



Social innovation in times of crisis or in difficult social conditions

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Which crisis and where?

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The current crisis is composed of different crises:

- Financial crisis
- Economic crisis
- Political crisis
- Social crisis
- Ethical crisis

These crises previously existed in parts of the world. New and threatening is that they now exist simultaneously in all parts of the world as a global crisis - expression of interdependence in a globalized world.





The challenge for social innovation

What is social innovation?

- Innovation means to modify existing thinking, behaviour, products, capacities and structures. Innovation is not per se positive - only if it contributes to values and objectives.
- Social innovation means to modify existing thinking, behaviour, products, capacities and structures in order to improve life in community, the social cohesion, fair and equitable sharing and distribution of goods and services, benefits and burdens.
- A social entrepreneur: someone who grabs a social problem and offers an innovative solution, combining entrepreneurial instruments with ethical responsibility.



The challenge of social innovation

Two reactions in times of crisis:

- Destructive: Suicide, alcohol/evasion, criminality, more of the same (bad solutions which led to the crisis), conservatism, everybody against everybody.
- Constructive: Scarcity as motor for innovation, community building for joint solutions, new solutions to overcome the roots of the crisis.

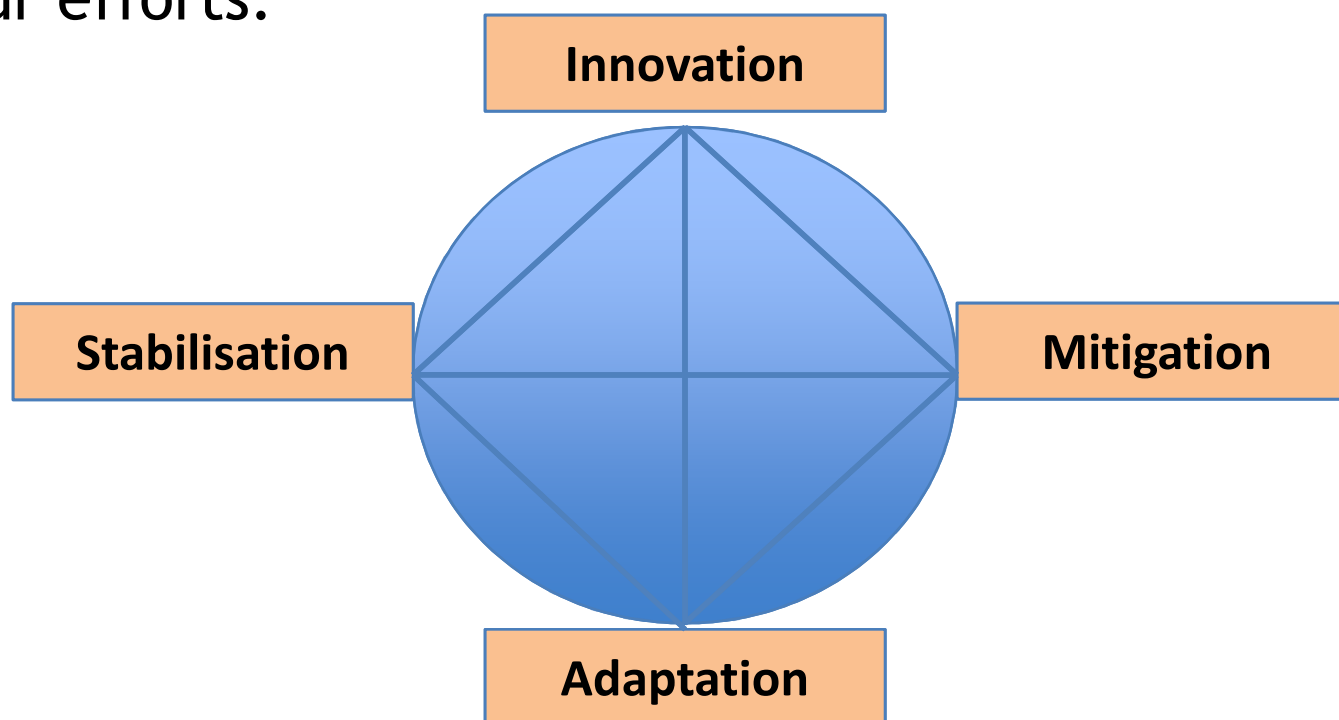
Maintaining existing social standards is already a success and progress in times of crisis.

Challenge: how to transform a problem into an opportunity?



Integrated innovation

Innovation is only sustainable if it is seen as one part of four efforts:



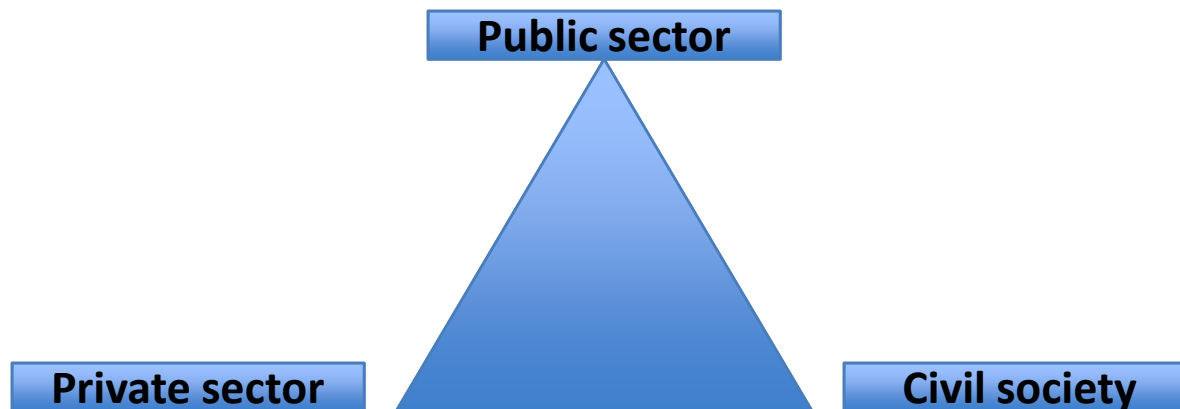


Which Actors? State, civil society, private sector

Pioneer strategy and cooperation strategy

Social innovation requires:

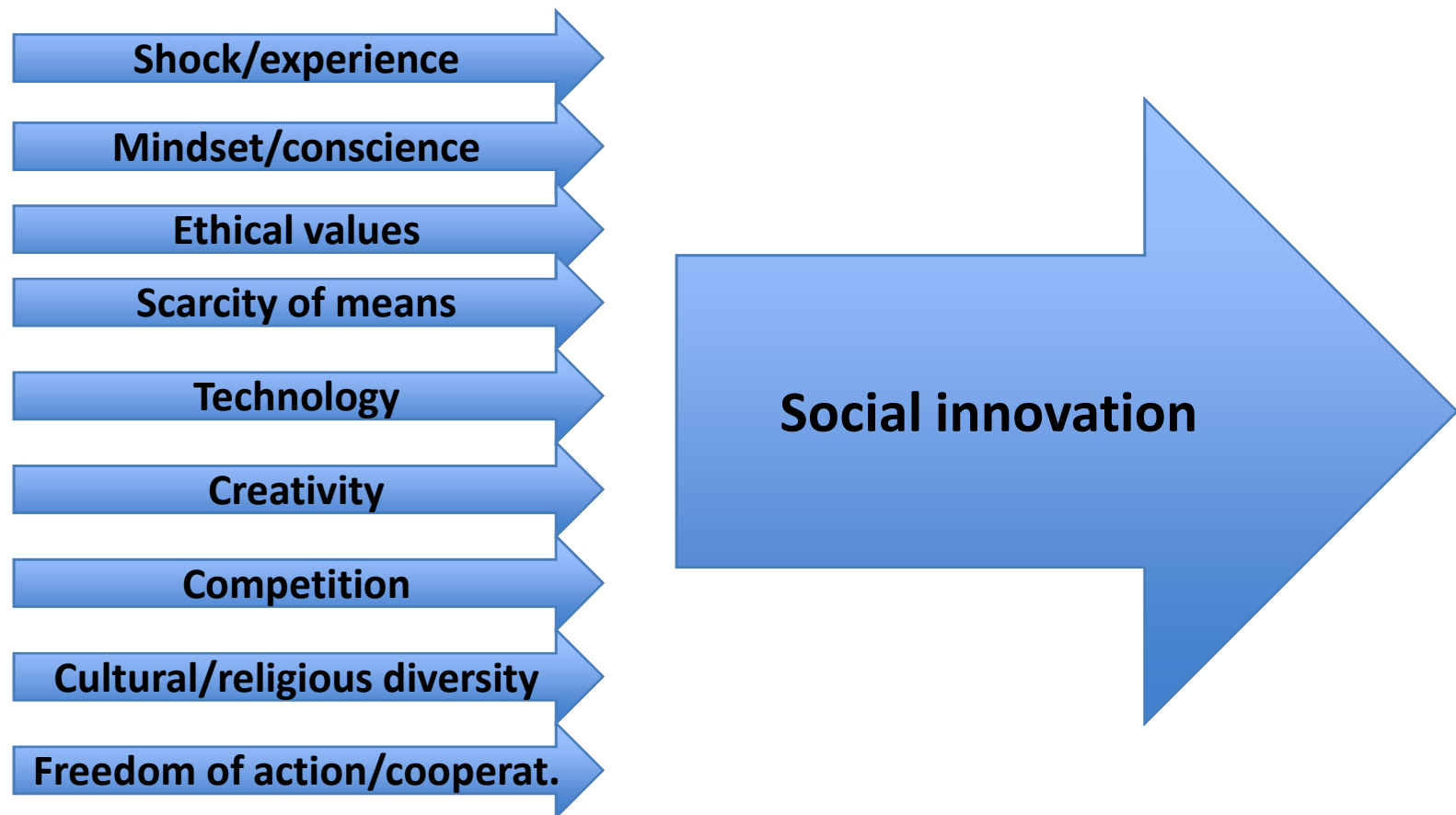
- a) a pioneer: a person or institution has to start and catch the momentum and should not wait until everybody agrees;
- b) a cooperation strategy: social innovation is only sustainable if it leads from the pioneering phase to cooperation of actors from three sectors: public sector, civil society and private sector.





Drivers for social innovation in crisis

Manifold drivers for social innovation





Values and Virtues for social innovation in crisis

Personal and institutional values and virtues

Values

- Responsibility: respond to the needs of the people
- Equity: striving for equal rights with unity in diversity
- Freedom: use the space of action for building community
- Servant leadership: being a steward for the common good

Virtues

- Courage: being ahead, taking entrepreneurial risks
- Modesty: doing the right thing not expecting public award
- Moderation: acting as part of a community (hist./pres.)
- Humour/joy: self-criticism, hopeful, light-footed.

