situations of the two cases show a similarity in terms of the positions of the actors who perform the capability-centered activities. In both cases, the actors fulfill intermediary positions between residents and their commissioners by channeling information from one to another. They also fulfill central positions in networks of different project actors, for example, NGOs, schools, companies, and other societal partners. In both cases, this network position became more important throughout the project: the Neighborhood Management in Seestadt – initially dominated by team members with spatial planning profiles – diversified with social workers and communication specialists, and actors of the Dialogue Approach in DrottningH increasingly considered it important to collaborate with NGOs and safety- and community development experts.

Many other elements of the two governance situations, however, are different. In Seestadt, the Neighborhood Management is a non-profit organization commissioned by the project's development agency and the City of Vienna. It is exclusively dedicated to activities in Seestadt and has been operating since 2014 (Hinterkörner et al., 2014) – the same year that the first residents arrived in the area. Because members of the NM are selected through a public competition and contracted for a temporary period of 3-6 years, the NM's team members are dynamic throughout the duration of the UDP. At the time when this research was conducted, the consortium consisted of a private landscape design office and an aid organization that together employ nine professionals. The contract agreement between this NM with their commissioners enclosed the condition that the team had to consist of at least three team members trained in social work, technical planning, and public relations (City of Vienna MA25, 2019).

Opposed to the formally contracted organization in Seestadt, the Dialogue Approach of DrottningH resembles a looser collective of professionals operating the CCP. Although the two main dialogue projects in DrottningH were performed by the municipal housing company, the wider set of capability-centered activities that form the Dialogue Approach is performed by all members of the project team operating the UDP. This group consists of civil servants representing several municipal departments – among which the planning, culture, employment, and safety department –, and the municipal housing company. Similar to the UDP’s total duration, participants are commissioned to perform the Dialogue Approach for a period of 25 years.

**TABLE 5.3** Governance situations of the two capability-centered activities in the two cases

		Neighborhood management in Seestadt	Dialogue approach in DrottningH
Actors	Organization operating the CCP activities	Non-profit consortium consisting of a private landscape consultant and aid organization	Urban development project team
	Members operating the CCP activities	Architects, planners, social workers	Civil servants from planning, employment, culture, safety departments; civil servants from municipal housing organization; action-researchers
	Duration of participation	3-6 years per phase (multiple phases possible)	As long as the project takes (intended period of 25 years)
Position	Commissioner	Development agency + City of Vienna	City of Helsingborg + Helsingborgshem
	Collaborating actors	Companies, residents, NGOs, public service organizations, research institutes	Companies, residents, NGOs, public service organizations, research institutes
Information	Resident-developer information exchange	Via daily contact with development agency and an office centrally located in the neighborhood	Via dialogue projects and offices located in the neighborhood
	Interdisciplinary information exchange	Via periodic meetings with other UDP actors	Via biweekly meetings with all UDP actors and via thematic subgroups
Scope	Scope of activities	Defined via task description	Undefined
Control	Appointment of position	External (via public competition)	Internal
	Evaluation of performance	Formal (through funding and contract)	Informal
	Position towards commissioner	Semi-dependent	Semi-dependent
Funding	Funding arrangement	Periodic (annual)	Project-based
	Funding provider	Development agency + City of Vienna	City of Helsingborg



The different organization of actors relates to different forms of control, scope, and funding in the governance situations. In Seestadt, the scope of the capability-centered activities is defined through a detailed task description enclosed with the contracting of the Neighbourhood Management (City of Vienna MA 25, 2019a). Accordingly, the NM receives yearly budgets from its commissioners (Hinterkörner et al., 2014) reports about its performance of last year, and submits proposals for next year's activities (City of Vienna MA 25, 2019b). Although the NM is thus formally appointed as an autonomous organization exclusively responsible for performing the capability-centered activities, the formal way of appointment evaluation, and funding create a semi-dependency of the NM to its commissioners.

In DrottningH, there is no formal contracting procedure that exercises control over the actors. Because both members and commissioners belong to the City of Helsingborg, however, a self-evident dependency occurs between them. It was observed, however, that team members were relatively independent in making decisions and that the commissioners did not exercise much control over the capability-centered activities performed – e.g., there was no detailed task description issued such as in Seestadt. Instead, the commissioners defined the scope of the intended capability-centered outcomes through outspoken principles through a political decision at the beginning of the project (City of Helsingborg, 2011). The decision that Drottninghög's social improvement weights equally important as spatial improvement became an important precept for justifying the activities of the Dialogue Approach. Different from Seestadt, the activities are funded through project-based finance composed of different regular budgets of the municipal departments and municipal housing company.

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#### 5.4.2 Institutional landscapes of capability-centered activities

Although the governance situations in Seestadt and DrottningH are thus organized differently, the wider institutional landscapes of the capability-centered activities show some remarkable commonalities. Tables 5.4 and 5.5 present explanatory variables affecting different elements of the governance situations (i.e., actors, position, control, scope, information, and funding). The tables also reveal which of these variables can be identified as institutions (i.e., rules, norms, or shared strategies) and which ones cannot. Comparing the institutional landscapes of the two cases leads to several insights about institutions shaping capability-centered practices.

**TABLE 5.4** Institutional landscape of Neighborhood Management in Seestadt (see supportive quotes in Appendix 12)

	Explanatory variable	Affected governance element	Institution?
1	Vienna has a tradition of already-existing Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung	Actors, position	Rule
2	The social department (MA25) of the City of Vienna has the capacity to commission, coordinate and evaluate Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung	Actors, control	Rule
3	Selecting members of Neighborhood Management through a public competition is common in Vienna	Actors, control	Rule
4	The Neighborhood Management acts according to a task description that it agreed on with its commissioners	Control, scope	Rule
5	The Neighborhood Management in Seestadt is seen as the communication channel between the developer's agency and residents	Information	-
6	The Neighborhood Management is seen as one of the operational strategies for social sustainability in Seestadt	Scope	-
7	Seestadt is seen by its planners and developers as an urban laboratory for innovation and learning	Scope	Shared strategy
8	Social sustainability is a basic concept in Viennese urban planning, e.g., it is one of the four criteria of housing competitions	Scope	Norm
9	Vienna has had a stable socio-democratic political climate for almost 100 years ('Red Vienna')	Scope	Shared strategy
10	Vienna's socio-democratic tradition is understood as that 'the state needs to take care of the residents' and not leave it to the market or residents themselves	Scope	Norm
11	Seestadt's developers and planners believed that something like the Neighborhood Management was needed for the project to succeed	Scope	Shared strategy
12	Seestadt is developed on land that is owned by the City of Vienna, for which non-monetary created money can be 'captured'	Control	-
13	The Neighborhood Management is generously funded (compared to other Gebietsbetreuungen in Vienna) as it receives funding from both the City of Vienna and the development agency	Funding	Rule
14	Seestadt is located at a brownfield location in a pressing housing market, for which the value potential is high	Funding	-
15	Seestadt has a large scale and a lot of political commitment	Scope	-
16	Seestadt is located in an isolated area of Vienna	Scope	-

## **Clear positioning of capability-centered actors**

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First, the capability-centered activities in both cases were affected by institutions defining the actors responsible for these activities and their respective positions in the governance situations. In Seestadt, the processes of contracting, evaluating, and funding the NM in Seestadt followed existing processes via the so-called Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung in Vienna. Coordinated via specific support group at the City of Vienna, appointing NM teams via public tenders and issuing contracts for 3-6 years has been common in Vienna since 1999 (Rechnungshofes, 2013). Although this thus shows that neighborhood management is an institutionalized practice in Vienna, it should be noted that Seestadt's NM was also influenced by individual project decisions. Namely, different from other Neighborhood Managements that are completely publicly-commissioned organizations and operate in already-existing neighborhoods, Seestadt's NM is specifically dedicated to the urban development project and commissioned by both the City of Vienna and Seestadt's development agency (City of Vienna MA 25, 2019b).

Although the position of actors in DrottningH's was not as formally institutionalized as in Seestadt, an underlying norm played an important role in defining actors responsible for capability-centered activities. On the first sight, the Dialogue Approach can be explained by the project manager's decision to establish an intra-departmental project team, and the political decision to extensively involve residents and to have a 'slow' duration of 25 years (see variables 1, 2 and 3 in Table 5.5). Although these decisions had a strong impact on DrottningH's governance situation, they are not identified as institutions because they lack repetitive characters. Yet, from the side of the municipal housing company, it became clear that the institutional landscape of Helsingborg did in fact define roles for capability-centered activities: "When it comes to those decisions difficult to argue for, like putting money into dialogue or putting money into social developments, there are examples in Sweden where that's not what you expect of your housing company. ... [In Helsingborg], we are expected to do this, no one else is doing it so, and it's on us to do it" (DTH-mun.hou.com-2).

TABLE 5.5 Institutional landscape of the Dialogue Approach in DrottningH (see supportive quotes in Appendix 12)

	Explanatory variable	Affected governance element	Institution?
1	The project is led by an intra-departmental project team in which members prioritize DrottningH over their regular work	Actors, positions	-
2	The extensive involvement of residents in DrottningH is defined as a political decision	Actors, positions	-
3	The urban development project has a 'slow' duration of at least 25 years	Position	-
4	In Helsingborg, it is expected from the municipal housing company to do something extra for social development	Position	Norm
8	DrottningH's project leader insisted on biweekly meetings between all project team members to encourage integral solutions	Information	-
5	The Dialogue Approach is seen as one of DrottningH's operational strategies to improve people's quality of life in the area	Scope	-
6	The City of Helsingborg has an 'innovation culture' that encourages project employees to experiment and make mistakes	Control, scope	Shared strategy
7	DrottningH's ambition for 50% social development and 50% spatial development is defined in a political decision	Scope	-
8	Politicians in Helsingborg were consensually convinced that it would be the wrong thing not to involve residents	Scope	Norm
9	Some Swedish private investors find it important to invest in socially demanding areas	Scope	Norm
10	The City of Helsingborg wanted to show through DrottningH that it cares about all its citizens	Scope	-
11	DrottningH's planners and developers believed that developing socially challenging areas is not possible without engaging residents	Scope	Shared strategy
12	After some years of development, planners and developers realized that DrottningH's social development should get more attention	Scope	Shared strategy
13	The City of Helsingborg's departments prioritize their regular budgets for DrottningH	Funding	Rule
14	The municipal housing company is able to accept short-term losses for long-term benefits	Funding	Rule
15	Drottninghög had low property values for which the potential value creation is high	Funding	-
16	Drottninghög is developed by the owners of the land	Control	-
17	Drottninghög is considered the socially weakest area in Helsingborg	Scope	-

## **Strong scope-definition through norms and shared strategies**

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Second, norms and shared strategies in both cases strongly defined the scopes of capability-centered activities. In Seestadt, the NM benefitted from the situation that social sustainability formed a basic concept in Viennese planning. As much described in literature, local politics and urban development in Vienna are strongly influenced by 'Red Vienna' - a period between 1919-1934 with strong social reforms oriented at improving the living conditions of the Viennese working class (Suitner, 2020). To illustrate, social sustainability is one of the four criteria in housing competitions in Vienna (Paidakaki & Lang, 2021). A similar commitment to social values was observed in the planning ideology in Helsingborg. Although Helsingborg was not governed by a sociodemocratic but by a right-conservative party, it became clear from the interviewees that DrottningH's social principles were politically 'stable' and that project actors believed that they would be able to survive changes in Helsingborg's political leadership - "the project is probably purple enough to feed both parties" (DTH-mun.hou.com.-2). Moreover, DrottningH also attracted private developers who were driven by social values - as they explained that purely economically spoken, the area was not that interesting for them yet.

Not only did social values serve as ethical principles for the operationalization of local activities, they also formed beliefs among actors about what is needed for well-functioning urban areas. In DrottningH for example, interviewees explained how most actors agreed that the transformation of an area like Drottninghög would simply not succeed without extensively involving citizens. Similarly, interviewees explained the strongly-controlled NM as a form that Vienna needs to facilitate resident initiatives - "they don't come bottom-up" (SEE-developer-2). Such beliefs about what is needed to achieve the right outcomes may be deeply rooted in local planning cultures. In Vienna for example, some interviewees linked the formally-institutionalized form of Neighborhood Management to Vienna's hierarchical emperor history where it is expected from a state to take good care of its citizens. These tendencies are also reported in planning literature: 'The Social Democrats [in Vienna] are avoiding more open planning procedures and unlocking the system to allow participation of more actors, as this could mean that they would partially lose control over the development of the city' (Knieling, 2009).

Next to social values defining capability-centered outcomes, it was remarkable that the value of 'innovation' in both cases played an important role for the capability-centered practices to take place. Embedded in Vienna's Smart City Strategy, Seestadt is seen as a 'front-running project' in Vienna's wider urban discourse (City of Vienna, 2022; Wien 3420 aspern Development AG, n.d.) and interviewees

explained how they saw the NM as one of the innovations fitting in this conception. In DrottningH, the City of Helsingborg is known for having a strong drive for innovation and city directors encouraged their administrative staff to experiment and “to make mistakes” (DTH-municipality-4). Altogether, it is plausible that this framing bolstered the belief that “we don’t need to measure everything” (DTH-municipality-4), and thus helped project actors in justifying their unprecedented activities aimed at social improvement.

## Funding for public-interest investments

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Third, institutions enabling funding for long-term public interests were observed in both cases. In Seestadt, the NM’s funding traces back to a complex arrangement in which public and private ownership and funding intertwine<sup>19</sup>. This complexity is not uncommon in Vienna: Leixnering et al. (2020) describe how the many privatized publicly-owned companies serving Vienna’s public administration act independently, yet still strongly publicly-coordinated through ‘hidden’ structural mechanisms in the background. Indeed, interviewees explain that the public-private development partnership had the advantage that the yields generated – that were generous because of the pressing housing market<sup>20</sup> – (partly) stayed with an actor with public interests.

In Drottninghög, the majority of the project location’s land was owned by the municipal housing company<sup>21</sup> which created the opportunity for them to act as a main developing actor. In Sweden, municipal housing companies are non-profit organizations acting under limited liability, yet that are concerned with public interests. Because they offer housing to everyone and because they are almost entirely owned by municipalities (Hedman, 2008), it is described that throughout history “Swedish municipal housing has been actively used as a political instrument in a number of varied situations where municipalities and the state have viewed the market as an insufficient supplier” (Hedman, 2008, p28). In recent decades, some

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<sup>19</sup> The land of the former airfield was publicly owned by the Vienna Business Agency and BIG (a national real estate company). They founded the public-private development agency Wien3420 AG, where they formed a consortium together with the private organization GELUP (i.e., a subsidiary organization of three companies, of which some of them are publicly owned). Subsequently, the Neighborhood Management was also both publicly and privately (through the public-private development agency) funded.

<sup>20</sup> An audit in 2013 reports that GELUP already earned back 74% of its purchase price with selling 56% of the land.

<sup>21</sup> Remaining parts were owned by the City of Helsingborg

of them actively started improving the living conditions in deprived housing areas from the Million Dwellings Program – such as Drottninghög – in which continuity, long-term views, and participation of residents are mentioned as basic principles (Hedman, 2008). From the interviews, it became clear that the municipal housing company was able to accept short term losses that will be compensated with long-term yield: “You can say in short terms other neighborhoods are paying for Drottninghög... but having loans on Drottninghög that look 10 years ahead we will have made a profit” (DTH-mun.hou.com.-2).

## **Influence of spatial, social, and economic location characteristics**

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Finally, it should be mentioned how non-institutional location characteristics played a role in the capability-centered practices. In Drottninghög, interviewees explained how the economic value potential for the municipal housing company in Drottninghög was higher than in other areas because the area’s quality could improve much, making it a ‘strategic location’ to develop. Similarly, Seestadt’s economic value potential was described as “sky-rocketing” (SEE-developer-1) because new real estate is developed on a large brownfield site in times of a booming Viennese housing market. In both cases, the UDPs were seen as municipal showcase projects and received a lot of media attention. Combined with the project location’s spatial characteristics, these economic and social features of the project locations explained why the capability-centered activities were performed here and not (yet) elsewhere. For example, the large scale and isolated location of Seestadt explained why the developers were willing to do everything they could to make the project a success – the NM was also seen as a marketing tool to create a positive image of the project. In Drottninghög, the relatively small size of the area explains why this area was selected and not surrounding neighborhoods with similar social issues: “It’s a very powerful thing for the whole city to go forward in a kind of small area of the city” (DTH-municipality-2).

## 5.5 Discussion

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Altogether, the findings reveal how the governance situations of the two cases were affected by institutions (either rules, norms, or shared strategies) and location characteristics. Considering these findings, however, it should be noted that this research came along with various challenges and limitations. First, attention should be paid to the analytical difficulty to identify institutions in the empirical object of urban development projects. Since UDPs always take place under specific spatial, temporal, and organizational conditions, the repetitive character of institutions may not be easy to recognize. One could argue that strictly spoken, an organizational structure such as the Gebietsbetreuung in Seestadt does not function as an institution if it does not necessarily affect other UDPs– in the hypothetical case that another project would be better helped by another solution than the NM. On the other side of the coin, one could argue that, since projects often dure for a period of ten or twenty years, individual project decisions can evolve into institutions throughout the project. This discussion was relevant in DrottningH, where interviewee participants dissented whether the ‘innovation-oriented culture’ of the City of Helsingborg was a general characteristic of the local planning culture or whether it was something that had grown out of the project itself. As another discussion point, it can be argued that behind the non-institutional variables identified in this analysis (such as individual project decisions and the location characteristics defined in 5.4.2) are also deeper institutions in effect. For example, the economic characteristics identified in 5.4.2 may relate to certain institutional features that the political economies of Sweden and Austria have in common. Since both countries can be seen as coordinated market economies that affect patterns of economic activity, policy-making, and distributions of well-being (Hall & Soskice, 2009), these patterns imply particular institutions that structure, among many other things, the economic and social potential of the projects investigated. Although this study did not go into depth about the institutional features of the local political economies, it should thus be noted for future research that the distinction between institutions and non-institutions is a thin line, and that how this line is drawn depends on a researcher’s decision on the depth and width of institutional analysis.

This study also has methodological limitations. Since the study includes both rules, norms, and shared strategies as institutions, the analytical scope is broad and the various explanatory variables derived from the case-study analysis have not been analyzed in-depth. The interview guides were, for example, not specifically designed around the embedded social norms, or specifically around the Gebietsbetreuungen,



but had an inductive character in which explanatory information about the urban development projects was collected. The broad scope of this study's analysis was an explicit decision for the research design and related to this study's aim to identify institutions of capability-centered practices in an inventorying way. Since few empirical studies about institutional landscapes of capability-centered governance practices exist in literature, this study aimed to identify different types of institutions relating to capability-centered activities, rather than fully analyzing one of them. For that reason, the findings of this paper should not be seen as complete descriptions of the institutional landscapes in Vienna and Helsingborg, but instead, as a contribution to a better understanding of the governance of social sustainability in planning practice.

## 5.6 Conclusions

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The wider aim of this chapter was to improve our understanding of how local structures and conditions in urban governance - i.e., 'the context' - relate to capability-centered practices. Empirically, this study aimed to identify institutions as explanatory variables to understand why two CCPs took place as social sustainability operationalizations within two urban development projects in Vienna and Helsingborg. Based on an institutionalist-comparative analysis inspired by Ostrom's (2009) IAD framework, the study identifies that CCPs do not necessarily benefit from highly formalized rules that prescribe specific localized social activities. Instead, it is found that particularly institutions (1) positioning the actors responsible for performing capability-centered activities clearly, (2) defining strong socially-oriented and innovation-oriented scopes of these activities, and (3) enabling funding that upholds long-term public interests within the market dynamics that co-shape the projects are conditional for the capability-centered practices to take place. The study also shows that those institutions can take shape both as formal rules or as strongly-embedded norms or shared strategies, depending on the traditions of the specific place. In that way, it can be concluded that capability-centered practices in urban development projects are localist in the sense that specific actors and their activities and interactions can differ from place to place, but 'meta-localist' in the sense that it is driven by certain conditions deeply embedded in the (planning) cultures, systems and traditions at play at the urban, regional or even national level.

While most planning studies on social sustainability have so far focused on collecting different perceptions by various urban actors, or on performing ex-post evaluations of social policies or local practices in urban development, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the wider process of governance relating to social sustainability's operationalization in planning practice. The exploratively identified institutions in this study invite for further research into the institutional design of capability-centered governance practices, for example by deeper analyzing planning cultures, governance capacities, political economies, or property rights in relation to empirically observed capability-centered practices. Future international comparisons could also include a wider diversity of planning and governance systems, such as countries with conformative planning models or Anglo-Saxon welfare states, to investigate if similar institutions are also relevant in very different planning contexts. After all, a richer base of information on the commonalities and differences between different institutional landscapes will contribute to a better understanding of how localist planning practices can be more generally steered – without omitting their ability to adapt to local situations.



# 6 Conclusion

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## Towards developing places for human capabilities

‘Improving cities leads to improving people’s quality of life’. The introduction of this dissertation pointed out how this proposition is somewhat naive for societies where, despite spatial improvements and growing economic welfare – social inequalities are increasing. Nevertheless, suchlike assumptions about the effects of spatial interventions are not uncommon in urban development research and practice. During spatial planning and development activities, it often remains implicit how improvements to *cities* actually lead to improvements in people’s *lives*. This research opened this black box by adhering to the principles of the Capability Approach, investigating how processes of city-making relate to the outcomes experienced by people living in urban environments.

