

# **Social Innovations in Creative Communities for Sustainable Consumption: is it promising?**

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Supervisors

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Thesis for the fulfilment of the  
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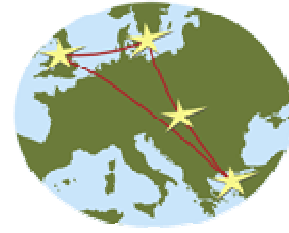
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# MESPOM



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## **Abstract**

In the current discourse on sustainable consumption, there have been major interventions by the businesses and governments, focusing on changing consumer behavior through greening products and services. However, the problem of consumption is not limited to greening products and environmental impacts, but it is also a social issue. Together with the increasing consumption around the world and materialistic aspirations, a decline in well being and happiness can also be observed, particularly in industrialized countries. Recently, the sustainable consumption process has started to draw attention to individual value shifts reflected on peoples' consumption patterns and social behavior. To examine and explain phenomenon, examples from creative communities are being analysed. According to some experts' on sustainable production and consumption, these creative communities are showing promising outcomes through increasing well being and developing sustainable lifestyles. Still, they have been unable to disseminate their practices to the mainstream markets. This indicates a need for developing strategies to explore the creative communities in terms their values, principles, social innovation strategies, practices and their perspectives of sustainability. Unless these are well understood and an exchange platform is established between relevant actors including citizens, it is unlikely that creative community practices (i.e. sustainable lifestyle cases) will be incorporated the society as a whole.

This research addresses the challenges and opportunities facing creative communities, their behaviours and social innovation solutions using both theoretical and empirical studies. The results are based on five field case study communities from the US, Scotland, Sweden and Italy, each with different types of social innovations. The main findings on individual value orientation and action incurring benefits demonstrate the potential of the communities or their practices to be adapted by wider society. Moreover, the nature of their practices, which highly depend on ethical responsibility, transfer of knowledge and networking relations, have shown the potential of linking between creative community-citizens, external actors-community and between individuals. This can be established through creating relational spaces, which can take varied forms to stimulate social innovation in the agenda of sustainable consumption.





## **Executive Summary**

Over the past decades, the scenario of global consumption depicts a bleak picture in terms of impacts on society and the environment. The global consumer class owning high-tech products (e.g. electronic gadgets) alone comprise about 1.7 billion people of the world (Worldwatch Institute 2004). The impact of this increasing trend of consumption puts an enormous demand on natural resources. The Living Planet report stated that even moderate projections of the United Nations on population and consumption, require a doubling the bioproductivity of the planet by 2050 (WWF 2006). It is further noted that achieving this level will be impossible since natural capital may well be depleted before that date. The same report concluded that failure to impact on consumer behaviour makes it more than just an issue of bioproductivity. Over the past three decades or more, scientists have tried to link people's needs and desires with wealth, income and quality of life. It was found out that quality of life increases as income increases until a threshold is reached beyond which *happiness* starts to decline (Scitovsky 1976; Durning 1992; Ropke 1999; Worldwatch Institute 2008). Increasing number and choices of products with high level of consumption, declining natural resources and social relations, all mean that an individual's behavioural domain requires as much attention as consumer's groups or organizations. Thus, our way of defining well-being must be reconsidered; where greater well-being should not mean more consumption (also in WWF 2007).

In a general sustainable consumption discourse, we see various ideas and approaches being developed. The current definition of sustainable consumption by the United Nations looks at reducing the high impact of products and making the economy 'greener'. The priority areas for sustainable consumption are mobility, food, and energy systems in and around households. Although the supply-side orientation to efficiency-based approaches can contribute to reducing the environmental impacts, the attention to the idea of consumers *consuming less* has, so far, been largely untouched. An interesting picture is drawn where citizens or individuals are organizing themselves toward sustainable lifestyles and individual value shifts. Despite the promising evidence, these creative communities are unable to spread their practices to society at large. Therefore, this research will address the problem and potentials of creative communities whose social innovation solutions are largely unable to create wider changes in the society. It must be mentioned that the perceptions gathered in this study are those believers in community-based development, which may differ from conventional top-down strategies and market actor's perspective such as large corporations. On the other hand, careful selection of well-known cases in developed countries show the importance of promoting their ideas, innovations in living and value-based relational strategies.

In this research, information on the 5 cases was collected through conducting 14 in-depth interviews and 3 site visits. The geographic boundary of the study encompasses various cases of community-based social innovation in industrialized countries. This is due to the fact that recent sustainable consumption process have focused much on reducing consumption in Europe and North America because of the increasing consumption trend and basic needs are met. These 5 cases are: car-sharing and intergenerational house-sharing services in Milan-Italy, Voluntary Simplicity (VS) in the US, the Findhorn Ecovillage – Scotland, Augustenborg EkoStaden in Malmo-Sweden, and Northwest Earth Institute in Oregon – US. The practical examples from real-world cases draw upon various connections between specific values to community actions or social innovations. The examples are divided into 2 groups – the first one presents values embedded in social innovation and their advantages in reducing environmental impacts and/or address social problems; the second group provides examples of networks in strategizing and expanding the community initiatives or social innovations. The examples help to identify barriers and drivers in promotion and inclusion of creative community aspirations and social innovation diffusion. In order to keep the diversity of potential sustainable lifestyle choices the broadest definition of social innovation was considered. Here, social innovations suffice any individual or actor's interests, ideas or actions in pursuit to social and ecological well-being.

All the cases demonstrate self-transcendence values with a combination of biospheric and altruistic/ social values, and personal growth and wellness in terms of self-interest values. In self-

transcendence cases, respondents from VS, and Findhorn noted the value of *giving something back to nature as we are taking something out of it*. Generally, self-interest values, on the contrary are those values related to individual's interest to derive pleasures, financial gain, meet desires etc. that have a potential or can make someone else worse off (with the increasing resource demand). Here, in case of VS, NWEI and the Findhorn, transformation at the level of individual is observed. The main idea is to reduce the material needs and increase happiness in other environmentally benign and socially cohesive manner. This adds to the equity dimension in the way creative community try to deal with a problem or issue. The cases showed that social innovations provide opportunity to make people feel good by inclusion in the process of early adoption of the sustainable consumption practices. Moreover, personal satisfaction came from an action and sometimes moderation came as a result of 'doing'.

In order to understand the effect on the environment and society towards sustainability endeavours, the individual members act as key change-makers. Their actions are at first seen operating within their communities. While other cases, for example, shared services (Milan car sharing and intergenerational house share) and local government's approach to social innovation, also reflects the importance of collectivism in stimulating social innovations diffusion in communities that are part of the conventional society. This proves the large potential for wider adoption of their practices. In cases where private sphere consumption behavior hasn't been addressed, i.e. Augustenborg, the need for individual value changes to act accordingly in reducing consumption has emerged to be the next point of intervention. All the respondents believe that generating social cohesion is an important step, which can positively affect the environment and reduce consumption. There is a huge importance on factors such as, '*sense of belonging*', *trust and reciprocity*, *intimacy*, *knowledge sharing* and *respect on natural limit*. Willingness to change is perhaps the most important feature of creative community individuals. Association of *willingness to change* or make changes tied to social or biospheric values together can produce higher benefits.

Another important observation, from small scale social innovation in service design related to the house sharing case, shows that there are hidden benefits such as positive academic performance from students, the elderly's sense of feeling young, general improvement in communication and reducing the environmental impacts from sharing household consumption. In the case of car-sharing, the scheme is directed to environmental and city quality improvement, where the comfort of the customers has been auto-produced by intentional design of the scheme. Another hidden benefit is the widely discussed attitude-behavior gaps of the consumers. High social cohesion and bridged personal relationships help reducing forgetfulness, where individuals help each other by prompting or reminding. Repetitive prompting and practices can help shaping new habits and routines. Long-term practices themselves help shape behavior rationally and that is more ecological.

There is an emphasis on '*process*' rather than a result-oriented approach in the perspective of problem solution. This can generate benefits in different spheres, sometimes external benefits, in the form of *increasing cooperation and knowledge creation*. Dedication to volunteer work is one of the factors with which creative communities are moving forward and experiences are being exchanged. However, this highlights the dependence on *philanthropic* and *volunteer* services, which results uncertainty in achieving the outcomes. There are some typical challenges of *budgetary and manpower limitations* which hinder the activities from progressing.

The variety of actions and initiatives points to another important factor that there are many models of sustainable consumption and thus, there are choices available to see the appropriate transfer of experiences and practices with tailored solutions. The localized practices based on common social values (at least) have generated impacts in their niches to create more long-term and anticipated changes. There is also a huge diversity in the levels of networks that was observed, which is similar to present society's networking development. The difference between the conventional and creative communities is that the niche strategies and value-based learning approach between the communities and interested actors make the network stronger. The variations in networks can be observed in social relations (soft bonding, emotions, conviviality, pluralism, collectivism), loose networks (linking local and global networks through communication technologies for high-information volume exchange), and

actors' networks are perhaps the most relevant in terms of building bridge between the creative communities and rest of the society. Through the variety of networks, *windows of opportunity* can be created in terms of new innovations, value changes, a larger adoption of sustainable consumption practices and expansion of the best-customized solutions. Considering this in mind, the physical (generate solutions), social (for voices to be heard) and knowledge spaces (exchanging experiences) must be created as levels of enabling platforms. This can trigger social innovation as well as wider adoption of the creative communities and/or value-based approaches to practices by a more integrative process linking the mainstream society.



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1. Background

Over the previous decades, the scenario of global consumption depicts a bleak picture in terms of impacts on the society and the environment. The global consumer class owning high-tech products (e.g. electronic gadgets) alone comprises about 1.7 billion people of the world (Worldwatch Institute 2004). The impact of this increasing trend of consumption is an enormous demand on natural resources. The Living Planet Report (WWF 2006) stated that even moderate projections of the United Nations on population and consumption, require a doubling the bioproductivity of the planet by 2050. It is further noted that achieving this level will be impossible since natural capital may well be depleted before that date. The same report concluded that failure to impact consumer behaviour makes it more than just an issue of bioproductivity. Over the past three decades or more, scientists have tried to link people's needs and desires with wealth, income and quality of life. It was found out that quality of life increases as income increases until a threshold is reached beyond which happiness starts to decline (Scitovsky 1976; Durning 1992; Ropke 1999; Worldwatch Institute 2008)<sup>1</sup>. Increasing number and choices of products with high level of consumption, declining natural resources and social relations, all mean that an individual's behavioural domain requires as much attention as much as consumer's groups or organizations. Thus, our way of defining well-being must be reconsidered; where greater well-being should not mean more consumption (also in WWF 2007).

In the general sustainable consumption discourse we see various ideas and approaches being developed. The current definition of sustainable consumption by the United Nations looks at reducing the high impact of products and making the economy 'greener'<sup>2</sup>. The priority areas for sustainable consumption are mobility (mode of transport including leisure), food (meat and dairy by other types of food), and energy systems in and around households (heating, cooling, energy using

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1 Increasing consumption in terms of material/wealth accumulation with increasing income has been related to status-seeking behaviour. Happiness paradox, i.e. whether more consumption means more happiness is still a point of debate among scholars. Thorstein Veblen (1902) wrote on "conspicuous consumption", John Kenneth Galbraith - *The Affluent Society* (1958), Tibor Scitovsky - *The Joyless Economy* (1976), and Juliet Schor's *The Overspent American* (1998) illustrate the relationship between high income with increasing work stress and the loss of happiness. Quality of life determined by materialistic pursuits and well-being or increasing consumption is unable to increase happiness until a certain threshold. Thus, the point of debate other than ecological impact of increasing consumption comes from need-based theories (more in Max-Neef, 1991). Another stream of research has shown increasing socialization and sharing system, in contrast to individualization in consumption, can positively affect society and environment. But the question remains – when are we really happy and how? The 'Happiness Paradox' (Easterlin 2003) in consumption always remain as we are unable to satisfy ourselves with increasing consumption because there is always someone else with more than what we have (Goodwin *et al.* 2007). This has been further extended to increasing wealth gap in the societies and global poverty (Goodwin *et al.* 2007).

2 The Commission of Sustainable Development defined Sustainable Consumption as – "*emerging as an umbrella term that brings together a number of key issues, such as meeting needs, enhancing quality of life, improving resource efficiency, minimising waste, taking a life-cycle perspective and taking into account the equity dimension; integrating these component parts in the central question of how to provide the same or better services to meet the basic requirements of life and the aspiration for improvement, for both current and future generations, while continually reducing environmental damage and risks to human health*" (UNEP 2002). A report on consumption by the global youth (UNEP 2001) stated that "*sustainable consumption is not about consuming less, it is about consuming differently, consuming efficiently, and having an improved quality of life. It also means sharing between the richer and the poorer*" (see more: Fuchs and Lorek 2004)

products), together comprising up to 70-80% of life cycle environmental impacts in societies (Tukker 2007). These priority areas help focus attention on the following dominant approaches<sup>3</sup> in the sustainable consumption process.

*The first* approach is the mainstreaming sustainable production and consumption (SCP) process by ‘greening’ the market through efficiency gains. Achieving efficiency in production comprises the utilization of less energy and material intensive technologies, incorporating life-cycle thinking and, zero emission principles into the production processes. This in turn, as advocated by the policy-makers, this should lead to ‘smarter’ consumption with consumers moving towards using ‘green products’ to create green consumerism. Although the supply-side orientation to the efficiency-based approach can contribute to reducing the environmental impacts, the idea of consumers *consuming less* has so far been largely untouched (Fuchs and Lorek 2004).

The *second* dominant approach is to use information-based policy instruments (e.g. eco-labelled products, energy labelling scheme) and green products campaigns to invite consumers to green consumerism. This approach is based on the expectation that pro-environmental campaigns can help consumers to make informed choices. This can be observed in sales growth of sustainable products such as organic products. In 2004, the sales of organic products were \$25 billion with growth rates between 5 and 40% (Mont 2007; Organic Monitor 2005). However, so far there has been little success in pro-environmental campaigns to *reduce* levels of consumption. Researchers argue that this is a result of ignoring social interactions, culture dominance and human feelings playing important role in understanding the change of consumer behaviour (Mckenzie-Mohr and Smith 1999; Jackson 2005).

The above two approaches, mainstreaming eco-efficiency strategies and product-information campaigns, when compared with the level of consumption, highlight a gap in reducing the level of consumption. This means that the two dominant approaches (or even combination of the two approaches) have been unable to influence consumer behaviour.

## 1.2. Defining the problem

There is a third approach that draws an interesting picture where citizens or individuals are organizing themselves in a way that is geared towards sustainable lifestyles and individual value shifts. These people create combined approaches (or at least as much as possible) to reduce environmental impacts and increase social well-being. They connect as individuals to a community, to economic spheres and to nature. They bring in innovative solutions guided by specific value orientation that look at a problem from a sustainability perspective. One Planet Living, a set of 10 guiding principles by the World Wildlife Fund for Nature is an example that combines consumption with sustainable living.<sup>4</sup> There are also examples of growing membership of the Global Ecovillage Network (385 registered ecovillages around the world as quoted in Worldwatch Institute 2008), and community-based unique energy technologies (Tukker *et al.* 2008). According to some working in the area, they are the emerging ‘*creative communities*’ that are bring promising solutions such as social innovations and setting

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<sup>3</sup> An approach to reducing consumption is not always a stand alone one. In many cases, combination of policy instruments and production-process remodeling or product-design changes (e.g. energy labelling product campaigns by efficiency gains) can be observed. Therefore, both production and consumption oriented approaches can be found.

<sup>4</sup> One Planet Living – Zero carbon, zero waste, sustainable transport, local and sustainable materials, local and sustainable food, sustainable water, natural habitats and wildlife, culture and heritage, equity and fair-trade and health and happiness. (WWF UK, <http://www.oneplanetliving.org/> )

inspiring examples of sustainable communities (Manzini and Jégou 2003; EMUDE 2006; Tukker *et al.* 2008).

However, despite the fact that these creative communities are sometimes proving to be the centre for excellence, they appear unable to spread their practices to society at large, which is why their practices are still considered as niche strategies. Saying that the creative community cases are inspiring lessons for others to follow in terms of social and environmental behaviours is not enough to spread the ideas. This means spill-over effects in terms of learning and establishing a linkage between the promising social innovations of the creative communities and consumer society can only create exchange. Moreover, the creative communities must be able to show how their solutions (e.g. social innovations) are being generated, what solutions can be offered, what choices are available, and how they are able to make a difference. Most importantly, the visions and demands of the creative communities and society at large need an enabling platform in order to examine the choices of sustainable consumption and well-being. This also refers to understanding of the value-based engagement of the creative communities and consequent advantages in terms of common well-being. This leads to finding approaches that link all the relevant actors together. This is a highly challenging task, as it demands appropriate interconnectedness, ability to interact, and realistic solutions to be offered and accepted. But as stated above, sustainable consumption is an integrative process. It draws connections at different levels of interactive processes between different actors. These actors are not only the creative communities and the “average consumers” but also those engaged in transformation, proving products and services (i.e. business and economic actors) and the governments.

Therefore, this research will address the problem and potentials of creative communities whose social innovation solutions demands attention by the society, particularly, in the sustainable society context.

### 1.3. Main objective and Research questions

The main objective of this research is to reveal the importance of creative communities and the strategies needed to incorporate creative community solutions in society at large. This leads to the following the research questions:

- What are the benefits of creative communities in the sustainable consumption discourse?
- How can the values and relationships of the creative communities be incorporated by larger part of the society?

### 1.4. Methodology of the study

#### 1.4.1. Conceptualization

The original idea of this research stemmed from a personal interest on ‘*ways to consuming less*’ in present day high impact consumption scenario in the developed countries. Preliminary research was focused on linking the principle of sufficiency to the current sustainable consumption process, particularly to consumption and consumers. The preliminary findings on the application of sufficiency helped defining possible case studies and the initial characterization of the ‘sufficiency’ as a concept of ‘moderation’. However, there are limitations to the application of the sufficiency principle to the broader aim of sustainability in terms of involvement of different actors. Further study in this area seemed to raise too many challenges for the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, sufficiency is

considered as an important background principle for some of the creative communities in grounding values that are reflected in their pro-environmental behavior.

A preliminary review of the existing literature was conducted on consumer behavior research and problems of consumerism. The strategy of using role models recommended in some literature gave stimulus to look for further case studies. Since the original interest was tied to reducing level of consumption and displacement of materialism, the next step was to find examples of communities involved in reducing consumption. The literature findings further provided information that social innovation is useful for reducing consumption and have been developed by creative communities. The different activities of creative communities in the literature provided a basic understanding about the discrepancy in recommending role models and incorporating their social innovation strategies among general consumers. This paved the way of collecting information on various examples of creative communities in the industrialized countries, particularly Western Europe, Nordic countries and the US. The preliminary findings of the literature also highlighted important characteristics among the creative communities such as the linkage between their values and community-based activities, and the variety of networking strategies they are continuously developing. This provided additional information to further narrow down the cases of creative communities in literature that focuses on relationships they have are building.

Since the recent literature that focuses on creative communities is still trying to understand the underlying drivers that lead to their actions together with the lack of global uptake this research is also designed in the same manner. This led to the selection of some promising examples to study in that their names repeatedly occurred in literature, presenting the positive results of reducing the consumption and balancing social and personal needs. However, the challenges and perception of wider societal integration has not been explored in most of the literature, except for common service design, like car sharing. This then paved the way to carefully select case studies that not only brought positive outcomes, but also stimulated social innovations. Moreover, the focus on the relationships encouraged the researcher to select one or two cases where external actors (e.g. governments, NGOs) have contributed to social innovations.

Another part of the literature review was to find out the theoretical explanation of environmentally significant behavior or pro-social behavior, which can be observed through social innovations by the creative communities. The theoretical explanation that links values with their community behavior has been used to develop models combined with the literature analysis. Two main sets of theories have been used. Firstly, the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) model is explored to understand individual's value orientations on social and environmental behaviours. However, as the focus of the research is on community, the VBN provided a limited view at the initial stage, which led to a search for further empirical data that can relate the VBN with community behavior. Fortunately, the VBN model provides an explanation of collective behavior and actions. Empirical findings by the VBN theorists provided key characteristics of the community-based activities and social movements. This made the author extend the VBN's collective behavior explanation with community activities and has been applied to understand how the creative communities are able to generate positive research. The anecdotal experiences in the literature and the VBN collective behavior were applied to the networking of relations. This led to the next step, finding appropriate social and actor networking theories. In this study, Exchange Network theories and Actor's Network theories have been used to provide an understanding of relevant factors and their impact on social relations. The two main theories combined were then used to construct an analytical framework.

