transformative social innovation theory

Social Innovation Resourcing Strategies and Transformation Pathways:

A First-cut Typology

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Abstract

The paper looks at the development dynamics of social innovation processes (Haxeltine *et al*, 2016) addressing these from the perspective of their resourcing requirements. It distinguishes between financial and other kinds of resource needs and begins from the observation that, even if the financial needs of social innovation processes are low, social innovation still incurs some financial costs. These will increase if a social innovation activity is to grow. Strategies and associated business models for covering financial costs must therefore be developed if initiatives are to sustain and grow. This holds implications for the transformative potentials of social innovation. Each solution entails different tensions, risks and ways of addressing these. Each holds implications for mission, governance, organisational culture and relations with external systems and actors. Each solution therefore maps onto different and distinct development pathways, affecting what kinds of contribution to societally transformative change the social innovation process can make. The paper develops a simple typology of pathways to help practitioners understand the different options and make informed decisions. The paper points out nevertheless that there is inevitably an element of compromise implied in securing a funding stream. Some degree of hybridisation of social innovation processes, initiatives and organisations is inevitable in the search for financial sustainability and is likely to entail the emergence of some form of social enterprise activity and some modification of original transformative ambition. The social innovation process is transformed through hybridization and with this, also, the nature of its transformative potential (Weaver et al, in press).

Keywords
Transformative social innovation
Development dynamics; pathways; journeys
Resourcing structure of social innovations; financial resources; non-financial resources
Resourcing strategies; sustaining social innovations; business models; social entrepreneurship
Hybridization; transformation of social innovation initiatives;

Research Highlights

- The paper identifies different strategies that social innovation initiatives and organisations can take toward sustaining and growing. These strategies map onto different and distinct development 'pathways'.
- Pathways are distinct vectors for change in particular directions involving coherent alignment of organisational logic, culture and modus operandi with one or more (evolving) business models.
- Hybridization can be expected in the search for financial sustainability. It entails the emergence of some form of social enterprise activity and change in the nature of any transformative potential.

1. Introduction

The present paper was specifically developed as an input to the TRANSIT project workshop on Monitoring and Resourcing held February 16-17 2017 in Maastricht (NL). The working paper is partly informed by research undertaken within the TRANSIT project covering reviews of literature, empirical work and progress in developing and testing theoretical propositions for a prototype theory of transformative social innovation, but also by an extensive collaboration of the co-authors outside the remit of the TRANSIT project. Taking the resourcing needs of social innovations as an entry point for data collection and analysis, the paper seeks to structure our emerging understanding of social innovation process dynamics and to propose a typology of development pathways as a framework for further analysis. The paper seeks to:

1. Establish typologies of resources of different kind that may be required at different stages in the life and development of a social innovation organization/initiative; map from where and from which actors these are or could be obtained.
2. Outline the 'opportunity landscape' for transformative change of societal systems institutions and the transformative visions and ambitions of different actors. Key questions include: Which kinds of transformative change are (currently) interesting for which actors and why? Which social innovations could contribute to these and how?
3. Clarify which types of resourcing strategies and business models are associated with which types of development (and transformative) pathway.

The paper first sets out some background about the TRANSIT project and its remit. It then reports empirical insights about resourcing needs and strategies of social innovation organisations and initiatives. These derive from analysis of detailed case studies of 20 different social innovations (Jorgenson et al, 2016). For each social innovation, the case studies describe local manifestations in two countries and their associated networking or membership organization. This descriptive exercise is supplemented by an analysis of so-called 'critical turning points'; i.e. key moments or events in the development dynamics of each of a set of (four) local manifestations. These data have been analysed transversally to derive insights about development dynamics, using the cross-cutting themes of resourcing, monitoring, learning and governance to offer different perspectives on the data and provide different lenses and probes for analysis. In addition, this paper draws on work undertaken by the authors outside the remit of the TRANSIT project, which uses the success case method (Birkerhoff, 2003) to analyse factors in successful manifestations of social innovations (Marks et al, 2017; Weaver et al, in press).

There is a brief discussion of the 'opportunity context' (see also: Weaver, 2017; Weaver, Boyle and Marks, 2017; Skropke and Weaver, 2017) provided by the wider operating conditions for social innovation organisations. Contexts vary markedly across geographies and time, but there are some common themes across societies, sectors and systems; for example, the inherited models of welfare capitalism, health care, criminal justice, education and achieving social and economic inclusion through full employment are all increasingly under strain. There are many related trends acting as drivers: economic downturn, austerity policies and funding cut backs, policies to reduce the role and responsibility of government as a direct service provider, demographic changes (ageing population, increased migration) environmental changes, technological change and increasing expectations, etc.

The 'opportunity context' is relevant for identifying transformation targets, key external actors, their interests, their goals and how these interface with social innovation. This discussion of 'opportunity context' also brings us to discuss empirical insights from the perspective of different actors and their interests in social innovations. In the perspective that this paper takes, actors of particular relevance are those within social innovation organisations who have societally transformative ambitions (Wittmayer et al, 2015) and those outside social innovation organisations with interests in transformative change who also play roles in SII/SIO resourcing and evaluation.

While each of the cross-cutting themes is distinct and can be analysed individually, there is also a strong interface between themes. There are especially strong relationships between resourcing and measuring/evaluation (Weaver and Kemp, 2017). This strong relationship owes partly to the conditions attaching to money coming from some sources and how this is accounted for and justified. The present paper describes different possible forms and sources of funding and associated conditions as a basis for highlighting that tensions and risks can arise among actors within individual social innovations and between social innovation actors and external actors. These can be related to conditions attaching to funding or to the very presence of money. Money implies a form of social relationship that is anathema to the spirit and principles of some social innovations. It can also be an instrument of control and it holds a well-known potential to corrupt.