This research aimed to develop a capability-centered understanding of governance processes that affect the implementation of social sustainability goals in contemporary urban development. The main findings are synthesized in two parts: first, section 6.1 draws conclusions about the evaluation of social sustainability policy outcomes in urban areas if these are interpreted through a capability-centered perspective (6.1.1). Second, the section presents a set of more and less-institutionalized governance elements around urban development projects that relate to such capability-centered social sustainability outcomes (6.1.2). While the first section synthesizes the answers to research questions 1-3 (presented in the introduction chapter), section 6.1.2 comprehends the answers to questions 3 and 4.

Following the main research findings of this dissertation, this chapter revisits the main research aim of this dissertation in section 6.2 and elaborates on the key contribution and implications of this research. Subsequently, the chapter provides recommendations for urban development practice in section 6.3. Finally, section 6.4 reflects on further insights gained and on some methodological limitations of this dissertation. The section, and also this dissertation, concludes with directions for future research.

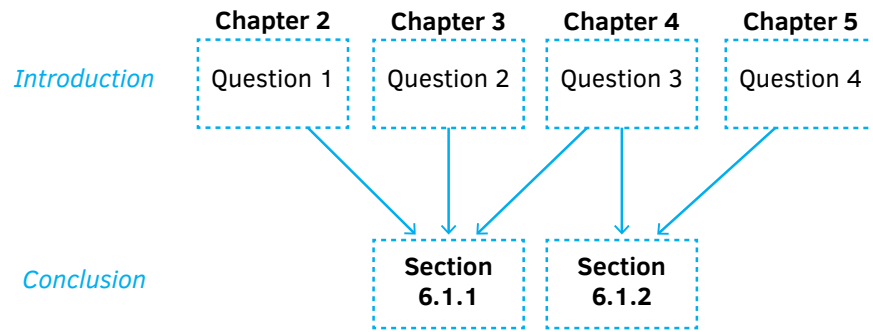


FIG. 6.1 Synthesis of research findings

## 6.1 Main research findings

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### 6.1.1 Evaluating urban social sustainability outcomes

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By embarking on the Capability Approach (Alkire, 2005; Nussbaum, 2000; Robeyns, 2017; Sen, 1999a, 1999b, 2009) to evaluate social sustainability policy outcomes, this research uncovers the variety of interpretations that people have of what a socially sustainable life in urban areas is or could be. This becomes clear from the case study on Buiksloterham&Co in Chapter 3. The case reveals a discrepancy between how planning professionals perceive social sustainability versus how residents do. While planners perceive it as a linear, all-embracing condition that can be achieved through the implementation of a set of policy interventions such as shared gardens, mixing housing tenures, community rooms, or the allocation of community coaches, residents perceive social sustainability quite differently. The empirical findings reveal a high variety of how different people value, interpret, and ‘perform’ social sustainability on the ground. First, they show how different individual persons make different value judgements about what important urban functionings (Basta, 2016) for social sustainability are. For example, while one person found the possibility to do sports close to the house very important, another person did not value this at all. Moreover, the findings show that whether these functionings are considered ‘sustainable’ (i.e., affordable, accessible) also differs from person to

person. Two individuals living in the same housing block, with the same distance to the public transport, described their access to public transportation as “great” and “terrible”. To one person, the ferry is close by and runs often enough. For the other, it is “too far away and does not have a good time schedule”.

In addition to this – and most remarkably – the case studies in Buiksloterham&Co and Nieuw Crooswijk both reveal a wide variety of the ways that people *convert* implemented policy interventions (i.e., referred to as design interventions in Chapter 3 and place interventions in Chapter 4) into their personal expanded capabilities. The studies find various contextual aspects that function as enabling or constraining factors for people to perform those capabilities, i.e., ‘conversion factors’ (Robeyns, 2005, 2017; Sen, 1999a). These factors range from a broad set of personal characteristics (Sen, 1999b), observed in this case study as ‘the right tone’ of professionals, or ‘personal preferences’. They also include ways in how a person relates to factors in the urban environment (Brummel, 2017) such as the architectural form of a building or a fence around a shared garden, and to ways that people relate to their social environment (Robeyns, 2005), such as ‘the connection to other persons living in the area’ and a person’s ‘identification with others’. Chapter 4 shows that realized place interventions did not necessarily lead to equal capability outcomes, and that certain place interventions yield an unequal expansion of resident capabilities. While the factors that influenced the unequal conversions were sometimes related to personal or social characteristics, the study also found various factors resulting from decisions made in the implementation process. In other words, the studies identify a set of new factors that provide information about how a person relates to his/her environment, that result from the ways that urban development projects take place.

Based on the varieties identified, it thus became clear that social sustainability’s operational meaning is not only situated in specific places (Shirazi & Keivani, 2017), but that its meaning also differs from person to person and can change over time – for instance as residents grow older, as people move in and move out, or as societal developments take place. It then follows that operational approaches in urban research and practice that acknowledge the diverse and dynamic ways in which people’s urban capabilities are shaped are most accurate to advancing urban social sustainability. The study in Chapter 2 shows how policy implementation in contemporary urban development practices is predominantly – either implicitly or explicitly – geared towards the delivery of spatial interventions as the goal of policy implementation, such as public spaces, buildings, and infrastructures in neighborhoods or cities. Seen from the perspective of the Capability Approach, such policy interventions only serve as *resources* for people to achieve their urban capabilities (i.e., a *resource-centered* approach). In addition, the study

in Chapter 3 presents the discrepancy between how residents experience social sustainability and how planners intend to facilitate it through a set of design interventions. Altogether, it becomes clear that urban development practices are commonly more oriented towards the realization of resources as a result of policy implementation than towards the expansion of people's capabilities. The plurality in which different people value social sustainability functionings, and the variety in which different people achieve their valued capabilities, are – despite the best intentions that planners and developers may have – easily overlooked in practice.

### 6.1.2 **Relations between governance and capability-centered outcomes**

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When incorporating the variety of interpretations and the multiplicity of factors affecting residents' performances in the evaluation of social sustainability, the question follows how this variety can be governed in development practices. Is it at all possible to affect people's highly individual- and context-dependent capabilities through the implementation of urban development projects, and if so, in what ways? By analyzing the governance processes around urban development projects, this research identifies a set of elements in both the governance situations and institutional landscapes around urban development projects that affect the achievement of capability-centered social sustainability outcomes.

The case studies in Chapter 4 first show that people's expansions of urban capabilities are facilitated through operational interventions that are tailored to the needs of local residents through human-centered support. This support is complementary to the realization of spatial interventions such as new parks or mixed housing and is not necessarily planned for via masterplans, development visions, or operationalization documents. In other words, it concerns support that facilitates the *conversions* between generally available spatial resources and personal capabilities. The case of Buiksloterham&Co, for example, showcases how a municipal worker, after realizing physical community rooms, provides a laptop in a community room to enable self-organized language lessons to take place. Chapter 4 also demonstrates the case of Nieuw Crooswijk where the unplanned subsidization of rent enabled local residents to start a coffee café within the transformed neighborhood. On a larger scale, Chapter 5 provides evidence of how the Neighborhood Management in Vienna has the capacity to facilitate emerging resident initiatives, and how planners in Helsingborg interact with residents to find out their needs before they decide on spatial interventions. In this dissertation, these governance activities are found to be perfect examples of 'capability-centered policy interventions.'

Although these examples of facilitating capability-centered policy interventions within urban development projects may appear seemingly simple in terms of budget and scale, the Dutch case studies in Chapter 4 also reveal that such interventions are not self-evidently part of urban development projects. Behind realizing such interventions, namely, the question lingers whether planning and developing actors in urban development projects have enough insights into how different individual residents experience social sustainability. Without an understanding of the factors that enable or withhold local residents to convert resources into capabilities, efforts to implement social sustainability goals risk being futile. Obtaining situated understandings of what social sustainability means to local residents, however, is challenging given the large number of people living in urban areas. As a step forward to cope with this issue, the case studies in Chapters 4 and 5 find the following elements of governance around urban development projects that affect the realization of capability-centered policy interventions.

The first element that the studies find is the integration of actors who represent or understand people's urban capabilities in the conventional governance processes around UDPs. The research identifies how processes of collaborative governance (Ansell et al., 2020; Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson & Gerlak, 2014; Emerson et al., 2012; Healey, 1998) are precisely facilitative to expanding human capability through urban development. Chapter 4 finds that negotiations among planning and developing actors (such as real estate developers, local governments, or housing companies) and utilizing actors (such as local companies, residents, or societal organizations) are necessary to adapt generic place interventions to the individual- and context-dependent capabilities of residents. Since it is particularly the latter actors who are able to grasp the perceptions of different local residents, the collaborations thus serve as a way to integrate knowledge about residents' valued functionings, capabilities, and experienced conversion factors into the design and realization of policy interventions by the former actors. Subsequently, the institutional comparison between Aspern Seestadt and DrottningH in Chapter 5 points out that collaborative governance activities are institutionally embedded. By analyzing capability-centered activities through an institutionalist perspective (Healey, 1999; Ostrom, 1986, 2009; Polski & Ostrom, 1999; Sorensen, 2017), the research provides empirical evidence of governance situations where such negotiations are facilitated by actors fulfilling an intermediary role between planners and residents in an urban development project. This study concludes, among others, that the successful performance of capability-centered governance activities within an urban development project is a result of existing institutions that clearly *assign actors* responsible for these activities - actors who can thus be evaluated and controlled (such as the Neighbourhood Management Team in Vienna is publicly coordinated and assessed).



As another element, the studies in Chapters 4 and 5 find that clearly outspoken capability-centered social principles in the initiative phase of urban development projects – and upholding them in the transition from realization to utilization phases – explain capability-centered outcomes of social sustainability. While it was observed in the cases how such principles were outspoken in different ways, i.e., via a signed manifest (Buiksloterham&Co), a political decision at the beginning of the project (DrottningH), or by rules in city-wide planning documents (Aspern Seestadt), they all helped to justify the performance of capability-centered governance activities. Accordingly, the case of Nieuw Crooswijk shows how simply the lack of intentions of the project’s planners and developers for expanding people’s capabilities explains the failed capability outcomes. On top of that, more than adhering to social principles within an urban development project alone, the study in Chapter 5 underscores the effect when such principles being rooted deeper in the institutional landscape of the project. The study shows how institutionalized social values – either via rules, norms, or shared strategies (Ostrom, 2009)- in the wider planning context or the political economy of a place – are driving forces for capability-centered governance activities to take place in a specific situation. Such values could be institutionalized in a formal way, for example via listing social sustainability as one of the four criteria for housing competitions in Vienna, or in an informal way – in Helsingborg for example, it was considered ‘normal’ that developers do ‘something social’ in the areas where they develop (Chapter 5).

Next to the presence of strongly-embedded social principles in the governance around urban development projects, the case studies also identify flexibility in defining concrete operational interventions as a governance element that explains capability-centered outcomes. In both Nieuw Crooswijk and Buiksloterham&Co, the ideas for the eventually realized capability-centered interventions emerged only after utilizing actors came into play and the urban development project proceeded to the realization phase. Likewise, the capability-centered governance activities in Aspern Seestadt and Drottninghög do not consist of realizing pre-defined design solutions, but of encouraging utilizing actors (among which residents) to come up with ideas and facilitating them in the realization of these ideas. Due to the diverse ways in which people interpret social sustainability, it is a misconception that one can predict all valued urban capabilities in the early phases of a project. As a principle for capability-centered governance, Chapter 4 therefore also concludes that a strong goal commitment in urban development projects needs to be balanced with experimentalist governance approaches in which knowledge about local needs can be incrementally integrated into the process of policy implementation.

Finally, the case studies find that institutionalization of social sustainability goals in the governance processes around urban development projects is an essential element for achieving fair capability outcomes. The studies brings specific elements to light in the

political-economic and institutional-historical processes of urban development that relate to people's access to cities (Biggeri & Ferrannini, 2014; Deneulin et al., 2006; Frediani, 2021). Institutionalization is particularly needed to prevent positive capability policy outcomes to pertain only to a selected group of residents and instead strive towards an equal distribution of people's capability levels (Bartels, 2020; Sen, 2009; Swyngedouw, 2005). This becomes clear via the comparison of the Dutch case studies (Chapter 4) that reveals institutional voids around urban development projects concerning social sustainability implementation, and shows how those voids led to rather limited capability outcomes. Moreover, the comparison between Aspern Seestadt and DrottningH in Chapter 5 reveals how several institutions are conditional for capability-centered governance activities to take place within urban development projects. Next to the positioning of actors and the embeddedness of the social values mentioned above, the chapter also identifies funding that can uphold the public interest within market dynamics as an institutional condition for capability-centered activities to take place.

## 6.2 Contribution and implications

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Altogether, the studies point out that capability-centered social sustainability outcomes are not per se achieved by a set of spatial interventions, but instead, facilitated through an institutional landscape that let collaborative governance practices occur that are socially-principled, that bring developing and utilizing actors together, and that are reflexive in terms of the specific activities that take place in a situated urban area. Up next, this section discusses what these findings imply for the way that governance for urban social sustainability and the implementation of social sustainability goals should be understood.

### 6.2.1 Understanding governance for urban social sustainability

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Based on the empirical studies, it becomes clear how a capability-centered approach to social sustainability provides new insights that spark a fundamental re-interpretation of governance processes around urban development practice. By analytically distinguishing 'resources' from 'capabilities' as the end goals of social sustainability policy implementation, this dissertation demonstrates the limitations of a resource-centered operational approach to urban social sustainability. From a

capability-centered approach, implementing social sustainability does not per se center around the realization of new spatial resources. Instead, the main challenge of implementing social sustainability goals in urban development practices lies in understanding what social sustainability means to people in local urban areas. How do people value and interpret different functionings for social sustainability? What makes a person utilize certain places, or what is the reason that another person does not? Beyond implemented policy interventions, what else might people value, and what else might they need?

These new insights call for an organization of collaborative activities among urban actors in such a way that they construct local understandings about what is exactly needed for different residents to live a valuable life in cities. Without such a collaboration, implemented policy interventions run a high risk of missing the mark. They also risk failing if understandings of local people's capabilities are not integrated into the planning, developing, and utilizing activities of urban development practices. It is thus essential for governance towards social sustainability to embed processes in which it can be continuously evaluated how place interventions correspond with the experiences of the ones who actually live in the developed urban areas. In addition, such processes should facilitate the possibility to act up on evaluations. Not only does this research point to reflexivity that is needed in governance activities. It also points to the need to embed capability-centered principles into the wider cultural and political-economic structures that shape urban development practices. This 'embedded reflexivity' makes the relation between governance processes and social sustainability outcomes seem somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, concrete solutions for urban interventions need to be kept as open as possible – sometimes challenging prevailing institutions – to be able to adapt to emerging individually-dependent needs. On the other hand, governance activities oriented towards capability expansion might not take place, or will not lead to equal capability outcomes, if they are not embedded in institutional landscapes around these activities.

Governance towards social sustainability in urban development, therefore, proves to be a balancing act between reflexivity in terms of situated governance activities and institutionalization in terms of social principles, responsible actors, and funding for public interest. The key to finding this balance, as this research points out, does not lie in defining operational indicators of social sustainability and regulating their realization into urban development practices. Instead, this dissertation points out that social sustainability goals can be implemented more effectively through carefully creating collaborative processes and (in effect) developing institutional landscapes that set out human-centered principles for how socially sustainable outcomes are defined, in what phases, by whom, and for whom.

Most essential in all this, concerns putting individual capabilities at the normative heart of the policy implementation process. Although it is self-evidently not feasible to tailor social policy interventions to every single person's needs, it is essential for all governance situations to *start* from an individual capability perspective, and design spatial resources and other spatial interventions only if they enhance desired human functionings. Amidst the many different interpretations and operational shapes that social sustainability may take in local situations, individual diversity and real opportunities are the central principles that must be sustained during all development phases of urban development projects.

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### 6.2.2 **Managing social sustainability's implementation challenge**

The novelty of this research is that it brings a new set of variables to light that carry explanatory power for understanding whether socially sustainable urban outcomes are achieved or not. Via the capability-centered evaluation of urban outcomes, the research shows how each person experiences urban social sustainability in a unique way. This insight has implications for what we may expect from urban development to contribute to people's quality of life. The findings imply that social sustainability is a phenomenon that cannot be fully controlled through urban development projects - after all, there is simply no single 'end picture' of a socially sustainable urban environment that can be 'created'. Nevertheless, the findings still point out that social sustainability *can* be steered toward in urban development - several governance elements were identified in this research that lead to capability-centered social sustainability outcomes (Chapters 4 and 5). The improved understanding of what social sustainability means 'on the ground' thus opens a new door for analyzing which governance elements are conducive to social sustainability. The more is known about the situated needs and values of people in local urban areas, about how they interpret social sustainability, and about how they experience enabling and constraining factors to perform urban capabilities, the better it can be investigated what type of place interventions, governance activities, and institutional conditions are conducive to it.

From a broader perspective, these improved understandings of urban social sustainability contribute to an explanation of why implementing it is often considered so challenging. In resource-centered approaches to policy implementation (Chapter 2), the operational interventions are already more or less known at the moment of framing the policy goals. This implies that they can be *verified* during the implementation process of urban development practice - their exact dimensions, forms, and costs can be calculated and designed for. As described above, this

does not always go up for pursuing social sustainability from a capability-centered approach. Steering towards human capabilities brings along uncertainty about what concrete operational interventions are needed. Governance towards social sustainability is, therefore, not per se about designing, developing, and deciding on interventions in a technical way. Instead, it is about accurately managing collaborative processes in such a way that they leave space for dialogue, evaluation, and reflexivity. In that way, social sustainability is pursued as an ongoing *condition* that needs to be *sustained*, rather than a tangible outcome at a specific moment in time. By deepening the understanding of governance towards urban social sustainability, this research thus helps to explain why social sustainability's implementation is particularly so challenging – it demands an approach to governance that is essentially different than the governance approach that is currently dominant in urban development.

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### 6.2.3 Towards human-centered policy implementation

The findings of this research thus lead to an improved understanding of how social sustainability goals can be implemented. Most fundamentally, the research stresses the need to centralize individual well-being at the normative heart of social policy implementation. This implies that, if social policy ambitions are expressed in specific situations, it needs to be critically assessed whether relating governance processes are actually centralized towards human beings, and not towards the realization of resources alone. This point relates to discussions held in practice about the perceived gap between the systemic world of planning, policy, and the experiential world of people's daily lives, for example in The Netherlands (Jongers, 2023; Reijndorp & Reijnders, 2010; Tijdelijke Commissie Uitvoeringsorganisaties, 2021). The discussion points out that many 'systems' have become too technocratic and have lost sight of the impact that these processes have on people (Tijdelijke Commissie Uitvoeringsorganisaties, 2021). In other words, 'technical' resources have become more dominant than the actual 'human-centered' end goals.

Various attempts to fundamentally rethink what 'human-centered' policy implementation implies are already taking place in research and practice. In research, such implications are for example explored by radical economic thinkers in political economics on the meaning of value (Mazzucato, 2018) and the fundamental principles of the economy (Raworth, 2017). In practice, efforts are made to evaluate levels of prosperity in societies not only in economic terms but also in terms of people's quality of life. This is observed in for example in the Human Development Index (Conceição, 2022) and multiple pamphlets to 'go beyond GDP'. Efforts are

also observed more locally in the Netherlands, through for example the development of a 'broad prosperity' metric (in Dutch: Brede Welvaart) (Hardus et al., 2022) and its integration in urban development practices (Hendrich et al., 2023). This dissertation can be seen as a contribution to efforts that aim to organize urban planning and development 'systems' in such a way that they are more balanced and human-centered. It provides the tools to understand to what extent policy interventions in urban development contribute to people's perceived well-being, and what type of solutions are needed to move closer to the experiential world of people living in cities. For example, a response from planners and developers to a protest against the announced demolition of an urban neighborhood can be informed by investigating how such an intervention affects the capabilities of the protesters. Perhaps, the demolition itself is not the main concern of the protesting residents. Instead, it may have triggered a deeper feeling of not being acknowledged by public authorities. In that case, the answer would not be to cancel the demolition but to invest in a trustworthy relationship between residents and the relevant professional actors.

This dissertation has a narrowed focus on urban development projects and only takes a small step in the direction of human-centered policy implementation in general. How exactly the Capability Approach can inspire human-centered approaches in policy domains different than urban social sustainability would therefore require additional research. Nevertheless, this dissertation does provide a lesson for policy implementation in a general way. Overall, the research reveals how social concerns can be easily overlooked in institutional landscapes where processes of governance and policy implementation are predominantly oriented towards the realization of resources – processes that see policy outcomes as technical solutions that can be planned and realized in linear ways. As long as social policy goals such as inclusion, diversity, and well-being are seen as something 'extra' that can be added on top of many other ambitions in such processes, they are not likely to be achieved. Instead, achieving urban social sustainability requires a deep fundamental analysis of existing processes of governance and policy implementation, based on strong normative principles, to discover what it takes in practice to actually steer toward the expansion of human well-being in urban areas. Standing on the shoulders of giants with similar ambitions, this dissertation represents a small step forward to doing so.

## 6.3 Recommendations for urban development practice

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Developing places for human capabilities – how to do so? This section translates the main insights gained in this research into recommendations for urban development practice. The advice is directed to everyone who works on, or is engaged with, governance towards urban social sustainability, for example policymakers, advisors, researchers, strategists, and decision-makers in urban development. Although the recommendations listed below are accompanied by some practical examples about urban development projects for clarification, the recommendations are not yet specified to specific policy contexts or governance situations. They do not serve as concrete guidelines, a protocol, or a handbook. Instead, the recommendations comprehend a list of general principles that need to be further specified in various policy contexts of urban development practice.