### **1.4.2. Data collection**

Information on the 5 case studies was collected through conducting 14 in-depth interviews and 3 site visits. The respondents chosen for each case are the leading actors and field experts in the communities. Additional interviews were conducted to understand the perception on the creative communities and their acceptance. Site visits were conducted in Milan, Italy and Malmö, Sweden, which provided insights and understanding on the needs of participatory processes in promoting social innovation. Telephone interviews and email communications were also conducted with the respondents. The list of respondents is provided in the Appendix. In order to receive the most relevant feedback from the respondents, each interview was uniquely designed with particular attention to types of values, the method of creating a communicative platform and perception on actor's engagement both in and outside the communities. The questions mainly focused on 'why' and 'how' in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues.

Personal communication, dialogues and sustainability conversations were also held with university students from various disciplines (behavioural science, social anthropology, economics, environmental science, development studies, and industrial design). Informal one-to-one discussions were held with 6 students in Sweden, UK, US, Germany, France, and Switzerland. Discussions were also held with 4 young professionals in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan to receive perspectives on sustainable consumption in South Asian countries. These conversations provided useful background to understand the similarities, differences and creative community needs in those countries, but largely focused on exploring the scope and design of the research. In this research names of some respondents have not been disclosed on request. In these cases only the geographic location has been given.

### **1.4.3. Method of Analysis**

The analysis is divided in to two parts, reflecting the two research questions. Firstly, the VBN was linked to actions and benefits based on the findings of the research to say why the creative communities should be promoted. Secondly, a comparative analysis was carried out to find similarities and differences between the chosen cases. This comparative analysis is based on 8 criteria developed through the literature analysis. In the development of these criteria, Network theories provided a basic content on the formation of social organizations and how to identify relationships in social interaction. This further helped the research in broadening the criteria to be used under 8 thematic categories. The value embedding in social network theories also led the researcher to construct a linkage between the VBN–Action results to understand further the nature of the relationships. This in turn helped in discovering challenges and opportunities facing a wider incorporation of creative communities.

### **1.4.4. Geographic boundary of the study and case selection**

The geographic boundary of the study covers cases of community-based social innovation in industrialized countries. This is due to the fact that recently, the sustainable consumption process has focused much on reducing consumption in European countries and North America. Moreover, the value-based community-based initiatives can provide useful recommended strategies if general consumers must be targeted to reduce environmental and social impacts. The five cases chosen here address the following aspects of mainstreaming strategies:

- **Service design as social innovation and a strategy of external support** - Two cases were observed to identify barriers and opportunities: car-sharing and co-housing in Milan, Italy
- **The role of downshifting and civic engagement -Voluntary Simplicity:** Perception and strategies in building cooperation with specific actors, examining the values embedded in social movements in Portland and Los Angeles, United States (US);
- **Value-based social organizations - The Findhorn Ecovillage:** The form of exiting social organizations and relationship with various actors with challenges, perceived opportunities and ideas on the pro-environmental and social values, norms and behaviours. The Findhorn Ecovillage, Scotland, United Kingdom;
- **Government intervention for social innovation - Augustenborg EkoStaden:** An approach of community-based intervention by local government and lessons learnt for stimulating innovation in Malmo, Sweden;
- **Education for sustainable consumption: NorthWest Earth Institute** – A unique example of education to form pro-social and pro-environmental behaviours in the US. Also linked to philosophy of Voluntary Simplicity.

## 1.5. Scope & limitations

Given the limited scope of the survey and time constraints, the research was limited to looking at local influence factors that have the potential to bring about changes in regions, or creating a new regime. However, since the research focuses on community-based social innovations, community members or citizen's perspectives in building relations to diffuse innovation and its acceptance in the society can provide useful information on existing challenges and opportunities. Since multiplicity of consumption problems can vary, citizen oriented approaches such as the discussed social innovations also range from aspirations to changing perspective to local practices. In order to keep the varieties of social innovation and to show the opportunities and challenges of value-based engagement (personal to community groups), a broad definition of social innovation was considered.

Interactions with all the actors in a community were obviously not possible. As a result, this research concentrates on discussions with the key informants such as field experts and leaders rather than community observations. It must be mentioned that the perceptions gathered in this study are only of those believers in community-based development, which may obviously differ from conventional top-down actors, large corporations and some market actors. On the other hand, the careful selection of known cases in developed countries does show the importance of promoting their ideas, innovations in living and value-based relational strategies.

## 1.6. Target Audience

This research is targeted mainly at researchers and students involved in sustainability, sustainable consumption, environmental governance and politics, and environmental policy and management. Since consumption issues draws links from multi-disciplinary areas, this research can be useful to professionals from sociology, economics, development studies, culture and social psychology disciplines. As the content largely covers creative community practices, their values and roles in reducing consumption, this research can also be source of information for these enthusiastic practioners. Moreover, a different perspective of social innovation in this study which is not only limited to private business enterprise development can be useful in supporting further research by innovation analysts/scientists.

## 1.7. Organization of the thesis chapters

This research is organized in seven chapters as follows:

**Chapter 1** presents the introductory background, nature of the problem, objectives, research questions and methodology. In describing the methodology, the choice of data collection and selection of the cases are presented to enable the reader to understand how this research has been conducted.

**Chapter 2** discusses the social innovations in sustainable consumption. A large part of this chapter is devoted to a description of background information on practical examples of social innovation cases, variations in creative communities, and their engagement within their communities and with other actors. It also highlights the main drivers of social innovation and barriers for larger acceptance in society.

**Chapter 3** is devoted to the theories that have been applied to develop the analytical models for the case studies and answering the research question. The Value-Belief-Norm model is presented and its extension suggested by the researcher. This is followed by background information on the network theories. At the end of this section the theoretical conceptual model along with analytical framework is provided.

**Chapter 4** presents the findings of the chosen case studies including a historical background together with perspectives and practices related to values, features and relationships. The findings are also related to the first theoretical model (i.e. VBN-Action-Benefit) based on responses, observations and analysis.

**Chapter 5** is the analysis of the study and presents an interpretation of first model drawn from the VBN model in the previous chapter. Following this the criteria-based case comparison and network of relations are described. Here, the two research questions in this study divide the analysis section into – a) one focusing on the benefits of value-based engagement; b) a second addressing the factors that influence the larger incorporation in the society.

**Chapter 6** is devoted to discussions addressing sustainable consumption issues in the Global South focusing of social values perspectives and community-based engagement with specific examples drawn from Bangladesh. This brief discussion highlights somewhat different orientation of consumption problem from the industrialized countries.

**Chapter 7** presents the conclusions, answers the research questions and identifies a number of potential areas for further research.

The appendix section at the end of this research provides the list of respondents and other background materials used in the case-study.

## 2 Social innovation in sustainable consumption

This chapter presents practical examples of social innovation by creative communities relevant to the research. The practical examples described draw various connections between specific values of community actions or social innovations. The examples are divided into two groups – the first one presents values embedded in social innovation and their advantages in reducing environmental impacts and/or addressing social problems; the second group provides examples of networks in strategizing and expanding the community initiatives or social innovations. The examples help to identify barriers and drivers in promotion and inclusion of creative community aspirations and social innovation diffusion.

Before moving to theoretical background and review, it is important to define the term ‘social innovation’ for this study.

### 2.1. Defining social innovation

Many social innovation cases are about rethinking the design of products, physical spaces and social technologies, which differs from the traditional commercial enterprise model. This gives room to redefine innovation in social and environmental contexts that can sufficiently contribute to the sustainable consumption goal. At present, literature provides several ways to form contextual definition of social innovation. Before going to a working definition for this study, the author seeks to explore the existing definitions of social innovation.

There are ways in which social innovation is being applied:

1) Social innovation to create ‘social entrepreneurs’: Predominantly, social innovation is an idea that seeks solutions to a problem related to unmet social needs (Skoll 2005). Here, social innovation can relate to new venture creation or technological innovation with social goals combined (Falk and Ryan 2007). In this definition, social innovation generates social enterprise. Typically, the business definition of social enterprise includes economic sustainability<sup>5</sup> and resolving social problems. The Oxford Business School’s Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship defines social entrepreneurs as -

*“A professional, innovative, and sustainable approach to systemic change that resolves social market failures and grasps opportunities. Social entrepreneurs engage with a wide range of business and organizational models, both non- and for-profit, but the success of their activities is measured first and foremost by their social impact.” (Skoll 2005)*

Professor Greg Dees in "The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship" (Dees 1998) has equated social innovation with social entrepreneurship. According to Dees, *“social entrepreneurs act as change agents in social sector by:*

- *Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value)*
- *Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission*
- *Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning*

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<sup>5</sup> Economic sustainability relates to work for profit in social enterprises (Self-Germany, a Social Entrepreneurship and Leadership Foundation definition). Such enterprises incorporate social and sustainability causes, although the outcomes or solutions are dependent on risk taking in venturing, incubation process as social innovation itself, and in providing solutions to small and medium size enterprises. The not-for-profit feature can also define in social entrepreneurs, however, financial mechanisms forms an integral part for sustainability of the enterprise.



- *Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and*
- *Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.”*

Thus, such social enterprises or innovations look at technological and organizational solutions. Innovators and early adopters both provide examples of self-management of organizations, i.e. developing reflexive and self-organizational skills (Moulaert *et al.* 2007). The replication of innovation diffusion may strongly depend on early adopters who play a big role in gaining wide acceptance of the innovation or enterprise.

2) The *process* of any social innovation diffusion creates social (and ecological) solutions. In the case of diffusion, the innovation can be social from the starting point and may go through myriad provisions to change a system in error. In the context of sustainable consumption, social innovators perform as producers or co-producers.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes, this can be part of socio-technological innovation system where innovation takes into consideration – “*how the innovation and process will be understood*”, what values and goals are related to innovation for system change, what forms of “*social and institutional will needed to be contrived*” and what actors’ involvement to enable the solutions need to be solicited (Falk and Ryan 2006).

Social innovation based on the diffusion of social enterprise, or *diffused social enterprise* (DSE) defined by EMUDE (2006) links to bottom-up *socio-technical* innovations (but not always related to technology) as -

*“That auto-produces social quality, where the term “diffuse enterprise” indicates people who, in their everyday life, organise themselves to obtain the results they are directly interested in; and the expression ‘to auto-produce social quality’ refers to the process whereby, through actively seeking to resolve their problems, people enhance a project that has the side effect of (more or less deliberately) reinforcing the social fabric.”*

3) The broadest definition of social innovation is where innovations satisfy any individual or actor’s interests, ideas or actions in pursuit to social and or ecological well-being. The Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto, Canada<sup>7</sup> (Centre for Social Innovation 2008) defines social innovations as -

*“New ideas that resolve existing social, cultural, economic and environmental challenges for the benefit of people and planet. A true social innovation is systems-changing – it permanently alters the perceptions, behaviours and structures that previously gave rise to these challenges.”*

A broad definition can have several features, mutually exclusive or inclusive:

- **Social technologies through community engagement** (Dawson 2006a): It can be a set of innovative ways in a soft-path of sustainable lifestyles such as creating communities, group building in ecovillages, working creatively to displace materialism, community-level governance techniques etc. Here, ways to achieve a goal (process) is more important than providing result-oriented solutions. Thus, innovation itself may not be inventive but the process of diffusion and path making is innovative.

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<sup>6</sup> Halme *et al* (2005) used ‘co-producer’ to term consumers or provider of product service systems. In some other literature, the term ‘prosumer’ can be observed. Co-producers can be seen as service innovators performing enterprises to give product-service solution.

<sup>7</sup> For more information: Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto, Canada website at: <http://www.socialinnovation.ca/about>.

- **Soft-core innovation:** values, beliefs, new norms that combine and ensure social and ecological well-being to help in creating personal sustainable lifestyles, change consumerist behaviour and help focus on long-term attainment of happiness (Falk and Ryan 2006). Reflection of such soft paths can be observed through attaining broader social goals by enhancing communication, and stretched to justice, equity, and well-being concepts.
- **Creation of space for more innovation and innovation enabling platforms:** this is more of an umbrella definition of social innovation combining the previous two – linking values and actions for sustainable lifestyles, windows of opportunity for expressive and conviviality, formulating community of interests to enable more innovation and diffusion to occur for system innovation.
- **Re-define design:** features, services, process change, joining principles with products/services and physical solutions.
- **Replication in diversity context:** history, culture, social norms and habits, economy, ecological diversities can produce innovative replications but with common goal of sustainability.
- Since social innovation is defined under diffusion, innovation path, trajectory, path-breaking and creation of systems with wide participation of actors from different areas, it can contribute to social reconstruction. Here, social innovations can combine actor's interests, values and cause a phenomenological social structure. Such features are generally linked more comprehensive innovations such as sustainable communities than product-service design.
- Institutional innovation and social economy: this has been defined under the EU SINGOCOM project<sup>8</sup> (Moulet *et al.* 2007) whereby innovation creates new forms of governance and social relations through developing a social economy to satisfy human needs.
- Social innovation in terms of addressing the soft-side (behaviour etc.) of consumers and facilitating conditions may be more inspirational of better life than overcoming a crisis situation (Cohen and Murphy 2001).

In the above definition and features of social innovation in sustainable consumption, it is challenging to distinguish one initiative from another. However, it is accepted that not all social innovation is new. The idea might have existed for a number of years, what context it is viewed in, what it creates or what impacts or changes it makes are also innovations. In terms of creative communities, their values, ways of *doing* things, making, living and engaging to seek solutions are concerns from a sustainable consumption point of view.

In light of the broadest definition of social innovation, this research is purposely designed to look at the challenges facing creative communities by drawing examples from:

- small service design cases
- sustainable community cases: the creation of a community attached to principles, values and behavioural changes
- conceiving ways in collectivism that produce interactions to build relations for diffusion and that stimulate the interests of business, governments and individuals
- perceptions and expectations of the creative communities about the roles of stakeholders in sustainable consumption process in community-based development

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<sup>8</sup> Social Innovation, Governance and Community Building (SINGOCOM) Project commenced in 2001 by European Union under Framework V. The project was financed by Key Action Improvement for Socio-Economic Knowledge Base for 36 months. The project was focused on several case studies to assess historical development and trend of social innovation and social movements. For more information see SINGOCOM Project website.

- relating micro-context to macro-level system changes in terms of replicating promising cases.

Some of the examples presented below shows the creative communities and their social innovations in developing strong networking threads. There is also emerging interest in academia in terms cooperation and exchanging knowledge with the creative communities to increase sustainable consumption. A brief focus of the current research discourse is provided below.

## 2.2. Focus of recent literature on creative communities in a sustainable consumption discourse

Interest in social innovation by creative communities to reduce consumption is relatively recent. In the sustainable consumption discourse, several streams have considered the social impact of consumerism. Most of the creative community initiatives vary in their efforts, worldviews, type of initiatives, development of bottom-up institutions, activism and so on, that combine environmental, social and economic impacts of social innovations. However, social innovations that address consumption by intention and through outcomes show inclusion of unmet social needs or problems are rare. In other areas of sustainability, i.e. environmental and economic, creative communities may vary in their innovation, benefits and challenges. Different strands of research focus on *creative communities ethical behaviours and sufficiency strategies for environmental care* (Princen 1997; Princen 2005; Jackson 2005; Mont and Plepys 2005; Stern *et al.* 2000; Sachs *et al.* 2000; Andrews 2006; Etzioni 1993; Etzioni 2006a; Elgin 2007; Cohen and Murphy 2001; Røpke and Reisch 2004; McKenzie-Mohr and Smith 1999), *system innovation from product service design and sharing resources* (Shove 2003; Mont 2004; Halme *et al.* 2005; Manzini 2006; Tukker 2007), *socio-environmental policy change campaigns* (Cohen and Murphy 2001; Stern *et al.* 2000; Sachs *et al.* 2000; Myers and Kent 2004; Fuchs and Lorek 2004) and *welfare and well-being in creative communities* (Kasser 2002, Kasser 2004; Whybrow 2005; EMUDE 2006; Latouche 2006; Dawson 2006b). There is small body of empirical research on creative community's organizational psychology that is concerned with group dynamics, networking relations and functions (Claridge, 1997; Danter *et al.* 2000).

There is a growing literature on the functions of creative communities (i.e. what do they feel, what they do) and their impacts on consumption or sustainability (i.e. what concerns them and how do they seek resolution) brought by the creative communities and civil society organizations. There are web-based resource materials and community's own research work including ways to transform and develop communities to take action in, for example, the *Intentional Communities Wiki*. Almost all of these community-based knowledge materials are working within the trust-based network of communities without support from governments and there is increasing support from the research institutions and academia to receive applied knowledge. As an exchange rule, the communities receive technical know-how, access to new developments and receive wider public attention. An example, of such exchange relations have been established by the *Emerging User's Demands for Sustainable Solutions* component of the *Sustainable Everyday Project* (EMUDE 2006), where several universities came together to showcase the community-based shared service designs and collective actions with social, economic and environmental benefits. This project was funded by the European Commission 6th Framework Programme, and the lessons from the activities are expected to be incorporated in the Marrakech Process (Meroni 2007). An interesting aspect of these works is that the cases are based on real life examples rather than theoretical ones and therefore provide opportunities for other communities and society at large to adopt them. Another interest among researchers is to provide positive results to initiate interests among business and government actors (EMUDE 2006).

Despite these positive features there seems to be a gap in bringing these 'role models' to the sustainable consumption table. It was argued that the typical approach of consumption reduction by quantitative representations may be interesting to policy makers, but that it rarely moves people (Sachs *et al.* 2000). Presentation of consumption by *social innovations, intellectual projects, models of behavior* for moderation should highlight "*remarkable and surrounding aspects of nature, its sounds, colours, ... peoples' organizations, interests and wishes.*" (Sachs *et al.* 2000). This demands not only an understanding of community organizations in their actions or behaviours, but also an appreciation of how people can sense changes, states of mind, and internal drivers, and how these factors are reflected in actions and relationships. Is such an understanding of creative communities' concerns, values, commitment and relations with others in reality so difficult? Are benefits clearly visible? Or, is it the conventional notion of complexities arising from the intricate web woven by our relations with the world that challenges us? The famous American transcendentalist and one of the pioneers of Voluntary Simplicity, Henry David Thoreau once quoted "*Our life is frittered away by detail... Simplify, simplify, simplify! ...*" (*Where I Lived and What I Lived For, Walden*). May be it is possible to link 'us', the ordinary people, with 'them'.

Let us look at some of these model cases to see their ways of expressing values and their efforts to bring the tide of change.

### 2.3. Exploring the social innovations of creative commons: A review

According to Robert Putnam (1985), social capital is increasingly becoming scarce in industrialized countries. Today, nearly a quarter of US citizens do not have anyone to confide to at time of distress (Worldwatch Institute 2008). The increasing trend of declining happiness resulting from loneliness, stress, depression, and exhausting 'life energy' are being observed in Europe and Japan (Worldwatch Institute 2008). This is the story of modern urban life where material and cultural choices are plenty, but where there is less time and energy to drive pleasures from them. But where there is a *will to regenerate social relationships*, there is huge opportunity to improve life quality (Worldwatch Institute 2008).