This provides for making a first cut attempt to distinguish different sustaining and scaling strategies that social innovations use and to associate these (and related business plans) with different tensions, risks, and transformative pathways and potentials, which forms a conceptual framework for evaluating different resourcing strategies. The paper provides some empirical examples but a 'sister' paper (Marks et al 2017) and a book chapter (Weaver et al, in press) provide extra examples. A short review of some innovations and current initiatives in the area of resourcing is also made. One such innovative funding instrument, Pay-for-Performance Bonds or Social Impact Bonds, is the subject of a separate short working paper (Marks and Weaver, 2017).

2. The TRANSIT Project and Its Remit

The TRANSIT project is charged with developing theory and empirics relating to the claim that social innovations (processes, initiatives and organisations) have potential to contribute to societal transformation. We define social innovation as a process of change in social relations, involving new ways of doing, organizing, framing and/or knowing that challenges, alters, replaces or provides alternatives to dominant institutions and structures (Haxeltine et al, 2017). Social innovation processes are carried through as initiatives, often of social innovation organisations, which may be informally constituted or have some formal legal status. Social innovations practised by many local manifestations are often organised in mutually supportive networks and may have one or more membership organisations at regional or national levels. They may also be networked internationally.

Social innovations are responses to perceived gaps and deficiencies in established arrangements and provisions. They respond by deploying 'unconventional' modus operandi and different from mainstream organizational logics. Their organizations cultures (e.g. management and governance systems) are typically less formal than those of mainstream organizations. While there is a wide spread of social innovation organizations and initiatives across the spectrum of 'radicalism' and while mainstream actors are most likely to be able to work with social innovations that are not hostile to the mainstream (for example, those with ambitions to build complementary social infrastructures and institutions as alternatives or supports to mainstream institutions), there is still likely to be significant dissonance between the modus operandi and organizational logics of mainstream organizations and those even of non-confrontational social innovations.

This often manifests most glaringly in different approaches of internal and external actors to producing and measuring social impact. Internal concerns of social innovation practitioners focus on process. Their approaches to delivering social impact tend to emphasise an asset-based approach to interventions. This stresses positive attributes, such as the assets a person brings, what a person can do, what a person can contribute, etc. External concerns focus on the cost-effectiveness of interventions (the social return on investment). This typically involves establishing a base-line condition from which to measure improvements delivered by interventions. Baselines are established from a 'deficits' perspective, which stresses the needs and problems of people, what they lack, what they cannot do, why they need help, etc. The 'cultures' of social innovation organisations and the 'cultures' of external actors can be not only very different, but fundamentally incompatible (Weaver and Kemp, 2017).

Nevertheless, the transformative potential of social innovations also rests on these differences of culture and approach. The claim has been made that social innovations hold a potential to contribute to societally transformative change. This claim arises in the context of a growing number of challenges facing society some of which are symptoms of dominant ways and forms of societal organisation, which makes them difficult to address within the context of prevailing institutions and makes usual approaches to finding solutions less suitable or ineffective. The claim is based on the idea that, rather than solutions to societal challenges being developed and introduced top down, solutions are better coming from bottom-up as social innovations developed by those most directly facing challenges and through processes of self-organisation.

Social innovations are typically critical of some aspects of societal organisation. The dominant forces in the development of socio-economic relations over many decades have been the twin forces of marketization and bureaucratisation, as identified by Polanyi (1944). Many social innovation initiatives and their proponents present as a counterforce to these trends and the negative aspects of them. One way or another they seek to offer a counter-trend toward the (re)humanising of socio-economic relations (Kemp et al, 2016).

The influence of social innovation initiatives can go beyond what they achieve locally. But this depends on their sustaining and scaling. In turn, this depends on their securing favourable changes in the framing conditions for their operation, especially in terms of external governance (Pel et al, 2015; Pel et al, 2016) and financial innovation (Marks and Weaver, 2017). The processes through which sustaining and scaling might be secured are of interest, because there are different possible pathways for this. These are linked to the resourcing strategies and business models of the social innovations. Different pathways present different trade-offs. In turn, how these are managed holds implications for the kinds of transformative change to which social innovations might contribute.

In exploring the claim that social innovation initiatives hold a potential to contribute to transformative societal change, the TRANSIT project holds open the possibility that change can come in many shades and can be negative as well as positive and that how change is viewed also depends on perspective. A transformation that is seen from one perspective to be positive can be seen negatively from the perspective of others.

Some relevant questions of interest to the project about the contribution of social innovation initiatives in transforming society and its institutions and structures therefore include:

1. Which social innovation initiatives and organisations hold ambition or potential to contribute to transformative change?
2. In relation to transforming which existing societal institutions and structures or to filling which existing gaps and deficiencies in these?
3. How might these be transformed; i.e. in what ways and through what processes?
4. What constitutes or contributes to the transformative potential of an SIO/SII and what factors contribute to their empowered or disempowerment in respect to this potential?

Sustaining and scaling

The concern of the project – societal transformation – makes one thing very clear. In order to contribute to societal change, social innovations or their influence must go beyond the level of individual local manifestations. They must be taken up more widely or their influence must somehow spread by scaling-out or scaling-up. The project is therefore focussed on processes that relate to the developmental dynamics of social innovations that have potential or ambition to contribute to societal level transformation; i.e. large scale, irreversible change.

Sustaining the initiative is the primary objective of social innovation actors. If they also have transformative ambition they must seek to go to scale. In principle scaling is achievable in different ways and combinations of ways, including by:

1. Growing individual initiatives, so that they involve more people in their activities
2. Intensifying activity levels, so that activities are carried out more regularly and people are involved in them more often
3. Extending the scope of the initiative to new areas of activity and new challenges, so that the range of purposes and people served by the initiative increases
4. Replicating initiatives; i.e. developing more local initiatives
5. Extending the initiative over wider geographical areas
6. Embedding the initiative in the operations of other organisations, whilst maintaining own identity
7. Having another organisation adopt and internalise the initiative and carry it to scale, etc.