### Recommendations for understanding the local meaning of social sustainability to residents

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A crucial insight that emerged in this research is the need to obtain situated understandings of what social sustainability means to people. The Capability Approach has proven to be helpful to construct such understandings. To perform capability-centered evaluations of social sustainability in local urban areas, it is advised to:

- 1 Assess social sustainability in terms of urban capabilities (i.e., real opportunities to perform those functionings in the urban environment that are valuable for a person's quality of life) and not just in terms of characteristics of the built environment, as the latter are merely resources to achieve former. In the practice of urban development projects for example, this means that planning actors or developing actors should perform local capability studies at the start of a project. The method for the resident interviews in Chapter 3 can be used for such studies. When evaluating social sustainability from the perspective of the Capability Approach, it is important to:
- 2 Define which functionings in the urban environment are valuable for residents' quality of life, and how different residents weigh and interpret those functionings differently.

- 3 Analyze the enabling or constraining factors that residents experience to convert resources into opportunities to perform valuable functionings.
- 4 Apply qualitative research strategies in which narratives, experiences, perceptions, and values can be captured.
- 5 Consider that the experience of social sustainability can differ from person to person, also among people who reside at the same location (i.e., in the same apartment block, street, or neighborhood) or among homogeneous policy target groups (i.e., based on age, gender, ethnicity, income, education, or household composition). To address this, urban professionals could maintain ongoing dialogues with residents or other utilizing actors to form a realistic image of the people utilizing the area of an urban development practice.

### **Recommendations for translating social sustainability policy goals into operational interventions**

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After identifying and categorizing people's perceptions of social sustainability, it is very much possible that the identified needs and values conflict with each other. This can lead to dilemmas when deciding on operational interventions: whose wishes to prioritize? To operationalize goals for social sustainability into sets of place interventions, it is needed to weigh different value judgements and to take positions about what interventions are most needed. To facilitate this process, it is recommended to:

- 6 Facilitate public debate on how the various conflicting needs and values identified in the capability assessments (see principle 1) ought to be weighted. This type of debate can be organized via public events at libraries, debate centers, or schools, but also via media channels or digital tools.
- 7 Identify prioritized target groups of the concerning policy according to the normative principles of the Capability Approach: for more capability equality, it is needed to address the ones with the most deprived capabilities first.
- 8 Design capability-centered place interventions according to the insights that were gained through the local capability studies, and in dialogue with the identified target group.



## Recommendations for the governance processes around urban development projects

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The research has shown that, due to the high variety in which people experience urban capabilities, it cannot be assured whether capability-centered place interventions lead exactly to the intended outcomes. Nevertheless, several governance elements were found in this research that makes it more likely to do so. To adhere to a capability-centered governance toward social sustainability, it is recommended to:

- 9 Express collective capability-centered goals in the initiation phase of urban development projects and give them weight for other development phases that follow. Examples of how this can be done are e.g., a collectively-signed manifest (Buiksloterham&Co, see Chapter 4) or an issued political decision (DrottningH, see Chapter 5).
- 10 Facilitate fair negotiations between utilizing actors and developing and planning actors about how the place interventions are realized and managed. Actors can for example negotiate that the real estate developer creates extra interventions according to the needs of the utilizing actors, if the latter takes care of the social management of the interventions after they are realized. Such a negotiation for example took place between the social housing developer and the health care developer in Buiksloterham&Co (see Chapters 3 and 4).
- 11 Evaluate how newly-implemented place interventions enable residents to expand their urban capabilities in a structured and continuous way (and not only at the beginning or end of a project). In practice, such evaluations could take place by appointing a representative evaluation committee, or by commissioning an independent actor such as a university to perform assessments.
- 12 Allow reflexivity for developing and constructing actors to adapt place interventions according to locally-emerging insights throughout the different phases of a practice. This can for example imply a temporarily subsidized rent for an emerging resident initiative (as happened in Nieuw Crooswijk, see Chapter 4), or the design of an (unplanned) playground that emerged as a wish by local residents (as happened in DrottningH, see Chapter 5).

## Recommendations for institutionalizing social sustainability in a local urban development practice

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Next to collaborative governance activities, this research discovered several institutional conditions that support capability-centered outcomes. Based on these insights, it is recommended to:

- 13 Create or uphold institutional capacity responsible for social values, and with the ability to act as a developing actor in urban practices. In practice, this may imply the introduction of new regulations, standards, or norms for innovative governance models, such as self-organization. Simultaneously, it may also imply the reform of already-existing institutions, such as those that govern social housing organizations in the Netherlands.
- 14 Design or maintain institutions that enable funding that upholds long-term public interests within the market dynamics that co-shape urban practices. In practice, this requires critical investigations of the functionings of local housing markets, planning regulations, and land use policies. It may also imply the introduction of new regulations, standards, or norms that protect public interests with regard to urban social sustainability.
- 15 Cultivate a planning culture in which social values are discussed, understood, and pursued, and in which innovation can take place. Such values can be enshrined in policy, but can also be developed through public events, city festivals, innovation funds, or other strategies. Moreover, a planning culture can also be influenced by the design of planning, real estate development, and architecture education.
- 16 Actively reflect on collective beliefs on the effects of policy interventions. To support this, a role is reserved for conducting scientific research and facilitating knowledge exchange between research and practice.

## 6.4 Reflections, limitations and directions for future research

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As the final part of this dissertation, this section makes use of the opportunity to reflect on the research and the process that lies behind it. It presents insights gained during the process that stretch beyond the main research questions, it reflects on some limitations and methodological decisions that were made along the way, and concludes with directions for future research that emerge from the research findings.

### 6.4.1 Further research insights and reflections

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Beyond the main contributions and implications of this research, a few other insights on social sustainability's implementation were collected during the research process that – although not analyzed in depth – are worth reflecting on. The first concerns the inherent tensions that occur between the various values behind social sustainability. At the start of this research, the choice was made to address the concept through a normative lens focused on individual well-being and capability equality by adhering to the Capability Approach. During the interviews with professionals, however, tensions between individual and collective well-being popped up when discussing social sustainability's implementation. Interviewees for example mentioned how dilemmas occurred in urban development projects when an individual resident was asked to move out of his house to develop the urban area towards a higher goal in the interest of residents in general. This concerns a dilemma between the individual-oriented versus collective-oriented values behind social sustainability, and not unfamiliar in urban development. Although this research explicitly argued for one approach, different approaches may be more suitable for different research purposes. How individual versus collective values of social sustainability are weighted, may also very well depend on cultural contexts. Whereas this research was conducted in a European context where generally much value is placed on individual well-being, certain Eastern cultures may place different value on individual compared to collective well-being. When operationalizing social sustainability in research practice, it should therefore be kept in mind that normative positionings may be differently relevant for different empirical contexts.

Another reflection emerging from the research concerns the attitude observed among Dutch urban practitioners who were somewhat unaccustomed to social themes in urban development. Despite growing attention to social policy goals, as outlined in

the introduction of this dissertation, professional efforts towards social sustainability seem to depend much on the intrinsic motivation of individual professional actors. As of yet, policy operationalization strategies only meagerly incentivize such efforts. It seems that, within the same organization, some professionals find social sustainability important to address in their work, while others do not necessarily think so. No doubt, any social sustainability goal is inherently normative, but the same could be said of some environmental sustainability goals, and many other policy goals. Yet, environmental goals in urban development seem to be far ahead of social goals in terms of efforts on rethinking governance processes. Although the implementation of environmental sustainability may not yet be ideal, research and experiments on its institutionalization in terms of norms, regulations, and processes developed are surely more developed. As an example: the BREEAM certificate has been in effect since 2009 as a method to assess sustainable built environments, but mainly assesses sustainability in terms of (technical) environmental aspects. It is only recently that possibilities are explored to integrate 'social impact' indicators into the assessment criteria of the certificate (Dutch Green Building Council, 2023).

Although not analyzed in this dissertation, a few speculations are shared here about what it is that withholds social sustainability to be governed into urban development practices. One relates to a spatial bias existing in urban development practice, as also pointed out earlier in this dissertation. A deeply engrained focus on 'spatial resources' as the final outcomes of urban development may explain why operational strategies for environmental goals such as CO<sub>2</sub>-reduction are found quicker than for more intangible goals such as well-being. Alternatively, it could also be a matter of time before social sustainability becomes an equal dimension to other dimensions of sustainable urban development, simply because social concerns about justice, well-being, and quality of life have only recently become more serious ambitions in the pursuit of sustainable urban development. Finally, it could be possible that the willingness to institutionalize social sustainability is strongly embedded in the cultural and political landscapes of a place. Reflecting on how the interviews with professionals were conducted in the three different countries, it is noticeable that Dutch interviewees asked for much more explanation around the topic of social sustainability than the ones in Austria and Sweden. Beyond the institutional conditions identified in this research, there might be many more engrained habits, values, and beliefs in societies that influence the extent to which social sustainability is integrated as a policy goal in governance processes.

This relates to a final point of reflection worth mentioning, namely, that historical explananda are likely more related to social sustainability than studies have hitherto uncovered. The cases in this research comprised both brownfield developments where no people were living in the urban area before transformation, and

regeneration projects of neighborhoods where residents had been living for multiple generations. Through the evaluations of social sustainability in Nieuw Crooswijk and Buiksloterham, it became clear how events from the past strongly affected the perceptions of residents in Nieuw Crooswijk, and not necessarily in Buiksloterham (where all residents were new). In addition to this, the institutional analysis in DrottningH and Aspern Seestadt showed how long-lasting institutions affected the governance activities taking place in the specific situation of the urban development projects. Altogether, these observations point out the relevance of historical processes to the meaning of social sustainability and the way that it is being governed into more current projects.

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#### 6.4.2 Limitations and methodological reflections

Naturally, the research presented in this dissertation has limitations. While some of these limitations relate to practical feasibility issues, others relate to methodological decisions that were explicitly made in relation to the research questions.

The Capability Approach is not an uncomplicated framework to apply in to research and policy. How can one actually observe and analyze a person's freedom or real opportunities? Attempts to find operational solutions to observe them bring along the risk to oversimplify indicators and overlook the original meaning of the concept. Two slightly distinct strategies were followed in this research to empirically observe capability outcomes. Chapter 4 focused on the valued urban functionings of residents and the conversion factors that they experienced to actually perform them. Chapter 5 focused on the distinction between realized place interventions as 'resources' and the (in)equalities of perceptions by residents about to what extent these had an impact on their urban life. In both approaches, the distinction between 'resources' and 'capabilities' played a central role. For both strategies, however, it could be criticized that this is still a limited view of social sustainability. First, because the wide range of aspects had to be delimited for feasibility reasons – certain aspects, such as decent housing for example, received little attention in the empirical analyses. Second, because these solutions focused on *already realized* place interventions into capabilities addresses residents' utilization of places, and entirely sidelines the interpretation of urban capabilities as people's freedoms and agency to influence and co-design urban areas. This was a decision made to make the research feasible, and not because the second interpretation would not be relevant.

Next to the challenges that emerged around interpreting social sustainability from a capability perspective, the analysis of governance processes around urban development projects came along with methodological challenges. This research focuses on urban development projects as situations in which many actors are involved, that last over a long period of time of 10-20 years, and that encompass multiple policy domains such as housing, public spaces, and real estate development. As these characteristics make the potential variables that influence the governance processes around the projects innumerable, a specific analytical perspective is necessary to be able to 'grasp' the processes. Since this research had an explorative character, however, - i.e., in which the precise elements of governance were not known yet at the start of the research -, the scope of governance was broad. Although this broad scope was an explicit methodological decision that corresponded with the problem definition and research question, it made the empirical analyses challenging. For instance, a first part of the data collection in each case study was dedicated to obtaining a picture of the many different actors involved in the process, and their activities in the different phases and at different levels. Along the case study continued, more depth could be reached. Although this issue is partly inherent to explorative research, it could be overcome in future research by defining the research focus *more*, for example via a focus on a specific type of actor, project phase, or level of analysis (e.g., area-based practices vs. planning rules at city-levels).

It was decided to start conducting the case studies relatively early on in the research process (i.e., after 1 year of the PhD research). An advantage of this decision was that early empirical observations helped the researcher to reflect on the theories adhered to. This helped significantly in specifying the research focus and in theoretically relating concepts that were not often connected yet (i.e., social sustainability, capabilities, urban development, and governance). However, it also implied that the methods for data collection developed while the case studies were already being conducted, and so, that the analytical focus became more specified along the way. The data analysis evolved in various iterative rounds, leading to a final analysis that was more narrow than the initial one. This implied that certain data collected (such as the recordings of the interviews with residents in Nieuw Crooswijk) were used for only a small part of the analysis. Nevertheless, all data are stored at protected server of TU Delft so that they can be reused (at request by others) for other research purposes.

Finally, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the research should be reflected upon. Although no extreme constraints were experienced in terms of possibilities to conduct empirical research, the eventual case study material is less diverse than it was intended to be according to its proposal. At the moment of the pandemic outbreak, this research had proceeded for 1 year and was about to start the first

case study data collection round. Along with the uncertainty about what would happen in the soon future, it was decided to start with the data collection 'as good as was possible' rather than postponing it. Given the unexpectedly long duration of the pandemic and restricted policy measures (covering the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of this PhD trajectory), this was probably a wise decision. Nevertheless, intentions to use participatory observations in the working environments of developing actors as a method to reconstruct governance processes were not realized.

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### 6.4.3 **Directions for future research**

First, this research opens the door to a new direction in evaluative research in urban studies: one that focuses on identifying how urban spaces are utilized in different ways, and searches for the explanations behind these differences. In that way, this research contributes to a closer connection between urban social sustainability studies that aim to identify the concept's spatial indicators on the one hand (such as nearby infrastructure or public spaces) and human-based understandings of how people relate to these indicators on the other hand. It thus moves the understanding of urban social sustainability closer to strands of social sciences that are concerned with the understanding of human behavior, namely anthropology and psychology.

The dissertation stresses the relevance of interpretive research approaches to analyzing urban social sustainability's implementation. The identified variety in residents' interpretations, valuations, and experienced conversion factors around urban social sustainability would not have been identified if merely quantitative methods would have been applied. For obtaining in-depth understandings of social sustainability, it is essential to be able to ask participants questions behind the question during empirical research. Not only should people's behavior be observed, what their further needs and aspirations are should also be investigated, and what it is that withholds them to fulfill them. This research thus critically questions the appropriateness of positivist approaches that exclude value-judgments and experience in their assessments of the evaluation of social sustainability. It does not aim to argue that quantitative methods that, for example, collect information about spatial characteristics in neighborhoods such as density or number of amenities are futile. On the contrary, these are important resources in people's urban lives. This research does, however, argue that such approaches should always be complemented with qualitative methods to understand the various ways in which people relate to urban resources.

Specifying the evaluative perspective of social sustainability, however, also implies that other conceptualizations are left out of the research scope. While the Capability Approach has been particularly useful in this research to focus on social sustainability's individual dimension, it did not touch much upon social sustainability's collective dimensions yet. In future research, aspects such as social cohesion or feelings of community could be addressed through the concept of collective capabilities (Evans, 2002; Ibrahim, 2006; Pelenc et al., 2015). From that perspective, social sustainability would be interpreted as a valuable opportunity for different individuals that can only be achieved through the collective effort of people. However, some capability scholars refute the concept of collective capabilities because of the ethical individualism that is key to the Capability Approach (Robeyns, 2017; Sen, 2009). They warn that collective capabilities may easily be confused with individual capabilities that depend on social efforts, in which the latter should be seen as conversion factors that affect the eventual ends of well-being, but are not *part of it*. Nevertheless, future research can discuss to what extent groups also have intrinsic moral worth (D'Amato, 2020), especially if certain opportunities can only be achieved through collective action (for example the opportunity to live in a sustainable environment). In line with this, it should be considered that the Capability Approach is *one* evaluative perspective on social sustainability and that other approaches might be more relevant depending on the question that is being raised about urban social sustainability. For example, if a specific research interest is to analyze distributional effects of policy interventions, or to develop ideal theories of justice at the constitutional level, other approaches on spatial and social justice can be preferred.

This research had a focus on both – and the relation between – the process of urban development (i.e., governance processes around urban development projects) and its outcomes (i.e., social sustainability in the urban environment). In hindsight, it is clear that investigating these dimensions at the same time is challenging when studying lengthy endeavors like urban development projects, particularly in terms of case selections. Ongoing urban development projects lend themselves well to investigate governance *processes* – which relies on access to relevant actors and relatively current information –, while projects that are already completed lend themselves more suitable for investigating social sustainability *outcomes*. After an urban area has been transformed and new residents have been living in the urban area for a while, evaluations of resident experiences may be more reliable. However, by then, actors that led the project may not be available or may not be able to recall all relevant aspects of the governance process. Future research that aims to analyze similar relations would therefore ideally consist of longitudinal research setup in which both the process and outcomes are observed in real-time.



This research, nonetheless, has proven the relevance of in-depth empirical studies that evaluate urban development projects both in terms of outcomes and process. More specifically, it has shown that it is possible to identify variables that can explain what is effective when implementing urban social sustainability. Nevertheless, future researchers can decide to zoom in on elements of the process alone to achieve more analytical depth. Elements of concern could, among others, include negotiations between developing and utilizing actors, or the ways in which actors are able to uphold social principles in the transition between the realization to the utilization phase of urban development projects (see Chapter 4). Other research could focus on planning cultures, governance capacities, political economies, or property rights and their relations to capability-centered governance activities (see Chapter 5). Moreover, the conclusions point to the explanatory potential that theories of institutionalism have for understanding urban social sustainability implementation. The conclusions of this research confirm that the observed governance situations and the (inter)actions that shape them do not occur as such, but adhere to deeper rules, norms, and beliefs in society. This implies that studies that conduct social policy evaluations in urban development will be able to conclude on process-outcome relations more accurately if they take the institutions embedded in the wider planning context into account.

After all, many more governance elements around urban development are to be discovered that affect how social sustainability plays out in cities. Not only do we need to know how processes of city-making take place in real life situations - we need a deep understanding of the people living in these cities. Going beyond the boundaries of a single discipline or a single analytical level is academically challenging, yet the way forwards to understanding how we can develop places for human capabilities.

# Appendices

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## APPENDIX 1 **List of interviewees**

Buiksloterham&Co professionals			
	Interviewee code	Organisation	Role in organization
1	BSH-municipality-1	Municipality Amsterdam	Sustainability manager
2	BSH-municipality-2	Municipality Amsterdam	Land developer
3	BSH-municipality-3	Municipality Amsterdam	Neighbourhood coordinator
4	BSH-soc.hou.org.-1	De Alliantie (=social housing organization)	Communication specialist
5	BSH-soc.hou.org.-2	De Alliantie	Area developer
6	BSH-soc.hou.org.-3	De Alliantie	Real estate project manager
7	BSH-soc.hou.org.-4	De Alliantie	Real estate project manager
8	BSH-soc.hou.org.-5	De Alliantie	Real estate project manager
9	BSH-soc.hou.org.-6	De Alliantie	Neighbourhood coordinator
10	BSH-soc.hou.org.-7	De Alliantie	Neighbourhood manager
11	BSH-urb.designer-1	Studionedots (=urban design company)	Managing board
12	BSH-priv.developer.-1	Synchroon (=private urban development company)	Project developer
13	BSH-priv.developer.-2	Private real estate company	Founder
14	BSH-priv.developer.-3	Private real estate company	Founder
15	BSH-healthcare.org.-1	Philadelphia (=healthcare organization)	Project manager
16	BSH-healthcare.org.-2	Philadelphia	Coach / community builder
17	BSH-healthcare.org.-3	Philadelphia	Coach / community builder
18	BSH-citylab-1	Stadslab (=self-organized Citylab)	Founder

Nieuw Crooswijk professionals			
	Interviewee code	Organisation	Role in organization
19	NC-municipality-1	Municipality Rotterdam	Neighbourhood manager
20	NC-municipality-2	Municipality Rotterdam	Project manager
21	NC-municipality-3	Municipality Rotterdam	Neighbourhood networker
22	NC-municipality-4	Municipality Rotterdam	Project developer
23	NC-municipality-5	Municipality Rotterdam	Account holder social development
24	NC-municipality-6	Municipality Rotterdam	Work and income / coordinator area-based work
25	NC-soc.hou.org.-1	Woonstad Rotterdam (=social housing organization)	Lead of neighbourhood management
26	NC-soc.hou.org.-2	Woonstad Rotterdam	Former lead of neighbourhood management
27	NC-soc.hou.org.-3	Woonstad Rotterdam	Program manager
28	NC-soc.hou.dev.-4	Woonstad Rotterdam	Former program manager
29	NC-soc.hou.devel.-5	Woonstad Rotterdam	Asset manager real estate management
30	NC-soc.hou.devel.-6	Havensteder (=social housing organization)	Lead of neighbourhood management
31	NC-priv.developer-1	OCNC (=development consortium)	Project director
32	NC-priv.developer.2	Heijmans (=real estate company)	Managing board
33	NC-priv.developer.3	Era Contour (=real estate company)	Managing board
34	NC-research-1	OMI (=city exhibition platform)	Architectural research consultant

Aspern Seestadt professionals and residents			
	Interviewee code	Organisation	Role in organisation
35	SEE-municipality-1	Municipality Vienna	Coordination program manager
36	SEE-municipality-2	Municipality Vienna	Coordinator Gebietsbetreuung Stadtneuerung MA25
37	SEE-mun.innovation-1	Urban Innovation Vienna (=municipal innovation agency)	Senior Expert, Smart City Agency Vienna
38	SEE-mun.exhibition-1	IBA (=municipal housing exhibition), formerly Wien 3420 AG	Lead coordinator IBA, former project manager, resident
39	SEE-developer-1	Wien 3420 AG (=development consortium)	Infocenter
40	SEE-developer-2	Wien 3420 AG	Planner coordinating Neighborhood Management
41	SEE-nei.manag.-1	PlanSinn (=neighborhood management team)	Deputy head
42	SEE-col.hou.group-1	Que[e]rbau (=collaborative housing group)	Founder baugruppe
43	SEE-col.hou.group-2	Que[e]rbau (=collaborative housing group)	Founder and architect baugruppe, resident
44	SEE-research-1	University of Vienna	PhD researcher on Aspern Seestadt
45	SEE-research-2	Independent researcher and architect	Member of quality board
46	SEE-resident-1	-	Resident
47	SEE-resident-2	-	Resident

DrottningH professionals and residents			
	Interviewee code	Organisation	Role in organisation
48	DTH-municipality-1	Municipality Helsingborg	Project manager
49	DTH-municipality-2	Municipality Helsingborg	Strategic developer labor market
50	DTH-municipality-3	Municipality Helsingborg	Spatial planning architect
51	DTH-municipality-4	Municipality Helsingborg	Former project manager
52	DTH-municipality-5	Municipality Helsingborg	City director
53	DTH-municipality-6	Municipality Helsingborg	Chairman of the board of urban planning, deputy mayor
54	DTH-municipality-7	Municipality Helsingborg	Security strategist
55	DTH-mun.hou.com-1	Helsingborgshem (=municipal housing company)	Area developer performing dialogue projects
56	DTH-mun.hou.com-2	Helsingborgshem	Assistant project manager DrottningH
57	DTH-priv.developer-1	Tornet (=Private real estate developer)	Project manager
58	DTH-priv.developer-2	Riksbyggen (=Cooperative housing company)	Area manager
59	DTH-priv.developer-3	Ikea Do More (=social enterprise company)	Director Do More
60	DTH-resident-1	-	Resident
61	DTH-resident-2	-	Resident
62	DTH-resident-3	-	Resident
63	DTH-resident-4	-	Resident

Buiksloterham&Co residents						
	Interviewee code	Age range	Household composition	Tenure	Occupation	Tenure via Philadelphia*
64	BSH-resident-1	46-55	Living together with child	Social rental housing	Unemployed/ full-time mother	No
65	BSH-resident-2	26-35	Single	Social rental housing	Employed	Yes
66	BSH-resident-3	56-66	Living together with partner	Social rental housing	Retired	No
67	BSH-resident-4	67-75	Living together with partner	Social rental housing	Retired	No
68	BSH-resident-5	56-66	Single	Social rental housing	Employed	No
69	BSH-resident-6	36-45	Single	Social rental housing	Employed	No
70	BSH-resident-7	26-35	Single	Social rental housing	Employed	No
71	BSH-resident-8	56-66	Single	Social rental housing	Retired / employed on a freelance base	No
72	BSH-resident-9	26-35	Single	Social rental housing	Employed	No
73	BSH-resident-10	56-66	Single	Social rental housing	Unemployed / health insurance act	No
74	BSH-resident-11	26-35	Living together with partner & child	Social rental housing	Unemployed	No
75	BSH-resident-12	18-25	Living together with 1 or more others	Liberalized rental housing	Student	No
76	BSH-resident-13	67-75	Single	Liberalized rental housing	Retired	No
77	BSH-resident-14	18-25	Living with grandmother as caregiver	Social rental housing	Student	No

\* Being informed about resident's tenure via Philadelphia was relevant due to the focus of the study.