Co-housing, a powerful grass-root social innovation is now providing a solution to urban renewal. On average, the number of co-housers varies between 15-35 families, sometime extending to 100 with multi-generational inhabitants (Lietaert 2008). Originally, co-housing was founded in Scandinavia, particularly in Denmark in 1972 by Hildur Jackson<sup>9</sup>. The stimulus for the idea was the healthy development of children and provision of emotional support to young women by sharing lives. This was reflected in physical design of co-housing. It focused on *neighbourhood development and sense of belonging* by combining private and common facilities. There are 6 fundamental characteristics followed in all co-housing initiatives (Lietaert, 2008). People develop *user-demanded solutions* through participatory decision-making, and design extensive space for common facilities such the kitchen, dining, green areas, paths, playgrounds, day-care, the library, laundry and so on. Cars are typically parked outside. Products such as tools, cars, gardening tools, utensils etc. are shared. Additionally, fully equipped private houses are available for personal space. Today, the popularity of co-housing has diversified through large shared buildings and groups of retrofitted buildings (IC 2007) with the help of social housing companies. Work in and for the 'Common House' is also shared on a rotational basis and sometimes paid for by the community. Recent co-housing increasingly features

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<sup>9</sup> Co-founder of the Global Ecovillage Network and the Gaia Trust, the Danish Network of Ecovillages. Now residing in Denmark after years of struggle to found an ecovillage that did not receive approval from the government lobbied by other interest-groups (Gaia Trust, [www. http://www.gaiauniversity.org](http://www.gaiauniversity.org)).

*green design*, combining renewable energy supply, efficient heating systems, recycling and composting facilities, and shared or private resource saving appliances (Meltzer 2005).

The benefits of co-housing vary with the size, forms, shapes and available facilities. Socially, multi-generational exchanges increase *social inclusion* (elderly, retiree, disabled, empty nesters). Sharing work and resources provide a *healthy balance* of privacy and community, as well as, leisure. Co-housing elderly are reported to ‘stay young’ through daily participation with youth and children (Cohousing-US 2007). Cultural diversity can be seen in different designs (IC 2007). Sharing of common spaces also *reduces private costs* of living (IC 2007). Frequently, co-housers with high concern about environmental problems tend to downshift with ‘*less stuff*’ (Cohousing fact sheet US 2007; Meltzer 2005). The variety of income group living together *reduces status hierarchy* and there is an ‘invisible’ collective force, a *cultural norm* to live with less (Meltzer 2005). *Congruency of values and behaviour* is reported by people with reducing personal and spatial distances (Meltzer 2005). Shared resources and spaces provide opportunity to *cut down emissions*. Communities discuss and share information on *improving collective support and aid environment*. These features are attractive to outsiders as co-housing belongs within the mainstream urban environment (Meltzer 2005). A high advantage is to reduce the private housing demand in the cities, which is increasing all over the world with very few exceptions.

Shared services with increased public spaces have been incorporated in designing services by many housing providers (Halme *et al.* 2005). Cohousing has influenced social housing authorities, developers and architects to consider extended common spaces in neighbourhood design for social and environmental benefits. Today, cohousing is commonly designed for the elderly by private developers in Netherlands, Denmark and the US (Cohousing-US 2007) and in Scandinavian countries, governments support co-housing construction and assists urban neighbourhood regeneration projects (Lietaert 2008). In 2006, Germany’s urban house demand fell by 9% as a result of increased use of communal services, e.g. social housing with innovative service system features (SmartLIFE 2007).

The very basis of co-housing is to maintain a *participatory* process, including *strategic leadership*, participatory *conflict resolution*, and *mutual trust* in everyday lives. As a result there are new opportunities to improvise over time. The Global Network of Intentional Communities<sup>10</sup> is now embracing the ‘Passion principle’, a causal method that effectively distributes work, nurtures altruistic values and cares for the environment (IC 2007).

Eco-village Ithaca (EVI) in New York, has developed their ecovillage using a *diffused* version of the cohousing model. This adoption of cohousing ideas has led them to change the design of their houses and use the less energy intensive houses and neighbourhoods which can be observed in close-clustered houses in some cohousing models. EVI is the first model of cohousing group to construct two neighbourhoods (EVI 2008). This has led significant interactions between the cohousing and ecovillage communities in sharing experience in order to further reduce environmental impacts with new technological innovations. Another important advantage of this fusion is to free natural space. EVI has limited its built neighbourhood and has 70% free green spaces. The US Department of Agriculture provides \$12,100 year to restore wildlife in habitat on 2 acres of EVI’s land (EVI 2008).

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<sup>10</sup> **Intentional Community** is an inclusive term for ecovillages, cohousing, residential land trusts, communes, student co-ops, urban housing cooperatives, alternative communities, and other projects where people strive together with a common vision. (IC website, [www.ic.org](http://www.ic.org))

In many eco villages and cohousing development, the expansion of communal services is based on distributed working principles, environmental concerns, local food shopping, time bartering, neighbourhood renewal and implementing numerous social innovations. The variations in ecovillages can be seen and increasingly form adaptive structures in terms of outlook and activities. With increasing diffusion through social innovation, as illustrated above, Dawson (2006a) suggested a list of principle attributes of an ecovillage: a place with community forming central importance, shared values and resources are the norms, there is a movement to win back local control over resources, they are built exclusively by communities rather than developers, and they act as central place for research and demonstration. He added that ecovillages should be seen as places where “*at the heart of their rationale is the desire to construct human settlements that tread less heavily on the Earth.*” (Dawson 2006a quoted after Ecologist 2008).

Probably one of most illustrated and famous example of social innovation driven by *historical tradition and community culture* is Slow Food, a non-profit eco-gastronomic member supported organization. Carlo Petrini, a food and wine journalist founded the Slow Food movement in 1986 as a response to the opening of first fast-food chains in Italy (Slow Food 2006). Historically, Italian culinary culture is an expression of delight, a platform for socializing, enjoyment and conviviality. The impacts of fast food in altering the state of mind, increasing health problems through processed food, disrupting local food production system, and above all, changing a much valued social culture were seen as major threats. The Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity under the Slow Food International now provides visibility to people showing how industrialization of food erodes the variety of tastes and species, and affects local farmers through unfair distribution of benefits. Today, it has more than 80,000 members (Slow Food International 2008). The main values of the Slow Food movement are to provide consumers the *right to pleasure* and thereby to *protect the heritage of food, food systems, tradition, and culture*. An important contribution that enabled the movement to be successful was *support from the Region in Tuscany* where the Foundation formed a partnership with the Rural Agricultural Development Agency (ARSIA) to support local farmers markets, local suppliers and other actors in the chain. The success of the Slow Food movement in Italy has attracted more than *122 countries* around the world to come forward to join. In different countries the movement invites consumers to develop a sensitive taste through taste education and through this opens the market for local food producers. As a result of its business orientation, Slow Food has successfully created a wide network of local food producers in many countries, making inventories around the world of food and recipes that can be tasted in local areas. The slow food market system, however, is still fragile and the perceived exclusivity means that food is often highly priced. However, the growing network of supporters of this movement shows importance of involvement of various actors along with consumers and campaigns based on the recent manifesto combine simple, colourful and illustrative examples of food with information targeted to raising awareness and satisfaction.

Many creative communities are providing *capacity building* support. Typically, ecovillages carry out educational and vocational training programmes linked with public and private schools, universities and civil society organizations. The purpose of these programmes is to *share and build knowledge* on key eco village concepts such as recycling, gardening, composting (Ecologist 2008), passive housing, community-based renewable energy system management (EVI 2008; Ecologist 2008), neighbourhood design and so on. Ecovillage Ithaca in New York, designed with modern green technologies, provides hands-on training at Cornell University and Wells College. The Ithaca College has also formed a partnership with the National Science Foundation and the residents provide a localized working model including managing community resources, financing and managing social enterprises and lessons on local community governance. Educational involvement builds a *wider platform to increase communication with the mainstream*, as well as, sharing experiences. Students and youth receive knowledge

on various daily measures to keep their footprints low, build relationships with wider groups, learn about natural systems and develop interconnectedness with nature. Learning through visibility and promising practices are also helping to grow voluntarism.

There are some cities and towns looking holistically on how to respond to climate change by taking local initiatives and investing in local energy projects. For example, Transition Town, is a network of localities, towns and villages in the UK, United States, Australia and New Zealand where citizens have committed to become climate neutral societies with cooperation of the local governments (Transition Town 2008). At this embryonic stage of the initiative, the successful and stable towns or cities are sharing and offering knowledge, training and educational campaigns to the others. An interesting aspect of this initiative is that it combines personal and collective activity and enjoyable social interactions. It also delivers the message that a common vision is possible to achieve and one, which is shared by other communities to face the 'twin challenges' of peak oil and climate change.

There are a number of networks that have been established that focus on specific *knowledge sharing* through direct communications. For example, The Permaculture Association is an international network of individuals, local groups and communities that search for solutions to sustainable land management on a community basis. The central principles or values that bring people together are - to take care of earth, create socially cohesive relations of practioners and to support fair distribution of resources (Röpke and Reisch 2004). The training provided by the Association involves 'action learning' through forming small groups of people trying to change the world and willing to commit to a series of about 4 actions. Learning meetings are hosted by the Association in different places through local or regional base organizations where each participant is linked with an expert as a 'reference'. The participants are also responsible for finding other activists or practioners to form groups and communities to initiate collective actions. In a study on the emerging consciousness for sustainable consumption, the presence of ecological values in its social organization was seen as the main reason for growth of permaculture practice (Röpke and Reisch 2004). This approach of self-organizing is similar to other intentional communities such as cohousing projects that seek to adopt 'principles' to build a sustainable lifestyles. Global and nationwide online networks have been formed where *cohousers* share knowledge, express concerns and values, provide eco-tips and fellowships to start new intentional *community of choice* and find like-minded people. The current number of cohousing communities and networks is unknown.

Another important step in networking for broader and less specific dissemination to the wider public is networking through conventional media. *Media* has huge potential to play important role in increasing *visibility* outside the national boundary. Ecovillage such as EVI has gained media publicity because of its partnership networks and educational support. Spanish TV broadcasts Ithaca Hours, newspapers and magazines features the innovative efficient systems, and documentaries on *student-communities exchange programs* (EVI 2008; Ecologist 2008). The network of actors established with EVI is setting example of mutual cooperation between various agencies at the local and global level. EVI's focus on nature conservation or protected areas and social cohesion are lessons for other *intentional communities to be created*.

With the help of *web-based network* and booming *blogspots* of creative enthusiasts, people are learning about making changes at home, work and exchange useful information *of what works and what doesn't*. This is providing room for debate and opening the door for change. An important feature of these web-based publications and networks is *free knowledge*. This is another wave of social movement emerging to work against patenting of intellectual properties. The Global Ideas Bank (GIB) was created in 1995 by the Institute for Social Invention (The Nicholas Albery Foundation, UK). This

web-based platform is a network of inventors, which grew over years promoting creativity workshops and creative solutions around the world. The reason behind this innovation was concern over losing *individual and collective wisdom* through current structural lock-in of citizens who are making themselves vulnerable, losing collective visions to 'change', and lacking mutual cooperation (GIB 2008).

Some of these networks have established *incentive* mechanisms through awards as a form of *recognition* and showcasing work for *support from other actors*. Global Ideas Bank who won the Margaret Mead Special Recognition Award for "community creativity for a new century" in 2001, are now awarding to other social inventors (GIB 2008). Such networking organization has fostered links between other social innovation organizations (e.g. European Social Innovations Exchange, the Norwegian Ideas Bank, the School for Social Entrepreneurs, and the Centre for Innovation in Voluntary Action). The current model of the Global Ideas Bank website combines thousands of idea entries by creative communities and individuals with voting systems and categorization of issues. These ideas can be taken up by others for further development and share knowledge. Such steps not only increase the knowledge base, but also assist to create a global *democratic process* for change by community based social innovations. One of the consumption related campaigns was to organize a day long online workshop with social innovators to develop ideas of 'non-product, non-gadget ideas to improve the society together' (GIB 2008). This underlying idea is no less different from creative communities' effort to '*consume less*' by other means (e.g. self-transcendence).

The above examples indicate variety of ways in supporting local activities, which are rooted in 'quality' enhancement and respond to problems with underlying values, ideologies, experiences, and human feelings for self and the others.

## 2.4. Drivers for social innovation for sustainable consumption

Most of the creative communities and social movement have come from a *problem solution* or *need based approach*. Even if there is no intention to create a social or environmental movement, the organization of the creative communities meets unmet social needs has driven the social innovations. In previous sections, the illustration of Slow Food and intentional communities show such response. In case of shared services, the social innovation can target one or two of the sustainability dimensions attached to the problem (Halme *et al.* 2005). For example, social innovation relating to group housing of socially excluded elderly in Estonia, has been more social and economic in terms of sustainability achievement (EMUDE 2006). In order to achieve environmental sustainability, much more integrative approach from source of resources to process of interaction to end-of life is considered (Halme *et al.* 2005). This means that nature of the problem and solutions design will create outcomes of whether or not the system will be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. This is probably true for specific small social innovation cases such as some of the product service systems. However, in case of intentional communities like cohousing, ecovillages, permaculture groups and many other innovative ideas were influenced by the internal factors individual's will to make a move. What makes the creative communities different is the way they precede towards a solution. Creative communities not only derive pleasure out of responding to a problem, conceiving a solution but also designing in a better a way geared to common well-being (Manzini and Jégou 2003). Thus, problem-solution has another driver attached to the creative communities inspired for sustainability, which is inspiration to 'make things better and by the art of doing. On the other hand, the failure of social innovations, do also suggest adaptive nature, visions, aims and ability to be resilient. It was found that usually, social innovations are resilient and the nature of seeking support by collectivism makes it more resilient (Mulgan *et al.* 2007).



Another important driver is the *rejection of the present system* (e.g. economic dominance over life, materialistic, lacking justice, and unfair distribution) by the communities. This is related to problem solution, but not to a particular problem. The result of such view is a collective perspective of individuals with recognizing threats coming from political, cultural, economic, social and environmental changes. In 1960s, the counter-culture movement is an example of total *rejection of what is established as a social or cultural norm*. There is also inspiration mingled with creation of such communities by leaving the place in urban or rural established places and move to a secluded place. Ecovillage history along with many transcendentalists approach is similar. This seems to change over time as seen in Ithaca Ecovillage case. The Global Network of Ecovillages is rather expanding and becoming attached to the mainstream through providing various capacity-building supports. The rise of the networks with diversity of problem orientation and acting for solidarity, can drive others spatially and systemically isolated communities to be connected.

In the history of social innovations, *philanthropy* has been the largest driver for incubating social innovations (Mulgan *et al.* 2007). This, for obvious reasons, is in need of funds, either to create or test the innovation, or to make community settlements. The rejection of a conventional system is one of the reasons to seek ethical funds by the creative communities geared to well-being (Mulgan *et al.* 2007). Gardner & Prugh determined venture philanthropists as a key constituency with the power to reshape economies towards sustainability (Worldwatch Institute 2008). Transformation in the market and societies through seeding innovative ideas by venture capital investment can be a powerful tool. For sustainability goal oriented innovations in different sectors – agriculture, waste disposal, water, and energy, venture capital can support use of innovative technologies or practices to deliver the services to people in a clean way. In recent years, deviation from conventional financial market orientation to ethical capital investments coming from various investors can be observed. Some transition theorists have marked this as *Venture Philanthropy* where performance-based financing, relating professional services to social services, high engagement of the downstream actors in the production-consumption chain, partnership approach form the basic features. This is also acting as driver under sustainable community vision. In 2004, the Corporation for National and Community Service of the US granted approximately \$4,000,000 to nonprofit organizations with a purpose to help new, start-up and established organizations develop new service programmes that have the potential of becoming national in scope (SCN 2004). These grants fund innovative strategies to effectively engage volunteers in service sectors and encourage engagement of public charities, clean technologies, community organizations, private foundations, schools with statement of intent is evaluated on degree of potential to replicate and regenerate its programmes. These investments sometimes face same external pressures from financial analysts and portfolio managers for quarterly or cyclic earnings based on short term financial results. Reorganizing donors external influence on grant-seekers for short-term fund cycle as a form of innovation stability, contradicting with profit-maximization, and recognizing need to develop value-chain through active ownership of shares in portfolios are gaining grounds (EBBF 2008). In 2006, philanthropic ventures on community based cleantech investments in North America boosted to 78% over 2005 level that became the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest investment category with 11% of all investments (Worldwatch Institute 2008).

*Historical and political context* can highly mobilize of communities as well as stimulating local economies. *National policy changes* to establish enterprises are essential to support social innovation projects. Since the 1970s, Denmark allowed small companies, cooperatives, communities and to start their own renewable energy projects and the option of income from connecting to national grid (Worldwatch Institute 2008). At present, 80% of wind turbines are owned by cooperatives, local companies and individuals (Worldwatch Institute 2008). This triggered major investments in renewable energy

projects, local ownership and earning a local profit, gaining further acceptance of the schemes in the country.

*Experiential knowledge* can also drive social innovation. With the will to make changes, many social innovations are put into neighbourhood actions such as waste and water management, changing lifestyles and so on. This is what the networking in relations among communities unfolds. Exchange rules within themselves as well as sharing information and knowledge. It was seen in the famous case of Global Action Plan project, where citizens participated together to create changes to reduce consumption (GAP 2007). The main idea of the project was to engage participants into exchanging dialogues, personal reflections, and small group exercises on values, habit and behaviours of consumption (Røpke and Reisch 2004). This led to citizens who were convinced by their and others' experiences that community can be mobilized by creating communities.

## 2.5. Barriers for social innovation for sustainable consumption

*Lack of common values* is the one of the main barrier in accepting creative communities and supporting their endeavours. As noted by various researchers, self-interest or personal satisfaction values overriding the common well-being inhibits the process of the adopting social innovations. The self-interest values such as desires for more wealth, power (Kasser 2002, 2004; Whybrow 2005; Scitovsky 1976; Princen 2005; Røpke 2000; Stern 1996, 2000; Jackson 2005) and perspective of comfort serves as barriers to change behavior (Stern 2000; NCC 2007). Creative communities and their social innovations have been dominated by values related to nature and social bonding. Such values are uncommon if it dominates over self-interest. Another barrier from the consumer side to accept is their lock-in and not knowing how to contribute and come out of consumerism. This is related to the *lack of information and awareness* that can trigger social innovation. However, as seen in GAP project, a better understanding facilitates into citizenship and can transform behaviours towards collective and private actions. There is also level of spiritualism and religious institutions involved in community's wellness schemes and practices. The growing secularism and loss of religious values has created counter-feelings towards spiritual practices. The eco-villages like Ithaca, Sieben Lienden (Germany) maintain secularism and religious practices do not collide. However, except for the well-known examples, religious belief based practices are unknown.

The policy-makers and planners usually perceive that incorporation *embedded values in changing consumer behavior by internal rules is hard to put into community planning design* (Ecologist 2008). This is why many of the infrastructural support –based project to create community may not achieve similar success in terms of collective behavior and social cohesion. Shared resource service on the other hand, can work well which is based on design strategies (Ecologist 2008).

*Present structure of the market*, oriented towards consumerism is definitely not supportive to make a large scale shift that would support local or regional economies. Social innovations are small-scale and so are the creative communities. In cases where companies moved forward to financially support social innovators (venture philanthropy), this is done as part of their usual business process. This also restricts governments to support the creative communities as the conventional system process is based on profit-maximization, which is not the main condition of social innovation in creative communities. Market for localized production, services and green business are yet to be developed. The interest of creative communities in investing on green technologies can be observed (EBBF 2008). Thus, there support to greening business and vice versa, requires sharing of common visions and main working principles. The isolation of the creative communities is another factor that inhibits the process of engagement. Moreover, creative communities work on a cooperation model, whereas

businesses are based on a competitive structure (Princen 2004; Worldwatch Institute 2008). This makes the two come together from extreme points of a goal seeking nature. This again relates to *lack of common vision*.

Since the creative communities are still growing, given their mode of adoption; there is *confusion* about *what actually can make them role models* and *how their practices can be applied*. The main objective of EMUDE (2006) and the EU- LIFE project (Life 2008) is to showcase their works and explain in simple language about creative communities and the variety of choices that they have to offer to a society.

The process of community-based organization is slow. The time demand of the process of community building can discourage many others to collective actions. It requires time to gathering like minded people and building a community (cohousing planning can take 3-5 years, Leitart 2008). Understanding group dynamics and build a common vision or foundation is vital if the community commits to make the 'change' to sustainability transition. The growth in terms of building social relations with actors linking would mean feasibility, viability and visioning has to come to a common ground (Sustainable Consumption roundtable-UK 2007). Moreover, participatory processes can take time to reach to a consensus. Sometimes the innovator needs take the lead and knowing the risks, however, the values shapes and lag period of how much time the planning can take place is the question. It is also time and energy consuming with the will of voluntarism to get authorization or approval from the local authorities.