In these processes, there is scope for the social innovation process, the social innovation organisations and proponents, and artefacts – such as values, practices, mechanisms, activities –

to remain true to the original intent, ambition and design of the social innovation or to divert from these (Pel et al, 2016).

The development dynamics of social innovation initiatives and organisations takes us to questions concerning what resources social innovation initiatives require at different stages in their development, the different strategies and business models used to obtain resources, and the impact of resourcing strategies and business plans on the social innovation and its transformation journey.

3. Insights to Date about Resourcing

Box 1 sets out some key insights the authors draw from TRANSIT empirical work on the theme of 'resourcing'. The remainder of this section elaborates on these and draws related insights.

The structure of the resourcing requirement of most social innovations is different from most commercial organisations (Weaver, 2015). Typically, social innovations make use of 'free' and neglected resources, which are leveraged into productive use with relatively little in the way of financial capital or monetary support for day-to-day operations. They use mostly abundant and non-rival resources that have been rejected or dismissed by the market economy as being without commercial value. They often make intangible resources into assets and use the freely-given time and skills of individuals and groups to carry out their activities and create assets (new resources) useful to the initiative, such as software, webpages and knowledge/experience relevant to the initiative. Many social innovation initiatives are specifically directed toward 'de-resourcing'; i.e. making do with less, sharing, creating fulfilment and wellbeing through activities than need no material resources, etc.

Box 1: Some 'key' insights about resourcing of social innovations
• Social innovations have different from usual structures to their resourcing needs: they use mostly abundant and non-rival resources and have relatively low requirements for scare and rival resources. • Even so, there is a complementarity among resource needs: a lack of secure base-level funding even at low levels of requirement (i.e. to cover money costs of operating and to obtain some key skills, such as to pay part-time local organisers) is destabilising and diversionary. It frustrates possibilities to leverage otherwise wasted resources into productive use. • As social innovations grow the structure of their resourcing needs changes. They are likely to need to perform new organisational and managerial functions as well as incur financial costs of scaling-out and/or scaling up. • Typically, they encounter funding and skill gaps and a constraining legal and regulatory framework. Innovations are needed in finance, external governance, and the science system if social innovations are to go to scale. • Seeking financial sources creates tensions and risks. Measures need to be developed to mitigate these and to help stakeholders make informed choices about trade-offs.

Examples from the TRANSIT case studies of the kinds of non-financial resources that social innovations mobilise include: volunteer labour (i.e. the time and talents of individuals and groups), derelict or unused buildings, unused land or space, old or discarded equipment, waste materials, underdeveloped resources, etc. SII often apply free labour to other low value resources and assets in order to transform these to have higher value. They also often partner with other organisations and make use of their spare capacities or develop relationships with professional organisations willing to provide pro bono support.

Some key resources and assets of social innovations are 'intangible'. The core beliefs and principles of the initiative, its mission, and the activities that translate these into practice attract people to it. The internal cohesion of the social innovation is therefore related to the capacity to remain true to the core mission. Credibility, image and integrity are important resources, since they impact on the capacity to retain members, the commitment of members and the sense of 'ownership' that members have over the social innovation. Autonomy of action is often an important attribute prized by members of social innovation organisations. This also provides a capacity for bottom-up innovation, which is often most effective in addressing challenges and problems, since the people most affected are the ones developing solutions. Credibility and legitimacy are also important resources. These can come from being 'recognised' by other important or influential actors, such as by government, major funders, major charities, businesses or universities as being worthy of attention and support; e.g. by providing favourable legal and regulatory status, supplying grants, entering into partnering arrangements, *pro bono* provision of support services, or providing independent assessment of positive social impact. They can come also through the patronage of well-known and well-respected figures.

Box 2 highlights insights from the TRANSIT cases about resource requirements of initiatives and how these are met.

Box 2: Key resource requirements of illustrative social innovation initiatives and how these are met

- Many initiatives have volunteers as an important resource in their activities. This applies in relation to local initiatives and projects of Transition Towns and to the Danish INFORSE member's local activities, especially in the early years. Participation in these local activities is perceived by proponents to demonstrate a willingness among people to switch between periods of (formal) employment and periods of volunteering when (formally) unemployed.

- Other models for engaging participants include mutual-aid and exchange-based activities, such as are practiced by Time Banks. Time Banks are based on reciprocal exchange of time and services.

- As well as mutual aid based around service exchange, some initiatives are based around the sharing of other assets and resources; e.g. Eco-Villages. FabLabs and Hackerspaces include substantial exchange of artefacts and experiences among the active members of the labs and spaces.

- Many initiatives develop new resources, using their free labour and the experience that comes from practising their activities to generate information about 'how to do' what they do, to create support software that enables their activities to be performed more effectively, and to build internet sites and webpages to disseminate information to other practitioners. These become mutually accessible resources for members of their networks. Examples include: Impact Hub, Living Knowledge, Time Banking and INFORSE.

- Some initiatives are affiliated to Universities, such as the DESIS Lab and Science Shop. These have access to resources of the Universities through the integration of their activities into University course and curricula.

3.1 Grants and project support

Especially when operating at low activity levels, social innovations typically have low requirements for scarce and rival resources compared to commercial organisations. Nevertheless there is a complementarity among the different resources that are needed. Some financial resource is usually needed to cover base-level money costs of establishment and operation. Often money is needed for some paid staff to act as organisers, since organising and coordinating activities requires high levels of commitment. The success and survival of local initiatives of many kinds of social innovation is found to depend on having paid (or partially paid) organisers and coordinators; e.g. Time Banks (Weaver et al, 2015; Weaver et al, 2016). This means that many local initiatives have recurrent need for small amounts of money for organising and coordinating costs.