Nieuw Crooswijk residents					
	Interviewee code	Age range	Household composition	Tenure	Occupation
78	NC-resident-1	67-75	Living together with partner	Social rental housing	Retired
79	NC-resident-2	67-75	Single	Social rental housing	Retired
80	NC-resident-3	67-75	Living together with partner	House for sale	Retired
81	NC-resident-4	>85	Single	Social rental housing	Retired
82	NC-resident-5	36-45	Family	House for sale	Employed
83	NC-resident-6	46-55	Family	House for sale	Employed
84	NC-resident-7	26-35	Family	House for sale	Employed
85	NC-resident-8	56-65	Single	Social rental housing	Employed
86	NC-resident-9	>85	Living together with partner	Social rental housing	Retired
87	NC-resident-10	36-45	Family	Social rental housing	Health insurance act
88	NC-resident-11	46-55	Family	House for sale	Employed
89	NC-resident-12	36-45	Family	House for sale	Employed



## APPENDIX 2 **List of planning documents reviewed**

Buiksloterham&Co		
Author	Year	Document title
Gemeente Amsterdam	2003	Structuurplan Amsterdam, Kiezen voor Stedelijkheid
BVR in samenwerking met Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening Amsterdam (dro)	2003	Masterplan Noordelijke IJ-oever – Noord aan 't IJ
Projectbureau Noordwaards	2005	Projectbesluit Buiksloterham – Transformatie naar stedelijk wonen en werken
Gemeente Amsterdam	2006	Investeringsbesluit Buiksloterham
Gemeente Amsterdam	2009	Bestemmingsplan Buiksloterham
Studionedots, DELVA Landscape Architects & de Alliantie	2015	Stedenbouw concept – definitief ontwerp kavels Cityplot Buiksloterham
Metabolic, Studionedots & DELVA Landscape Architects		Circulair Buiksloterham - Een Living Lab voor circulaire gebiedsontwikkeling
De Alliantie	2016	Toepassing 'Circulaire Ambitie' in Buiksloterham
De Alliantie & Philadelphia		Contract de Alliantie – Philadelphia (enkel Artikel 1. Doel en Artikel 17. Evaluatie)
Door de Buurt	2018	BUIKSLOTERHAM - Input voor de gebiedsvisie en herziening bestemmingsplan Buiksloterham Ingebracht door bewoners en bedrijven in de Buiksloterham
Studionedots & Merosh	2019	Presentatie 'Circulair Cityplot Buiksloterham. Amsterdam Noord, NL'
Gemeente Amsterdam	2020	Investeringsnota Buiksloterham 2020 - Van organische ontwikkeling naar versnelde transformatie

Nieuw Crooswijk		
Author	Year	Document title
Gemeente Rotterdam, WoningBedrijf Rotterdam & Deelgemeente Kralingen-Nieuw Crooswijk	2003	Structuurvisie Nieuwe Kijk op Nieuw Crooswijk
Ontwikkelcombinatie Nieuw Crooswijk	2005	Masterplan Nieuw Crooswijk
Gemeente Rotterdam, Nieuw Crooswijk 2018 & Woonstad Rotterdam	2013	Nieuw perspectief voor Nieuw Crooswijk – Visie op Nieuw Crooswijk in een nieuw tempo
Woonstad Rotterdam, Gemeente Rotterdam, Deelgemeente Kralingen-Crooswijk, Havensteder	2013	Crooswijk Werkt – Geactualiseerd uitvoeringsprogramma
Gemeente Rotterdam	2014	Gebiedsplan Kralingen-Crooswijk – Krachtig Kralingen-Crooswijk
Bureau Volhoudbaar   Perplekcity & Woonstad Rotterdam	2015	Tussen tijdelijkheid en toekomst
Gemeente Rotterdam	n.d.	Wijkagenda Crooswijk 2019-2022

Aspern Seestadt		
Author	Year	Document title
City of Vienna	2005	STEP05 Urban Development Plan Vienna – Short report
Aspern Airfield project team & Aspern airfield planning team	2008	Aspern Airfield Master Plan – Executive summary
Rechnungshofes	2013	Bericht des Rechnungshofes Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung der Stadt Wien
City of Vienna	2014	STEP25 Urban Development Plan Vienna
Hinterkörner, P., Lang, L., Collon, H., Kintisch, M., Mollay, U., & Schremmer, C	2014	Vienna, aspern Seestadt: Implementation Plan
Rechnungshofes	2015	Bericht des Rechnungshofes - Erschließung Seestadt Aspern
City of Vienna	2018	aspern Die Seestadt Wiens - Fortschreibung Masterplan 2017
City of Vienna	2019	Verfahrensbestimmungen - VERGABE EINER GEISTIGEN DIENSTLEISTUNG FÜR DAS STADTTTEILMANAGEMENT SEESTADT ASPERN
City of Vienna	2019	Aufgabenbeschreibung - Stadtteilmanagement im Rahmen der Wiener Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung
City of Vienna	2019	Besondere Vertragsbestimmungen - VERGABE EINER GEISTIGEN DIENSTLEISTUNG FÜR DAS STADTTTEILMANAGEMENT SEESTADT ASPERN.
City of Vienna	2022	Smart Climate City Strategy Vienna – Our way to becoming a model climate city

DrottningH		
Author	Year	Document title
City of Helsingborg	2011	Inriktningsbeslut och direktiv angående framtida förändring och utveckling av Drottninghög
City of Helsingborg	2012	Drottninghög - Planprogram för Drottninghög
Helsingborgshem	n.d.	Drottninghög tillsammans – ett dialogprojekt
City of Helsingborg	n.d.	Guide to Helsingborg 2035
City of Helsingborg	2015 (updated 2021)	DrottningH Projekt- och hållbarhetsplan
Styrgupp DrottningH	2019	Strukturbild Drottninghög 2018
City of Helsingborg	2022	H22 City Expo

## APPENDIX 3 **List of field visits**

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The tables below report about research activities that were undertaken during the field visits, and therefore do not include online interviews that were conducted at other dates. It should be noted that all case studies took place in periods when travel restrictions were at place due to COVID-19 pandemic. Since many professionals worked at home during this period, the majority of the interviews with professionals were conducted online. The majority of the interviews with residents were conducted on site in the case study area.

Field visits Buiksloterham&Co	
Day	Activities
14 March 2020	Orientation walk in the urban area
10 June 2020	Conducting interviews, tour by planners
7 July 2020	Conducting interviews
17 August 2020	Conducting interviews
24 September 2020	Conducting interviews, spreading flyers
25 September 2020	Conducting interviews, lunch with healthcare organization and clients in facility rooms
26 September 2020	Conducting interviews
15 July 2022	Tour, visiting facility rooms

Field visits Nieuw Crooswijk*	
Day	Activities
19 February 2021	Orientation walk in the urban area
13 April 2021	Conducting interviews
16 April 2021	Conducting interviews
19 April 2021	Conducting interviews
22 April 2021	Conducting interviews
24 April 2021	Conducting interviews
26 April 2021	Conducting interviews
3 May 2021	Conducting interviews
4 May 2021	Conducting interviews
6 May 2021	Conducting interviews
7 May 2021	Conducting interviews
18 May 2021	Conducting interviews

\* Researcher lived close to neighborhood through all duration of PhD

Field visits Aspern Seestadt*	
Day	Activities
4 March 2022	Orientation walk in the urban area
14 March – 26 March 2022	Residing at the location, conducting interviews, joining dinner at housing group, chatting with residents, joining a tour for university students
6 April 2022	Conducting interviews

\* Researcher resided at the location for two weeks

Field visits DrottningH	
Day	Activities
7 June 2022	Orientation walk in the urban area, tour by planners
8 June 2022	Conducting interviews, taking part in H22 festival
9 June 2022	Conducting interviews, taking part in H22 festival
10 June 2022	Conducting interviews, taking part in H22 festival
17 June 2022	Conducting interviews, taking part in H22 festival

\* Researcher resided close to the neighborhood for two weeks

## APPENDIX 4 Interview guides

The interview guides for the semi-structured interviews roughly include two types: the ones for interviews with professionals (meant to collect data about the governance processes) and the ones for interviews with residents (meant to collect data about how social sustainability in urban areas is perceived). Although each guide was adjusted before conducting an interview according to the specific situations of a case (i.e., specific interventions in the urban area) and according to the specific professional roles of the participant, they followed the following general structures:

### General guide for professional interviews (applied in Buiksloterham&Co and Nieuw Crooswijk)

#### 1 Introductory questions

- For how long have you been involved in this urban development project?
- What has been your role in the project? What is your current role within your organization?
- What was the state of the project at the time that you became involved?

#### 2 Project goals

- In your perception, what have been the main goals for social sustainability in this development project?
- Why are these goals important?
- Have these goals changed over time?
- According to you, how does this urban development project contribute to social value for residents of the urban area?

#### 3 Project interventions/ operationalisation

- Which solutions have been designed to realize the goals mentioned before?
- Spatial solutions?
- Communicational/organizational solutions?
- How do these solutions contribute to the goals mentioned before?
- According to you, which project interventions have most impact on social sustainability in the urban area?
- What do you think is the most innovative aspect of this project?

[+Specific to each case: questions about project interventions relevant to the case, such as: Who owns the collective facility spaces? How are the spaces managed? How is the community library different than a regular library? Etc.]

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#### 4 Implementation process

- With which actor does your organization predominantly collaborate in this project?
- Are these public/private/civic actors? Municipality, private developers, housing companies, urban designers, NGOs, resident groups, entrepreneurs?
- How would you describe the collaboration with these parties? Formal or informal? Based on legal agreements or based on trust?
- Which social sustainability goals do you share with other involved actors? Which ones do you not share? Is there a common vision between different parties?
- Which actors have played a major role for embedding social sustainability goals into the projects? Who is most responsible for the social dimension in the project?
- How was decided on specific project interventions to operationalize the social sustainability goals? When and by whom?
- To what extent did the project succeed to uphold the social sustainability goals set in the early phases of the project along the process, up to the realization and utilizing phases?
- Have there been challenges to uphold the social sustainability goals? What were these challenges? How did you overcome them?
- To what extent has there been flexibility in the project to adapt to the changing needs of diverse inhabitants?
- Is the social value of the project investments being evaluated in this project? If so, how?

[+Specific to each case: questions about process elements relevant to each case, such as: How did the displacement procedure take place? How big of a role does the neighborhood management team play in the project? Etc.]

#### 5 Evaluative questions

- Considering the realization of the project, what do you consider as a success for social sustainability? What do you consider less successful for social sustainability?
- What are you most proud of in this project?
- Do you have any concerns about the future development of this area?
- Is there anything else important for the topic of social sustainability that you would like to share with me?

#### Specific additional questions for interviews with professionals in Aspern Seestadt and DrottningH

#### 6 Explanatory variables

- Why was chosen for this specific operational practice? Was it clear from the beginning what this would mean in practice, and had different options been considered?
- What were driving factors behind the actual implementation of this operational practice?
- Why was it made possible in [specific project]?
- How do you explain the increasing attention for social part in this urban development? Why was this needed; what does it deliver? Why not differently?
- Was this a new approach for [the city]? Is it also common in other urban developments in [country] to work on these aspects parallel in urban developments?
- In what way do you think that the project is unique for [city]? And for [country]?
- [Country] is known for [what came out of previous interviews]. Do you agree with this and where does it come from?

## General guide for interviews with residents (applied in Buiksloterham&Co and Nieuw Crooswijk)

### 1 Introductory questions

- For how long have you been living here? What was the reason for you to move here?
- Could you tell me something about yourself? What do you do in daily life?
- What do you think about this neighbourhood?

### 2 Propositions

Present propositions (as listed in Appendix 7) to interviewees, ask them to fill out the scheme, and meanwhile, ask probing questions such as:

- What does this functioning mean to you? How do you interpret it?
- In what way is this functioning important for you?
- What do you think of when you read [...]?
- What type of [...] are most important to you?
- Do you have access to this functioning...? If not, why not?

### 3 After filling out the scheme:

- If you take a look at the scheme, do you recognize yourself in the way that you have filled it out?
- Is there something that you would like to add about these propositions?

### 4 In-depth questions about the four most extreme propositions

- Why do you agree or disagree strongly with this proposition? Why is this important for you?
- How often do you perform this functioning? Would you like to do this more frequently, or less?
- What makes you perform this functioning? What is it that withholds you performing this functioning?
- In which situation would you perform this functioning more often?
- To what extent do the place interventions of this project [refer to concrete interventions] help you in performing some of the above mentioned functionings? Why do they or why do they not?

### 5 Closing questions

- What do you like most about living here and about the neighbourhood? What do you like least?
- Has the outbreak of the pandemic made you value different things about your neighbourhood?
- The propositions and questions were all about what you find important in your neighbourhood. Did you miss a statement? Is there something else that you find important in your neighbourhood?
- Is there something that you forgot to mention or that I forgot to ask?

## Specific additional questions for interviews with residents in Aspern Seestadt and DrottningH

### 6 Validating effectiveness of capability-centered practice

- What effect do you think that [capability-centered practice] has on the neighbourhood of [project]?
- Do you have an example of a case in which it was helpful for you that the [capability-centered practice] was there?
- What do you think of the work done by the [capability-centered practice]? How effective are they in achieving these goals?
- Do you think that the [capability-centered practice] is effective in including/approaching all residents of Seestadt? Or is it only for a selected group?
- Do you see changes through their work over time? Are these positive or negative changes?
- What do you hear about what other residents think of the development of the area?



# Operational indicators of social sustainability in the built environment

## Belonging to Chapter 2

	Dixon and Woodcraft (2013)	Dempsey et al. (2009)	Shirazi and Keivani (2019)
<b>Tangible</b>			
<b>decent housing</b>	-	decent housing mixed tenure	quality of home building typology social mix
<b>transport</b>	transport links	accessibility (e.g., to local services and facilities/ employment/ green space)	
<b>daily facilities</b>	-	-	access to facilities
<b>recreation</b>	provision for teenagers and young people shared spaces that enable neighbours to meet space that can be used by local groups	§walkable neighbourhood; pedestrian friendly	quality of centre
<b>jobs</b>	-	employment	-
<b>schools</b>	schools	education and training	-
<b>public spaces</b>	public space playgrounds	attractive public realm	-
<b>healthcare</b>	services for older people healthcare	-	-
<b>urban design</b>	-	urbanity local environmental quality and amenity sustainable urban design neighbourhood	quality of neighbourhood density mixed land use urban pattern and connectivity

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	Dixon and Woodcraft (2013)	Dempsey et al. (2009)	Shirazi and Keivani (2019)
<b>Intangible</b>			
<b>social interaction</b>	how people living in different parts of a neighbourhood relate to each other how well people from different backgrounds co-exist	social interaction social justice social order social cohesion	social networking and interaction
<b>social networks</b>	relationships between neighbours and local social networks	social capital social inclusion (and eradication of social exclusion) social networks	social networking and interaction
<b>cultural expression</b>	-	cultural traditions	-
<b>feeling of belonging</b>	how people feel about their neighbourhood sense of belonging and local identity	sense of community and belonging	sense of attachment
<b>feeling of community</b>	-	community cohesion (i.e., cohesion between and among different groups)	-
<b>safety</b>	feelings of safety	safety residential stability (vs turnover)	safety and security
<b>well-being</b>	quality of life and well-being	health, quality of life and well-being	-
<b>existence of informal groups and associations</b>	the existence of informal groups and associations that allow people to make their views known	active community organizations	-
<b>representation by local governments</b>	local governance structures responsiveness of local government to local issues	local democracy	-
<b>levels of participation</b>	-	participation	participation
<b>levels of influence</b>	residents' perceptions of their influence over the wider area and whether they will get involved to tackle wider problems.	-	-

APPENDIX 6 **Operational indicators of social sustainability compared to indicators of the Leefbaarometer**

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Belonging to Chapter 2

Social sustainability	Leefbaarometer
<b>Tangible</b>	
<b>decent housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>housing part before 1900</li> <li>housing part between 1900–1920</li> <li>housing part between 1920–1945</li> <li>housing part between 1945–1960</li> <li>housing part between 1961–1971</li> <li>housing part between 1971–1980</li> <li>housing part between 1991–2000</li> <li>historical housing</li> <li>dominance of pre-war</li> <li>dominance of early post-war</li> <li>dominance of late post-war</li> <li>dominance of recent buildings</li> <li>part of single household row-housing</li> <li>large freestanding and duo-housing</li> <li>medium-size freestanding and duo-housing</li> <li>small freestanding and duo-housing</li> <li>dominance pre-war single household</li> <li>part of small single household before 1900</li> <li>part of small pre-war single household housing</li> <li>part of small single household housing 1900–1945</li> <li>part of small single household housing 1970–1990</li> <li>part of small multiple household housing after 1970</li> <li>part of single household social rent</li> <li>part of single household for sale</li> <li>part of multiple household for sale</li> </ul>
<b>transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>distance to train station</li> <li>distance to transfer station</li> <li>distance to driveway highway</li> </ul>
<b>daily facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>number of shops for daily groceries within 1 km</li> <li>distance to closest atm</li> <li>day recreation facilities</li> <li>disappeared supermarket</li> </ul>
<b>recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>number of cafes within 1 km</li> <li>cafes and cafeterias (combined index)</li> <li>number of restaurants within 1 km</li> <li>catering industry and shops (combined index)</li> <li>smaller shops</li> <li>library within 2 km</li> <li>number of stages within 10 km</li> <li>distance to closest swimming pool</li> <li>proximity to forest</li> <li>part of green</li> <li>proximity to parks</li> <li>proximity to IJsselmeer/Markermeer</li> <li>proximity to recreative water</li> <li>proximity to North Sea coast</li> <li>proximity to North Sea</li> </ul>
<b>jobs</b>	-

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Social sustainability	Leefbaarometer
Tangible	
schools	number of primary schools within 1 km education and healthcare (combined index)
public spaces	-
healthcare	number of general practitioners within 3 km distance to closest hospital
urban design	urban facilities part of national monuments part of buildings with industrial function part of buildings with public function density proximity to residential area proximity to 'open, dry, natural area' water in neighbourhood high voltage pylons noise pollution distance to main road network distance to high way number of trains proximity to rail track proximity to roads proximity to chloride area industry nearby flood risk earthquake risk
-	mutation rate
-	part of wester migrants part of 'moe-landers' part of non-western migrants part of Moroccans part of Surinamese part of Turks part of other non-western migrants single parent families families with children families without children part of incapacitated part of welfare recipients elderly development of households development of 15–24 year old's

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Social sustainability	Leefbaarometer
Intangible	
social interaction	socio-cultural facilities
social networks	-
cultural expression	-
feeling of belonging	-
feeling of community	-
safety	nuisance (combined index) order disturbance abolishment violent crimes robberies burglaries
well-being	-
existence of informal groups and associations	-
representation by local governments	-
levels of participation	-
levels of influence	-

# Sustainable urban functionings articulated as propositions during resident interviews

## Belonging to Chapter 3

Sustainable urban functionings	Adjusted urban functionings for application to the case-study	Propositions applied during the interviews
Inhabiting affordably and comfortably	Left out of this study scope	-
Working at viable distance from home	Going to school, internship, or work at an accessible distance from home	It is important for me that my work, internship or education is located in my own neighborhood rather than elsewhere
Going to school at viable distance from home		
Transporting yourself from home to another place	Transporting yourself from home to another place	Accessibility was a strong condition for me when I searched for a home. As long as the accessibility is good, the location of my home does not matter
Making use of parks, squares, playgrounds and any publicly accessible space	Making use of parks, squares, playgrounds in the urban area examined	I find it important to go to parks, squares or playgrounds in my own neighborhood instead of elsewhere.
Recreating according to one's own preferences	Making use of cafes or restaurants Doing shopping (besides groceries) in one's own neighbourhood Doing sports in one's own neighbourhood	I find it important to visit cafes or restaurants in my own neighborhood instead of elsewhere. I find it important to do shopping (besides groceries) in my own neighborhood than elsewhere I find it important to do sports in my own neighbourhood than elsewhere.
Having adequate access to healthcare at viable distance from home	Left out of this study scope	-
Benefitting from adequate architectural design in one's surroundings	Left out of this study scope	-
Building and maintaining social relations	Engaging with own social contacts in the neighbourhood	If I have friends of family visiting, I prefer to do something in my neighbourhood, such as going to a cafe, park, square or shops.
Feeling part of and contributing to the community's life	Feeling part of a community	A neighbourhood is nicer to live in when it is a true community.