*Lack of Effective Articulation* is related to the language. Articulation refers to having sufficient capabilities of persuasion and influence. For creative communities, the promotion must know the term. Many people think reducing consumption is a term for sacrifice. Creative communities are inspiring but they live in deprivation (Andrews 2006; Manzini and Jégou 2003; Jackson and Michaelis 2004). The case of slow food is a perfect example of inviting customers to interested organizations and local entrepreneurs and suppliers. They use terms that are similar to marketing campaigns and do not highlight in a way where consumers can think they are losing something. Slow Food offers – *Clean, Good and Fair* food. The words are more embedded in designing the slow food development itself. Although the movement started of with basic values related to protecting rich gastronomic traditions, they went beyond to address the customers at all segments, not 'only for elite to enjoy artisan;' food. The training on local food and wine tasting under their ark of taste programme is both drawing customers and interested parties. Such language articulation also needs to be linked to attract policy makers and government. In the same example, the Tuscan government came forward knowing the threat and as a response to local farmers protests (Slow Food International 2008). This relates to understanding the local impact and social appeal of the measures to be demanded. Further, the specialists, contribution to designing service it is of importance. The creative communities networking potential also much depends on articulation. The networking involves communication, methods, channels, levels and dynamics of the communicators. For the prominent cases, we see innovation also occurs at this point.

The above examples highlight two points of notice – a) *to see how creative community's embedded values, beliefs, principles and reactions (actions) can be identified*; b) *to view ways by which interactions can be identified that stimulates creative communities and others to bring new ideas in sustainability or sustainable discourse*. This is discussed in the next Chapter 3 covering relevant theories.

### 3 Theoretical Background

The following theories help to explore certain values and behavioural characteristics found in creative communities. First, the *Value-Belief-Norm* (VBN) theory is considered to provide an understanding of the types of values that bring moral obligations to create behavior that work towards solving environmental and social problems. Secondly, since the VBN theory is applicable largely to individuals, social or community theory has been used to link individuals with communities and common thinkers to explain the community perspectives and initiatives. Thirdly, *Exchange Network theory* is presented to support community relationships with other actors in the society.

Taken together, these theories create a conceptual model that is applied in the case studies to identify the dominance of VBN in individual and collective behavior. This in turn, helps to identify and examine the relationships or networks that social innovation demands for promotion and incorporation in society at large.

#### 3.1. Value-Belief-Norm Theory

Value-Belief-Norm Theory is by far the most renowned work on morals that can be used to explain pro-environmental behavior. Paul Stern and his colleagues (Stern *et al.* 1999) who developed this model state that pro-environmental behavior comes from moral obligations or ‘personal norms’ embedded with a certain value orientation. The theory attempts to reveal a chain of influences on behavior from peoples’ value sets and beliefs to action. The value sets are divided into 3 types – *egoist, biospheric and altruistic*. The theory combines Schwartz’s Norm Activation theory (1992), Dunlap and van Liét’s Ecological value theory (1978) and partly, Rational Choice theory.

The VBN model originates from Schwartz’s theory that presumes that altruistic values lead to *awareness of adverse consequences* (AC) on other people and thus instigates a responsibility to help eliminate the problem. Stern’s VBN is built on this norm-based action flow comprising: acceptance of specific personal values, beliefs that things attached to these values is under threat, and personal responsibility or actions to alleviate the threat and restore the values (Stern *et al.* 1999). The personal norm is termed as ‘*ascribing to responsibility*’ (AR). Schwartz (1992), followed by Stern (Stern *et al.* 1999) used self-transcendence values to represent concern with transcending selfish interests and enhancing other’s well-being. Therefore, the more self-transcendence values are present in people, the more they are morally obliged to help each other.

The second link on biospheric value orientation originates from acceptance of the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) as an antecedent to adverse consequences. Stern (2000) correlates the NEP with biospheric and altruistic values positively and egoist (self-interest) values negatively. Several studies found positive correlation between self-transcendence values and pro-environmental behavior (Jackson 2005). However, one value orientation can co-exist with another one (Stern *et al.* 1995; Jackson 2005).

In terms of generating behaviours, the models are divided into 3 categories: environmental citizenship (where individuals take responsibility to problem-solution with others), policy support (responding to regulatory instruments, green taxes, or demanding policy changes conducive to reduce negative social or environmental impacts), and the private sphere (individual responsibility to make changes). In this model the negative self-interest, or egoist behaviours are assumed not to support pro-social or environmental significant behavior. The following Figure 3-1 shows the original VBN model.

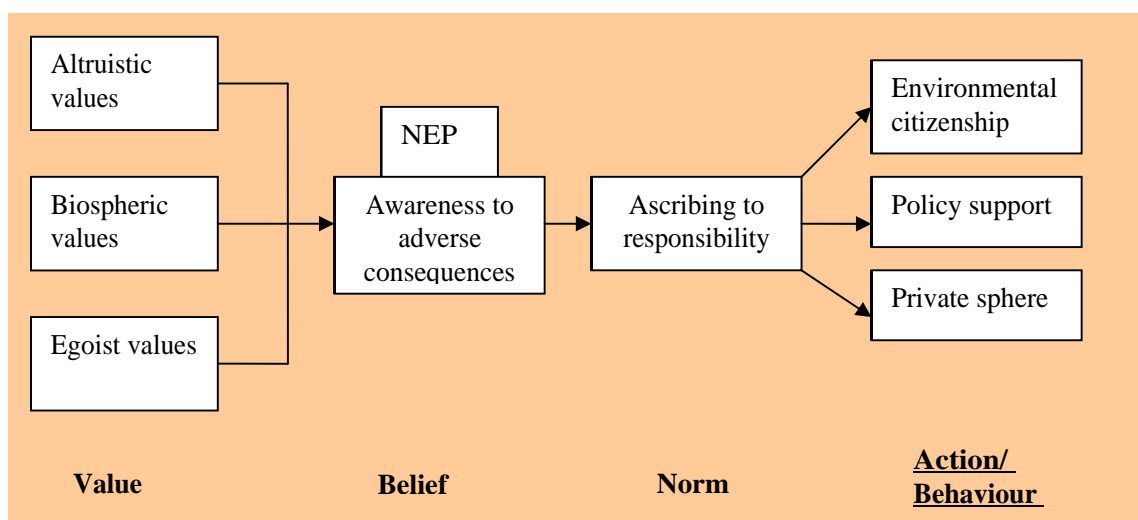


Figure 3-1: Value-Belief-Norm Model (Stern et al. 1999)

### a) Ecological Value Theory in VBN

This normative model of environmental behavior suggests that specific value orientations (e.g. morality, altruistic values) in individuals create pro-environmental or pro-social behaviours (Jackson 2005). Dunlap and van Liere's (1978) study suggests that biospheric value orientation, or concerns about environmental problems stem from values, beliefs and attitude existing in society. According to these theorists, a New Environmental Paradigm arises from an idea of an 'environmental crises caused by a belief in the abundance of resources, failure of the laissez-faire market economy, blind techno-centric views and private property rights. This paradigm shift is a follow up to the crisis situation of the Dominant Social Paradigm (Jackson 2005 quoted after theorists) where sets of values have been eroded in society. The erosion of value is one of the contributory factors of the environmental crisis. The New Environmental Paradigm is composed of respecting natural limits and the importance of preserving the integrity and balance of nature.

From an environmental philosophy perspective, Arne Naess' (1973) view of Deep Ecology can be viewed as a dominant working concept among creative communities (e.g. intentional communities in ecovillages). Deep Ecology places great importance on abiotic factors in the natural system (non-human species and their roles in maintaining ecosystems) and the core principle engrained in Naess's doctrine of biosheptic egalitarianism claims that humans are part of the living environment in a collective system which has intrinsic values and rights to live and flourish. This principle allows 'deep' thinking on 'why' and 'how' nature's integrity must be allowed to continue, particularly in terms of reducing the environmental impacts by humans. Moreover, Naess's work has been applied by many scientists in studying nature as a dynamic system. Bill Devall and George Sessions (1985) described that the principle of 'everything is connected to everything else' raises a certain ecological consciousness, which extends to political and spiritual deliberations in addition to mere scientific system model perspective. Devall and Sessions (1985) explained the rise of ecological consciousness in works of other scientists such as Rachel Carson, Aldo Leopold, Paul R. Ehrlich and Barry

Commoner<sup>11</sup>. Thus, Deep ecology can be viewed as a belief based on values to attain the development of all components of nature within a carrying capacity. Although their works have been applied in various ways in different environmental arenas, the study of deep ecology in motivating human behaviours and actions as applied by certain creative communities is untapped.

However, in studying ecological values in moral behavior, early works of Schwartz (1973, 1977) are noteworthy. Shalom Schwartz distinguished 2 main value orientations in his self-concept model - 'self-enhancement' (self-interest) and a 'self-transcendence' (i.e. other-regarding). The self-enhancement values relates to personal utility maximization under rational choice model in contrast to self-transcendence that considers altruism as a part of individual's pursuit to transcendence. Schwartz argued that pro-environmental or social behavior is less likely to be brought by self-interested values compared to self-transcendence values. However, a third value orientation – exclusive environmental concern or biospheric values, which may not contribute to social values, can also be observed in green activism. Such distinctions are important to understand the values-behavior in both the individual and collective actions of creative communities. Jackson (2005) stated that there is no one-tone correspondence between these values and thus, any pro-environmental or altruism can operate based on different motivations. Stern (Stern *et al* 1995) considered that egoistic values are less likely to engage people in 'pro' behaviours than those having biospheric or self-transcendence values, a view that resonates with latest evidence of Costanza's (Costanza *et al.* 2007). Zavestoski (2002) found that environmental concerns correlate positively with both self-enhancement (egoistic) and self-transcendent (altruistic) values. This suggests that although motivating certain environmental concerns may not require value changes, persuasion to consume less must rely on internal value changes moving towards more self-transcendence.

Schwartz (1977) further noted that personal norms directly influence pro-social and altruistic behaviours arising from belief of 'moral obligation' to engage in such a behavior. This is different from the 'subjective norm' or standard emphasized in the theory of planned behavior. In Norm Activation theory, some behaviours can be intended without any reinforcements fully based on internal values. Such internal values come from psychological antecedents – awareness about the consequence of one's actions and accepting personal responsibility for actions and consequences.

### **b) Extension of VBN model: From individual VBN to community engagement**

Stern (Stern *et al.* 1999; 2000) used the VBN model to analyze environmental citizenship in social and environmental movements. He concluded that VBN can provide support to both non-activism and activism in understanding the individual socio-psychological process of individual behavior to favor group/ community engagement. Here, dominance of self-transcendence over self-interest values to gain collective advantage is workable processes for common well-being. In other words, an individual's decision to act responsibly depends on their basic value priority and belief in 'claimed threats'. Stern's extension to link individual behavior with collectivism involved combining cultural theory<sup>12</sup> (mainly egalitarianism) with the VBN model. It must be mentioned that VBN model does

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<sup>11</sup> System Scientists and concept focus: Rachel Carson on environmental system and pollution; Aldo Leopold's 'Land Ethic' concept on preserving integrity, stability and beauty of nature; Paul R. Ehrlich on resource scarcity, overpopulation and over consumption; and, Barry Commoner on 4 laws of ecology about closed loop natural system conditions.

<sup>12</sup> *Cultural Theory* explains: there are major 4 types of worldviews: entrepreneurial/ individualistic, egalitarian, fatalist, hierarchic. In case of creative communities, worldview dominates in egalitarianism and can be observed in collectivism characteristics of social innovation. For more information on cultural theory, see Thompson R. Ellis and Wildavsky A. (1990). *Cultural Theory*. Boulder CO: Westview Press.

not establish the links between community-based management and VBN in terms looking at community interactions. This is what has been extended here, where VBN heavily weighted on creating community, leads to management and the process of participation and in doing so creates and evolves relations. According to the search for moral and practical support from common thinkers or by *like-minded individuals*, groups or community are established geared to achieve broader goals. These goals comprise common well-being concepts and practices to eliminate the *'threats'* perceived by the 'commons'.

Building on the advantage of community engagement, Gardner and Stern (1996) suggested that small group and community management can provide useful policy prescription to environmentally significant behaviours. This means that the psychosocial antecedents of biospheric and altruistic values not only can translate to a personal obligation to engage in pro-social or pro-environmental behaviours, but also *provides a pre-condition to build community*.

The interface between self-concept and collectivism, they argued, can be found in community-based management of natural resources and social relations. Drawing examples from traditional crab fishermen in Maine and the Swiss alpine village of Törbel, Gardner and Stern (1996) analyzed their innovative ways of managing *common resources*. This is similar to the notion brought by Princen (2005) in studying the application of the sufficiency principle and attaining ecological rationality in the such communities. Such a principle and rationality works among individuals as well as within the community through adoption of strong community rules, disciplines and practices (Gardner and Stern 1996). The success factors of community based management include following characteristics<sup>13</sup> (adapted from Table 6.1, p130 in Gardner and Stern 2002; see also Jackson 2005):

- local control over natural resources with a commitment to long-term management
- sufficient dependency on local resources to create incentives for self-regulation
- adopt guiding rules (embedded values, principles, awareness about impacts, limitations) and procedures (embedded commitment, responsibility)
- modification of community management rules or governance (social, cultural, economic, environmental) are based on participatory process
- monitor changes of resource use and activities by community members
- delineating boundary of control referring to usually small size
- recognition of 'right to change' by higher-level authorities
- creating community dependency over local resources
- existence and strength of local community

Gardner and Stern (1996) analyzed the system of management and organization of community and groups. Management is based on participatory decision making, monitoring, social norms, expectations and so on. This attempt to move from individual to collective behavior/ action is a two-way process. Additionally, internalization of the management factors listed above (group interest) by the individual is influenced through social learning and forming a social identity. They also found that the degree of internalization also influences success of effective group management.

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<sup>13</sup> Much of the community-based natural resource management include common property management. This is in Ostrom's word common pool resources. This research does not deal with common property management except emphasizing that shared resource, material and energy needs are similar to creative communities work with presence of VBN, principles, natural limit. This is to show the positive impacts in sustainable consumption journey. For further reading, see: Ostrom, Elinor (1990). *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gardner and Stern identified two major reasons to explain why individuals internalize group norms. Firstly, in a community or group, each member participates in creating the norms through newcomers entrance in a community is linked to adoption than creation. Secondly, value of these norms becomes important for members to protect/ preserve local community interests and becomes and individuals value as a member of that community (Jackson 2005). The group norms are said to create 'shared meaning', contributing to social well-being by building trust, collaboration and social cohesion. By individual acceptance of group norms, a social cohesion is cemented that forms social capital (Stern *et al.* 1999; Gardner and Stern 2002); this contributes to *a sense of shared meaning* in their lives.

The concept of social capital has a long history of development. Emile Durkheim discussed role of 'value introjection' in which values, morals, commitments precede contractual relations that drive individuals to behave in a collective way (Tukker *et al.* 2008). This resonates with the idea of 'reciprocity transactions' that emerged from personal exchange networks. Max Weber identified the 'enforceable trust' comprising a formal and informal group that ensures shared conducts, rational actions, kinship and community (Tukker *et al.* 2008). A clearer theoretical framework of social capital concept is provided by Pierre Bourdieu (1984), James Coleman (1999), and Robert Putnam (1993; 2000). Bourdieu first postulated that social capital is a network of relationships; a product used to build social investment mechanisms aimed at reproducing social relationships through material and symbolic benefits. By enlarging this network of relations, individuals and collective actors may change the social system. Coleman related social capital as an important ingredient to ensure individual quality of life and it is shared collectively by a group. Putnam termed social capital as a structure or a social organization itself built on *trust, norms and networks* to improve societal efficiency through facilitating concerted actions (Putnam 1993).

### **c) Creative communities and social capital**

The set of conditions for successful community based management and a social capital concept can be observed in today's creative communities and their aspirations. Tukker (et al. 2008) positioned these communities within the domain of egalitarians in the cultural theory model (groups with risk averse and precautionary attitudes, high level of equality). The actions of creative communities to determine their destiny, learning and growing from their experience and work have been heavily supported by many scientists (Illich 1978; Schumacher 1973; Sen 1999; Rifkin 1999). Sachs (2002) also stated that localized social networks of stakeholders can preserve resource renewability. In addition, in a localized sociality, free-riders or externalities can be easily identified and have better opportunity to receive feedback for improvement (Tukker *et al.* 2008). Drawing on various examples of social innovations demonstrating bottom-up approaches, such as participatory social services for elderly and organic food networks, they concluded that creative communities pose promising solutions to drive needed 'change'.

They also identified three positive implications of involving creative communities:

- Environmental: A collective use can significantly reduce environmental impacts through shortening distancing [Princen's (2005) concept of material provisioning in local resources to see connectivity and impacts], visibility of resources and lower energy intensity. These can all be identified, tuned and reduced in scale.
- Socio-economic: Creative communities can bring a high level of value creation at least at the local scale, protect local wealth and create local and distributed economies. The intensity of local relations helps optimize and regenerate 'social resources'.



- Political: Creative Communities can facilitate local democratic decisions and choices and increase system transparency through bringing decision making power near to then end user. Furthermore, such a basis of forming local governance can assist the individual and community to make responsible choices.

#### **d) Creativity and power of 'group work'**

According to some cognitive scientists (Homma, Tajima & Hayashi, 1995), people instinctively believe that working in a group has advantage over working individually, especially on creative tasks. While analyzing the social psychology of creativity, Hennessy (Paulus and Nijstad 2003) concluded that intrinsic motivation (to act upon cooperation and collaboration) is still a dominant driving force behind creative process. The system model draws many threads together to explain group creativity, mainly stating the influence of symbolic mentors, relations and figures to stimulate more practical innovations (Paulus and Nijstad 2003). This has been related to non-material aspirations and experiential knowledge of others. Moreover, the majority of creative works are related to problem-solving, equal to threat awareness followed by responsibility to act. The similar nature of problem-perception (like NEP) in a group means that there are more chances to draw out the multiple perspectives of a problem or even drawing alternative tasks. Multiple perspectives, in turn have been related to concerted efforts to search for solutions with that exhibit similar values, feelings and sometimes experiences. It is proven that the ability of several members to approach a problem differently not only gives opportunity to create effective creativity (smaller groups) but also results in more original, innovative and sometimes higher quality solutions. According to them, this opens the door of flexibility in ways of dealing with and diffusing social innovation. Here, it must be mentioned that the group creativity theories and empirical evidence has been applied from innovative and complex product and service creation to responsible behaviour, drawing together tasks and group performance in tackling problems.

While analyzing the origin of innovation in creative communities, the EMUDE results (EMUDE 2006) reject the ideas of cliché theories concerning creativity within the domain of specialists. They conclude that creativity in communities is generated by 'forward looking, people capable of sharing their vision with others'. Drawing on empirical evidence from communities involved in sharing resources, engagement in community services, and environmental impacts, these researchers identified evidence of a problem-solving context *sometimes* tied to values, ideology, principles, and specific experiences. However, willingness to solve a problem through collective actions has been argued as a '*natural way of responding*' without the need to accept of 'structures' to exploit them.

This brings exploring VBN types with problems, impacts on socio-environment (and other domains) and *ways of doing* things. Thus, VBN further can extend to understand the domain and importance of social relationships brought in the process of social innovation. This draws attention to the Exchange Network theories that focus on different domains of relationships prevailing in creative communities and in society at large. The VBN model, although recognising an individual's affiliation with the others (communities, groups etc.), does not show the how a community can organize itself. The section on social capital in previous paragraphs describes the relationship of VBN to community-based management; however, it seems important to take a closer at the application of network theories. This provides another extension to VBN-Community linkage regarding the influence of groups and networks for effective social innovations.

## 3.2. Exchange Network theory

The idea of exchange network theory is the formation of a specific social structure through two or more connected exchange relations between actors (Cook *et al.* 1983). The basic components of the theory include (Ritzer and Goodman 2003 after Cook *et al.* 1983):

- there is a set of either individual or collective actors
- valued resources are distributed among actors
- there is a set of exchange opportunities among all actors in the network
- some exchange opportunities develop into useful exchange relations
- exchange relations are connected to one another in a single network structure.