The lack of reliable funding streams to cover base-level operating costs (even at low levels of requirement) threatens survival and sustainability and can frustrate the possibility for the social innovation to leverage non-rival and waste resources into productive use with positive social impact on a continuous basis. There is also a risk that any social capital built up gradually and progressively over several years of operation of a social innovation organisation can be lost if a break in funding disrupts operations. The social capital built from earlier years of investment can be lost quickly, but can only be rebuilt slowly. One strategy to reduce this risk is to diversify the income stream by requesting funds from several different foundations, asking each for only part of what is needed overall and ensuring that no single foundation is asked to assume continuous and total responsibility for financing the SIO. The downside is that this increases the workload in administering (multiple) small grants. Box 3 provides a typology of different kinds and sources of funding that SII/SIO often draw on in the early stages of their development.

Applying for money is time consuming and diversionary. Much of the time of organisers is spent, not on core mission, but on applying for funds to cover base-level costs needed just to run the activities and keep them going. This applies, for example, to many FabLabs, local DESIS Labs and local Time Banks. This prompts some initiatives to seek to generate own income streams so they can self-finance. Some initiatives generate income by selling products (e.g. software from Hacker Spaces) or services (e.g. advice from local Impact Hubs) or running course and hosting different kinds of event (Impact Hubs, Fab Labs, UK Transition Towns).

As social innovations progress, their need for financial resources tends to increase because of the higher organisational costs and extra functions that growth entails. Whereas at the outset most social innovation organisations and initiatives are far from the point of breaking even financially and use grants and similar funding to cover costs, as they begin to establish their income can increase, for example, by being able to attract project funding or generate own earnings. At this point they can hit a 'funding gap' where they are no longer so eligible for charitable grants (as they are no longer making a loss), but they are not generating income sufficient to attract investors. Few (if any) funding organizations or bodies see it as within their purview to provide base-level funding for social innovation initiatives that are only marginally below the financial break-even point, even if these deliver significant social benefits. We return to this issue having turned first to the possibilities offered by social finance.

Box 3: Different kinds and sources of early funding

1. Grants, typically from foundations, philanthropists and local authorities are usually awarded for small amounts and for short periods especially in the early stages of SII/SIO development when the activity faces financial costs and is loss making. Grants are useful to establish, pre-pilot, pilot and refine ideas at small scale. Grants come with the fewest 'ties' and may be given unconditionally. However, the short-term nature of grants implies a need to reapply for funding regularly. This imposes a high workload on the SIO of a type that also detracts from carrying through the core activities of the SII. Grant awarding bodies are keen to support start-up ventures, rather than to repeat fund existing ventures. The intention is for funded organisations to gradually wean-off grant funding and to establish own income streams or secure investment. Foundation grants are often financed from endowment income. With poorer rates of return in recent years foundations have less income to distribute.
2. The next phase can be to seek project funds. Foundations, charities and interest groups may financially support projects intended to deliver impacts to specific target groups. Project grants may lead to larger experiments and to demonstration projects to explore promising ideas, to extend the range of application of the idea, or to demonstrate that something that can work at one scale holds potential to be up-scaled or rolled out more widely and to learn how that might be done. However, wider roll out after successful trails and demonstrations depends on securing the investment needed for this. Here, SII/SIOs often come up against a 'gap' in available funding mechanisms and instruments.
3. Competitions and tenders. Foundations, charities, government agencies and the EU operate competitions and issue calls for tender to which SIO can apply for funding. However, the terms and conditions applying to applicants often favour larger organisations over smaller organisations; e.g. by specifying that lead applicants must have a minimum annual income or a minimum level of reserves or requiring substantial levels of co-funding. Such conditions favour larger organisations, even though these may not be the most innovative or have the best intervention or mechanism for addressing challenges. Often larger organisations are those with a dedicated mission that have an established presence and role in a particular area of operation and funding streams relating to these. These can develop effective monopolies over an area of funding and activity. Conditions for competitions and tenders that favour larger organisations can lock-out contributions from smaller more versatile SII/SIO or weaken their negotiating positon when operating in partnerships with the larger party. Furthermore, the programmes of larger organizations are already typically aligned with government policies. This tends to frustrate the prospects for proposing innovative alternatives to conventional policies in such areas as social inclusion where the established policy approach stresses job readiness and employment as the route to inclusion and does not provide for other forms of productive activity.

3.2 Social finance

Social innovation ventures usually start from a limited size and from non-traditional business operators, using earning models which are usually perceived as less self-sustainable and less replicable than those of business driven counterparts. This leads to a lack of funding for up-scaling and a fragile market for valuing social innovation.

The financing needs of SII/SIO are different from most conventional investment targets. They have special needs; e.g. for funding that provides opportunity for flexible deployment and over which lines of accountability and control might be more flexibly organised; financing that provides for stability and 'patience', offering scope to target social returns that are only realisable in longer-term time frames; and funding that is open to the possibility of failure, which is needed in order to learn from failure and not to repeat failed experiments. Practitioner needs for finance vary over different phases in the development of the social innovation: establishment, diffusion/diversification, upscaling, etc. Conventional finance does not always offer the types of capital needed. Furthermore, mainstream financial institutions and practices tend to marginalise both social innovators and those individuals and communities who most benefit from social innovations.

Nevertheless, new institutions focused on supplying a distinct form of capital classed as 'social finance' are emerging. Social finance refers to the deployment of financial resources primarily for social and environmental returns, as well as (in some cases) a financial return. Social finance is recognised to be important for social innovation both directly (as a source of finance) and indirectly because the investment typically challenges the institutional logics associated with conventional rationalities and thereby it creates space to challenge dominant institutionalised logics and patterns in resource flows otherwise often tied to dominant social structures.

New institutions, mechanisms and instruments for enabling financial resources to be created and directed toward innovations aimed primarily at creating social and environmental value include: new types of asset class, such as impact investing or micro-finance; innovations at the fund level; and new tools such as competitions and challenge grants. New funding models are emerging: hybrid funding models and structured deals that blend different risk-return capital that are evident across the social sector.