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Sustainable urban functionings	Adjusted urban functionings for application to the case-study	Propositions applied during the interviews
Interacting with neighbors and people living or working in the area	Interacting with neighbours	I find it important to know my neighbours well. I enjoy knowing my neighbours, but I don't want to spend much time on it. I prefer to be anonymous than having regular (weekly) contact with my neighbours
Being and feeling safe	Left out of this study scope	-
Experiencing individual and collective well-being	Left out of this study scope	-
Identifying oneself with the area's character and its social fabric	Identifying oneself with the neighbourhood	I don't care much about the identity (or, the vibe or character) of my neighbourhood, as long as I have a nice home
Participating in and contributing to valued cultural activities	Participating in cultural activities in one's own neighbourhood	It is important for me to participate in cultural activities (such as music, art, or religion) in my neighbourhood
Joining informal groups as well as formal associations	Joining groups or initiatives in one's own neighbourhood	I find it important to join groups in my neighbourhood such as a neighbourhood association
Being informed about and involved in local government initiatives	Being informed by the local government	I find it important to be informed about what the municipality is doing in my neighbourhood
Being actively involved in initiatives for collective matters in the urban area examined	Taking initiative for the neighbourhood	The more people take initiative for the neighbourhood, the better the vibe in the neighbourhood gets.
Accessing the means necessary for voicing one's own perspectives and stakes regarding local matters	Influencing the urban environment in one's own neighbourhood	I do not feel the need to think along with the design of my neighborhood



# Quotes supporting professionals' perceived goals for social sustainability

## Belonging to Chapter 3

The supporting quotes are a selection of the most illustrative ones. An overview of all coded quotes is available open access at the repository of 4TU.ResearchData (DOI 10.4121/91040a6c-b93f-4b1e-8683-34b46da12c72.v1)

Planning goal for urban development project	Supporting quotes
Diversity	<p>"Als je die diversiteit aan milieus hebt, dan is het gewoon fijn.... dan heb je natuurlijk ouderen daar wonen en kinderen daar wonen, dan heb je al gauw een soort wisselwerking he. Het mooiste ideaalbeeld is dat je toch kijkt van ouderen die wat minder in de maatschappij zitten weer letten op de kinderen van bewoners die vlak in de buurt zitten" (BSH-urb.designer-1)</p> <p>"die inclusieve wijk, met dat gedifferentieerde, met die relatie met de natuur, he, met de grondbedekkers en de... het is een dorp in de stad, allemaal kleine korrels, en heel erg gericht op die diversiteit, om de gedifferentieerde samenstelling van de bevolking, en daar heeft de architect ook heel erg op gestuurd, die gelooft daarin." (BSH-soc.hou.org.-2)</p>
Inclusion	<p>"En het lijkt ons belangrijk dat er dan wel een soort van gemeenschapje ontstaat, dat samen echt vormgeeft aan eigen buurt. En dat dat ook een mix is, dus dat het niet zo is van, 'kijk, dat is die ruimte van de sociale huurders', maar dat het echt inclusief is en dat iedereen zich d'r welkom voelt en er blij van wordt." (BSH-soc.hou.org.-1)</p> <p>"Voor buurtbewoners ook dat het makkelijker is om elkaar te ontmoeten, letterlijk, maar ook figuurlijk, in het vinden van ... gemeenschappelijke belangen, gemeenschappelijke wensen, gemeenschappelijke behoeftes, nou we zitten hier natuurlijk pas net, maar het opzetten van een appje, zo van 'ik kook donderdag pasta', die bestaan er, maar wij kunnen er wel voor zijn om dat ook door deze omgeving aan te jagen, en daardoor mensen met elkaar in contact te brengen. En dan kunnen wij er weer tussenuit. En dat vinden wij écht, ja en een hele mooie vorm van dagbesteding, dat onze deelnemers daar een rol bij kunnen hebben, én je draagt bij aan een samenleving, ja, waar.. inclusiviteit... ja hoop je dat het groot wordt, ja hoe zal ik dat zeggen, waar weer een gevoel van gemeenschappelijkheid.... dat zijn grote woorden, maar waar dat signaleerd wordt." (BSH- healthcare.org.-3)</p>
Sense of community	<p>"De kerngedachte, echt vanuit Buiksloterham is gewoon echt de community. En, dat we, naja, we zijn natuurlijk deel coaches, maar ook eigenlijk veel meer zou onze rol nog moeten zijn, echt een community te bouwen, dus echt de krachten uit, en nu richten we ons meer op de flats, te halen van bewoners, en dan maakt het eigenlijk niet uit of die bewoners hier nu bij Philadelphia wonen of bij de Alliantie. Echt de verbinding met elkaar te zoeken." (BSH-healthcare.org.-2)</p>
Liveability	<p>"En leefbaarheid zit echt heel erg in eh, naja, dat we dus voldoende groen, voldoende sport, voldoende faciliteiten daaruit voor maken. En dat is ook wel een zoektocht, omdat we ook dus die productieve wijk ambitie hebben, en veel mensen maken zich daar ook wel zorgen over." (BSH-municipality-1)</p>

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Planning goal for urban development project	Supporting quotes
Social interaction	<p>“Nouja, ik denk inderdaad dat meer mensen elkaar kennen. Dat is een hele concrete.. Dat is wel echt een heel concreet doel, dat mensen elkaar kennen, omdat ze elkaar tegenkomen in die wasruimtes, omdat er soms vragen ontstaan via de app, omdat wij dat via zo'n eetapp, maar daar heb je ook allerlei andere vormen voor, proberen met elkaar in contact te brengen, dat mensen elkaar kennen, dat er ook samen lijntjes ontstaan... eh... zo hadden wij een bewoonster en die wilde iets opgehangen hebben. Nou wij hebben nog geen boor daar, dus die heeft op de app gezet van 'kan iemand mij helpen en dan bak ik een taart voor jou'. Nouja, superklein, maar dat zijn belangrijke dingen denk ik. Stel je voor er komt iemand met een was, nou hoe is dat, ja dat is wat wij willen stimuleren.” (BSH-soc.hou.org.-3)</p>
Active inhabitants	<p>“Het ideaalbeeld was het type huurders dat echt bewust voor deze plek kozen of zouden kiezen, mensen met een groen hart, mensen die gewoon iets met duurzaamheid hebben...” SP1: “de fysieke duurzaamheid?” SP2: “ja die bijvoorbeeld deelwasmachines gaan gebruiken in plaats van zelf een totaal niet duurzaam oud wasmachientje in hun huis te zetten, die het vanzelfsprekend vinden om afval te scheiden, die zelf ook met ideeën komen, voor auto delen... , en ook in sociaal opzicht die gewoon samen iets willen maken van hun nieuwe buurt, en daarmee ook Buikslotherham vormgeven.” (BSH- soc.hou.org.-1)</p>
Self-building inhabitants	<p>“Heel belangrijk ook, de zelfbouw kavels, dus de kavels waar kopers zelf woningen maken, die zijn heel erg betrokken bij de buurt, dat vinden wij ook belangrijk.” (BSH-soc.hou.org.-3)</p> <p>“We wilden dat er ook zelfbouwers in projecten kwamen. Zelfbouwers en mensen die eigenlijk hun eigen huis bouwen, direct hun eigen huis vanaf scratch, dat zijn eigenlijk de dragers van een sociale structuur in een gebied. Het zijn de smaakmakers, vaak heel erg betrokken bij wat er gebeurt, en ook vaak bereid na te denken voorbij hun eigen woongrens om een bouwblok, een gebied, te verbeteren. Zeker ook omdat het geen huurders zijn maar kopers, dus eigenlijk ook gewoon langdurig betrokken blijven bij een plek als dit. Als je die vanaf het begin aan tafel hebt, dan helpt dat heel erg om gelijk de juiste identiteit te maken, want je bouwt met mensen die er ook echt gaan wonen. En in de stedenbouw, dat weet jij ook, is het meestal zo dat we bouwen, en we weten pas 5 jaar later wie daar gaan wonen. En nu heb je je klanten direct aan tafel zitten.” (BSH-urb.designer-1)</p>
Social sustainability	<p>“Allereerst is dat echt ook een visie waarmee de buurt ontwikkeld is, dus dat is ook maar ergens bedacht ..[onverstaanbaar], dat is ook een keuze geweest. Die ook aan de huurders is gepresenteerd als onderdeel van het wonen in deze wijk. Uiteraard niet als verplichtend, maar wel van 'goh dit is het karakter dat we willen, waarvoor we het belangrijk vinden van deze week, dat het een kenmerk wordt van deze buurt'. Wat wij denken dat het... voor de reguliere bewoners van de flats en daar hoort ook bij de ruimere buurt, niet alleen van de flats waar het om gaat, is dat zij in die ruimtes, dat die echt top zijn ingericht, en uitnodigend zijn ingericht, en doordat er een warm welkom sfeer is, dat er gehoord en gezien en warm welkom wordt geheten. Ja, dat wij die sociale circulariteit, of die sociale duurzaamheid... dat we een opstapje bieden om dat makkelijker te organiseren.” (BSH-healthcare.org.-3)</p>
Prevention of nuisance	<p>“Dat zie je eigenlijk door alle ontwikkelingen die wij doen heen, is dat wij altijd proberen om in ieder geval in de gebouwde omgeving, niet een onderscheid te krijgen van 'dat is sociale huurhoek, en dit is een koophoek, of een duur ontwikkelde hoek'. Want daarmee, zegmaar, ontstaat er toch een soort van stigmatisering, in ieder geval een.. van ook de mensen die erin wonen. Terwijl dat grote onzin is.. het is, het zijn allemaal woningen en er wonen allemaal mensen, en als die op een normale manier, zonder meteen vooroordelen, met elkaar gewoon in contact zijn, ontstaat er ook een veel rustige.... hoe moet ik het zeggen.. dat is voor ons, op de lange termijn, is dat ook heel positief voor ons bezit. Ehm.. want daarmee voorkom je ook verloedering, dus je kunt het ook... je kunt het zacht maken, maar je kunt het ook hard maken. Dus als je het hard maakt, kijk... verloedering is voor ons het allervervelendste wat er is, dus wanneer er gewoon hoeken in gebouwen, of in hele wijkjes ontstaan, waar gewoon niet de juiste aandacht aan gegeven wordt, wat betekent dat het daarna een langzaam maar zeker achteruitgaat.” .... “Juist door veel integratie, door veel contact, kun je juist dat verzachten, en is het ook makkelijker om verschillende groepen met elkaar te laten praten, en als er een keer iets is, dat het dan ook snel de wereld uit is, en dat er begrip voor elkaar is.” (BSH-soc.hou.org.-3)</p>

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Planning goal for urban development project	Supporting quotes
Social circularity	<p>“En daardoor vonden we dat we het van deze ruimtes, sociaal circulaire ruimtes zoals wij ze in het project noemden, dat we daarvoor echt moesten zorgen dat dat wel goed zou zijn, want anders zou er weinig circulairs meer aan Buksloterham zijn eigenlijk. Ik bedoel, zonnepanelen leggen we overal wel neer. Dus dat wij uiteindelijk denk ik de belangrijkste doelstelling van: we moeten zorgen dat de drie ruimtes die we hier hebben, ook al zijn ze niet groot, dat dat echt iets wordt van, en voor en door de buurt. Dat klinkt een beetje cliché, maar dat wilden we wel echt. Dat mensen hier elkaar konden ontmoeten, dat ze ook zelf met ideeën kwamen, dat ze dachten: ‘he, wat een leuke ruimte, daar wil ik wel, nou weet ik veel wat voor activiteit, dat kan een yogales zijn, maar het kan ook samen voetbal kijken ofzo zijn, dat het echt een ruimte was, niet van Philadelphia, niet van de Alliantie, maar van de mensen zelf. En dan niet alleen van de huurders van deze blokken, maar het liefst ook van de mensen van uit de dure huurblokken, of de zelfbouwers, of naja, nog verder. Dat was eigenlijk de belangrijkste doelstelling denk ik wel.” (BSH-soc.hou.org.-1)</p>
Circularity	<p>“De allereerste doelstelling was Circulair Buksloterham, de eerste circulaire wijk van Amsterdam. We hebben altijd van het begin gezegd, dat kan in fysieke zin, dus bijvoorbeeld door water te besparen door een bepaald soort toiletten aan te brengen in de woningen, door zonnepanelen, door rainproof dingen, maar we hebben ook altijd gezegd: er moet ook een sociale circulariteit zijn.” (BSH-de Alliantie-1)</p>
Living lab	<p>“Daarnaast willen we een living lab zijn, dus we willen leren door het te doen, dus dat is ook een belangrijk uitgangspunt. Dus naast die thema’s met die doelstellingen, is ons uitgangspunt dat we niet zozeer gaan studeren en rapporten maken [lach] over hoe het ooit zou kunnen, maar meer, veel meer kijken naar als we een interessante innovatie zien, of iets waarvan we denken: dat kan bijdragen aan de circulaire stad, dan .. en het zou hier een plek kunnen hebben, en er zijn ook meerdere stakeholders enthousiast, dan gaan we kijken of we dat kunnen faciliteren. Dus dat is het uitgangspunt van de werkwijze, en ook wel van Circulair Buksloterham” (BSH-municipality-1)</p>
Urban transformation	<p>“Ja, vanuit de Cityplot-gedachte is het uitgangspunt voor het gebied dat er een woon-werkgebied ontstaat, waarbij wel de nadruk in deze ontwikkeling ligt op wonen, en daarbij worden allerlei diverse woontypes en groottes in prijsklassen als het goed is aangeboden. Op basis daarvan zijn wij van mening, ook als Synchron, en dat omschrijven we ook vanuit de visie die de Alliantie en de gemeente voor z’n gebied heeft gemaakt, ontstaat er een heel divers gebied, rondom een gemeenschappelijk binnenhof wat de sociale cohesie versterkt in het gebied. En daar kunnen ook functies landen, zeg ik maar even, die het gebied versterken, de combinatie wonen-werken, werken aan huis, nou, op dit moment heel actueel ten gevolge van de corona-crisis, zou het ook heel goed in het gebied passen, ook al in de oorspronkelijke visie” (BSH-priv.developer-1)</p>

# Quotes supporting residents' experienced conversion factors

## Belonging to Chapter 3

Supporting quotes are a selection of the quotes most supportive to explaining the conversion factor. An overview of all coded quotes is available open access at the repository of 4TU.ResearchData (DOI 10.4121/88da3959-1795-40aa-a5b3-7739fee4d219.v1)

Functioning: interacting with neighbours		
Conversion factor		Supporting quotes
<b>Personal</b>	Preferences, values, and character	"Ik ben niet anoniem, maar ik hoef ook niet.. Ik vind het eigenlijk niet zo erg als mensen weten wie ik ben, ik vind het wel leuk om veel contact te hebben. Het ligt er maar aan hoe je je voelt, als daar maar geen dingen aan vast zitten. Ik weet dat je ook juist de anonimiteit kunt willen opzoeken" (BSH-resident-10)
<b>Social</b>	Connection to other persons or social groups	"Wat ik zie is dat mensen zich betrokken voelen bij een groep waar ze gewoon bij horen. Dus bijvoorbeeld, de mensen die houden van drinken betrekken zich tot mensen die ook drinken, die hebben daar een klik mee. Mensen met een hond betrekken zich weer tot andere mensen met een hond. En mensen met een achtergrond betrekken zich ook weer met andere mensen met een achtergrond." (BSH-resident-14)
	Identification with others	"Vanwege de klik die je op een gegeven moment bent. En je bent in een omgeving liever in groep waar je bijhoort, dus waarmee je het eens bent, dan waarmee je het oneens bent. Ik heb er ooit iets over gelezen, iets met sociaal bewijs. Dat je je dan verbonden voelt met elkaar. En als je dan het een en ander met elkaar eens bent, ben je daarin ook sympathiek tegenover elkaar. Dat werkt wat meer voor mij, zo'n relatie." (BSH-reisident-14)
	Natural process	"Natuurlijk is dat leuk, maar ik hou ook wel van een soort natuurlijk verloop. Niet iedereen is hetzelfde, dus ja.. wat heb ik daar in te vinden? [lach]. Met sommigen heb je dat in het begin niet, maar heb je daarna ineens een gesprek. Maar het gaat erom dat je elkaar respecteert. Ik vind 'elkaar respecteren' eigenlijk belangrijker in plaats van 'IK vind het belangrijk dat...' (BSH-resident-10)

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Functioning: interacting with neighbours		
Conversion factor	Supporting quotes	
Spatial	<b>Architectural form of building block</b>	"Ik moet zeggen, je hebt hier meer contact met je burens dan in elke andere woning waar ik heb gewoond. Absoluut. Want je komt elkaar gewoon vaak tegen, nogmaals, omdat het naar binnen is gericht. Het is geen trappenhuis, het is geen rijtjeshuis. Het is echt een vierkant. Dus je komt elkaar allemaal tegen." (BSH-resident-6)
	<b>Attractive interior design</b>	"Ja, heel slim opgezet ook. Als je je post op gaat halen sta je al in die ruimte. Er staat natuurlijk een koffieapparaat. Prima koffie, want het zijn bonen, en een grote tafel, en er hangt een televisie, we hebben internet daar. Dus als je daar iets wil, je wil wat met iemand bespreken.. of iemand doet z'n was en het is bijna klaar of nog net niet. Dan neem je een koffie en er komt altijd wel iemand langs die ook iets wil een praatje maken. En in die eerste flat valt mij op dat mensen nog actiever gebruik maken van die ruimte, want Jennifer gaat ook vaak daar een kopje kopje drinken, dan komt er een man waar ze een kaartje mee gaat leggen, die coaches zitten daar vaak. Maar de andere bewoners komen ook zo even naar beneden. Het wordt daar wat intensiever gebruikt, en dat is hier nog minder. Maar je hebt hier ook veel mannen, je kan niet alles hebben. Maar zodra er internet was beneden, ging het meteen in de app "oh, dan kunnen we Netflix kijken met z'n allen beneden, of voetbalwedstrijden" (BSH-resident-5)
Organizational	<b>Long-term consistency of professionals on site</b>	"Wat wel werkte, was dat mensen van Philadelphia vaak rondliepen. Die maakten praatjes. Dat betekent dat je ze je persoonlijk linkten aan hun. Dat betekent dus ook dat je altijd bekende gezichten zag. In het begin waren er nog niet zoveel mensen, dus dan is het wel fijn als je een bekend hoofd ziet." (BSH-resident-1)
	<b>External party as intermediary between residents</b>	SP1: "Wat wel via de Alliantie is opgestart is van die burensapp. Dat is wel vanuit de Alliantie ontstaan. Daar wordt vrij veel onderling gecommuniceerd." SP2: "Zou het niet ook gewoon via een van de bewoners opgezet kunnen worden?" SP1: "Dat had ook gekund, ik weet alleen niet of het dan ook gebeurd was. Nu kwamen we gewoon in de woning, en was daar een briefje: 'welkom in de bolder. Als u belangstelling heeft draai dat nummer'. Ik denk dat als dat briefje er niet was geweest, mensen ook niet in die groepsapp waren gegaan. Want dan had een van de bewoners dat initiatief moeten nemen. Dat had je langs alle deuren gemoeten: 'wil je in de groepsapp?'" SP2: "Dus als je het zo bekijkt, draagt de woningcorporatie wel iets bij?" SP1: "Ja, precies. Dat is wat ik zei: ze kunnen het niet van bovenaf opleggen, maar ze kunnen het wel initiëren, wel het aanzetje geven." (BSH-resident-3)
	<b>Non-occupation by professionals in collective spaces</b>	SP1: ""Gebruik je die gemeenschappelijke ruimte ook wel eens om in te zitten?" SP2: "Nee, nee. In het begin van corona vond ik dat niet zo slim. En nu zitten er meestal al mensen van Philadelphia." (BSH-resident-1)

