

READY FOR TAKE-OFF? PROCESSES OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

This chapter argues that the process dynamic of social innovation depends on the societal domain where the social innovation is anchored and on the mode and intensity of interaction. Nine types of social innovation, derived from the process dynamics point of view, are presented and discussed.

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SI-DRIVE is about the relationship between social innovation and social change. The process dimension of social innovations is one of the five key dimensions of SI-DRIVE and concerns the creation and structuring of institutions as well as behavioral change. In theoretical terms, the process dimension asks for the mechanisms that bridge between individual social innovation initiatives (micro level) and social change (macro level).

The range of social innovations that have been studied in SI-DRIVE's global mapping and case studies seem to be very heterogeneous and experimental. Flourishing, stagnating and withering activities can be found in all policy and practice fields. This broad range of social innovation activities corresponds to different ways of diffusion or dissemination of social innovation. Contributing to an increased understanding of the processes of social innovation, we have to transcend the limits of the single social innovation activity and study

the interplay between different social innovation projects and actors from different social fields, supporters as well as opponents. Further on, we have to avoid overly simplification in reducing the process dynamics to scaling or imitation.

In this chapter we present a more differentiated view on the process dynamics of social innovation. Based on the results of the global mapping and the SI-DRIVE case studies, we start with two basic assumptions.

First, **process dynamics depend on the societal domain** where the social innovation is anchored. We concentrate on three dominating societal domains: the civil society, the economy as well as politics. When we talk about societal domains we see that each societal domain is driven by a specific logic, however, aspects of the other societal domains can be found as well.

Societal field Interaction	Economy/Market	Civil Society	Politics
Fragmented/Niche	I Company based	IV Temporary Niche	VII Experimental
Fragmented but partially framed	II Entrepreneurial	V Community based	VIII Embedded
Societal/Global	III Disruptive	VI Global movement based	IX Top Down

Types of social innovations from a process dynamics perspective

Second, **process dynamics are often grounded on the mode and the intensity of interaction.** The modes of interaction are the classical ones: competition, cooperation and hierarchy. The intensity of interaction depends on the degree of exchange between the social innovation activity and on the strength of the general idea that is behind those activities.

In addition, we include further aspects like the amount of professionalization of social innovation activities, the societal dynamic behind those activities (digitalization, migration, demographic change, environmental and energy issues), and the role of politics.

The table presents the nine types of social innovations derived from a process dynamics view. The nine boxes within this table stand for the process dynamic that results from the interplay between the two dimensions. It is important to keep in mind that these are ideal types and in reality there are many examples that stand in between these types and in the course of development, social innovation activities can move from one box to another.

Referring to the different societal domains, we observe three types that are anchored in the **economic domain**.

I Company based social innovations are driven by companies and focus on the internal structure of the company. Patterns of implementation are fragmented, meaning that companies normally implement isolated solutions. Exchange or common platforms are marginal, political support can be found only in very few cases. The driving forces behind such activities are demographic change, shortage of qualified labour and economic pressure. The process dynamic is low, maybe slowly rising, because of ongoing pressure. This type is best documented in the practice field of workplace innovation (see article on Workplace Innovation as an important driver of Social Innovation).

II Entrepreneurial driven social innovations are based on a new balance between economic and social goals. They follow professional business models and aim at least at limited scaling. The interaction is competitive and market driven, however, does not only take place via prices, but also via reputation. In spite of competition, entrepreneurial social innovations are framed by several platforms, associations or networks across geographic boundaries. The dynamic is different from country to country and depends on factors like the welfare system and the traditional division of labour between state, market and civil society, the specific legal frame for social led enterprises, the social innovation ecosystem as well as funding opportunities.

III Disruptive social innovations are based on digital business models and are often financed by venture capital. They are typically associated with the mode of the shared economy that is based on sharing and marketing individually owned goods. They are disruptive as they act against given political

standards or regulations that are seen as a hindering factor. Interaction is market driven and competitiveness is based on a large community, that renders scaling essential. Because of strong competition the organization of common platforms and exchange between the social innovators is very limited. Competition, partially on a global scale, and digitalization are the driving forces behind a high dynamic, at least at the beginning of the business' activities. In the long run, the dynamic depends on further (de)regulation and the power of established actors. This type is typical for social innovation activities in the practice field of car sharing.

Three types of social innovation are anchored in the **domain of civil society**:

IV Temporary niche stands for a type of social innovation that is limited in time and space. It is driven by often highly engaged actors who aim at solving a specific local problem. Individual engagement is dominating, personal social networks are used. Pragmatism or muddling through goes hand in hand with a low degree of professionalization and with high support from volunteers. Political support is limited and often remains informal. Interaction with other social innovation initiatives is limited and there is no reference to a global societal trend. In consequence the dynamic is often limited. As far as scaling or upgrading takes place, this type shifts to type two when it becomes marketed or to type seven when it achieves reliable political support. Examples for this type can be found in many practice fields, e.g. in displacement and refugees or new models of care.