A particularly interesting financing mechanism and instrument that might hold important potential to boost social innovation are pay-for-performance instruments, such as social impact bonds. A brief discussion of social impact bonds and their viability as a source of finance for social innovations is provided in a separate paper (Marks and Weaver, 2017). So far, however, social innovators have not obtained full benefit from the rise in ethical and sustainable investment funds, even though these hold a significant potential to boost social innovation activities. In part this is because of the complexities and specificities of social innovations, which are very different from each other. Also, it has been noted that social innovation processes involve distinct phases and that "going to scale with social innovation involves 'bespoke' types of finance at each stage" (Westley and Antadze 2010). This makes arranging financing deals more complex.

3.3 A funding 'gap'

On the one hand there are organisations (foundations, local authorities, grant givers) willing to give money to loss-making start-up social innovation initiatives. On the other hand, there are social impact investors willing (in principle) to invest in social innovations that are more than breaking even and that operate at just below market rates of return but deliver positive social impact. However, there is a funding 'gap' between these possibilities, which particularly affects social innovations that are at or about breaking even. These are no longer so eligible for grant support, especially if they are developing own income streams, but they are unlikely either to qualify for social impact investment.

This funding gap is compounded by lack of experience of potential investors with the specific characteristics of voluntary and social sector organisations. From a conventional accounting perspective social innovation organisations supported in their development so far by grant and project income do not qualify for investment. As grant and project support is intended to be fully spent their financial accounts show no reserves. Also, because grants are not recurrent income (even though grants and project income may have been won historically over long periods and it could reasonably be expected that similar grants will be won in the future) grant income is largely discounted from the perspective of prospective investors. Applying conventional approaches to interpreting the accounts of SIO can mislead potential investors by suggesting a higher financial risk than actually applies. Perception of financial risk is also compounded because the leadership, governance, financial management, quality assurance, and safeguarding practices of social innovation organisations are seldom to the standards expected by investors.

4. Societal Challenges, Game Changers and the 'Opportunity Context'

The 'opportunity context' for social innovation organisations and initiatives is changing nevertheless in favour of their playing a bigger role in society and in societal change. In the first decades of the 21st Century, the EU is witnessing a progressive collapse in public confidence in many of the traditional institutions of society that underpinned political, economic and social arrangements during the 20th Century. These include the institutions of state government, representative democracy, the tax system, finance (money and banking), social security and all aspects of welfare capitalism, including public services, pensions, etc. The capacity of the state to act as guarantor for economic security and 'order' in the forms EU citizens are used to experiencing is eroding. This is driving a search for new models for delivering economic and social security and wellbeing fit for the 21st Century (Weaver, Boyle and Marks, 2017).

Key pressures and drivers of these changes include the economic downturn and (perhaps) the beginning of the end of the paradigm of economic growth, breakdown in state ability to tax capital and corporations and to intervene in domestic economies through wealth redistribution and direct economic intervention, austerity in public finances, greater competition globally for resources of all kinds, demographic change (ageing populations, influxes of migrants from other world regions), environmental change, and technological change, especially the continuing impact of information and communication technology. These trends interact to exert pressures on many established systems and institutions; for example, at the same time as technological progress gives the potential to enable people to live longer, it increases the costs of medical interventions. People are living longer, their expectations of health care are high and increasing, but the capacity to deliver top-level health care to all on a free-at-point-of-delivery basis at a time of financial austerity is stretching health care systems everywhere in the EU. Lifestyle changes contribute to this mix. Many people are leading increasingly unhealthy lifestyles that damage physical and mental health and add to the costs on healthcare systems.

Similar stresses are felt in many other systems of public service provision: adult social welfare, criminal justice, youth services, education, urban poverty relief, migrant assimilation, etc. Similarly, the new context challenges the veracity of policies that were developed and could work in earlier contexts, but are less appropriate now. Social inclusion policy in the EU is still based heavily around ideas of full employment and getting people work-ready and into jobs, but this can be a zero-sum game in the context of a depressed mainstream economy, globalised capital and technological changes that reduce the need for labour as a production factor (Weaver et al, 2017).

Although often perceived only negatively, such developments and challenges are stimulating greater reflection across society on the social values created by social innovation initiatives. They also offer scope for innovative new solutions to emerge; for example, for a merging of public, private and civil spheres and the emergence of 'hybrid' solutions in delivery and finance. With diminishing confidence in state finance and 'fiat' money, new forms of money and banking are emerging led by social innovation organisations, such as internet currencies, local currencies and time credits. Hybrid solutions could take advantage of these.

There is new scope for a shift in roles and responsibilities in society and for new forms of social relations between individuals and organisations to emerge. Aspects of some social innovation initiatives hold potential to be part of transformative change: for example, contributions that could be made through self-help and mutual –aid arrangements in the community, through the co-production of welfare services, through 'preventative' programmes that reduce the incidence of problems arising and thereby reduce costs on public services, and through forms of 'incentivised volunteering', etc.

However, the policy frameworks within which social innovations operate can disadvantage them precisely because they are not mainstream actors. Policy frames and policies have been designed to support large, mainstream organisations that are nationally and internationally significant in terms of performance indicators used by policymakers, such as earning, tax base and employment. But legal, regulatory and fiscal arrangements that support commercial operations can disadvantage smaller-scale, local social innovation operations that do not have the same access as larger players to legal and accounting expertise or the same geographical flexibility for optimising their operations internationally to take advantage of legal loopholes and concessions.

Social innovators are therefore prone to fall foul of employment legislation, tax legislation, health/safety legislation, and product/service quality standards and to face disproportionately high transaction costs in addressing such legal requirements compared with mainstream organisations. Equally, they fall foul to mainstream models of financing and financial control/accountability.