A more integrative exchange theory was devised by Cook, O'Brien and Kollock (Ritzer and Goodman 2003) that took into consideration the power-relations between actors and their impact on making decisions. The decision theory associated with this integrative framing included a better understanding of the ways actors make choices with respect to specific transactions. Cognitive anthropological explanation tries to define an actor's perception, process and retrieval of information. Here, symbolic interactions provide a key to understand how actors use available knowledge or information through symbolism to express intentions to one another to develop trust, reciprocity and commitment in such a relationship.

Shifting reliance on the theory of rational choice, Meek (1971 in Ritzer and Goodman 2003) suggested that rationality be looked at as an exchange rule that could be based on altruism, competition, reciprocity and status consistency. The risk of involvement in an exchange network is a matter of concern in recent literature on exchange theory (e.g. what if I don't receive in return?). In such analysis, the theory provides different scenarios of risk perception and trust developing factors between actors, which shift the theoretical orientation toward 'real world' structures in society.

### a) Network analysis theories

According to some network theorists (White 1992; Wellman and Berkowitz 1988; Ritzer and Goodman 2003), network theory is shaped by a normative approach focusing on culture and socialization processes through which *norms and values are internalized among actors*. In general normative orientation, people bind together through shared ideas (Ritzer and Goodman 2003). The theory entails network formation between people, (Ritzer and Goodman 2003) groups, corporations (Mizruchi and Koenig 1986) and societies (Ritzer and Goodman 2003). In early theoretical framing, Mark Granovetter (1985) stressed the network as a structure in itself formed by the concretizing of personal relationships with a limited notion of an actor's relations formed by access to wealth, information and power. He further stated that strong ties (family, friends) can have value where and can motivate actors to develop altruistic behaviours with increasing accessibility to each other in need. Here, bonding and linking between actors based on certain common ground precedes altruistic behavior and thus the motivation that derives from it.

The theory is further extended by Mizruchi (1990) by associating cohesion and solidarity to networks of relationship (e.g. cohesion of corporations and their power relations). He stated cohesion "is a function of group members' feelings of identification with the group, in particular their feelings that their individual interests are bound up with interests of the group" (Mizruchi 1990 in Ritzers and Goodman 2003). In his definition, *solidarity is more of an objective form of independent process of sentiments of individuals*. While taking into account both cohesion (normative) and solidarity (subjective), Mizruchi found similarities between network's behaviours which may be a pattern of relationships in relation

to collective objectives, by what he calls *structural equivalence* or the association to some entity in social structure.

Thus, network exchange theory combines social exchange theory with network analysis. The importance of various sizes, shapes, and connections of the networks where exchanges occur (Ritzi and Goodman 2003) has less importance than what is being exchanged. Simply put this means, *the size of actors networks is deterministic of the structure in the network exchange theory, which overlooks the values, norms and interests of exchange networks building*. Another limitation is the basic premise of a structural factor in *determining the degree of power in the relations* (e.g. similar to corporatist regime formation). For the purpose of looking at social relations through use of network theories and the validation of values, social norms and social capital are important driving motivators for an anticipated behavior,

## b) Actor network theory

It is opposed to idea of origin, and takes into account both relativism and contexts. This critical social theory was pioneered by Michel Callon (1986), Bruno Latour (1987), and John Law (Ritzi and Goodman 2003) and emerged from science and technology research where it has been applied in looking at technological innovation and diffusion in the sociological system. To some it is rather a grounded theory where social interactions are defined as a network integrating material environment (technology) and semiotic environment (e.g. concepts and symbolic meanings). Other related theories to ANT are *symbolic interactions*, socio-technical systems theory, institutional theory, and network theory. Useful guidance may be provided in applying ANT to consumption behavior as well as behavioural change, through use of role models. This is because of the use of 'material semiotics' and stratification bias of the other network theories (e.g. structure formation in society actors, cluster formation in innovation system). In influencing consumption through symbolism, ANT can provide the basis for the creation of actor networks in a ways that will be more non-material in nature and symbolic in relations. For service design concepts and diffusion to users, ANT can be applied. Moreover, the simultaneous evolutionary domain of culture, society, and nature (Ritzi and Goodman 2003) adheres to system dynamics and transition adaptability of an innovation. The theory may be perceived as a broadening by a 'loose network' and which produces 'local' results (Ritzi and Goodman 2003). Thus, ANT is heavily based upon roles of influencing or building factors, conflict or misplacement, which can collapse the network. However, such extreme view of the theory, even if its nature seems loose, relative and evolving, is difficult to apply to human behaviours and the role of creative communities in their effort to save the planet.

Thus, the network theories posit:

- what is being exchanged
- who is involved in the process
- how networks are formed
- what does the network look like or base upon...

Based on the above, following Figure 3-2 is drawn to show the extension of individual's VBN to groups or community and ultimately, to the relational networks as means to anticipated transformation in the present society. The above discussion also point to a specific transformation occurring in the societies that is highly based upon information exchange and knowledge networks what many scholars name as *the information society*. Sustainability and consumption issues together or even partly, are about the same society where needs, wants and satisfaction are shaped by exchanges.

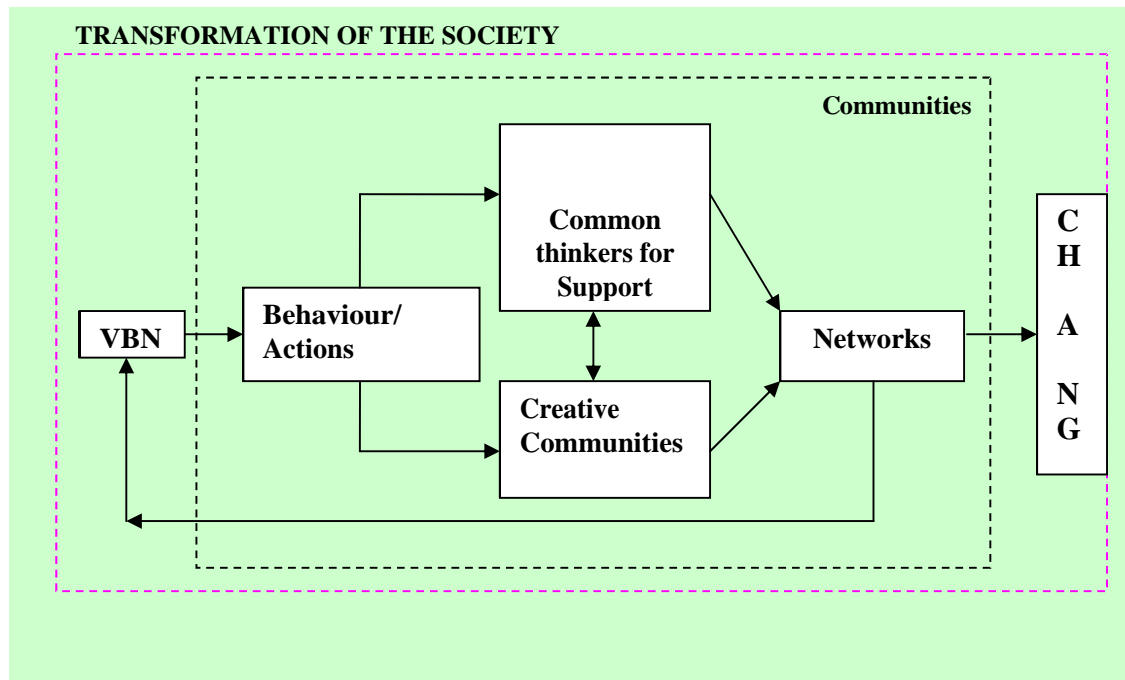


Figure 3-2: VBN Extension to Community-Networks

### 3.2. Analytical Framework

There are three stages to how the analytical framework has been applied. In first step, the Value-Belief-Norm theory is linked to the benefits that occur from the VBN-Actions. There is no clear rule on how VBN should be applied to identify changes. The VBN-Actions or behavior has been linked to the benefits incurred from the community actions (See Figure 3-3) the case studies, both self-transcendence and self-interest value orientations, beliefs on threats, norms, actions either collective or individual have been investigated. This answers the first research question –

- a) What are the benefits of creative communities in the sustainable consumption discourse? (Section 1.3.)

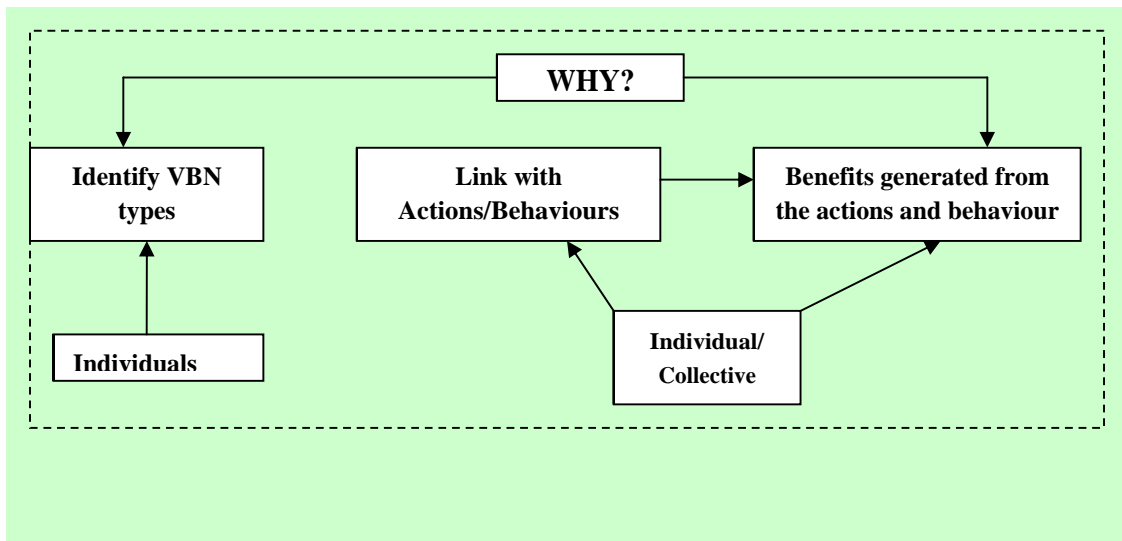


Figure 3-3: Analytical Model (a)

The following model (Figure 3-4) provides the analytical framework to see how values are translated into relationships. That is, how the VBN links with community and networks. Here, the Network Theories provide a basis to view the exchange relationships between communities and other actors with the domain of relationships. Further, the network theories help to identify the main elements that influence the relationships in creative communities. The elements were partially explored through the results of VBN in the analytical model (a). It focuses on the *exchange relations* that can be identified through looking at *actors, influences and drivers* presented in Chapter 3. In this step, a comparative matrix is also drawn to find similarities and differences between the cases based on *main feature, problem, organizational approach and external influential factors*. This matrix is based on a set of 8 criteria developed from section, which explores model cases of value expression and social innovation (See Table 3-4). In Section 2.3 to 2.5, the previously discussed *influencing factors* for social innovation and relationship with *values and drivers* with creative communities' outlines, how the creative communities' endeavours can be incorporated in a wider context. The barriers discussed before provide a basis to *identify the challenges or resistance* for creative communities in promotion and acceptance in the society. Lastly, it identifies what the relations are and who are the actors (partially observed in VBN and Comparative criteria analyses) in the exchange relations in the communities, larger community structure and supports to answer the second research question:

- b. How can the values and relationships of the creative communities be incorporated by larger part of the society? (Section 1.3.)

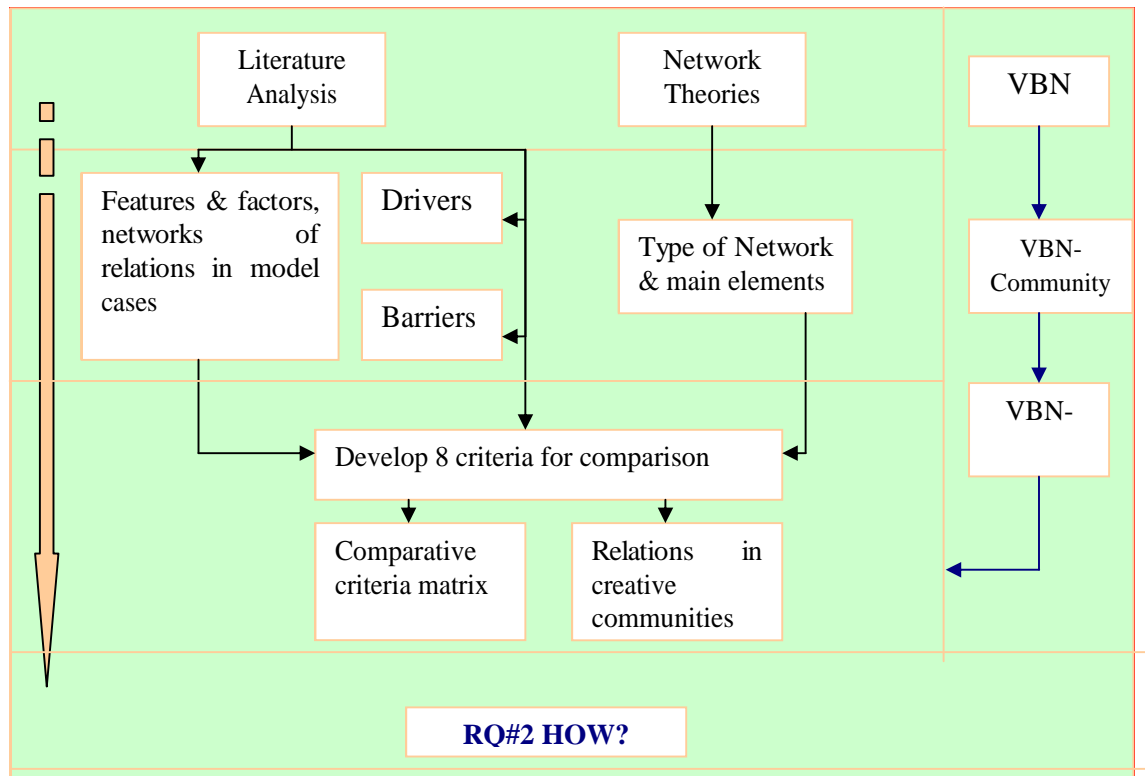


Figure 3-4: Analytical Model (b.) for networks of relations in creative communities

Table 3-1: Selected Criteria for comparison of the cases

**Criteria for comparison of the case studies**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Thematic areas of influence<br/>(history, culture, demography, ethnicity, social norms and values, religion, political process, past experiences)</p>  | <p>5. Relation to market-based strategies<br/>(belief about conventional system of economic growth, market based instruments to reduce consumption)</p> |
| <p>2. Sources of external or internal support for social innovation<br/>(funds, human capital, technology, infrastructure)</p>   | <p>6. Capacity building methods<br/>(education, awareness, training, national policy or strategy based solution)</p>                                    |
| <p>3. Perceptions in reducing consumption<br/>(localization principle, regionalization of best practices, ethical investments, possibility of merging between initiatives, spiritual well-being)</p>                                   | <p>7. Trust placement<br/>(on actors)</p>   |
| <p>4. Continuous evolution and adaptive management<br/>(self-management organization, decision-making process, politicization, experiential knowledge, information or knowledge-based, local government intervention satisfactory)</p> | <p>8. Resistance/challenges<br/>(at various levels)</p>   |

## 4 Findings of the Case Studies

This section presents the major findings of 5 selected cases. The findings are based on interviews with the respondents (see list of respondents in the Appendix), background materials supplied by the respondents, organizational websites as recommended by the respondents, personal observations where field studies were conducted, and informal discussions. At the end of each finding or description of the cases, the VBN-Action-Model is presented through matrices to establish the links in an easily visible and user-friendly way. These are partial analyses with interpretations and relevant comparisons are provided in Chapter 5.

### 4.1. Case 1: Voluntary Simplicity

#### 4.1.1. Historical Background

A more internal and personal growth oriented creative community is the Voluntary Simplicity (VS) community. Over the years, VS has shown continuous evolution of approach and perspectives towards life with a set of core values that has never changed. The original concept was derived from spiritual or religious non-materialism (Gregg 1936). American transcendentalists, namely Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson pioneered the movement of ‘simplifying life’ and connecting with nature. Over the years, VS evolved through introducing new foci related to the burning problems in the US and around the world. In the 1970s, VS clashed with consumerist movement and voluntarily the simplifiers decided to ‘downshift’ from high consumptive lifestyles. Initially, these simplifiers were those who had a choice of affluent lifestyles (Myers and Kent 2004) and skilled professionals with hobbies related to gaining knowledge or devote to creative use of time<sup>14</sup>. Many of them moved to small towns or regional centres in the US, Canada and Australia to promote community-based culture. This scenario has changed in recent years. Growing time-stress, depression, lack of sociality, obesity, lock-in to money-consumption-status trio, global conflicts, wealth gap are concerns of the VS. The difference between others looking for policy changes and VS is the perception where individuals take responsibility to contribute to the change (Andrews personal communication, March 26 2008). Over the years, ideas of VS have grown to add up more self-transcendence values that link with one another. The new simplicity is not simple at all (Elgin personal communication, April 3 2008). There is a personal transformation with a holistic concept of life (Andrews personal communication, March 26 2008). Simplifiers put emphasis on high level of *personal health* and *satisfaction* while significantly *reducing the environmental impact* (Etzioni 1998). Such behavior came out of freewill to minimize expenditure and dependency on consumer goods, and to cultivate non-materialistic sources of satisfaction. They consider life with values of compassion, environmentalism, responsibility, community building, conviviality and self-regulation. Household environmental behaviours constitute (but are not limited to) life-long education, public campaigns, recycling, composting, energy saving, minimized travels, second-hand purchasing and sometimes using shared product services. In a nutshell, take advantage of new knowledge that is targeted to well-being of self and others. During the interviews several sets of value-behavior and mainstreaming strategies emerged provided below.

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<sup>14</sup> Tibor Scitovsky (1976) distinguished goods in two – relative goods (e.g. electronic goods) and creative goods (e.g. art, craft, music etc.). Usually, VS are more inclined towards or practitioners attaining creative use of time through expression of innovative mechanisms, activism and so on.

#### 4.1.2. Values, Features, Relations

Although the concept of *Simple Living* seems to be spreading in the US, the respondents emphasize that there is still 80% of the total US population to reach in terms of awareness of simple life (Holst personal communication 28<sup>th</sup> March; Elgin personal communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008). There are some 20 million voluntary simplifiers in the US and the VS communities hope for many more to come (Elgin personal communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008). A general perception about VS is that it is a form of counter-culture in left-wing politics (Andrews, pers. Comm., 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008) and this makes it hard to be accepted despite growing evidence that VS is about *pleasures and meaning*. Simplicity increases personal well being by reducing financial burdens, and engaging people in interesting activities good for the environment (Andrews, personal communication, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008). Referring to new partnerships with leading scientists such as Peter Whybrow<sup>15</sup> (2007) and the renowned universities (University of California-Los Angeles, Stanford University, Cornell University in the US), the respondents emphasized that simplicity as a holistic concept aimed at personal growth can lead to wellness, happiness and give birth to creativity in life. The growing trend of support from health researchers on VS indicates emergence of new cooperation. According to the respondents, the growing anxiety is dominant in present industrialized country population and thus, one of the effective way of increasing communication with the average consumers is to prove the link between simplicity and wellness. Another strategy being developed is to make people overt, and expressive as generally people want to talk about themselves, their issues and problems (Holst, personal communication, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2008). Understanding how current life is progressing and imaging sufficiency and satisfaction are things people want to know, see, listen and realize. The challenge is that there is 'no time' as modern life is pressed with hurriedness and work-anxiety among other problems (Andrews 2006; Sachs *et al.* 2000). What VS can provide is the way to find satisfaction through "*taking a step back from where we are, and freshly understand who we are*" (Elgin personal communication, April 3 2008).