\*SP1=researcher, SP2=interviewee

Functioning: feeling part of a community		
Conversion factor		Supporting quotes
Personal	Preferences, values, and character	<p>"Gewoon vanuit menselijk punt ben ik er wel, maar ik wil ook... Dan ligt het zo vast. Ik ben iemand die niet in een hokje geplaatst wil worden, maar ik wil ook niet dat er iets van me verwacht wordt." (BSH-resident-10)</p> <p>"Zolang het maar niet opgelegd wordt, zolang het maar niet dorps wordt. Dat de buurvrouw je moeder aanspreekt met 'goh, Katrinka had wel een heel kort rokje aan'. Het moet dorps worden, vandaar dat anonieme gedeelte erin: je kunt het ook uitzetten." (BSH-resident-7)</p>
Social	Connection to other persons or social groups	<p>SP1: "Een buurt is fijner om in te wonen als het een community is." SP2: "Neutraal. Het is fijn, maar geen toegevoegde waarde. Ik kan ook best wel anoniem in zo'n wijk blijven wonen." SP1: "Je zegt 'het is fijn, maar geen toegevoegde waarde'. Wat is dan wel fijn eraan?" SP2: "Dat je erop terug kunt vallen als het nodig is. Of je kunt bij je buurvrouw aankloppen met 'he, heb jij nog een mixer'? En het is fijn om te lezen in de buurtwhatsapp als er wandelingetjes worden georganiseerd, of een etentje, dat is heel relax. Zolang het maar niet opgelegd wordt, zolang het maar niet dorps wordt"</p>
	Identification with others	<p>"Juist dit vind ik mooi, dat het door elkaar zit. Diversiteit vind ik eigenlijk het leukst. Want de kindjes zijn nog heel jong. Maar niet te veel. Als je alleen maar gezinnen hebt is het niet leuk natuurlijk. Als ik daar dan alleen woon, als alleenstaande, dan is het niet leuk. Maar het is gewoon een hele mooie diversiteit." (BSH-resident-10)</p>
	Natural process	<p>"Ja, jawel, maar het moet ook klikken natuurlijk. Ik denk dat daar meer gradaties in zijn. Ik vind het wel belangrijk om te weten, wie woont waar, en hoe, om elkaar te begroeten en dat soort dingen. Maar op een gegeven moment klikt het meer met bepaalde mensen dan met anderen." (BSH-resident-9)</p>
Spatial	Architectural form of building block	<p>"Wat ik wel hoor van de professionals, is dat in dit gebouw de gemeenschap vrij actief is. Daar hebben we over nagedacht, en dat komt volgens mij omdat dit gebouw zo gebouwd is. Omdat je het idee van de binnenplaats hebt. Ik vind het een beetje Zuid-Europees aandoen. Dit geeft ook een beetje een community-gevoel. En wat wij horen van de medewerkers is dat het saamhorigheidsgevoel hier heel sterk is." SP1: "Daar ben ik benieuwd om meer over te horen. Waarom werkt het goed?" SP2: "Omdat je gewoon.. je loopt over de galerij. Een aantal woningen heeft een terras aan de galerijkant, dus je ziet elkaar en je hebt contact met elkaar. Je kent elkaar ook. En je roept ook voortdurend... Ik denk omdat het zo in de rondte is gebouwd. Ik denk dat dat ongelooflijk van invloed is op het ontstaan van de community. Het schijnt hier sterker te zijn dan de andere gebouwen." (BSH-resident-3)</p>
	Attractive interior design	<p>SP1: "Hoe denkt u dat die handvatten in dit project zijn aangereikt?" SP2: "We hebben wifi gekregen, je hebt de gemeenschappelijke ruimte, je hebt wasmachines, en een droger. Dus als meerdere mensen elkaar kruisen, krijg je toch een gesprek." SP1: "Werkt dat echt?" SP2: "Ja, tuurlijk werkt dat echt. Dat je even een praatje maakt 'oh duurt dat zolang'. Daar begint het mee. En het is zo naar binnen gericht. Dit soort dingen zijn wel belangrijk, absoluut. En er staat een koffieapparaat, dus dan komt er eentje thee kof koffie halen, en dan komt er een ander. En dan is het toch 'he buurman'. En als je elkaar zo een paar keer ziet.. zo creëren je geloof ik die community, dat soort dingen helpen wel." (BSH-resident-6)</p>

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Functioning: feeling part of a community		
Conversion factor	Supporting quotes	
Organizational Organizational	<b>Central contact point for residents to approach for questions or ideas</b>	“Dus die voorziet is gegeven. Als het er niet was, was dit ook niet zo gegroeid. Want die coaches geven steeds een voorziet, die zei “ik ben de communicatiemanager”. Ik zei, “huh, communicatiemanager, hoezo dan?” “Ja, contact maken met de burens”, en dat hebben ze ook gedaan. En van daaruit groeit het verder. Zij zitten toch als een spin in het web. Als er iets is, dan spreken we hun als eerste aan. En zij zeggen dan “dan moet je bij die zijn”. Dus het is samen. Het zou mooi zijn als het alleen uit de bewoners ontstaat, en dat kan natuurlijk heel goed, maar er moet wel de gelegenheid uit zijn.” (BSH-resident-5)
	<b>Reflective attitude of professionals</b>	“Het is leuk dat er dingen bedacht worden, en dat ze ook weer checken, werkt dat, dat ze ook heel erg open staan voor feedback en die ook vragen.” (BSH-resident-11)
	<b>‘Right tone’ of professionals</b>	“Daar [community-gevoel] kunnen ze zeker heel erg bij helpen. Het ding is alleen...ze moeten wel de juiste toon hebben, maar er moet ook vanuit de community zelf behoefte zijn om zoiets te hebben.” (BSH-resident-1)
	<b>Long-term consistency of professionals on site</b>	SP1: “Geloof u erin dat die begeleiding ook over een paar jaar nog belangrijk is?” SP2: “Ja. Al is het alleen maar als aanspreekpunt. Een soort constante die door die flats heenlopen, dat je een soort vijver blijft waar je elkaar steeds tegenkomt. En hoeveel ze dan doen of niet doen, is dan ondergeschikt. Maar het feit dat ze er zijn, en dat als er wat is, je kunt zeggen...” (BSH-resident-1)
	<b>Timing of interventions (e.g., at the start of moving in)</b>	“Als je in iets nieuws woont, is er toch iets gemeenschappelijk. Het is samen een nieuw avontuur. En op een gegeven moment, tja, over een paar jaar gaat er iemand verhuizen en dan komt er een ander, die heeft de ontwikkeling niet meegemaakt.” SP1: “Dus u zegt ook eigenlijk indirect dat er bij het opstarten van een wijk belangrijke momenten zijn waarin je zoiets gezamenlijks kunt...?” SP2: “Ja, je krijgt een soort gemeenschapsgevoel, en dat verdwijnt op een gegeven moment zodra alles genormaliseerd is.” SP1: “Het hoeft natuurlijk niet per se te verdwijnen.” SP2: “Er zijn ook altijd wel nieuwelingen die mee gaan doen, maar mijn ervaring is dat het toch steeds minder en minder wordt.”
	<b>External party as intermediary between residents</b>	SP1: “Dat komt ook wel vanuit het community-building gevoel vanuit dan De Alliantie en Philadelphia zorg, dat ze er toch wel heel erg bovenop zitten, om de sfeer positief te houden. Want het kan ook snel omslaan, mensen kunnen last hebben van elkaar, van wat hier gebeurt, en dan tegen elkaar spelen. Ze zitten er dan wel bovenop om het een beetje een goede draai te geven. Ik merk wel dat als je iets gemeenschappelijks hebt, het toch wel belangrijk is dat er toch nog iets anders naast is om dat gemeenschappelijke te bewaken. Dus we komen er denk ik niet heel goed uit alleen maar onderling.” SP2: “Dus als de wooncoaches en de zorg van de Alliantie er niet zouden zijn, dan was het niet zo..?” SP2: “Ik denk dat er veel minder interactie was geweest. Dan was er misschien interactie geweest met een max. van 10 mensen op de app van bewoners, meer met informatie-uitwisseling. Soms als er wat wrijving was, over de parkeergarage bijv., merkte je dat er een frisse adem, lucht kwam vanuit Philadelphia om er een andere draai aan te geven. Zij bewaken de sfeer, de gemoederen daarin, en de leefbaarheid. En ze komen met initiatieven.” (BSH-resident-1)
	<b>Non-occupation by professionals in collective spaces</b>	SP1: “Er zijn hier ook van 9 tot 9 wooncoaches aanwezig. Wat doet dat, met het gemeenschapsgevoel?” SP2: “Daar heb ik eigenlijk nog niet zoveel contact mee. Soms zijn ze ook aan het vergaderen en dan zijn de deuren dicht.”

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Functioning: feeling part of a community		
Conversion factor		Supporting quotes
Organizational	Sharing professionally-gained information with residents	<p>“Ook het feit dat ze informatie geven, ons steunen, geeft verbinding. Steun dat als we er echt niet uitkwamen met deze parkeergarage, dat er ook gezocht werd met het overdrachtsteam over hoe we dat aan moesten pakken.” (BSH-resident-1)</p> <p>“Ik zou gewoon graag willen weten wat er speelt. We hebben ook nog een ruimte over, wat gaan we met de ruimte doen? Iemand zei: ‘oh een biljarttafel zou leuk zijn’, nou biljart ik niet, maar het was in ieder geval een voorstel. En toen, floep, was er ineens een fietsenschuur.” (BSH-resident-8)</p>

\*SP1=researcher, SP2=interviewee

Functioning: joining groups or initiatives		
Conversion factor		Supporting quotes
Personal	Time available	“Als ik er maar niet heel veel tijd in moet steken, want soms lukt het me ook niet.” (BSH-resident-1)
	Preferences, values, and character	<p>“Ik ben helemaal geen groepjesmens. De profielneuroses van iedereen waar je rekening mee moet houden, het duurt lang totdat er beslissingen genomen worden.” SP1: “Wanneer zou u wel bij iets aansluiten?” SP2: “Ik wil wel wat voor mensen doen, maar ik wil er niet lid van zijn. Stel je voor, je zou in een vereniging iets organiseren en het is iets wat bij mij past voor een middag per week of een aantal uur, dan wil ik dat best doen. Maar ik wil niet lid worden. Ik wil niet in een bestuur, wil niet iets met leden.” (BSH-resident-8)</p>
	Corresponding interests	“Het hangt ervan af wat voor activiteiten het zijn. Ik wil best iets voor anderen doen, heb wel eens gedacht dat ik goed huiswerkbegeleiding zou kunnen doen, dat is geen probleem. Maar met bejaarden, wat ik zelf ben, breien, dat zou ik niet doen.” (BSH-resident-8)
Social	Connection to other persons or social groups	SP1: “En wat zou je daarvan weerhouden?” SP2: “Ligt eraan wat daar belangrijk is, welke mensen, klikt het wel of niet. Waar zet je je gezamenlijk voor in? Connectie met mensen vind ik belangrijk.” (BSH-resident-9)
	Identification with others	“Zo'n buurthuis is heel laagdrempelig, en qua kosten is het ook heel goedkoop, en dat wil zeggen dat je een heel eenzijdig publiek krijgt. Dus een tamelijk arm, meestal mensen met een uitkering of in slechte gezondheid, en laagopgeleid. En ik voel me daar niet altijd zo heel erg thuis, en zij voelen zich ook niet zo thuis met mij. Dus ik zou graag wat gemengder. Het is afhankelijk van de wijk. In Oud-Zuid voel ik me ook niet helemaal thuis, want dat zijn allemaal rijke dames. Maar dat is toch ook wat anders, dus zowel wat rijker als armere. Maar hier.. Noord is arm, en laagopgeleid, en dat vind je ook terug in een buurthuis.” (BSH-resident-8)
Organizational	'Right tone' of professionals	“Maar natuurlijk... wij als bewoners moeten dat doen. Ze moeten niet zeggen: 'en nu moeten jullie gezellig doen'. Dat werkt dus averechts. (BSH-resident-7)
	Personal encouragement of resident ideas	SP1: “Weerhoudt iets je ervan om dat te doen, dat je zegt 'het lijkt me op zich wel leuk om het te doen', maar het gebeurt nog niet?” SP1: “Ja... eigenlijk omdat ik tot heden niet de kans heb gezien, of heeft iemand gezegd 'wil je hier en hier aan meedoen?’” (BSH-resident-14)

\*SP1=researcher, SP2=interviewee



Functioning: taking initiative for the neighbourhood		
Conversion factor	Supporting quotes	
Personal	Time available	"Het is wel een soort van voornemen van mezelf, maar ik heb er nog geen praktijk van gemaakt. Zonder reden, gewoon puur druk met van alles." (BSH-resident-9)
	Preferences, values, and character	"Aan de ene kant zoek ik wel die reuring op, en aan de andere kant ben ik blij dat ik een stad met een miljoen inwoners woon, waardoor je ook die anonimiteit hebt, dat het niet een 'moetje' wordt. Ik heb mijn eigen leven, mijn eigen sociale netwerk, het hoeft niet in die buurt te blijven." (BSH-resident-7)
	Confidence about one's own competences	"En kijk, als ik nou hele groene vingers had gehad, dan had ik gedacht 'oh, dat doe ik wel even'. Maar dat heb ik niet. Dus voor mij is het ook helemaal nieuw. Dus ik moet eerst gaan kijken, wat vraagt zo'n tuin nou eigenlijk? Daar moet ik toch wel een beetje professionele tuinmensen voor spreken. Ik heb op zich wel ideeën, maar ik weet ook niet precies wat allemaal mag." (BSH-resident-1)
	Corresponding interests	"Het moet ook passen binnen wat je doet. En daarnaast wil ik ook gemotiveerd genoeg zijn om daaraan mee te doen. Dus dan moet het wel een uitgangspunt zijn waar ik me ook hard voor wil maken. En als ik dan kijk, wat zou ik belangrijk vinden in een omgeving als ik hier rondloop, dan vind ik dat er teveel bestrating is en dat er nog wel iets gedaan kan worden aan groen. Ik erger me dat het groene grasveld zo groen is omdat er heel veel water op wordt gespoten, eigenlijk is dat een beetje waterverspilling. Dan zou ik meer over dat soort dingen willen meedenken." (BSH-resident-9)
Social	Connection to other persons or social groups	SP1: "En wat zou je daarvan weerhouden?" SP2: "Ligt eraan wat daar belangrijk is, welke mensen, klikt het wel of niet. Waar zet je je gezamenlijk voor in? Connectie met mensen vind ik belangrijk." (BSH-resident-9)
Organizational	Central contact point for residents to approach for questions or ideas	"Dat we een aanspreekpunt hebben van de woningbouwvereniging. Dat we kunnen zeggen: 'he, wij willen graag dit initiatief nemen, kan dat en mag dat?'. Of er zijn gebreken, kunnen we die kaarten?" (BSH-resident-7)
	External party as intermediary between residents	"Bepaalde dingen toch wel. Zoals de dingen hier met die geveltjes bijvoorbeeld, dat de Alliantie.. gevelbegroeiing, dat ze toch mee kunnen helpen. Of als we een plan hebben, dat ze zeggen: 'dat kan ook zo en zo', of 'wij hebben een ingang naar iets'. Dus in die zin kunnen ze wel helpen. Of een start maken met iets en dat bewoners het verder kunnen uitwerken." (BSH-resident-4)
	Personal encouragement of resident ideas	"Bijvoorbeeld, Nanda is een begeleider van Philadelphia. Zij heeft met mij gepraat over koken. Of het niet leuk is om een kookclubje op te richten. Ik had een app-groepje eruit gegooid of mensen daar interesse in hadden, en er hadden heel weinig op gereageerd. Toen dacht ik, ik ga zelf gewoon koken en zeggen dat je mee kan eten voor 4,50." SP2: "Hoe helpen ze jou daar precies mee?" SP1: "Zij heeft mij geholpen met het idee naar voren brengen, en ik heb het uitgewerkt tot dat ik elke keer een app eruit gooi. Dat bijvoorbeeld. Net even het zetje." (BSH-resident-2)
	External control of resident initiatives (e.g., control of sharing concepts)	"Daar waar de fietsenwerkplaats is zou je ook een kast kunnen inrichten die gecontroleerd wordt, iemand die werkervaring opdoet kan dat in de gaten houden, die het bijhoudt, die ze uitleent, prima. Maar ik ben niet moeder Theresa, dus ik leen niet dingen aan de buurt uit als dat niet werkelijk een wisselwerking is, als mensen dat met elkaar doen." (BSH-resident-8)

\*SP1=researcher, SP2=interviewee

# Quotes supporting residents' capability-evaluations of realized place interventions

## Belonging to Chapter 4

Supporting quotes are a selection of the quotes most supportive to explaining the conversion factor. An overview of all coded quotes is available open access at the repository of 4TU.ResearchData (DOI 10.4121/2f438769-dd7e-4845-9347-6b23c89c5432.v1)

Case: Nieuw Crooswijk	
Place intervention	Supporting quotes
1 <b>Masterplan with demolition, reconstruction, and renovation</b>	<p>“Ik heb in heel veel werkgroepen gezeten ... Juist met de structuurvisie, en het maken daarvan, was er een hele goede verstandshouding met de gemeente ... Aan het eind van de presentatie werd duidelijk dat alles werd gesloopt. Dat was alsof je een emmer met koud water in je gezicht krijgt, want tot die tijd heb je gewerkt aan de structuurvisie, al die dingen ingeleverd, en nu zegt iedereen 'ja we gaan alles wat jullie hebben slopen'. Dat is zo absurd. Toen kwam het verzet” (NC-resident-8)</p> <p>“Mensen komen voor gratis plantjes, en in de tussentijd ligt het conceptplan daar. Dus ik kom voorbij en vraag 'wat is dat'. 'Ja dat mag je meenemen'. En niemand heeft dat meegenomen. Maar ik ging dat lezen en “what the f*, ze gaan onze hele wijk slopen”.” (NC-resident-9)</p> <p>“De aanpak van Woonstad bij de ontwikkelingen was superslecht gewoon. Er was inspraak in het begin, maar mijn vrouw mocht op een gegeven moment niet meer komen. Die baas zei toen “Met een sloopkogel gooi ik al die huizen omver” ... Inspraak was afgeschreven. Later is het wel wat hersteld, maar we laten ons niet zomaar wegsturen.” (NC-resident-3)</p> <p>“Wij leven hier natuurlijk in een enorme rijkdom, we hebben op een heel fijn moment een heel fijn huis gekocht. Dat is wel ten koste gegaan van de woonplek van mensen die daar helemaal niet blij mee zijn. En een deel van die mensen woont ook nog in deze wijk volgens mij. Dus we hebben wel een soort van schuldgevoel daaraan overgehouden. Tegelijkertijd kan ik er ook niet zoveel mee, ik heb er ook geen oplossing voor” (NC-resident-7)</p>

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Case: Nieuw Crooswijk	
Place intervention	Supporting quotes
2	<p><b>Primary school with intended multiple-function purpose for the neighbourhood</b></p> <p>“We hebben ook nog even concerten gegeven in de school beneden, toen het Islamitisch was. Nu niet meer want dat wilden ze niet meer, ze hadden die ruimte zelf nodig, nu is het gewoon helemaal Islamitisch geworden. Dat is eigenlijk wel jammer, want het was een hele leuke plek, en ook omdat het een beetje verbroederd weet je wel.” ... “Vroeger had je nog een beetje mengeling van mensen, weet je wel, had je nog contact met die school enzo. Nu is het gewoon helemaal die school geworden. Dus nu is er niks meer van buiten. Het was vroeger eigenlijk een soort buurthuis voor de mensen en dat hebben ze weggegeven” (NC-resident-3)</p> <p>“De impact ervan op de wijk? Behalve dat als ik 's ochtends naar m'n werk gaat, het helemaal vol staat met ouders die hun kinderen afgooien, is het weinig. Het is toch een soort enclave in de wijk, een Islamitische enclave, ja dat is logisch.” (NC-resident-5)</p> <p>“Daar is nu helemaal geen sprake meer van [dat het een centrale plek in de wijk met buurtfuncties zou worden]. ... Bij de Noenschool, die ruimte die er was, die was ook helemaal niet geschikt, ook nog toen het de Pierre Bayle school was, toen dacht ik 'wie heeft dit verzonnen', wat een ontzettend nare plek was dit. Iemand moest dan betaald worden om achter de bar te staan, hele verkeerde opzet, helemaal niet gedacht vanuit hoe dat echt werkt.” (NC-resident-8)</p>
3	<p><b>Subsidized coffee café with intended functioning for the neighbourhood</b></p> <p>“Veel mensen gaan naar Croos, maar dat is niet helemaal mijn .... Dat zijn toch wat meer jonge mensen die daar komen, met krijsende kinderen (18:17). Dat bruine cafe type is meer bij Eden, dat is meer een volkscafe voor de wijk. Niet per se voor mij, maar mijn man wel en ik vind het dan wel weer leuk dat hij dat heeft.” (NC-resident-12)</p> <p>“Het lukt Croos overigens ook niet helemaal hoor [die buurtfunctie te krijgen]. Het idee was een beetje dat Croos dat ook had, als koffietent, maar daar komen voornamelijk, tja bakfietsmoeders, van andere delen uit de stad, dus het heeft die functie wel, maar voor moeders met kinderen die verder in Rotterdam wonen.” (NC-resident-13)</p>
4	<p><b>Collective gardens within new-built building blocks</b></p> <p>“Er wordt wel veel gedaan met z'n allen, ook de binnenplaats met z'n allen onderhouden. Dat is dit blok ongeveer. We hebben natuurlijk een VVE voor de binnenplaats, dus die doet groenvoorziening in de binnenplaats, maar ook de parkeerplaatsen en elektriciteitsvoorziening, feestcommissie, dat soort dingen. ... Je merkt wel, de allochtonen en autochtonen mixt niet echt met elkaar. Dat vind ik wel moeillijk, je hebt hier ook wel veel moslimkinderen buitenspelen, maar die spelen niet met de kaaskoppen om maar zo te zeggen. Het zou leuk zijn als dat wat meer zou integreren, maar ja.” (NC-resident-6)</p> <p>“Het is fantastisch dat we nu zo'n gemeenschappelijke binnentuin hebben, met kleine kindjes. Want al die kinderen vinden elkaar, dat is echt een feest. De binnentuin zorgt ervoor dat dit een community is, zelfs een soort gated community. Maar het heeft ook een heel groot nadeel, dat we een soort van afgeschermd zijn van de rest van de wijk. Er zijn ook gewoon huurwoningen hiernaast, en daarmee sta je dan een beetje uit verbinding. Dus de verbinding die je hier [binnen het blok] hebt, verbreekt juist de verbinding met de ander. Dus dat vind ik wel jammer.” (NC-resident-7)</p> <p>“Die laatste huizen hebben een binnentuin met een zwembad. Hartstikke tof natuurlijk, voor gezinnen met kinderen, er wonen trouwens ook veel expats. Maar er is geen contact mee te krijgen. ... Wat ze hier bouwen met de binnentuinen is voor de mensen natuurlijk fantastisch, alleen voor de buurt is het niet goed, omdat het heel erg naar binnen gekeerd is, je rijdt met je auto door de poort. Die mensen wonen niet in Nieuw Crooswijk, die wonen gewoon in hun bouwblok. De kinderen spelen in hun binnentuin en komen onze kinderen niet tegen” (NC-resident-13)</p> <p>“Ik zeg 'nou mooi verhaal. Jullie kunnen je auto allemaal op het binnenterrein zetten, en de plebs moeten drie keer rond gaan rijden om een parkeerplek te vinden.' Waar gaat het over? Stom. Ik vind het ergerlijk ook. Het werkt segregatie in de hand, dit soort dingen” (NC-resident-9)</p>