On the one hand policy makers need:

- Evidence and examples of successful social innovation and the (social) returns delivered relative to the funds invested in order to establish public investment priorities and justify public investment in social innovation
- Methods and tools for measuring, monitoring and projecting values added and prospective social returns from investments in SII/SIO based on heterodox metrics that can capture a diversity of values
- New approaches for designing funding mechanisms that are based on flexibility and on diverse and disparate values
- New ways of enlisting private sector financial support for social innovation to leverage limited public finance
- Insights into how to modify policy and regulatory frames so that these are more conducive and supporting to social innovation initiatives

- Understanding of social innovation systems to identify leverage points concerning where, when and on what to target investment and interventions for these to have maximum impact.

On the other hand, social innovators need:

- Access to managerial, organisational and legal skills/support and to be able to maintain that access and develop human resources in these areas throughout the innovation cycle
- Access to policymakers and support from intermediaries in raising awareness to the limitations of prevailing legal, regulatory and fiscal arrangements and the impact of these on their operations and scaling prospects
- Supporting policy innovations in the areas of work, employment, income and social charges that might contribute to creating a more enabling framing context, such as redefinitions of 'work', payments for providing opportunities for people to use their time constructively, the introduction of a 'citizens' income', and the possibility for organisations and individuals to contribute to social security and tax revenues by making 'in kind' contributions of time.
- Greater access to support from scientific institutes and universities, especially for help with data collection, data analysis, software development, ICT generally, development of monitoring protocols and tools, measuring and monitoring impact, development of evaluation reports, development of funding proposals, etc.
- Knowledge of and access to opportunities for social finance and help in becoming 'investment ready'.
- A rethinking of accountability in the funding models. To which interests should social innovations be accountable… to funders, to intended beneficiaries, to society as a whole?

The foregoing implies a need to be sensitive to a set of tensions and risks inherent in seeking to support social innovations in contributing to transformative societal change. There are different objectives, which conflict, creating a set of dilemmas:

- The need of social innovators for external finance, but the wish to retain internal autonomy
- The need of political actors to harness social innovations, but the wish to have top down control
- The need for politicians to relinquish control over how some public funds are used, but being subject to political demands for accountability in the use of public funds
- The need for greater acceptance of social innovations at a time when effective systems of quality assurance are not in place and the state is unlikely to be able to assure quality directly.

New knowledge is needed concerning how to manage such conflicts and how to exercise trade-offs in specific contexts.

5. Different Resourcing Strategies and Transformative Pathways

If social innovations are to have transformative impact, they have to sustain and scale. This takes us to the different broad possible forms of resourcing strategy and business models that a social innovation organisation can adopt, accepting also that a mix of approaches can be used and that business models are likely to evolve as part of the evolution of the social innovation organisation and its initiatives.

At least three distinct pathways can be distinguished, which might be described as:

- **External Funding Pathway**: this is a pathway that seeks investment and/or income by delivering services to external sponsors, especially services that help reduce costs on public sector agencies. It involves developing and delivering services of interest to the external sponsor. Contracts are established over the terms and conditions of receiving investments and/or income. The performance of the social innovation is measured and monitored in relation to designated target outcomes. This pathway is beginning to be supported by social finance, including through innovative 'pay-for-performance' financing instruments.

- **Autonomous Funding Pathway**: this is a pathway through which a social innovation organisation seeks to develop an own-income stream to self-finance its activities and fund continuity and growth. There are different ways of doing this. This can be achieved by establishing a social enterprise activity as a separate but related entity that is owned by the social innovation organization and is staffed wholly or in part by its members. Part of any surplus generated can then be returned to the social innovation organisation. Examples include restaurants, cafes and thrift shops. There is also the possibility to invest 'sweat equity' in developing new businesses and social enterprises. Sometimes these are launched by one or more members of the social innovation organisation. In return for support in getting the business off the ground, part of any future profits are tithed back to the social innnovation organisation, providing it with its own income stream. This return on investment can also be achieved indirectly by establishing a trust fund as intermediary between the business and the social innovation organisation(s) that have invested in-kind in establishing the venture.

- **Embedding Pathway**: this pathway involves the social innovation organisation partnering with an existing larger organisation that is wealthier or better funded and with which there is some complementarity of mission. The case studies show, for example, Time Banks that have embedded with Medical Insurers, Hospitals, large faith organisations, and large charities as partners. Each of these partners is wealthier and has recurrent income streams. The social innovation receives financial support for helping the wealthier partner deliver its mission.

6. Tensions and Risks

Each pathway brings with it its own tensions and risks. Social innovation organisations and initiatives may start up without any financial funding, but are likely to seek financial resources as they increase their activity levels and encounter increasing money costs. However, tensions and risks can arise in the search for money. Depending on where financial resources are sourced and the conditions that come with seeking and receiving money, different kinds of tension and risk can be experienced. Also, seeking and administering money involves skills and systems that incur additional costs, creating needs for additional financial resources, tools and human capacities; e.g. related to proposal writing, grant management, financial accounting and monitoring impact.

From our TRANSIT project work so far, we identify at least five sources of tension for social innovation initiatives (SII) aiming for transformative change, which give rise also to questions about possible interventions and ways for addressing or resolving some of these.