The recent recession experienced in the US (2007-2008) has led the national media to draw attention to strategies consumers use to minimize purchases (Andrews personal communication, March 26 2008). Andrews added that this might be seen as an important step where the mass media 'hotline' learnt from experiences in VS communities, but a large scale change in consumer behavior is unlikely to be expected unless people understand the whole concept of VS. The commercial media and businesses are also beginning to use the words '*Simpliçity*' or '*Simple*' attached to the promotion of unnecessary products (Holst personal communication, March 28 2008; Andrews personal communication, March 26 2008). Some companies are even coming forward with proposals of copyrighting 'VS' (Andrews personal communication, March 26 2008). These trends show an emerging challenge and ways are needed to find strategies for cooperation with other actors (Andrews personal communication, March 26 2008).

According to the respondents it does not occur to business and governments that driving people towards infinite economic growth is not the goal that inspires towards well-being. The idea of an economy for real welfare should be brought up repeatedly to the front of peoples' minds. The growing number of advertising media (Holst personal communication, March 28 2008) can insinuate people<sup>16</sup>. On the other hand, growing interest among the citizens can be observed through changing

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<sup>15</sup> Peter C. Whybrow, M.D. is Director of the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at University of California, LA and author of *American Mania: When More Is Not Enough*. His scientific research mostly relates to personal well being, mental health in the consumer society.

<sup>16</sup> This general perception is linked with growing capitalism with materialistic well being where real world problems are hidden and profit-maximization is central concern. Increasing wealth gap and unfair distribution of resources is linked



lifestyles due to global warming. Slowly, there is evidence that people are gaining understanding that there is no way other than reducing personal consumption. It needs to be understood that *simplicity* can provide an alternative to the choice of deprivation. (Elgin personal communication, April 3 2008).

“*VS is not about changing lifestyles, it is a whole life philosophy*” (Elgin personal communication, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008). There is a variety of VS (see Appendix for *The 7 Gardens of Simplicity* by Duane Elgin, 2007). When there is an economic crisis at home, spending is less. Skilful management of finance and reduced consumption can provide security in long-term. Increasing leisure and engagement with family and friends can create bonds beneficial in any crisis situation. In a strong community, in time of economic crisis, members support each other and build long term trustful relations that can help in such situations.

When there is a local problem, raising issues can create sense of connectedness (more than solidarity), keep people in touch, and create groups. The final step is to form a community. In such natural processes, belief holds strong with dependency and a progressive vision (Elgin personal communication, April 3 2008). However, more than just looking at problems, VS means pleasurable experiences - devoting time to community events, play, working on common projects can all develop further to a strong kinship supported by continuous practice of spirituality. In most cases, it is personal pleasure derived from sociality that the VS lifestyle provides. Phinney Ridge's eco-village is an example where citizens enjoy leisure and freedom to get involved into discussing larger issues (See Box 4-1). There is also support from the local authority in approving citizens' campaigns such as the *Village Crier* focusing on neighbourhood problems.

However, a big challenge of VS-related environmental activism is *language*.

#### **Box 4-1: Phinney Ridge - Changing the world one stop 'n chat at a time**

Cecile Andrews founded an urban ecovillage, Phinney Ridge in Seattle based 3 fundamental themes – ‘*Simple, Smaller, Slower*’. The ecovillage is designed within the metropolitan setting and focus on knowledge sharing, educating, neighborhood development and campaigning. The main idea is to keep people connected and evolution of ideas in lifestyles which also drive community activities. Eco-phinney's recent campaigns include community-based practices to reduce climate change impacts in households, alternative transport by biking and public transport, formation of local organic food stores, developing variety of forums focusing on issues. The study circles I regularly few times a week on issues ranging from personal problems to neighborhood issues to reflection on national politics and understand ways to contribute to global peace and justice. Occasional events, festivities, specific campaigning days, movie shows, art exhibition, democracy conversations with the help of community think-tank. The eco-village is partnered with non-profit Phinney Neighborhood Association where expert services and vocational trainings are organized for community and personal empowerment from cooking to house designs. The local authority formed a Neighborhood Climate Protection Fund (of \$15,000) after citizens voluntary put their own money to cut down carbon emissions and deepen understanding on global warming. Some of latest projects include car sharing, improving mileage, and neighbor-to-neighbor home-weatherization programme. The Seattle City Department is supportive to citizen's own initiation on to energize communities. Community groups set pledges in the broader area to request people to reduce energy use by simple steps among other actions. *Source: A adapted from Eco-Phinney website by Paul Andrews, 2008. [www.ecophinney.com](http://www.ecophinney.com).*

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with increasing consumption of consumables, commoditization of life, and affluence. There is hope for the time when average people will begin to notice the imperfection of the market and question egoist interest of market. (This is rather a more general perception of the respondents of VS movement).

Environmental activism is subversive and generally, activists fail to realize that people lack understanding of their concepts. In the majority of the cases, people are scared of activism. Simplifiers perceive that their social movement or activism should focus on how to attract people and so do other environmentalism. On one side, VS can organize within themselves by nurturing their values and practices. On the other side, it needs to change the outlook to gain more support from different actors in the society.

The concept of VS is age-old and activism made it look like something not well understood. Regarding sustainability, practitioners must understand that it requires time for personal transformation and that people do not want to change too much all on a sudden. The two recent publications '*Slow is Beautiful*' (Andrews, 2006) and '*Get Satisfied: how twenty people like you found the satisfaction of enough*' (Holst, 2007) have focused on pleasure of doing, making, inventing and initiating, all of which link to personal satisfaction as well as to greater well-being. Recognizing the interest of people on their success stories, Simple Living America (i.e. a VS community) launched an educational and publication project – '*Get Satisfied*'. In early phase of this project, the website covered 'do-gooders' messages on sustainable consumption and environment through a project entitled 'Simple Living America-LA', but it failed to receive attention. A strategy by changing the language to 'Get Satisfied' and focusing on levels on personal issues resulted thwarted entries from citizens to contribute to the book as well growing interest on satisfaction and needs (Holst personal communication, March 28 2008).

According to the respondents on actor's engagement, the values must be visible and require openness of the government and business. There are green businesses emerging, although the number is small. Rigid policies geared towards growth can restrict and provide disincentives to local economy. There is a need for large-scale structural change where policies will support local green business, which again is cumbersome if rapid results are anticipated. The VS and citizens by changing themselves can create enormous opportunities through inventing new ways, supporting local business, practices and creating new form of development. For example, spending less will help household to make resources available to others bringing equitable distribution on which policy makers are debating over (Andrews, 2006). Personal inspiration to community development similar to ecovillage movement can unfold many innovations. This can help people look at positive lifestyle and create changes. Prior consideration to infrastructure by any actor can also induce social innovations. However, there is a lack of funding to support VS activities and organizational education (Holst personal communication, March 28 2008). As such, the majority of the work is based on voluntarism and philanthropy. There are also voluntary media coverage through TV series on Simple Living, which focus on creative communities, and social enterprises on renewable energy, education, resource management, etc. The recent interest of such media documentaries was founded through partnership with some business organizations. VS leaders find it encouraging and as a sign of emerging mutual cooperation, even if this is still a very small achievement.

There is a typical resistance, for example, arising from zoning laws that restricts building community-based enterprises, create diversity in use of public space if not developed by large builders. Community's strength here is relatively low but it can be strengthened further (Andrews, personal communication, March 26 2008). Change in national policies and zoning laws (e.g. mix use of physical space referring to land-use design changes, urban planning etc.) can provide spaces for innovative projects, crafting, leisure, greening places, and reviving bioregions. Communities here need to form larger groups to drive the campaigns and for this, citizens need to understand about their potential to make change happen. The role of the media and networking cannot be overstated, as the role is that of the one who show others what can be changed. It is then up to the adopters to use

their creativity to implement in their own settings. *Resistance from the mainstream is natural.* (Elgin personal communication, April 3 2008)



Table 4-1: The VBN-Action-Benefit Model: Voluntary Simplicity

Value	Belief	Norm	Action	Benefits
	Awareness of adverse condition	Ascribing to responsibility	Policy support Private sphere behavior Environmental citizenship	
Sense of belonging: ( <i>other's care for me</i> )  Compassion	Eroding sociality, personal relationships  Negative personal relations is side cause of ecological losses	Revive interpersonal and inter generational communication  Understand security	Increase use of public space  Collective decisions to reduce threats  More time with communities or groups  Do-it= yourself works  Time banking/exchange favor relations between individuals and families  Engaging in personal conversion	Social (cultural and political impacts are included)  Wellness and reduce health costs*  Reduce conspicuous consumption  Compassion increases helping others in distress
Conviviality (play, humor, courage, social gathering)  Leisure (slow)	Self deprivation from joyous and delightful life  Fast pace life and status anxiety has reduced pleasures  Chronic stress and work related depression is increasing	Creative ways to use time	Participate in campaigns to reduce work hours  Find possibilities of leisure in communities	Reduce work-stress  Pleasure: ecstasy, joy, mirth

<p>Respect natural limits</p>	<p>Nature's absorption and carrying capacity crossed limit  World is leading to crisis</p>	<p>Understand local bio-regions  Understand linkage between nature and individual or community activities, consumption  Identify level of 'sensing urgency'  Downshifting for communal well-being</p>	<p>Help synergy natural cycles and physical design  Raise public concern  Conservation of water, energy, and other resources  Sharing products through services  Intensify collective use  Engage in debate in green tax reform and increasing and env. Regulations</p>	<p>Increase intimacy, kindness, teamwork  Thriving local crafts and artworks  Public campaigns and debates to conceive solutions against unsustainable policies  Enabling power of mass communication on local to global issues on threats, small-scale solutions</p>
<p>Cultural tradition</p>	<p>Individualization on lose respect for others  Traditional practices are lost  Intuitive wisdom for recuperation being lost</p>	<p>Take initiative of intergenerational meetings, social events</p>	<p>Honoring parents and elder, showing respect  Collect all the wisdom and sharing  Inventing ways of using traditions with modern technology (e.g. line-drying of clothes, use of natural healing therapy)</p>	<p>Take back your time campaign for worker's health  Economic</p>
<p>Ethical shopping and consumption</p>	<p>Distancing created by global trade and numerous products reduced chance of tracing impacts  Southern producers are being exploited</p>	<p>Moral commitment to preserve local and distributional justice</p>	<p>Support local and fair products  Product boycott  Purchase ethical and green products</p>	<p>Careful financial management in households  Support local economy by purchasing local products</p>

Creation of joyful communities	Competitive behavior is destructive	Commit to cooperation Reduce specialization Responsibility for saying and doing, being open, clear and public	Participatory decisions Collective consensus Neighbourhoods or group associations Cooperation advocacy for external actor and internal communities	Establish direct connection with producers (local organic farmers)  Demand and support ethical market chain
Sense of place	Connection with nature and love lost	Work in spirituality	Spiritual practices (non-religious or religious)	Invest on ethical business / small enterprises
Expression of creativity/explorer	Creativity is at the hands of 'creative class'  Proliferating self interest  Happiness brings more adaptive innovations	Relational and physical space creation  Believe and confidence in one's capability	Innovation in shifting material focus  Collective gathering of artistic and technical experiments  Focus on hand-made craftsmanship and artisanship	Environmental  Shift to low-impact diet
Choice editing	Freedom from continuous distraction of materialism	Self-restraint  Built discipline  Identify new routines to develop  rejection of material symbolism	resistance to temptations  shift to non material practices  engage in knowledge and moral conversation	Eliminate possibility of rebound by maintaining frugality (e.g. savings go to voluntarism, family security)  Increase hope*: developing meaning of life that fits with larger universe, having belief that gives comfort, guidance
Global social justice	world poverty, inequality, conflicts are at critical stage	responsibility of something 'bigger' than one's status and	local campaigns and protest drivers	

Freedom from war and conflict	to destroy the <i>unprivileged</i>	standard of living	global networking and association with charity-support organizations  search of small community solutions	Committed work for personal and collective engagements (in a community) for fairness to generations and environment
Life-long learning  forgiving	superficial knowledge, material well-being as increased  humans are not perfect, but technological/modernity lock-in prevents people to corrections	identify differences between good and bad information  learn from mistakes and become cautious in choice of expressions  knowledge and experiential sharing to improve life style and protect nature	study circles  podcast  learn from new innovations to assess use in households (e.g. 'how to save energy')  voice concern on unsustainable policies in locality/regionally  educate others from learnt lessons	Volunteer in skill development on eco-community design areas (permaculture certification, ecological building, composting waste management, reduce of material)  Conduct educational courses (e.g. Seattle Univ., Stanford Univ.)  Household designs try to improvise based on experiential feedback and new information  Abiding by environmental regulations  Reduced long-distance travel



## 4.2. Case 2: Augustenborg Ekostaden – Local government’s pursuit to social innovation

*“We were ambitious, but then we realized that we were wrong as we wanted to rush to achieve the target”*

– Trevor Graham, 2008

### 4.2.1. Historical Background

Augustenborg, a suburb in Malmö, Sweden mainly populated by immigrants, is an example of partnerships that support social innovations. Ekostaden Augustenborg started in 1998 as one of Sweden’s largest urban sustainability projects focused on creating a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable neighbourhood. Augustenborg was first built in the 1950s, by the municipal housing company MKB. It was vacated in 1970s by Swedish residents and the area became dominated by the large number of low income immigrants and at times a 65% unemployment rate (pop: 3000, City of Malmö. 2001). In addition, the old infrastructure of the neighbourhood meant high economic losses. Lack of employment opportunities and social capital prompted the Malmö Municipality to come forward and revive the area. As part of Local Agenda 21, a vision for the creation of a sustainable community was developed. As a practical step, the municipality drafted the Environment Development Programme (a follow-up of Swedish Sustainable Development Plan 96/ 97), which prioritized the development of an eco-city in the region. Funds were secured from private-public partnerships (MKB), national government (from an application submitted by Malmö Municipality for Augustenborg), and the European Union. The aims of the project were to improve living conditions, empower residents, increase the use of public and green spaces, reduce car mobility, encourage waste recycling, improve storm water management, and other issues. The provision of a *Local Investment Programme* invited local interested partners to join the innovative project. The most interesting aspect of the project was the integrated planning approach that entailed public participation, and also the way in which residents could influence the renewal of the neighbourhood. The project dealt with local residential areas, schools, industrial areas and local businesses as part of the integrated approach (Trevor Graham personal communication, March 29 2008).

### 4.2.2. Values, Features, Relations

The Ekostaden Augustenborg project focused on resident’s direct involvement through several overlapping stages. The communication process included *informal* conversations and rapport building to gain *trust* from the residents, particularly from those *socially excluded* individuals. A series of discussions, interactive workshops and informal gatherings were created to facilitate the exchange of experiences between external actors and the community. To *raise interest* among the local people a variety of cultural events were organized. Initially a detailed problem identification process was carried out for 2 months. This was followed by a selection of 15 unemployed residents, 65 households and involved enthusiast local people in the process.

This newly formed group received training on waste recycling. There were initial inhibitions for *acceptance* as residents initially *preferred* other methods of waste treatment. However, in order to *motivate* people, study trips to other cities such as Gothenburg were organized, where residents learned how the system worked, gathered information on *safety and maintenance* including the level of *satisfaction* of the users. The users exchanged information of household design preferences and recycling options, all of which were documented in the *different languages* of residents. The multi-cultural environment of

Augustenborg opened up opportunities for communication rather than inhibiting discussion, and as a result people shared their own different experiences. Similar *small groups* were created for other aspects of the project such as the development of green spaces and for the social housing project. Enthusiast tenants, with the help of architects, presented 10 design proposals that incorporated a fusion of cultural features. The problems identified during this process were how to identify the preference and perceptions of local people, together with *their view about change*, and restrictions. This led to a 2-month long reconstruction process of 42 gardens in 2.5 years and the development of a plan the second phase of the project for 9 years (Trevor Graham personal communication, March 29 2008).

The second phase started with an important step of *envisioning* the local environment. This pulled residents, local businesses, and schools together in a multi-stakeholder dialogue and identified potential social innovators and their capabilities. Many of these innovations have become very successful.

During this process, neighbourhood shared service ideas emerged of which car-sharing seemed the most feasible for fast start-up. Here, the local shopkeepers provided funds to support incubation. This became a popular car-sharing company and by now it has been operating for 8 years. Other ideas from envisioning exercise included a building cooperative and the development of entrepreneurial skills among the unemployed. A business eco-cycle, an entrepreneurial skill development programme included the formation of a community-based organization (CBO) made up of 15 unemployed, but potential entrepreneurs chosen from the residents. However, only few of the entrepreneurs have become successfully established through entrepreneurship training. According to the respondents, this was due to the inertia that some trainees or member of the CBO felt as a result of long-term unemployment period with underlying lack of self-confidence (e.g. personal capability). Another important point that such group formation was dominated by expert's idea on social innovation project design without giving full consideration to the social relationships amongst residents. These lessons later on led to *further inclusion of human capital* in all future *process* of implementation by the local government. The construction process provided employment opportunities with contractors and it helped to develop trust and self-confidence in the committed unemployed residents. Many of them have now developed successful local businesses to serve the community where others have become highly skilled professionals. For water management, a resident developed local technology for a rain water harvesting system which received the support of the actors and local people and has been implemented on a large scale. His patented technology has since become global. The resident involved in composting has been involved in training other residents and later on, managed the waste system in the neighbourhood with wages provided by the Municipality. The Tenant Association created a café for the elderly. Further achievement in the area of infrastructural changes are Sweden's first electric street train as a public transport, Scandinavian Green Roof Design (help to reduce rainwater runoff, keep moisture, etc.), energy saving insulation and building materials just to name a few (observation; Trevor Graham personal communication, March 29 2008).

There was also a time lag in the local authority's project management, which resulted in a change of local leadership and some resistance to community action. Between 1998 and 2002, public participation increased from 53% to 80% (Trevor Graham personal communication, March 29 2008). In 2006, public participation in neighbourhood issues came down to 60% and there appears to be a growing lack of social cohesion compared with the previous project implementation phase. However, the project has raised social security in the area, which may be the reason of 'no issues in the

neighbourhood' perspectives among the residents. On the other hand, it may be too early to determine the trend of public participation or the causes.

The next development is on-going the East side of Malmo where various environmental and local consumption reduction projects are being designed with longer project cycle of 15 years. The main lessons learned from the previous project in engaging and developing social capital for innovation projects are (Trevor Graham personal communication, March 29 2008):

- Mobilization of people: careful early selection of innovative thinkers in the community, that understand their concept and also their suggested approach to mobilize financial and human capital with matching visions;
- Separation assistance with need-based approach: this relates to pressing socio-economic and environmental issues requiring immediate interventions. Taking a long time to start with the people who are in desperate need for solutions;
- Innovation island: create space for change and spread ideas between form communication and infrastructural networking with a long time perspective. In each phase of the process, after moving to the next level one neighbourhood will establish communication on same intervention with new one (to exchange lessons with first phase neighbourhood intervention). This is to increase sharing of experiences and knowledge building between local people and create network of relations;
- Identification of the source of 'change' perception
- Focus on group dynamics in local residents' contribution and loose networking. That is, letting people to contribute as they will in terms of ideas generation or physical support, letting them identify problems to increase comfort for socializing;
- Special focus on knowledge building process with communications and forming 'thematic networks' taking into account security, reciprocity and trust building during knowledge sharing;
- Identification of social innovation only that seems promising to sustainability;
- Need to focus on private consumption areas such as energy saving;
- Rejection of forming CBO to drive a process.