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Case: Nieuw Crooswijk	
Place intervention	Supporting quotes
5 <b>Municipal budgets to facilitate self-organised initiatives by residents</b>	<p>“Mijn hele leven bestaat uit buurt activiteiten. Waarom ik dat doe weet ik niet, ik vind het gewoon leuk. ... Ik denk als je een stichting bent, kun je wat meer poen lospeuteren, maar ik heb daar geen behoefte aan. Ik weet het niet, ik ben gewoon geen stichting, ik weet niet eens hoe dat in elkaar zit. ... Ik heb een netwerker en die helpt me altijd. Ik heb haar soms helemaal nergens voor nodig, maar ik bel haar graag. Om te overleggen, en zij stimuleert me.” (NC-resident-1)</p> <p>“Ik heb natuurlijk mijn eigen stichting. ... We hebben natuurlijk subsidies, en we moeten natuurlijk toezicht op waar de gelden landen. Dat kan je eerst natuurlijk met andere initiatieven en stichtingen uit de buurt, en dan merk je hoe stroperig dat kan gaan. ... Toen hadden we zoiets van, dan doen we gewoon zelf een stichting, en dan heb je zelf het overzicht waar het geld landt.” (NC-resident-5)</p> <p>“Want de gebiedscommissie krijgt elk jaar zoveel geld, en dat gaat naar de mensen die het eigenlijk niet nodig hebben. ... Dat [subsidie] wordt dus niet meer op je naam gestort, maar dat moet dan bij een stichting. Tja, wie heeft in deze wijk een stichting? Als ik daar die nieuwe wijk in loop, hebben ze allemaal een stichting.” (NC-resident-10)</p> <p>“Maar het erge vind ik dan, je hebt voor de deur een festival, er wonen hier allemaal kunstenaars, ik ben zelf artiest en er zit daar een kroeg. Maar niemand kon ervan profiteren, het waren allemaal mensen van buiten de wijk. Er is dus een zak subsidie, en die wordt lekker verdeeld onder vriendjes uit Hillegersberg. Ik kots daarop, daar word ik zo boos van” (NC-resident-9)</p> <p>“Ik heb dus geleerd dat je je in dat soort clubjes moet bewegen, want dan krijg je dingen gedaan, en anders mogen er allemaal dingen niet. Dus zo werkt het een beetje. We merken wel dat als je je in de juiste clubjes bevindt, je ineens dingen gedaan krijgt.” (NC-resident-13)</p>

\*SP1=researcher, SP2=interviewee

Case: Buiksloterham&Co		
Place intervention	Supporting quotes	
6	<b>Urban design plan with mixed housing types (i.e., tenure and price range)</b>	<p>“Ik ben een beetje bang dat alle dure woningen daar [met groen] heel royaal in aangebracht worden, maar dat de kinderen een beetje worden vergeten. Ik hoor helemaal niks over speeltuinen, terwijl we hebben hier nog zoveel kleine kindjes? Waar gaan ze spelen? Bij die dure vlonders bij de expats aan de waterzijde? Nee, dat kan niet. Daar maak ik me wel een beetje zorgen over. Omdat het in twee delen ingericht is, wordt daar heel erg behoefte gegeven aan een bepaald soort groep, maar... wordt het dan ook echt leefwijk of gewoon een woonwijk?” (BSH-resident-1)</p> <p>“Met burendag hoop ik dat er wat meer mensen zijn van de overkant. Dat zijn koopwoningen, en dit is sociale huur. En soms ketst dat een beetje tegen elkaar op. ... Die hebben gewoon iets meer te besteden. Je ziet gewoon, zij rijden in auto's, en heel veel bewoners hier vanuit de sociale huur kunnen nog niet eens met een auto rijden.” (BSH-resident-2)</p> <p>“Hier in Noord heb je de yuppenfobie, dus dit wordt helemaal gezien als een scheidslijn tussen oud en nieuw noord. Ik denk dat het deels ook heel erg in mensen zit, maar in de discussie hoor ik ook dat het goed is dat je binnen een wijk ook die diversiteit creëert zodat je niet die scheiding krijgt tussen verschillende groepen. Ik denk dat je dat deels wel via dit soort instellingen kunt realiseren, maar het zit deels ook in het gedrag. Dus, ja.. Maar die inzet en uitgangspunten vind ik goed, daar sta ik wel achter.” (BSH-resident-9)</p> <p>“Diversiteit vind ik eigenlijk het leukst. Want de kindjes zijn nog heel jong. Maar niet te veel. Als je alleen maar gezinnen hebt is het niet leuk natuurlijk. Als ik daar dan alleen woon, als alleenstaande, dan is het niet leuk.” (BSH-resident-10).</p>
7	<b>Shared facility rooms including laundry machines in social housing blocks</b>	<p>“Ik zit heel vaak beneden in de gezamenlijke ruimte, om te praten. En als er iemand een wasje komt doen, komt er wel eens iemand bijzitten. Dat vind ik gewoon heel fijn. Dat diegene gewoon mee gaat luisteren met wat er in mijn leven aan de hand is. ... Als je hier je was zou doen, dan kom je heel weinig beneden, denk ik” (BSH-resident-2)</p> <p>“Ja, heel slim opgezet ook. Als je je post op gaat halen sta je al in die ruimte. Er staat natuurlijk een koffieapparaat. Prima koffie, want het zijn bonen, en een grote tafel, en er hangt een televisie, we hebben internet daar. Dus als je daar iets wil, je wil wat met iemand bespreken of iemand doet z'n was en het is bijna klaar of nog net niet. Dan neem je een koffie en er komt altijd wel iemand langs die ook iets wil een praatje maken” (BSH-resident-5)</p> <p>“Maar de meeste mensen die hun was doen gaan ook weer naar huis hoor. Die zie ik vooral naar heen en weer lopen” (BSH-resident-3)</p> <p>“Dat je beneden de was gaat doen en daar een praatje gaat houden, nee dat niet. Daar zit ik niet op te wachten, zoek ik ook niet op. Ik bedoel, ik ben de was aan het doen, ik zit daar met mijn joggingbroek en mijn slippers.” (BSH-resident-7)</p> <p>“Dat zei de architect ook: 'dan kunnen mensen terwijl ze op de was wachten met elkaar in gesprek komen.' Maar mensen gaan daar niet wachten totdat de was klaar is. Die stoppen hun was erin en gaan naar boven, en komen daarna hun was weer halen. Was misschien het idee, maar het werkt niet.” (BSH-resident-8)</p> <p>“Ik heb zelf ook een wasmachine, maar grote wassen doe ik hier. Ook vanwege het sociale aspect, dat je dan af en toe een praatje hebt. De gesprekken die je dan hebt met mensen in de buurt, wat leuk. Normaal gesproken heb je dat niet, maar nu heb je dan toch een praatje.” (BSH-resident-10)</p>

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Case: Buiksloterham&Co		
Place intervention	Supporting quotes	
8	<b>Shared gardens for social housing blocks and self-managed semi-public inner gardens for homeowners</b>	<p>SP1: "Ga je soms ook er [in de binnentuin van het sociale huurblok] zitten, als het lekker weer is?" SP2: "Nee, eigenlijk niet. Weetje waarom, ik vind het zo... er wonen ook mensen. Ik vind het moeilijk hoor, om daar te gaan zitten, als er ook mensen wonen die daar ook leven."</p> <p>SP1: "Het is net een beetje te privé?" SP2: "Ja, vind ik wel." (BSH-resident-1)</p> <p>"Als bewoner hier ga je niet daar in hun semi-tuin zitten. Mensen die hier al niet beneden wonen, zitten al niet hier. Dus dat slaat natuurlijk nergens op. Het is heel mooi dat ze dat hebben, dat je er doorheen kan wandelen om naar de overkant te komen. Maar het wordt meer een wandelroute dan een zitroute. Maar er moeten speeltuintjes komen, kinderen moeten bewegen." (BSH-resident-1)</p>
9	<b>Coaches allocated in facility rooms in social housing blocks as community-builders</b>	<p>"Wat wel werkte, was dat mensen van Philadelphia vaak rondliepen. Die maakten praatjes. Dat betekent dat ze je persoonlijk linkten aan hun. Dat betekent dus ook dat je altijd bekende gezichten zag. In het begin waren er nog niet zoveel mensen, dus dan is het wel fijn als je een bekend hoofd ziet. Ook het feit dat ze informatie geven, ons steunen, geeft verbinding. Steun dat als we er echt niet uitkwamen met deze parkeergarage, dat er ook gezocht werd met het overdrachtsteam over hoe we dat aan moesten pakken. Bepaalde regels, zoals de noodtrap niet gebruiken, geen troep achterlaten, troep opruimen, geen hondje hier laten poepen, al deze dingen werd op gelet, dat werd gehandhaafd." (BSH-resident-1)</p> <p>"Nanda is een begeleider van Philadelphia. Zij heeft met mij gepraat over koken. Of het niet leuk is om een kookclubje op te richten. Ik had een app-groepje eruit gegooid of mensen daar interesse in hadden, en er hadden heel weinig op gereageerd. Toen dacht ik, ik ga zelf gewoon koken en zeggen dat je mee kan eten voor 4,50." SP2: "Hoe helpen ze jou daar precies mee?" SP1: "Zij heeft mij geholpen met het idee naar voren brengen, en ik heb het uitgewerkt tot dat ik elke keer een app eruit gooi. Dat bijvoorbeeld. Net even het zetje." (BSH-resident-2)</p> <p>"Als het er niet was, was dit ook niet zo gegroeid. Want die coaches geven steeds een voorzet, die zei "ik ben de communicatiemanager" Ik zei, "huh, communicatiemanager, hoezo dan?" "Ja, contact maken met de burens", en dat hebben ze ook gedaan. En van daaruit groeit het verder. Zij zitten toch als een spin in het web. Als er iets is, dan spreken we hun als eerste aan. En zij zeggen dan "dan moet je bij die zijn". (BSH-resident-5)</p> <p>SP2: "Wat vind je hier werken in het project?" SP1: "Dat we een aanspreekpunt hebben van de woningbouwvereniging. Dat we kunnen zeggen: 'he, wij willen graag dit initiatief nemen, kan dat en mag dat?'. Of er zijn gebreken, kunnen we die kaarten?" (BSH-resident-7)</p> <p>"Daar heb ik eigenlijk nog niet zoveel contact mee. Soms zijn ze ook aan het vergaderen en dan zijn de deuren dicht. Het zijn wel aardige mensen, maar ik heb er nog niet zoveel contact mee." (BSH-resident-10)</p> <p>"Je hebt hieronder bij de gemeenschappelijke ruimte de wasbar, daar zit eigenlijk altijd wel iemand van Philadelphia, dus daar kun je altijd... dat vind ik ook gezellig, gewoon even een kletspraatje, de ene keer over het weer, en de andere keer over iets belangrijkers of over je zelf, dat vind ik ook leuk, even een connectie maken. ... Zij weten het ook niet helemaal dus dat gaan ze even intern zoeken. Het is leuk dat er dingen bedacht worden, en dat ze ook weer checken, werkt dat, dat ze ook heel erg open staan voor feedback en die ook vragen." (BSH-resident-11)</p>

\*SP1=researcher, SP2=interviewee

# Quotes validating selected cases as capability-centered practices

## Belonging to Chapter 5

Residents evaluation of Dialogue Approach in DrottningH (Helsingborg)	
Resident	Evaluating quote
DTH-resident-1	"Some of them [residents] are like, glad, because, you know, our neighbourhood is getting better, la-la-la. And others are feeling like they're not appreciated for how they were before. [...]. But most of them are happy. Most of them are happy"
DTH-resident-1	"I think there are doing a great job, I really do. [...] Because I always see them. They're always in the area, they talk to people, they sit with children, they're always here, they're always here. You always see them. You cannot miss them. You see them."
DTH-resident-2	"They could have done it and said "OK, we just need people who are educated, people who are fit for this job." But instead, they chose people who live here, who know about the area. And then they said "Well, we have encourage the people who live here, because it's their project." So, for me it was something which I really appreciate, and I really think it's a good thing."
DTH-resident-2	"Some people think it's a negative thing, some people think it's a positive thing. But I think that people who take it as a positive is more."
DTH-resident-3	"I think they are excellent. I think so. Helsingborgshem have always had a dialogue with the residents. And that's the most important thing, I think. It's the most important thing to do, and have a communication between Helsingborgshem and the residents. So not, it should not be a dialogue from Helsingborgshem to the residents that say "Now we are going to do this." They have done this: "We are thinking about doing this. What are you thinking?" That's the most important, I think. And they have done that excellent."
DTH-resident-3	"The working style is more loosen up.[...] you see people are more relaxed now than in the beginning." SP1: "How was it in the beginning then?" SP2: "A little nervous, a little uptight and everything should be perfect. But they realised everything cannot be perfect, you have to take it as it is." SP1: "And what is better? The planned version or this loosened..." SP2: "This, this loosened up. Because you get more done when you're not so uptight. You have more ideas when you're loosened up."
DTH-resident-4	"The idea behind it is great, I think, to base your decisions on what the residents in the area actually want. [...] We've already had a lot of visitors during the expo now that are unhappy with some of the newer elements of the area, mostly the buildings, they're worried about the parking. So it kind of seems like they haven't really taken into account 100% of these dialogues. But I haven't been a part of these dialogues on either side, so I'm not really sure what has been asked for and what has been used, so..."
DTH-resident-4	"I would probably not have the expo at all and try to solve... Like, xenophobic or racist tendencies in the job market. Because when it comes to areas like this, a lot of it is filled with minorities, and they have... As one myself, I find it a lot harder to find a job than most of my Swedish friends that have Swedish names that you see on their CV. And to fix, or try to help people with addictions, because that's also a big thing in the area, both drug and alcohol addictions. And yeah, just try to focus more on those problems rather than kind of drape them over and show like..."

Residents evaluation of Neighbourhood Management Team within Aspern Seestadt (Vienna)	
Resident	Evaluating quote
SEE-resident-1	"Some of the people in our building have been in touch and participated in some of the things, and that's been really good. [...] I mean for me it's just been really busy too that I haven't take part in things."
SEE-resident-2	"I think that this is something that the Stadteilmanagement does really well here. That they really want to get people involved. That want to hear the voices of the people living here. [...] For example, then at the front of the Wangari-Maathai-Platz. Besides the U-Bahn. That was originally, completely just asphalt. And then there was a lot of dissent. And a lot of, hey, what is this? It was named after the woman who planted trees, the Greenbelt movement. And it's, there's no green life here. There's nothing. And now, with people working hard, it's now, there are trees being planted. And it's, I think, partly due to people saying, hey, we want something different."
SEE-resident-2	"I think they have a difficult job. Because they're trying to gather a very diverse group of people. [...] I think, there are many groups of people living in Seestadt. It's a big enough minority that this language group should be represented. The things shouldn't just only be presented in German, and possibly English. But for example, in Turkish, or in one of the, some of the Baltic languages. Or something like this. To feel more open to people."
SEE-resident-2	"Only been there a few times in person. And it's been more in relation to social initiatives that have been there, for example. I think, yeah. It was, for example, Christmas time that they had a collection of where you could buy Advent. Or you could bring your Advent calendars that will then be donated to like a mother and child home. Or these kinds of things that you're showing support to other people. So, for that social aspect of being there. But I've not been in and had a conversation with anybody, about aspects of city planning or anything. Because it's also something that's not a super important theme for me, personally."
SEE-col.hou. group-2	"I think at the beginning, they were at the same level, and to find out and try out what people need. Maybe because there were just a few people who lived there, that made it easier. And now, it is like on another level. [...] It is more from top to down. In the beginning, it was really to find out what do people need, and then to try to make it in that way. Now, it comes more from 'up', they have some ideas and bring it to the people. Then the people can react." SP2: "Do you have an example of that?" SP1: "Maybe this ... were the jury is.. The money for the people. This is now... it is like a competition. So the people sit at home, and think about what they can do, because there is some money, and they can get it. This... I think this is the wrong side. It is better to let people come and tell them what they need, and then to have the money and find a way to... to make it possible."



# Quotes supporting explanatory variables of capability-centered practices

## Belonging to Chapter 5

Explanatory variables Aspern Seestadt (Vienna)		
Explanatory variable	Explanatory quote	
1	<p><b>Vienna has a tradition of already-existing Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung</b></p>	<p>“The City of Vienna has the tradition of Gebietsbetreuung. So, in all the districts that are getting refurbished or have some technical or social problems in housing, this has been a very successful program in Vienna for urban renewal in the last decades.” (SEE-developer-2)</p>
2	<p><b>The social department (MA25) of the City of Vienna has the capacity to commission, coordinate and evaluate Gebietsbetreuungen Stadterneuerung</b></p>	<p>“We have tools of communication, so every year in, I think November, they have to submit a program of what they want to do the follow year. And then we discuss it in a meeting that takes up to there or four hours every year, we discuss every project that they want to do. We give them feedback and sometimes we say that, like we... Sometimes we're fine with a project, sometimes we're not fine. That can also happen, and then there's of course, no funding for it and they have to think of something else, if it conflicts with our strategies.” (SEE-municipality-2) (MA25)</p>
3	<p><b>Selecting participants of Neighborhood Management through a public competition is common in Vienna</b></p>	<p>[Derived from planning documents]</p>
4	<p><b>The Neighborhood Management acts according to a task description that it agreed on with its commissioners</b></p>	<p>[Derived from planning documents]</p>
5	<p><b>The Neighborhood Management in Seestadt is seen as the communication channel between the developer's agency and residents</b></p>	<p>“Our goal is [...] to combine stakeholders in the field of planning, in the field of housing or developers, residential, but also some office developers or industrial developers that are our customers and we're talking to them, but we aren't in the role that we are talking directly to the new residents. Therefore, we need an organisation, and that was the other point of our intention and our main goal was to establish Stadtteilmanagement.” (SEE-developer-2)</p>
6	<p><b>The Neighborhood Management is seen as one of the operational strategies for social sustainability in Seestadt</b></p>	<p>“I'm there in the planning team and my responsibilities are project management for sustainability, environmental impact assessment, social sustainability, so Stadtteilmanagement, mobility and district development. So just like also coordinating function between different people here in 3420 and at Stadt Wien.” (SEE-developer-2)</p>

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Explanatory variables Aspern Seestadt (Vienna)		
Explanatory variable		Explanatory quote
7	<b>Seestadt is seen by its planners and developers as an urban laboratory for innovation and learning</b>	<p>“Aspern Seestadt is a good example for it because Aspern Seestadt per se has always been interpreted as kind of an urban laboratory for the smart city strategy, and that is why we have I think more innovative projects, more initiatives there in comparison with the city-wide average.” (SEE-mun.innovation-1)</p> <p>“Well, because Seestadt Aspern from the beginning understood itself as being an innovative and new kind of urban development, it wanted to do things better than usually at that time in Vienna.” (SEE-research-2)</p>
8	<b>Social sustainability is a basic concept in Viennese urban planning, e.g., it is one of the four criteria of housing competitions</b>	<p>“it is a core concept of planning in Vienna, this is why. You have this four basements of planning, and one is social sustainability. So you can't win any contest, building contest in Seestadt, if there is no social sustainability. And even the smart city concept has social sustainability aspect in Vienna, which is unique. Because you have this technical discussion, but because of Red Vienna and Social Vienna, SPÖ, this red, social aspect is written in everywhere. It doesn't mean that it always has the same meaning, but it is a basic concept.” (SEE-research-1)</p>
9	<b>Vienna has had a stable socio-democratic political climate for almost 100 years ('Red Vienna')</b>	<p>“I mean, the PSA is the strong player for social sustainability, because it's run by the City of Vienna. And people who are working there are also mainly part of the SPÖ, so the Socialist Party. So it's really red.” (SEE-research-1)</p> <p>“However, I think that especially social sustainability is also rather a recent thing. I think that sometimes because we're a red social democratic city, that people assume that we do that anyway, so that we really create strategies for it is rather recent.” (SEE-municipality-2)</p>
10	<b>Vienna's socio-democratic tradition is understood as that 'the state needs to take care of the residents' and not leave it to the market or residents themselves</b>	<p>“You know, Vienna has this tradition, or when you look very long back into history, we had the emperor, so it was all, everything very centralised. And the restriction for being self-organised was very high. The restriction for free speech or so, this was going back very, very late at the emperor time. And then we have this tradition in Vienna of social democratic politics that also was very – how should I say it? – caring, so protective. We do it for the people. They don't have to care themselves because they're workers, they don't have the time, but we, as a municipality, as a community, are dealing for themselves. In Austria, and especially Vienna, self-organised structures are not that traditional compared to Scandinavian countries. But that's my opinion, I can't prove it, but I would say that's one reason for it.” (SEE-developer-2)</p>
11	<b>Seestadt's developers and planners believed that something like the Neighborhood Management was needed for the project to succeed</b>	<p>“It was clear from the beginning on that we need them, so it is, I think, it's the second team of Stadtteilmanagement, so it's clear that they are only inside for two or three years, and then the team changes.” (SEE-municipality-1)</p>
12	<b>Seestadt is developed on land that is owned by the City of Vienna, for which non-monetary created money can be 'captured'</b>	<p>“So we as a land owner and development agency, of course we are interested that this project works out. Not only on a business scale, because this is already set, we are transforming a former special use land and the worth is sky rocketing. It is about community, about being crowded city parts, that can be an additional business centre that can be an additional district centre, and disattached to the neighbourhood, although there are the single family houses, and so on. So in the end, it should be a place, a new place of Vienna.” (SEE-developer-1)</p>