1. Internal struggle over growth and direction. This first tension is the internal struggle of an initiative between founders and leaders and other members of SII, over issues of growth and professionalisation. The interests and ambitions of the leaders may start to diverge from those of the members' causing loss of grassroots support. This problem is aggravated if the grassroots pay dues to the member organization, which can be resented. There may also be differences of opinion among leaders over which direction to go, causing splits in the social innovation leadership sometimes leading to new breakaway social innovation organisations being formed. Without the grassroots there is nothing to lead, nothing to learn about/from and no social impact. *How does the leadership keep people, as the main resource of a SII, motivated and on board? Is it sometimes worth losing and renewing support, accepting that some initial supporters will be lost if there are changes of direction, but that this may attract new recruits?*

2. Fishing in the same pond. There is a tension over the need to grow the number of local initiatives/branches and the fact that overall available grant support for establishing local manifestations is often in limited supply for early stage SII. Competition for grants between and within SII is therefore often a zero-sum game. The processes of competing for often very small and very short-term grants and reporting how money has been spent and what impact it has made is a significant diversion and drain on the human resources of SII, including at grassroots level. *A more rational and strategic grant awarding system is needed to enable social innovation organisations to focus more of their attention, time and resources pursuing core mission. How can a more rational system be achieved?*

3. Internal and external needs for monitoring. This tension relates to the misalignment between internal and external motivations, aspects and goals for monitoring. Government and other, accountable, funders are under pressure to demonstrate that money is well spent, so want to demonstrate social impact in return for funding. However, initiatives prefer to spend their scarce resources on making impact rather than on measuring it and prefer to work with asset-based methods for achieving impact rather than the deficit models that funders often seek to impose. At some stage in their development, they need also to evaluate the external environment to identify opportunities. Evaluating has significant resource implications as an activity and many social innovations lack the tools, skills and money to make studies. There are also inherent difficulties in measuring the impact of social innovations owing to indivisibility, time lags, subjectivity of qualities to be measured, etc. *Are there workable models that are not overly burdensome and make sense to all parties concerned; models that offer quality assurance and fit with the needs for data management and security; etc.? Could universities play a bigger role and, if so, how?*

4. Problems of base funding. This tension relates to the contradiction that funders may be willing to pay for specific additional activities of social innovation organisations (e.g. for pilots, demonstrations or for specific additional projects interesting because, for example, they deliver social impact to specific target groups), but are less interested to support the base costs of the initiatives. Funders often close their eyes to the fact that social impact can only occur if the fixed costs, such as rent, administrative staff, or the accountant are also covered. This often goes together with a second tension, namely that funders are willing to support demonstration projects, but when demonstrations are successful there may be no suitable funding mechanism to support wider roll-out and continuing operations. There are also tensions with pooling resources: if initiatives have to pool different resources, they also need to answer to different resource givers. *What financial and governmental innovations are needed to address the base funding issue? What political and other processes are needed to support implementation?*

5. Co-option from imposed agendas. When establishment actors set the agenda and expect the SIIs to play along, they are creating problems of co-opting. An example is the UK Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) 'signposting' benefit claimants to time-banks without providing additional resources to the affected time banks or being sufficiently conscious of the risk of overwhelming the absorption capacities of the available time banking infrastructure. SIIs can suffer mission drift and added strain on already stretched local organisers. Also, top-down pressures tend to come from single agencies in relation to the agency agenda. *A more genuine co-production process is needed with greater involvement of the parties in establishing a shared vision and agenda and that includes other agencies that might also have a stake and could help 'share the lift' by pooling resources. How can that be achieved?*

These tensions map onto a set of 'risks' for social innovation organisations in engaging with external actors. Briefly these risks (arising at different stages in the development of a social innovation) relate to:

- Inertia: Competition for limited grants between and within SII can be a zero-sum game meaning that it is pointless to try to grow the number of local manifestations/branches. If a new initiative or manifestation is funded, funds are pulled from a similar existing initiative elsewhere, so it folds. In that process the gains made from earlier investment of grant and the social capital built up by one manifestation can be lost. The processes of competing (often for very small and very short-term grants) and reporting for auditing purposes is also a significant diversion and drain on the human resources of SII, including at grassroots level. The risk is that in taking one step forward, the SII takes two steps back. There is a high risk of inertia or stagnation.
- Insolvency: there is a potential tension along the journey from being small to being mainstreamed, which is that along that pathway there is often a need to pass through a piloting and demonstration phase. Funds might be available for pilot/demonstration projects, but these seldom make contributions to covering fixed costs and don't necessarily open routes to long-term sustainable funding opportunities, Undertaking piloting and demonstration work can strain the SII to the point of insolvency.

- Insecurity: there is a risk when external resources come from a single or a dominant source that any change in leadership or policy in the sponsoring organization leads to an abrupt and total ending of the flow of financial resources. Such changes can be entirely arbitrary and completely unrelated to the performance of the social innovation. This especially concerns policy changes resulting from elections and changes of government and policies (when sponsorship comes from government or its agencies) and changes of leadership of partner organizations (when sponsorship is from embedding in larger organizations).
- Integrity: money raises the possibility of conflict of interest between the leaders of the SII and its grassroots members. Membership organizations are often more 'professionalized' than local manifestations, so need money. The grassroots activities have less need for money to operate on a small scale and may not want or need to grow. Growth ambitions are often integral to professionalized leaderships. The availability of money can lead to conflicts between personal interest of leaders and the interests of the grassroots members of the organization. SIO can also be vulnerable to the misuse of funds precisely because procedures surrounding the use of money are not always formalized and may lack necessary control mechanisms. They are also prone to 'founder syndrome'.
- Independence: the risk of loss of autonomy and independence of action and decision making is inherent in accepting money from external actors that comes with conditions imposed 'top-down'. Effects can range from mission drift to changing the modus operandi of the SII. Loss of independence can make the SII less effective in delivering its core mission.
- Innovation: the cultures, logics and interests of government and other establishment actors are different from those of the SII whose innovations and capacities to innovate they may seek to harness. Ironically, in seeking to harness SII innovations and capacities to innovate, these risk being damaged or destroyed by being co-opted. The capacity for continuous innovation is based on grassroots creativity, which is facilitated by independence of action, flexibility and horizontal governance. The more that the activities of the SII are subject to top-down control or are codified (such as through contractual arrangements) the less scope there is for new innovation.

7. The TRANSIT Case Studies Revisited

Against the backdrop of the different broad resourcing pathways and the tensions and risks they entail it is instructive to look at a specific social innovation, such as Time Banking, a social innovation where all three pathways have been (or are being been) travelled by manifestations in different national or local contexts.