Table 4-2: The VBN-Action-Benefit Model: Augustenborg Ekostaden

Value	Belief	Norm	Action*	Benefits
	Awareness of adverse condition	Ascribing to responsibility	Policy support Private sphere Environmental citizenship	
Conserve nature	Natural limit is being exceeded Energy consumption is high	Understand the collective responsibility of reducing consumption on energy, water, waste  Commit to collective & individual responsibility to develop projects	Develop plan for the environmental neighbourhood Facilitate professional-community partnership planning Participate in study trips, training	<i>Economic</i> Creating flood storage water Developed cooperation with government, companies Financial security enhanced in households
Social equity	Immigrants' integration with large part of the society  There is social exclusion of low income & unemployed	Take responsibility to develop human & social capital  Understand the dynamic of multi-cultural communication	Provide job opportunity through entrepreneurship skills Forming multi-cultural groups to increase communication	<i>Social</i> Social enterprises created, well-being & local management enhanced Collective participation in neighbourhood issues & concern Stability in resident's movements
Economic well-being	Financial condition is inhibit individual, social & environmental improvements Anti-social activities increased	Take responsibility to understand how personal income & contribution to society can be increased  Break out through unemployment inertia & try to change behavior, give ideas or participate in common neighbourhood issues	Identify the capacity & innovative ideas Develop eco-business cycle plans for entrepreneurs Raise funds form internal & other sources through partnerships, grants etc. to finance small projects & social innovations	<i>Environmental</i> Neighbourhood car-sharing scheme

Democratic participation Trust & reciprocity	Lack of trust between residents & other actors Lack of citizenry People afraid to engage in cooperative work or team work	Take responsibility in building trust between members & actors in the community development process Listen to every concerns raised & respond	Engage in one-to-one & group discussions Identify detail problems with others Regular feedback provision Formation of community-based organizations	Alternative public transport (electric street train) Efficient insulation system in building Rainwater harvesting system Traditional green roofing for rain runoff, better insulation, biodiversity
Personal commitment	Environmental management & social cohesion needs personal commitment & willingness to act (which is missing or less)	Sensing connection by communication, information from others Commit to work on cooperation	Participation in neighbourhood development exercise	Community-based waste recycling, composting Improved neighbourhood management
Sense of belonging Security	Residents do not feel connected to the surrounding environment  Regular flooding Lack of income security Lack of confidence	Commit to make changes Identify the problem areas & assist others in making connections	Visioning exercise Small group based participation in building projects Sharing of resources & services	

Note: The VBN reflects the aims, principles and values of the local government along with the implementing partners. Mixed involvement whereas helped in designing activities of the project and matching with anticipated results involving residents directly included in the community development process.

### 4.3. Case 3: Findhorn Ecovillage – The Lowest Eco-Footprint

*“If it’s not fun, it’s not sustainable” – Findhorn Ecovillage theme*

#### 4.3.1. Historical Background

The Findhorn Ecovillage, located in the Moray peninsula of Scotland is a well-known intentional community throughout the world. Over the years, this ecovillage has been showcased as a prime example of a sustainable community, which in 1998 earned them ‘The Best Practices Award’ granted, by the United Nations UN-Habitat Programme. The various social innovations they have implemented have been featured in the EU supported EMUDE project, Worldwatch Institute publication and many more reports.

Findhorn was originally established as a spiritual community in 1962 by Peter and Eileen Caddy and Dorothy Maclean as a Findhorn Bay Caravan Park. In the 1960, the 3 founders commenced organic horticulture and linked their activity with understanding a sense of connectedness (similar to understanding local ecosystem, habitats, bioregions, and biorhythms) in the surrounding natural landscape. This initiative not only provided income but also rejuvenated part of the dry sand dunes in the peninsula and the special horticulture practice attracted other experts around the country. The individual commitment to spiritual practices, cooperative working approach and establishment of specific farming methods they applied brought in outsiders to join the founders to establish a small community. This helped formation of the Findhorn Foundation, a charity devoted to build and foster value-principles. In 1970, the ‘education of consciousness’ focused on the awakening of altruistic, spiritual enlightenment and environmental values became formalized through developing a curriculum. This resulted in ongoing educational activities that are today’s major work of the Foundation. (Findhorn 2008).

#### 4.3.2. Values, Features, Relations

The Foundation and associated organizational members abide by common set of values agreement – *The Common Ground*. This serves as a documented code of conduct and tool for individual transformation geared to collectivism and ensured responsibility. There are 14 values outlined in the document, as follows:

*Table 4-3: The Common Ground*

<p>Spiritual Practice - align spirit of work for greatest good.</p>	<p>Respecting Others respect diversity in differences, views, origins, backgrounds and issues respect community property and other forms of life as sacred and divine</p>
<p>Service - service to others and the planet</p>	<p>Direct Communication - communicate clearly and honestly with loving acceptance, straightforwardness and open-listening</p>
<p>Personal Growth - expand human consciousness, transform attitudes and behavior patterns, take full personal responsibility</p>	<p>Perspective work through collective responsibility and keep aside self-interest values that can be harmful for</p>

for spiritual, environmental and human effects	community try to resolve any personal or business conflicts as early as possible
Personal Integrity - maintain high integrity by congruence of word and action	Cooperation communicate decisions clearly, respect other's care, integrity and wisdom in community decision-making process every decision affect each member and nature
Reflection recognize any criticisms, irritations or appreciations as reflections of inner-self	Resolution access to Grievance Procedure or involve an advocate, friend, independent observer or mediator in conflict resolution process. Commit to agree with resolution taken by the community
Responsibility - listen to constructive criticism and offer feedback to others in a caring manner	Agreements - not to evade laws, rules and guidelines
Non-violence - not to inflict own attitudes or desires on others and protest any instance of abuse	Commitment - exercising the spirit of Common Ground

Source: The Common Ground. [www.findhorn.org](http://www.findhorn.org).

As an ecovillage it has developed a wide variety of innovative strategies to reduce consumption and progress towards sustainability. The features of the village are presented below:

a) Knowledge building and sharing

In the 1980s, Findhorn started experimenting on their ecovillage project, the best use of social values and technological advancement. Currently, the Findhorn has developed following functions and inventions:

The Findhorn runs workshops and courses on various fields ranging from self-discovery and lifestyle changes to eco-technologies for a self-sufficient community. Annually, these draw more than 4500 participants from around the world from 50 countries (Findhorn 2008). In 2001, the extent of involvement resulted in the founding of the Findhorn Foundation College focused on inner growth and behavior in sustainable living, professional and business skills and arts. Publications on sustainable living, spiritual growth, community building, consumption choices, etc. are regularly published by the Findhorn Press. Several meditation centres, known as *sanctuaries* are also working for community members and guests. The Foundation has led some international workshops and transition management dialogues in response to soaring oil prices and the challenges presented by climate change. Various leading thinkers, companies and practioners have participated in them (Findhorn 2008). In 1997, the Foundation became part of an NGO affiliated to the UN Department of Public Information. As such its responsibility is to disseminate knowledge and raise public awareness on issues concerning '*sustainability, environment, peace, shelter, and new world order*' (Findhorn 2008). The Foundation is also a member of the UNESCO Planet Society Network and United Nations Environment & Development - UK Committee.



The ecovillage design education programme is a training of the trainers' course endorsed by UNITAR - United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The Best Practice award earned the community to establish the UNITAR CIFAL-Findhorn as a training and capacity building hub for local and regional authorities, international organizations, private sector and civil society (CIFAL Findhorn 2006/ 2008). The knowledge and capacity building programmes are focused on innovative model development for sustainable living and renewable energy programme development (O'Connel personal communication, March 25 2008).

One of the barriers is the general costs of participation in the courses that are very high resulting participation from the Southern countries is very low (O'Connel personal communication, March 25 2008). Yet, those who can manage to come to experience the community and take courses are offered bursaries and help with temporary lodging.

#### b) Organizational management

Findhorn, in general, has a complex organizational structure with hierarchies divided under different goals: spiritual, educational, economic and management of organizations. These organizational schemes are in continuous evolution and so sometimes there are shifts in organizational functions. There are general divisions between the Findhorn Foundation and the New Findhorn Association (NFA). These divisions have been sought to reduce the complexity of the decision-making process, especially for the ease of management and making financial decisions. However, it is sensitive to talk about difference between the Foundation Community and the Ecovillage Community (respondent, Findhorn, 2008). This is because of the growing interest of people having different roles and other issues.

- I. *Findhorn Foundation Community*: This comprises the ecovillage, education centre, the park, nearby college town in Forres, and islands of Iona and Erraid on the west coast. This large community also extends to individuals, business and other organizations around 50-miles radius of the Findhorn Park. Although the income the Foundation is slowly increasing, the Foundation is highly dependent on charity donations (respondent, Findhorn, 2008).
- II. *New Findhorn Community Association (NFA)*: Presently, the Foundation is part of larger community of 450 people who joined the New Findhorn Community Association for meditation, growth and preparation of food, building of eco-houses, celebration of art and culture. As members and guests with varied backgrounds have increased, they have formed smaller communities within the Findhorn Foundation; one of these communities is NFA. There are also 33 organizational members of businesses and charities. Revenues are generated through donations, fundraising events and member subscriptions. Within the NFA, there is the Forum of Organizations, which focuses centres on social and environmental well-being. The NFA Council, under the auspice of NFA serves as advisory committee of 12 –elected members. The intention of the Council is not to serve functions similar to local government, but to empower grass-root initiatives and help form innovative development projects.

#### c) Ecovillage projects and social enterprises

Environment: In 2006, an ecological footprint analysis was conducted by the Global Ecovillage Network in collaboration with the Stockholm Environment Institute York, and Sustainable Development Research Centre in Forres (also linked to the Findhorn location) of Scotland (Tinsley and George 2006). The result showed that Findhorn has the lowest ecological footprint in the UK. In the UK, community's 'food' and, 'home and energy' footprints found 37% and 21.5% respectively of the national average. The Consumables accounted for 46% and mobility for 6% of the UK's national

average. The shared service systems developed by the private organizers focused on heating, car sharing, washing, laundry and use of common space are major contributors to achieving low footprint (O'Connel personal communication, March 25 2008).

- I. *Housing*: Each physical development or infrastructure is based on the system approach by understanding the impacts, natural cycles and dynamics with attuning common values. The unique construction system was developed with environmentally sound and energy efficient principles, using natural and non-toxic materials, and a 'breathing wall' structure. The technology was published as UK's first technical manual on ecological building. Houses also use recycled materials from various construction sources and products like wood from whisky barrels. As there is lack of funds for renovation, the community expects to gather new resources. The five builders in the areas who are willing to renovate are unable to do so as a result of limited financial resources for relatively larger-scale energy-efficient design (O'Connel personal communication, March 25 2008).
- II. *Renewable energy*: Owned and operated by the Foundation, 4 wind generators (750 kw) provide all electricity requirements and 40% surplus electricity is connected to the national grid to earn income. Solar energy is also supplied additionally to pre-heat water (pre-heating increases energy efficiency in heating systems) for new and mobile homes.
- III. *Living Machine*. A biological wastewater and sewage treatment facility with high effluent treatment standard, which sets a prime example in the UK. The plant was built by an external social entrepreneur commissioned from a Canadian firm.
- IV. *Local food systems*: The original development of the Foundation was based on horticulture, which gradually became part of the larger food production system. More than 70% of the community's fresh food (vegetables and fruits) requirements are met by the scheme and the surplus is supplied to 200 individual households. Generally, the diet in the common house is very simple and people are satisfied (O'Connel personal communication, March 25 2008). In 1994, the Earthshare, a community-based agriculture scheme, was established to increase local food production and enhance the quality of production. The farming method is strictly based on organic and biodynamic model covering 15-acres of land and is expanding.

Another local farm the Wester Lawrenceton covering 95-acres overlooking Findhorn Bay produces organic dairy products. The method combines traditional farming with modern organic farming technology. The main objective is to purchase from social entrepreneur to support local agriculture and thus reduce food miles.

- V. *Local currency exchange and employment*: Ekopia is a Findhorn Community cooperative running partnership with local community stores (*Phoenix*), the Foundation and NFA. The organization is registered as a local industrial and provident society in Scotland and operates similar to a bank with 180 members to supervise and control local investment. In 2002, Ekopia launched a local community currency system, *Eko* to support localization of the economy and purchases in local stores like Phoenix Community stores – a cooperative. Each Eko (£E1) is equivalent to £1 sterling and it is used in community trade, helping in such way to keep wealth inside the community. Ekopia, uses £s as loans to generate investments and thus, backed up by normal UK currency. The main purposes of the scheme are to encourage trading with and between community businesses, to reduce banking and interest charges, and to provide community projects with access to low interest capital.

- VI. The ecovillage provides 200 jobs for the full time residents and is supported by various local activities and social enterprises (O'Connell personal communication, March 25 2008). The Findhorn Foundation Community (with the eco-village and periphery) has generated more than 400 local jobs with over £5 million worth of household income (2003 data from the Highlands and Islands Enterprise – Moray as quoted by the Findhorn Foundation 2007). The Foundation alone had income of £1,625,000 and expenditure was £1,570,000 leaving a surplus of £55,000 in 2005/ 2006 (Findhorn Foundation 2007). About 76% of this income came from educational activities and rest comes from rents and charity. At present, the Foundation has 120 co-workers, 70 full-time staff and the rest are volunteers or part-time workers (O'Connell personal communication, March 25 2008). Allowances of £200/ month are paid to full-time staff (Findhorn 2008). For the volunteers, depending on work types and contributions, earnings vary and non-resident staff (outside the ecovillage) receives a national minimum wage. Many of the part-timers or volunteers total income comes from other sources. One of unique feature is that, in case of financial distress, economic support is provided by community and association members to the person in need of financial help. This gives reducing the chance of conflicts and disappointment in the community as guided by the Common Ground.
- VII. There is a trend of expansion of local economic activities by semi-privatization (with community ownership) and emerging private companies owned by entrepreneurs in the community and periphery (O'Connell personal communication, March 25 2008). Many of these enterprises work in providing shared services to households including informal community members associated through voluntary services. Sometimes, many activities go against the core values (e.g. use of non eco-friendly raw materials). The extent of losing control over increasing privatized social enterprises is relatively silent due to lack of control or sanctioning procedures (O'Connell personal communication, March 25 2008).
- VIII. There is an emergent interest amongst community members to buy off the enterprises. The lack of funds in maintaining and expanding the coverage are resulting in contractual agreement with external actors or interested parties. There is an ongoing debate on the extent to which privatization should be allowed and the impacts it might entail. There are 45 entrepreneurs working to provide various services.
- IX. *Nature restoration:* The environment is made up of family-owned plots covering 400 acres of land comprise large ecologically sensitive dunes, together with 30 acres woodland and gorse offered to the Foundation (Findhorn 2008). In 1996, after Foundation's declined to purchase because of financial constraints, a group of community members and friends bought the land recognizing the importance of the area and set up Duneland Ltd. The enterprise created coastal shelterbelts and designed an innovative green corridor (Magic Triangle, 16 acres) to connect various separated areas of the ecovillage structures and nature space. The company works through collective land holding strategy and reserved land for future ecovillage expansion needs. In 2000, the company gifted 170 acres to (Findhorn, 2008) another newly formed body by members of Foundation Community and village representative, the Dune Trust. The objective is to restore areas where previous monoculture existed. The whole area is accessible to public to enjoy the natural site.
- X. *Mobility:* The low mobility footprint was achieved thanks to a focus on local employment and local satisfaction of necessities. Informal car-sharing schemes are working in the community where private owners share their cars, give lifts and community owned vans transport people. There are also buses and bikes used to commute locally and regionally. Nevertheless, lack of formal shared mobility scheme is being criticized by residents and therefore, a programme is being developed. However, educational outreach and incoming visitors have a

high footprint from air travel that can be significant and therefore, they need to be accounted for.

d) Decision-making process

The Foundation decisions are made by individuals and other departments with a Management Team of 11 members. This team consults with the Council members who regularly meet to discuss team building process and issues. The process of decision making includes proposal, analysis, feedback and mediating in open space for 'attuning' and goodwill after which voting is conducted. People also share feelings, reflections and thoughts after spiritual journey of personal analysis of the proposal prior to voting. If case of disputes over proposals, 'loyal minority' or support all the other's decision is questioned. In general, the process works through 90% majority rule.

e) The Findhorn's Networks and Growth

There are numerous internal and external networks operating in Findhorn helping to get connected with other organizations, individuals, communities within the UK and the world. Some examples are provided below:

- I. Voluntary service organization: This is a registered charity and network of Council for Voluntary Services partially funded by the Central government to maintain information, legal and funding advice to members. In Findhorn, the local volunteer organizations related to sports club, youth club, eco-caravans, eco-village centre are members, which are connected to larger network in the region.
- II. Findhorn's networks: There are many affiliations of Findhorn Foundation based on knowledge sharing and hands on training. The Foundation also supports interactive network through the official website. This Global Network guides online personal transformation and raising consciousness and link individuals around the world.
- III. Findhorn Foundation is the co-founder of Global Ecovillage Network which links global ecovillage projects, maintain database of members and disseminate various information.
- IV. Another promising area of utilizing human capital support to the community and other actors are expert's consultancy services by the Findhorn social entrepreneurs and residents. The Findhorn provides consultancy services to educate experimental technologies, share management perspectives, organizational consultancy, team building and staff development. Business consultancies include training on Triple Bottom Line, responsible business leadership through peer learning and mutually supportive trading relationships. The service receivers include various communities, private and public organizations around the world. This service is a part of the Social Venture Network, a non-profit networking organization of social innovations and entrepreneurs. The Findhorn ecovillage's implementation approach of sustainable innovation policies and practices have supported many new business expansions in Moray region of Scotland.

Table 4-4: The VBN-Action-Benefit Model: The Findhorn (Values adopted from the Common ground)

Value	Belief	Norm	Action*	Benefits
	Awareness of adverse condition	Ascribing to responsibility	Policy support Private sphere Environmental citizenship	
Religious and spirituality	Ethics and morality are disappearing	Align spirit of work for greatest good.	Spiritual practice & natural healing Change in local, seasonal, fresh food Develop local business with community works Increase voluntarism	<i>Economic</i> skilful financial management of personal & community knowledge transfer of values, change behavior, design service, entrepreneurial skills
Service	There is lack of services for collective well-being Resources from nature increasingly harvested for individualization Distancing created without knowledge of impacts at the source & along supply	service to others and the planet	Develop efficient energy and resource uses Highly shared resources & public spaces Educate other communities & intentional communities Aid poor countries & distressed	<i>Social</i> strong kinship & social cohesion set example for multi-stakeholder partnership & cooperation education & empowerment of others to take personal & collective actions security, comfort, peace, & fairness create a positive outlook to life
Personal Growth	Self-interest distracting to materialism	expand human consciousness, transform attitudes and behaviour patterns, take full personal responsibility for spiritual, environmental and human effects	Take initiative to improve environmental standard higher than national levels Build ethic based work & increase collective use work on creativity & skill development to increase eco-friendly projects, services, design	<i>Environmental</i> Lowest ecological footprint in the UK reduce resource use by sharing & spending less
Personal Integrity	Challenge in saying and doing	maintain high integrity by congruence of word and action	collect others & share knowledge exchange experience with others communicate clearly and	inspire to change selfish behavior developing global movement of communities to take environmental & social positive initiative

Reflection	Changing behavior doesn't focus on self-reflection ( <i>'know how you are, what you do'</i> )	recognize any criticisms, irritations or appreciations as reflections of inner-self	honestly	
Perspective	conflicts arise from lack of collective perspectives & common vision	work through collective responsibility keep aside self-interest values that can be harmful for community try to resolve any personal or business conflicts as early as possible		
Respecting Others	Lack of mutual respect increases self-interests & reduces openness	respect diversity in differences, views, origins, backgrounds and issues respect community property and other forms of life as sacred and divine		
Cooperation	competition is dominant & destructive force	communicate decisions clearly, respect other's care, integrity and wisdom in community decision-making process every decision affect each member and nature		
Resolution Agreements	conflict increases when parties lack communication	Access to Grievance Procedure or involve an advocate, friend, independent observer or mediator in conflict resolution process. Commit to agree with resolution taken by the community not to evade laws, rules and guidelines		

Non-violence	Radicalism violation are increasing to an extent which requires citizens commitment Infinite desires causing some violations	not to inflict own attitudes or desires on others and protest any instance of abuse		
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Source: The Common Ground (The Findhorn website) referred by respondents. Note: All the activities at individual and common spheres include abiding by the Common Ground core values, followed by AR. This is typical nature of ecovillage since it houses many activities, many interactions. The actions are not separated like the other cases.





## 4.4. Case 4: The Northwest Earth Institute – Transforming for Sustainability

*"Action on the environment comes from thinking about it--comes from real conversations about the real facts, our real lives, our real hopes..." -Bill McKibben, The End Of Nature*

### 4.4.1. Historical Background

The Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI), based in Portland, Oregon US has been running for 14 years as an educational and training institute responsible for developing innovative programmes to empower individuals and organizations. The mission of the institute is to motivate individuals to examine and transform personal values and habits, act on commitment and accept responsibility of the nature and commit to a cultural change (NWEI 2008). There two main core principles on which all the courses are based upon – deep ecology and voluntary simplicity.