V Community based social innovations have a strong focus on self-organization, in some cases they aim at strengthening local communities. They are based on a broader local community and the organization of the network is in need for a certain degree of professionalization. Local politicians are often involved, financial support by government funding is used as far as possible. Action is taking place at local level, however, communication strategies are launched from time to time. Often they are backed by a global societal trend (e.g. environment, renewable energy, local food) and to some extent; by formal or informal, national or global networks that provide orientation. The local dynamic is high and stable in the long run; spill-over for instance from autonomous energy supply to local food is possible. An overall self-enforcing dynamic is an untapped potential so far and depends on political factors (decentralization or regionalization, funding, regulation, and so on). This type of social innovation is characteristic for practice fields in the area of environment and energy (local production of energy, energy services, repair, re-use, and recycling, sustainable primary production of food).

VI Global movement based social innovation is anchored in civil society and is not directly a result of SI-DRIVE's global mapping or case study activity. Civil societies differ across countries and the notion of "multiple modernity" takes into

account that there is no common global way to modernity. Nevertheless, there are some social innovations that become adapted all around the world. Cooperative modes of car sharing, activities to protect and empower women, local food and local energy supply are just a few examples. Depending on the state of a civil society as well as on regional or national cultures, these activities are implemented in very different ways; however, there is always a common idea behind such activities. Imitation, learning, and adaptation are the key modes of interaction. This type of process dynamic differs from previously discussed types as it does not stand for a single project, but for a group of projects that are receiving increasing attention. So far, the dynamic is growing but still limited in scope. Maybe the future dynamic of those social innovations depends on further modes of informal and flexible interaction in the way Appadurai [1] calls it “cellular”. Some impression of the potential of this type can be found in the practice fields of community capacity building and integrated care.

Three further types are anchored in the **political domain**.

VII Experimental social innovations are based on funding programs, are organized as projects, and are limited in time and scope. Those funding programs cover a broad range of activities and a certain degree of professionalization is essential for the initiatives due to formal conditions and terms of the calls. The projects stand for themselves and are fragmented; interaction is very weak as an organized exchange between the different social innovation projects does not occur in most instances. Therefore, we cannot expect widespread dynamics from this type of social innovation. Nevertheless, there are some projects that provide strategies and the instruments for that are embedded in a practice field, implying that this activity shifts to type eight.

VIII Embedded social innovation stands for a type of social innovation that is more or less an integrated part of a specific practice field. This type of social innovation is based on financial resources from government. This could relate to specific calls to provide new solutions in a certain practice field, or resources are provided in the context of implementation. In the first step, social innovation activities of this type are fragmented, as in type seven, however, if successful they give impulse to strengthen the welfare system in compensating for its weaknesses. There is a certain dynamic as these social innovation activities have

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the potential to become an established part of the welfare system. In this context, professionalization and the development of a business model are crucial and we can expect that there often is a shift to type two (entrepreneurial social innovation). Typical examples can be found in the practice fields of youth unemployment, mobility of vulnerable groups, reduction of educational disadvantages, providing examples and inspiration, and last, integrated care.

IX Top-down social innovations are based on central political programs that combine incentives, support, nudging, regulation and prohibitions. The mode of interaction is hierarchical, but the dynamic depends on the acceptance and the active involvement of the people addressed. In some cases policy provides the impulses, a frame for the practice field, and enables the rise of activities from civil society and/or economy. The best known example for a failed top down social innovation is the prohibition of alcoholic drinks in the USA in the 1930s, and more recent examples are non-smoking incentives and regulations. In our case studies we find examples in the practice fields of income support as well as in centralized countries like China or Russia.

Summing up, we have to be aware that these types are ideal types and the matrix is static in nature. The examples studied have shown that social innovation activities can move from one type to another in the course of their life-cycle, and in particular between the different columns. For instance, car sharing is rooted in small-scale, local projects of self-organization and nowadays can be considered an entrepreneurial if not disruptive business. This includes the change from civil society or policy embeddedness towards market driven activities. Further on, there is a potential to shift from a fragmented niche – via more interactive or framed social innovations – to a global dynamic. Most of our case studies are in the two upper rows, most likely as the majority still is of a rather young age. There are general trends in social innovation but the dynamic take-off would require that the potential of social innovation is exploited systematically in the context of the related practice and policy fields. The challenge thus is to move into the boxes of the third row in order to unfold the potential of social innovations. This move can take place in civil society; it can be market driven, or part of policy strategies.

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