Timebanking is an interesting case because it has been on the cusp of scaling in several different country contexts for a long time although, with the possible exception of Japan, it is still to break through, and it is a social innovation that is 'in the sights' of establishment actors in relation to rebuilding communities and reforming public services in many countries. Also, several variant forms of timebanking have emerged at different times and contexts, so there is no single model of timebanking. Whereas 'purist' timebanking is organised around exchange of time on principles and values of mutual aid, reciprocity and equality, some variants are in the form more of incentivised or rewarded volunteering; e.g. JCSA or NALC (Japan) or Spice (UK). Such variants in Japan are now quite mainstreamed (Miller, 2008).

In each of the US, the UK and Spain (three of the countries represented in the case study and critical turning points analysis of time banks, there are around 250-300 Time Banks. At least in the US and the UK, new Time Banks are being established almost every week; but it is also the case that births of new Time Banks are matched by deaths of existing Time Banks. Many Time Banks fail to survive for more than a few years. Around 70% of US time banks fail within their first three years. So an interesting question is: what are the ones that sustain long term doing that the others fail to do?

One answer to this question is that most Time Banks that have sustained long-term have diversified their funding sources. Some have set up social enterprise businesses. These arrangements typically require that the Time Bank and the social enterprise are associated functionally but are separated legally and have different legal forms of constitution (e.g. charity + co-operative) to provide for the pros and cons of each legal form to be 'balanced out' through judicious advantage-taking of the regulatory and fiscal concessions pertaining to each. The social enterprise business operation has to be successful and competitive for it to generate a surplus. Its own running costs can be reduced by members of the Time Bank providing services to the social enterprise. Some of the surplus created by the income generating activity can then be used to cover the running costs of the Time Bank (Weaver et al, 2016; Weaver et al, in press). This pathway secures a degree of financial independence for the Time Bank, so provides scope for it to retain autonomy, integrity and fidelity to core mission. It nevertheless requires an entrepreneurial mind-set and capacity on the part of the Time Bank leaders and members to establish and operate these arrangements.

The approach of embedding Time Banks in larger organisations has been used by Martia Blech in the US. She has successfully run Time Banks over a 30 year period. However, over this period she has had three different organizations as partners and has twice experienced abrupt severance of the relationship with a partner organization, each time because of changes in the leadership of the partner organization and resulting changes of policy. The first severance of a relationship came after 19 years of successful operations with a health insurer. The second severance occurred even though the Time Bank was well embedded in the routine practices of the partner organization, a hospital. The current partnership, with the Catholic Diocese of New York is ongoing. Each severance has necessitated the creation of new time banks, with new memberships (Weaver et al, in press).

The fourth country where we have studied Time Banks is Japan. Timebanking originated in Japan. The first recorded Time Bank, the Volunteer Labour Bank (VLB) was established by Teruka Mizushima in 1973 (Miller, 2008). It became the hub of a national network of Time Banks, the Volunteer Labour Network (VLN). The establishment of the VLB/VLN paved the way for the emergence of other Time Bank networks in Japan, each offering innovative variants of the original (VLB/VLN) Timebanking model. These innovative variants emerged in co-evolutionary relation with on-going contextual changes in Japan, especially surrounding the ageing of Japanese society. Innovations were introduced to position time banks to provide care services to the elderly and, in some cases, to provide training and certification programmes to members to enable them to become carers. These adaptations provided an income stream for the time banks and their members as service providers. Timebanking has travelled farther down an institutionalisation and societally transformative pathway in Japan than in any other country.

However, more commercial variants on the original timebanking model are the ones that have 'institutionalized' rather than the original 'purist' model. These variants often involve mixed currency arrangements, with both time and money being used as currencies.

8. Final remarks

For a social innovation organisation to secure external funding it needs to be doing something that other actors in society feel is worthwhile or delivering/developing (or holding potential to develop and deliver) something that they value. This journey can be considered something of an institutionalisation journey, since the object is ultimately to secure a sustainable and secure funding stream by becoming a line item in the budget(s) of mainstream organisations, having some new funding mechanism created that enables the social innovation organisation to earn income from delivering something to society, or developing an 'own-income' stream through links to a social enterprise business.

The route involving external money is complicated by the fact that the further down this route the organisation travels, the more money comes with expectations and conditions, which also affect its resourcing structure, with increasing need for higher-level administrative functions and capacities. This implies professionalization and the adoption of the mainstream system logics of marketization, accountability, quality assurance and risk (financial and legal) management. This involves some loss of autonomy and is where any counter-wave ripple against marketization and bureaucracy that the social innovation organisations represent can easily get swamped and be lost, along with their scope to be continuously innovative and adaptive.

Much depends on the source of the external funding and the degree of compatibility between the motivations, logics and modus-operandi of the financier or commissioner and those of the social innovation organisation. Partnering between a social innovation organisation and a well-financed and like-minded charity to deliver something that both parties want does not necessarily introduce conflict or tensions over core mission, whereas partnering with large, rigid, top-down institutions presents more scope for top-down interference and control, including over core mission.

There is inevitably an element of compromise implied in securing a funding stream if this is needed to sustain or grow a social innovation initiative. This holds implications for the kinds of transformative change social innovation initiatives and organisations can contribute toward. In seeking funds to sustain and to grow, social innovation processes (if they are successful in this) are transformed through the hybridization implied by each of the three pathways just identified (albeit in each case to different degrees and through different processes) and with this, also, the nature of their transformative potential is changed (Weaver et al, in press). Some loss or modification of the original transformative ambition for the social innovation is inevitable. An important conclusion is that some degree of hybridisation of social innovation initiatives and organisations can be expected in the search for financial sustainability. This is likely to entail the emergence of some form of social enterprise activity.

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