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Explanatory variables Aspern Seestadt (Vienna)		
Explanatory variable		Explanatory quote
13	<b>The Neighborhood Management is generously funded (compared to other Gebietsbetreuungen in Vienna) as it receives funding from both the City of Vienna and the development agency</b>	“And part of the revenues of the real estate agency, is dedicated, and earmarked, to finance infrastructure of public interest. First and foremost technical infrastructure, but also other infrastructure projects. There are some funds there that give some flexibility in the development of the agency, and that is also why the neighbourhood management is funded in a generous way, they have quite an ok budget, so to speak” (SEE-mun.innovation-1)
14	<b>Seestadt is located at a brownfield location in a pressing housing market, for which the value potential is high</b>	“the city said, ‘oke, this is a completely new neighbourhood, so we will have a completely new community there with no historical relation to each other, and that is why it is very important to have a neighbourhood management from the beginning on, trying to support the people there, to become a community, to get some local cultural work ongoing.” (SEE-mun.innovation-1)
15	<b>Seestadt has a large scale and a lot of political commitment</b>	“That is something that you need to be aware of, that the Seestadt project, of course, there is a lot of prestige, there is a lot of political investment, political commitment in the project, and that is why you find some things there that are not implemented at a full city-wide scale.” (SEE-mun.innov-1)
16	<b>Seestadt is located in an isolated area of Vienna</b>	“Before there were the houses, it was an unwritten area in the mental map of the city, of the citizens. So, it was hardly known and there was nothing. So, our decision as an urban development company was we have to bring this area into people’s minds. It has to get on the mental map of the Viennese people.” (SEE-developer-2)

Explanatory variables DrottningH (Helsingborg)		
Explanatory variable		Explanatory quote
1	<b>The project is led by an intra-departmental project team in which members prioritize DrottningH over their regular work</b>	Four hours every Friday. Every week. Everyone there, talking about all the topics. So, if you are not interested in, or concerned with a question, you had to be there and listen. And everyone was asked to come, to contribute. So, even if you haven’t got the skill, you could have an opinion. Or some lessons learned. Or you know the right person or anything. So, you could contribute. And after a while that works.” (DTH-municipality-4)
2	<b>The extensive involvement of residents in DrottningH is defined as a political decision</b>	“The city has made the decision: we need to involve the citizens in our urban development, that’s the decision. So it starts with the leadership, I think. Starts all the way down to different projects. It was a necessity, I think, to start with that, otherwise we would totally miss the outcome.” (DTH-municipality-1)
3	<b>The urban development project has a ‘slow’ duration of at least 25 years</b>	“The other thing is, I think the relationship between us and our owner. That we are close and that we are in this together for a long time, not just for four years or, but actually for 25 years and trying to, or having the ambition of this being seriously long term and a very broad approach to development.” (DTH-mun.hou.company-2)

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Explanatory variables DrottningH (Helsingborg)		
Explanatory variable	Explanatory quote	
4	<b>In Helsingborg, it is expected from the municipal housing company to do something extra for social development</b>	“There are examples in Sweden where that’s not the, that’s not what you expect of your housing company. That’s not where your, what your housing company is supposed to do, where the owner has another expectation and way of looking at and using their housing company. In the Helsingborg context, that’s expected of us. I don’t come to the table with a proposition that’s the socially, social type of investment and people or my board go, “What are you, what’s this?” Where somebody’s surprised. So we don’t have that sort of stretch to deal with. We are expected to do this, no one else is doing it so, and it’s on us to do it.” (DTH-mun.hou.company-2)
8	<b>DrottningH’s project leader insisted on biweekly meetings between all project team members to encourage integral solutions</b>	“I’m also chairman of this steering group. I had representatives from almost every department, and some of our companies also. Because I saw that we had to work together, culture, schools, labour market, elder care, building company, building department and so on. So, I wanted also to involve them or see this as we have a common challenge to do this. And Anders Landsbo, as you met, he created a [Swedish word] group with all representatives from different departments also. And that has been a success factor.” (DTH-municipality-5)
5	<b>The Dialogue Approach is seen as one of DrottningH’s operational strategies to improve people’s quality of life in the area</b>	“We don’t want to force inhabitants in changing their, the, their way of living. And how they want to live their lives. In Helsingborg, we think that we shall provide possibilities. But people have to choose that for themselves. So, so, the dialogue, the dialogue was very, very important. Since we’ve seen projects like this in Sweden. Where you go in with both those. Tear some townhouses down, and flats down. And you have riots, and you have conflicts. So, therefore, for the understanding of the project was very important.” (DTH-municipality-6)
6	<b>The City of Helsingborg has an ‘innovation culture’ that encourages project employees to experiment and make mistakes</b>	“Since our project started the context of everything is possible. Everyone should contribute. You should work together. Not in your department. Together. That’s what they say, now. Innovation depends on that. You have to be able to take information from other parts, different perspectives, and so on. In the city, all the ten thousand people in the city, who work in the city, have learned that. Three, four, five years ago, they have worked with that. So, we are much better today, to do that.” (DTH-municipality-4)
7	<b>DrottningH’s ambition for 50% social development and 50% spatial development is defined in a political decision</b>	“Our city council or municipality board, yeah, they had a direction decision written down. It was decided what the project needs to focus on and how. Start with the dialogue, invest in the area, engage citizens, work with physical and social redevelopment. So it was all written down before the project was started. So it made a direction for us further on to proceed with the project.” (DTH-municipality-1)

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Explanatory variables DrottningH (Helsingborg)	
Explanatory variable	Explanatory quote
8	<p><b>Politicians in Helsingborg were consensually convinced that it would be the wrong thing not to involve residents</b></p> <p>“They [conservative politicians] were behind what I told you before. That we should manage to develop this kind of area. Where more wealthy people can live. But also, develop that type of area. For all people in Drottninghög. So, they stood behind it. So, it has not really been an issue between the parties. Whether we should do this or not. They agreed on that. And they have agreed on it year after year after year. So, it's no problem. I have not had any political problems with this. And putting money into the project is not the problem then. Because they agree on it. They want to do it.” (DTH-municipality-4)</p> <p>“I would describe the Drottninghög development process as purple enough to feed both parties or both political... [...] It feeds the social demographic ideology, it also feeds the need of the actual, the blue sort of ideologies in the Swedish context, of course.” (DTH-mun.hou. company-2)</p>
9	<p><b>Some Swedish private investors find it important to invest in socially demanding areas</b></p> <p>“We are a company who would take social responsibility, so in every municipality we have a... We make an agreement with the municipality for social... not social housing, but social apartments. So it was the very nature for us to help Helsingborg municipality with this when they asked up, so it was not a big issue for us.” (DTH-priv.developer-1)</p> <p>“I mean, I would say, for example, Riksbyggen's biggest goal is of course to contribute to it [to social goals], but also to be able to, in a long term, earn money from it. And we don't do that if we are not raising the standards in the whole area, so we need to get rid of the crimes or minimize the crimes, to minimize the unemployment and so on.” (DTH-priv.developer-2)</p>
10	<p><b>The City of Helsingborg wanted to show through DrottningH that it cares about all its citizens</b></p> <p>“Oceanhamnen? That is a totally different area where we start from the beginning to build new houses. And it's very near the sea and so on, so we wanted to both develop a new area near the sea, and at the same time start up a process in a very poor area, to show our citizens that we care about everyone in Helsingborg.” (DTH-municipality-5)</p> <p>“They thought that these two projects was so, were so important for the city. They were sort of identity for the city. We wanted, in the city, to show that we could, in the same time develop an area where there is nothing.” (DTH-municipality-4)</p>
11	<p><b>DrottningH's planners and developers believed that developing socially challenging areas is not possible without engaging residents</b></p> <p>“In areas which are challenging, it's a must, I would say. It's not unique. That's how we need to work otherwise it's not possible.” (DTH-priv.developer-2)</p> <p>“But in Drottninghög, we've had three thousand people living there. Their lives are there. We have to be connected with them. And do the things that we do, together with them. We can't just come there and do things. That will be wrong things then.” (DTH-municipality-4)</p> <p>“The dialogue, the dialogue was very, very important. Since we've seen projects like this in Sweden. Where you go in with both those. Tear some townhouses down, and flats down. And you have riots, and you have conflicts. So, therefore, for the understanding of the project was very important” (DTH-municipality-6)</p>

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Explanatory variables DrottningH (Helsingborg)		
Explanatory variable	Explanatory quote	
12	<b>After some years of development, planners and developers realized that DrottningH's social development should get more attention</b>	"Because we had an intense urban, city development. We are building development... It was intense, a lot of houses were built, a lot of houses were renovated and it still raises that question, everyone raises it, our decision makers and politicians: ok, do we see any progress within... of the tenants. The tenants that are living there, are they getting better life conditions, is the life quality improving, are more coming down to employment? And for that we see a slow change." (DTH-municipality-1)
13	<b>The City of Helsingborg's departments prioritize their regular budgets for DrottningH</b>	"Palle, our boss, he gathered a meeting early in the project. Where he had all his directors. And then he pointed out and tell them, now I challenge you. You should all prioritize Drottninghög. I won't accept that you don't prioritize your work in Drottninghög. And you should do it together. And Anders is the leader. [...] The driving forces are different. Because they are measured in different ways. You could be measured by how much land you sell. I can be measured by how many people getting work. That doesn't combine. But the thing is to discuss all these same things together. That's why we had this special meeting." (DTH-municipality-4)
14	<b>The municipal housing company is able to accept short-term losses for long-term benefits</b>	"And being, having loans on Drottninghög so much that looking 10 years ahead we will have made a profit. It's not a big profit, but it is a profit, by doing these here and now not so sound financial investments for the long term benefits. [...] So it's a project-by-project, always is park-by-park. It's investment-by-investment. [...] So by keeping the budget or the financial issues separate, so we have one budget, the city planning department has one budget, the employment office or department has one budget, and pouring money into developing Drottninghög piece-by-piece, we can avoid having this, an overall project budget scrutinized and pick that. Because it is such a long term approach... ..that's the most sort of long term way for us to invest also. That's what we usually do." DTH-mun.hou.company-2)
15	<b>Drottninghög had low property values for which the potential value creation is high</b>	"We can see a yield development that's more positive on Drottninghög than it is on an average area like Drottninghög. So that's the way we argue and tried to, that's also something we were trying to spread actually." (DTH-mun.hou.company-2)
16	<b>Drottninghög is developed by the owners of the land</b>	"Just on the other side of the street, it [the area] has quite similar problems, but the ownership structure is totally different. [...]. So much money that's invested here by both Helsingborgshem but also the city and the private companies, that it's not possibility in the other areas. So I'm working with some kind of planning program for another part of the city, where you only have these owner occupied associations and some private. residential, rental companies. And it's much more difficult to coordinate and nobody wants to pay" (DTH-municipality-3)
17	<b>Drottninghög is considered the socially weakest area in Helsingborg</b>	"We have about seven or eight areas that we have to develop. Perhaps Drottninghög back in 2010, 2011 was the poorest area. And the houses in Drottninghög, they really needed to be rebuilt. So there was a lot... And it was a rather small area, it was... We thought that was a good area to start with." (DTH-municipality-5)

# Code book

This code book includes the final codes that were used in Atlas.TI to analyze the interview transcripts. Depending on theoretical the concept, the codes either derived from the theory (i.e. concept-driven) or from the transcript content (i.e., data driven).

Theoretical concept	Coded theme	Data- or concept-driven	Used for interviews	Used in chapter
Social sustainability goal	Diversity	Data-driven	Professionals Buiksloterham	3
	Inclusion			
	Sense of community			
	Liveability			
	Social interaction			
	Active inhabitants			
	Self-building inhabitants			
	Social sustainability			
	Prevention of nuisance			
	Social circularity			
	Circularity			
	Living lab			
	Urban transformation			
Operational interventions	Mixed urban design inclusive of different tenure types and social groups	Data-driven	Professionals Buiksloterham	3
	Collective gardens where home-owners share ownership of the garden			
	Collective facilities rooms with shared laundry service in the respective social housing blocks			
	Collective WhatsApp group for tenants of social housing blocks			
	Coaches (health care professionals) in the collective facilities rooms			

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Theoretical concept	Coded theme	Data- or concept-driven	Used for inter-views	Used in chapter
Urban functionings	Going to school, or work at an accessible distance from home	Concept-driven	Residents Buiksloterham	3
	Transporting yourself from home to another place			
	Making use of parks, squares, playgrounds in the urban area examined			
	Doing shopping (besides groceries) in one's own neighbourhood			
	Enjoying leisure according to one's own preference in the urban area examined			
	Doing sports in one's own neighbourhood			
	Participating in cultural activities in one's own neighbourhood			
	Engaging with own social contacts in the neighbourhood			
	Feeling part of a community			
	Interacting with neighbors			
	Identifying oneself with the neighbourhood			
	Joining groups or initiatives in one's own neighbourhood			
	Being informed by the local government			
	Taking initiative for one's own neighbourhood			
Influencing the urban environment in one's own neighbourhood				
Personal conversion factors	Time available	Data-driven	Residents Buiksloterham	3
	Preferences, values, and character			
	Corresponding interests			
	Confidence about one's own competences			
Social conversion factor	Connection to other persons or social groups	Data-driven	Residents Buiksloterham	3
	Identification with others			
	Natural process			
Spatial conversion factor	Architectural form of building block	Data-driven	Residents Buiksloterham	3
	Attractive interior design			

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Theoretical concept	Coded theme	Data- or concept-driven	Used for inter-views	Used in chapter
<b>Organizational conversion factor</b>	Central contact point for residents to approach for questions or ideas	Data-driven	Residents Buiksloterham	3
	Reflective attitude or professionals			
	'Right tone' of professionals			
	Long-term consistency of professionals on site			
	Timing of interventions (e.g., at the start of moving in)			
	External party as intermediary between residents			
	Non-occupation by professionals in collective spaces			
	Sharing professionally-gained information with residents			
	Personal encouragement of resident ideas			
	External control of resident initiatives (e.g., control of sharing concepts)			
<b>Implementation community spaces</b>	Community spaces Buiksloterham&Co ('urban activator building' & shared facility spaces)	Data-driven	Professionals Buiksloterham	4
	Community spaces Nieuw Crooswijk (multifunctional school & coffee café)	Data-driven	Professionals Nieuw Crooswijk	4
<b>Governance situation affecting implementation</b>	Governance situation implementation community spaces Buiksloterham&Co	Data-driven	Professionals Buiksloterham	4
	Governance situation affecting implementation community spaces Nieuw Crooswijk	Data-driven	Professionals Nieuw Crooswijk	4
<b>Capability conversion place interventions</b>	Experiences place interventions Buiksloterham&Co	Data-driven	Residents Buiksloterham	4
	Experiences place interventions Nieuw Crooswijk	Data-driven	Residents Buiksloterham	4
<b>Capability-centered activities</b>	SEE_activities (activities of Neighbourhood Management Team) DTH_activities (activities of Dialogue Approach)	Data-driven	Professionals Seestadt (SEE) & DrottningH (DTH)	5
<b>Element of governance situation</b>	SEE_participants SEE_position SEE_control SEE_information SEE_scope SEE_funding SEE_location characteristics DTH_participants DTH_position DTH_control DTH_information DTH_scope DTH_funding DTH_location characteristics	Concept-driven	Professionals Seestadt (SEE) & DrottningH (DTH)	5

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Theoretical concept	Coded theme	Data- or concept-driven	Used for inter-views	Used in chapter
Explanatory variable	DTH_Intra-departmental project team	Data-driven	Professionals Seestadt & DrottningH	5
	DTH_Political decision about involvement residents			
	DTH_Slow duration of 25 years			
	DTH_Expectations from municipal housing companies			
	DTH_Bikweekly meetings for all project members			
	DTH_Dialogue Approach as operational strategy for quality of life			
	DTH_Innovation culture			
	DTH_50% social and 50% physical development			
	DTH_Political consensus the right thing to do			
	DTH_Social awareness private investors			
	DTH_DrottningH as showcase project			
	DTH_Belief that developing without involving residents not possible			
	DTH_Growing awareness social dimension			
	DTH_Prioritization departemental budgets for project			
	DTH_Municipal housing company for long-term interest			
	DTH_High value creation			
	DTH_Developed by land owners			
	DTH_Socially weakest area			
	SEE_Tradition of Gebietsbetreuungen			
	SEE_MA25 capacity to coordinate			
	SEE_Public competitions common in Vienna			
	SEE_Task description			
	SEE_Communication channel			
	SEE_NM as operational strategy social sustainability			
	SEE_Seestadt urban laboratory			
	SEE_Social sustainability as a basic concept			
	SEE_Stable socio-democratic political climate			
	SEE_State takes care of citizens			
	SEE_Belief that NM was needed for success			
	SEE_Land owned by municipality			
SEE_Generous funding				
SEE_High value potential/brownfield				
SEE_Large scale and political commitment				
SEE_Isolated area of Vienna				



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# Curriculum vitae

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Céline Janssen is an urban researcher with a design background. After being trained in Architecture (BSc) and Urbanism (MSc) at Delft University of Technology, her interests moved towards research into social values, citizen-oriented approaches, and planning and governance in complex urban development situations. She has been working for the Foundation for Area Development Knowledge at the same university whose mission is to advance the interplay between science and practice in the field of area-based urban development. In 2019 she started as the first PhD candidate within this institute.

While based in Delft, Céline is connected to various national and international networks. In 2022, she received a scholarship as a visiting researcher at the University of Vienna at the Platform The Challenge of Urban Futures. Earlier, as a Masters-student in 2015, she received an EU Erasmus scholarship for studying one semester at Istanbul Technical University which she extended with an internship at an architectural and urban design office in Istanbul. During her PhD, Céline has actively participated in global networks via the Human Development and Capability Association (HDCA), in European networks via the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) conferences, and in Dutch networks via Urban Land Institute Netherlands, Dutch Green Building Council, and various other informal working groups. She has also co-organized various (inter)national seminars and thematic sessions around the topic of this dissertation.

Céline has been involved in teaching Bachelor courses on Academic Writing and a Master course on Social Sustainability in Human Habitats at TU Delft. She has also supervised graduation students of the Master Management in the Built Environment. Céline is currently involved in teaching a course for the Master Metropolitan Analysis, Design, and Engineering (MADE) by Delft University of Technology and Wageningen University & Research at AMS.

Parallel to her academic work, Céline orients herself towards urban development practice in the Netherlands in multiple ways. In line with her PhD research, she has performed advisory activities for the municipality of Leeuwarden and has been part of expert panels for different organizations. In addition, she writes blogs and popular-scientific articles for platforms such as Socialezaken.nl, and Dearchitect.nl, but particularly for Gebiedsontwikkeling.nu where she has been part of the editorial



team. As a freelancer, she was a book coordinator and editor for the Dutch School of Landscape Architecture in 2019-2020. Currently, Céline is appointed as an advisor in the assessment committee for the research-by-design program on the Just City at the Creative Industries Fund.

# List of publications

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## Peer-reviewed journal papers

Janssen, C. Daamen, T.A., & Verheul. (2023). Governing Capabilities, not Places: How to Understand Social Sustainability Implementation in Urban Development. *Urban Studies*. 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980231179554>

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24#01

# Developing places for human capabilities

Understanding how social sustainability goals are governed into urban development projects

**Céline Janssen**

This dissertation develops an understanding towards governing social sustainability goals into area-based urban development projects. It draws on Amartya Sen's Capability Approach to construct a capability-centered evaluation of how institutionalized governance processes around these projects ultimately affect people's freedoms to do the things they value in their urban living environment. Presenting case studies from the Netherlands, Sweden and Austria, the approach adopted in this dissertation reveals the unique ways in which different individuals interpret urban social sustainability and convert spatial resources into personal capabilities. The research uncovers the governance elements and institutional conditions around urban development projects that enable or constrain resource-to-capability conversions. It shows that governing social sustainability goals into urban development projects is a balancing act between reflexive governance action on the one hand, and an institutionalization of principles, actor responsibilities, and funding provision on the other hand. Ultimately, this dissertation argues that, to steer towards urban social sustainability, urban development practices can be improved by adopting an approach that is not merely focused on spatial improvements, but takes the equal expansion of human capabilities as its point of departure.

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