### 4.4.2. Values, Features, Relations

The NWEI offers 7 study guides for small groups designed in an interactive framework involving discussions and dialogues with the participants. These 7 clusters include: *Global Warming: Changing CO<sub>2</sub>urse*, *Choices for Sustainable Living*, *Menu for the Future*, *Voluntary Simplicity*, *Healthy Children-Healthy Planet*, *Discovering a Sense of Place*, and *Exploring Deep Ecology* (NWEI website, 2008). The common spotlight of the programme is to explore *personal values, attitudes and actions* through engaging in in-depth conversations and discussions. There are following 3 main guiding principles in all the courses:

- promote earth-centred ethics and individual responsibility ;
- engage in simplicity to reduce environmental impacts and enrich life;
- reach internal consensus to dedicate oneself to protect the bioregion and living space.

Table 4-5: NWEI courses at a glance

Discussion courses	Focus	Sessions
Global Warming: Changing CO <sub>2</sub> urse	History, science of global warming Personal values and habits to reduce impact Personal actions to curb consumption and gain collective power to effectively respond to climate change. Visioning sustainable future for inter-generational equity	4
Choices for Sustainable Living	Meaning of sustainable living Interconnectedness between lifestyle choices and ecological systems.	7
Healthy Children-Healthy Planet	Pervasive impacts of advertising for children and media in changing child's view towards consumer culture.	7
Discovering a Sense of Place	Connect personal identity with natural features of living space natural cycles, sensing rhythm, potentials and limits and develop sensing gradually conscious choice of satisfying needs and find pleasures in local bioregion Mapping bioregions based on watersheds, non-human species types,	7

	<p>climate with local groups and other individuals</p> <p>Ways to form social bonds with local community members to build a responsible community</p> <p>importance of empowering people to take individual and collective actions</p>	
Exploring Deep Ecology	<p>Address core principles like system interconnectedness, Gaia hypothesis, universalism/living universe and relate to real world economic growth – based scenario</p> <p>How experience of awe and wonder in nature can shape worldviews and connection with nature</p> <p>History of Native Americans and their traditional values on sustainability</p> <p>Convenience of modern life and contribution of simplicity to overcome distractions by materialism and technology</p>	8
Voluntary Simplicity	<p>Distractions of modern society and distancing created by consumerism in relationships, personal care and the environment</p>	7
Menu for the Future	<p>Connection between food choices, industrial eating habits, historical shift from family farms to industrial agriculture on GMOs and synthetics, health and ecology.</p> <p>Food policies, alternative food system, organic production, ethics in supply chain</p> <p>Change food choices and habits</p>	6

Source: NWEI website, 2008 (<http://www.nwei.org/>)

As the NWEI was founded by a senior corporate lawyer, *Dick Roy*, the initial courses were targeted to law firms in engaging lawyers to understand the connection between human behavior and the environment. It has expanded since then and now targeted to organizations, the regular programmes are offered focusing on sustainability education. A unique feature of the organizational courses involves helping to *align organizational values with employee actions and sustainable community-based innovations* (McNamara, personal communication, March 25 2008). The post-discussion courses are geared to developing *green teams* to take measures in their workplaces in areas of energy, water and resource conservation and increasing efficiency, waste management, personal consumption reduction and building strategic leadership in communities. Some of the major corporations such as Intel, Standard Insurance, Hewlett Packard, Adidas, Nike, Microsoft, Heifer International and Starbucks are regular participants of the programme sending new employees to foster personal and workspace behavioural changes.

In another category of participants, courses are offered in community and neighbourhood centres and nature and science centres with technical assistance from non-profits to increase community involvement. For city governments or municipalities, the courses are tailored to take step-by-step sustainability initiatives. Faith centres and libraries are one of the other major participants of the courses on sustainable living, sense of place and embedding deep ecology principle. Courses related to sustainable living is also tailored for architectural firms as part of the continuing education credits. With the visibility of forecasts on climate change, McNamara responded about increasing interests of the citizens and organizations to make practical steps to reduce emissions.

NWEI has also formed team of investors in 2001 to obtain reasonable investment and protect natural systems, which created Sustainable Investment Institute to educate investment and institutional advisors. This main goal of this is to create supportive climate for social innovators and creative communities (McNamara, personal communication, March 25 2008).

NWEI works on community building where people reflect on lifestyle choices through behavioural changes. It is focused at individual, from individual to community and taking a stand in globalization. The idea is *educating by taking a journey on values* (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). But most people who come to the course already have knowledge on environmental situations. Those who come without having any idea about lifestyle choices, NWEI works closely to *change their ideologies* by leading *conversations* and *dialogues* on the sustainability concept (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). She also responded that mostly through conversation during the training, people become very active. These new people work on sustainability through workplace, community and faith centres to escalate behavioural changes and consumption practices in the mainstream. For traditional communities – dialogue with them is a novel idea and it can pinpoint on *traditional and community values*. However, the diversity of community values is hard to approach by the outsiders (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). For organizational education to change behaviours it should be kept in mind that in a workplace social pressure of ‘changing’ individual is uncommon, it takes times for others to accept the new changes and needs balancing capability to confront resistance.

Workplace-based grass-roots initiatives are coming from building a *Green Team* in a company and focusing on *outcome oriented* approaches within the organizations they are working in. It also helps building relations with the suppliers. For the past 6-7 years, Intel Corporation employees take course on corporate Social Responsibility, Products service systems and in building Green Team and *learning to do ‘best’* from the bottom (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). *Manufacturing industries* are most interested on sustainability and increasing high efficiency in production (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). The future course targeted to business may involve public opinion and continued debate. This seems to open doors for mutual cooperation and accepting the advantages of value-based engagement. Since internal government support is inadequate, external support<sup>17</sup> through transforming organizations and understanding the benefits to grow the bottom-up initiatives is an absolute necessary (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). The perspective of NWEI in raising business partnerships is very high, even if the process of inclusion of community-based innovations is slow.

For people, its faith communities build *Green Teams* through sustainability education and formation of small groups. Throughout the courses there is training on group building. The NWEI courses do not focus on hierarchical or conventional leadership as it is targeted to average all consumers or citizens or all levels of employees. Anyone can come and start courses without having to lead a team. Since it involves people who are interested, it finds a way *in a comfort zone* and a way in which they are *all in-charge* to set up a programme. Moreover, the role of facilitation changes in every meeting and anybody can sign up. The course emphasizes how much one person can do is *significant with small actions*. During leadership self-organizing skill development, no pressure is given to people and the workshops try to focus on expert involvement so as to develop collective creativity in actions.

Many citizens are unwilling to go for political campaigns and want to get involved in a project that involves city effort. *There is a strong overlap in reality to make changes happen in cities and pushing interests to make politically noteworthy actions*. Among the course participants, about 70% show high sense of responsibility and commitment to take actions. Most people want to take small steps in specific

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<sup>17</sup> During the interview, forms of external support from the actors, mainly government, donors, academia, business and media were considered. The researcher prompted about types of external support such as financial assistance, local government in infrastructures, access to financial and risk-aversion institutions

consumption clusters, which are easier for them. For a lifestyle change, the process involves significant thoughts, laid down choices of alternatives and creating provisions. NWEI helps people to find choices and provide advisory support based on available knowledge (e.g. *is it better to use car or bike?*). Generally, there is a 97% success rate in overall awareness increase linking personal transformation-collective action- accrued benefits.

The positive responses generated from the courses and with support from the volunteers, NWEI created the North American Network. There are over 600 volunteers organizing courses, conveying the information of NWEI programmes and mentoring others through conducting discussion courses (NWEI 2008). At present, the number of enrolment has reach more than 85,000 participants offered in 50 states in the US, Canada, Puerto Rico, Sweden and New Zealand (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). Participants also come from outside countries like India, Hong Kong, Germany, with specific interest on climate change (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008). The network operates through voluntary membership among the network of citizens, organizations and Sister Institutes managed through the outreach programme of the NWEI.

Over the years, NWEI's focus on developing green business led to incorporation of *The Natural Step* (TNS)<sup>18</sup>, a sustainability tool developed in Sweden in 1989. The TNS is used to train employees and provides direction to employees' decision-making process to reduce environmental impacts in business. NWEI also formed the Oregon Natural Step Network with affiliation of individuals and interested organizations. The enormous growth of this Network led to NWEI spin off into a separate nonprofit organization. In a question regarding TNS's inclusion for local consumption reduction and inclusion of TNS for communities, the respondent (McNamara personal communication, March 25 2008) stated about future potential to incorporate the model into consumption framework of the citizens. In Canada, the Madison Municipality has developed TNS in local neighbourhood design.

The NWEI website also offers ecological living tips to reduce consumption, build a children's community, and organize eco-parties (informal engagement in neighbourhood and create social connections). The outreach programme of NWEI or partner organizations provides guidance through long-distance communication to form groups (8-12 in group) in home, neighbourhood, faith centres, and business organizations. Specific guidance includes facilitation, how to become a local organizer, discussion sessions using course books and organizer's guide, participatory process, drawing business plan (for architectural firms and companies) rotational facilitation and strategic leadership. In addition, course feedback from participants and impact study of the courses are evaluated regularly for further improvement. Regular free online newsletter is produced to highlight the community-based initiatives taken, social innovations and impact of community groups in conservation.

Grass-root engagement is becoming stronger through internet share and blogspots. NWEI is developing strategies to focus on network for the past 2.5 years. The interests through networks are growing massively where people want to find information and outline of *what can be done*.

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<sup>18</sup> *The Natural Step: A Canadian example of Sustainability objectives under TNS*, which are to eliminate contribution to systematic increases in concentrations of substances from the Earth's crust, of substances produced by society, physical degradation of nature through overharvesting, introductions and other forms of modification & contribute as much as possible to meet human needs in society & worldwide. For more information: <http://www.naturalstep.ca/sustainability-objectives.html>. Most countries concentrate on developing TNS framework for the business, Canada has recently developed TNS to stimulate community-based social innovation. For more info: [www.naturalstep.ca/scp/sustainablecommunities.html](http://www.naturalstep.ca/scp/sustainablecommunities.html)

Table 4-6: The VBN-Action-Benefit Model: The Northwest Earth Institute

Value	Belief	Norm	Action*	Benefits
	Awareness of adverse condition	Ascribing to responsibility	Policy support Private sphere Environmental citizenship	
Promote earth-centred ethics & individual responsibility	Individualization is reducing the connection by demanding more personal space & increasing impact on nature  Ethics & principles are on decline that cares for other & environment	Connect personal identity with natural features of living space  Find importance of empowering people to take individual and collective actions  Commit to make personal lifestyle changes & in other places of interaction (work, living space)	Develop Green Team by employees to make small but integrative steps for greening workplace  Increasing making small changes & form groups  Raise awareness at workplace & neighbourhood on practical measures of reducing consumption  Conduct advocacy & volunteer in driving capacity building campaign  Form networks of associations, organizations, individuals  Form social bonds with local community members to build responsible community	<i>Economic</i> Participants want to share benefits of awareness in their organizational and personal spheres  Increasing interest from manufacturers  <i>Social</i> Social network creates strong element to maintain changes  Changes create synergistic effects among kins  Private & civil society strengthening in absence of policy support  Create network of innovators, volunteers, and multiple actors
Engage in simplicity to reduce environmental impacts and enrich life	Self deprivation from joyous & delightful life  Fast-paced life & status anxiety has reduce pleasures	Commit to make conscious choice of satisfying needs & find pleasures in local bioregion	Conduct focus groups, interviews, self-reflective discussion courses  Take small steps geared to specific clusters, e.g.	<i>Environmental</i>  Over 70% respondents feel they are on a road to make changes (e.g. voluntary car-pooling, recycling, giving up power

	Distancing created by global trade & numerous products reduced chance of tracing impacts		<p>Food – gardening, organic &amp; local food, change in diet, use of left-over food.</p> <p>Mobility – change in mobility pattern, create alternative transport etc.</p>	<p>mower, composting)</p> <p>Change in attitudes/ behaviours to green team actions makes change visible</p> <p>97% success rate in raising awareness who report to adopt lifestyles through more diversity &amp; local contexts</p>
Dedicate oneself to protect the bioregion & living space	Connection with nature & love lost	<p>Try to understand &amp; gain knowledge on natural cycles, sensing rhythm, potentials and limits &amp; develop sensing gradually</p> <p>Mapping bioregions based on watersheds, non-human species types, climate with local groups &amp; other individuals</p>	<p>Discovering a sense of place, sense of belonging by developing feelings for others things than materialism</p> <p>Organize meetings, opinion polls, events to promote sustainability in all spheres of life</p> <p>Engage into continuous learning from others, networks</p> <p>Take action individually or collectively to protest any activities that can cause adverse impacts on nature (non-professional spheres)</p>	<p>Leading green business provide examples for others</p> <p>Connect professional with personal life in sustainable lifestyles in terms of private sphere consumption*</p>

## 4.5. Case 5: Shared Service and Design

*"It is not about sufficiency, let people know things can be done in better ways"- Ezio Manzini, 2008*

### 4.5. a. Sharing home for intergenerational sociality

#### 4.5.1a. Historical Background

In June 2004, a Milan based non-governmental association, MeglioMilano launched their campaign on house-shares. They found out that the demand for student accommodation in Milan has increased to 20,000 places. The Milan city life assessment report of 2003 further addressed the problem of expensive rent in Milan, which is one of the highest in Italy and the struggle of students to commute from nearby cities. It also resulted students to move out in a new place for study. The lack of accommodation forcing students to move outside was viewed as hindering cultural and social growth necessary to keep the vibrancy of Milan. Furthermore, the problem was connected to resolve other social problems like exclusion of old pensioners who require assistance and companionship in their daily lives. As a result, a pilot project of 12 intergenerational house shares started in November 2004, with collaboration from University Politecnico di Milano in Bovisa, Milan. The project targeted independent elderly people and mostly university students under 23 years of age. By 2005, there were 30 intergenerational houses-sharing near located in Milan. More than 50% students now come from outside the region and rests from Lombardia region (Press conference, Provincia di Milano, March 20 2008).

#### 4.5.2a. Values, Features, Relations

The room rent varies between 200-250 euros a month for the students with shared facilities like kitchen, living room, bathroom, and garden (if available). The rooms are rented usually for a year with possibility of extension and willingness of the tenants. The Province of Milan gives financial support of 1000 euros to each elderly to refurbish houses before house share begins and for other retrofitting. About 20% houses receive free internet for 30% of the students to help students as well as elderly to learn new technology and about the world issues. The refurbishment choice is entirely up to the needs of the host and energy saving provision or related resources savings is not considered (Press conference, Provincia di Milano, March 20 2008).

The house-shares works with resource mobilization support from MeglioMilano through host-tenant selection, free legal assistance, psychologists' support, monitor weekly feedback, and conflict resolution. General monthly meetings to share experiences and discuss issues by the service users are organized by the association (Massone pers. comm., March 20 2008).

The selection process conducted by MeglioMilano is rigorous based on psychological criteria. Psychological analysis of the elderly and students are carefully conducted by the appointed expert in MeglioMilano. The result of the analysis is then used to making matches based on urgency of *companionship by the elderly, student's need to feel at home, level of tolerance, attitude and style of interpersonal communication, physical condition of elderly, socio-economic situation of host-tenant, eagerness to learn new things, ability of students to take responsibility, and potentials of the individuals to create a sense of belonging*. It is to create family style companions living conditions. The recent evaluation of the project jointly done by MeglioMilano and Provincial office of Milan reflects challenges of match-making in intergenerational groups. The usual complaint from the elderly is – *students like fast track life, hurry too and feel scared that*

*can cause lack of interaction. Sometimes they do not want to listen to important things').* From the student's side the complaint came from elderly demand nursing services against student's will. Massone added that it signals the gap in psychological testing to understand underlying process and behavior of social interactions of the students. The current project is focused to developing new criteria targeted to assess '*balance of expectations*'. By selection process modification, the project is facing problem with finding new young students who with sufficient commitment, social and accommodative nature. In 2004, out of 1678 students only 160 were primarily selected for house shares with 652 eager pensioners. At present, the house shares are dominantly run by females, more than 63%. There is one problem with dominance of females in the system and next step should consider gender balance in the project (Massone pers. comm., March 20 2008).

Despite the challenges, the project generated excellent outcomes. The problem of housing scarcity is being addressed by citizens. The students are achieving good results than before and in many cases elderly-students have bridged strong relationships. Elderly love and feeling young finds a revival with a connection to the world. All students help the elderly with necessary shopping and help with housing chores (a pre-condition of mutual agreement before house-share). The idea of home delivery food services have been removed which was floating since the relations built between the people are good enough. The process also helps increasing share of resources within household making life cost-effective, socially pleasurable where students learn to share with others and cutting down some consumption like heating, cooling personal belonging of consumables, and washing (Massone personal communication, March 20 2008).

During the pilot experiment, additional 180 house sharing interests were raised from researchers, PhD students, and nurses who were looking for cheaper places. There is an extension plan with the support from the Province of Milan to plan house sharing service between nurses-elderly and researcher-elderly. The houses near hospitals can provide house-sharing service to nurses who are close-by and nurses can reduce their cost of living significantly. Nurses are increasingly being deprived from good life quality and security because of their low income and stressful work. The project design is carefully thought out to eliminate chances of nurses benign exploited by their elderly. At the moment, funds are coming from the organizations involved and private sectors, which need to be diversified for further extension. There is a general need to increase reliability of the service and the press conference is a way of telling people about the innovative project. (Massone pers. comm., March 20 2008)



Table 4-7: The VBN-Action-Benefit Model: Intergenerational House-sharing

Value	Belief	Norm	Action	Benefits
	Awareness of adverse condition	Ascribing to responsibility	Policy support Private sphere Environmental citizenship	
Welfare of marginalized society	Social exclusion is rising Cultural exchange in cities is declining Students are being marginalized	Marginalized groups must be given opportunity to interact with the society Take responsibility to reduce loneliness Perceive need for inter-personal communication	Intergenerational house sharing Symbolic relations through shared time and resources Help each other during stressful condition Support social inclusion policy Bring local actors together	<i>Social:</i> Create level of tolerance and responsibility among students Commitment, trust among inter-generational relations Support in leisure Elderly feel young Student's improving academic results
Knowledge sharing	Traditional knowledge among young population has declined Technological knowledge exclude older generations	Devote own time and energy to exchange knowledge of 'doing things together'	Free internet support Exchange daily life skills (e.g. traditional less material intensive cleaning)	Homely environment for lodgers Increase confidence and security Transfer of knowledge to retain traditional wisdom
Financial interest	Poor student stipend insufficient to survive High room rents in cities are too expensive Lack of accommodation spaces & affecting growth of the city	Students & low income group needs cheaper options There is need to create physical space	Provide opportunities of cost-effective and cheaper options Provide economic incentive to gain support (e.g. refurbishment allowance)	Technical know-how of the old people Stay connected with the rest of the world by gaining information Gain trust on authorities Media publicity for replication
Sense of belonging	Eroding sociality, personal relationships	Be sensitive to other's needs See importance of living together & how partnership works	Increase use of common space Collective decisions to reduce threats Engage in personal conversation Understand the mindset of others for well-being intentions & effective exchange relations	Gain political support <i>Economic:</i> Keep money within the locals (less students will move out) Increase quality of living space by refurbishment Reduce demand for more houses Able to divert city

				<p>development need in other problem areas &amp; issues</p> <p>Increase communications between multiple actors (eg. citizens, Civil society, community, local or regional authorities)</p> <p><i>Environmental:</i></p> <p>Share resources &amp; reduce emissions (e.g. heating, washing etc.)</p>
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#### 4.5. b. Car-sharing Italia (Milan)

##### 4.5.1b. Historical background

In 2001, Milano Car Sharing (now an independent enterprise – Car Sharing Italia CSI) was initiated by the largest environmental association in Italy, Legambiente-Milan. During the early stage of development, a car sharing project was operated by the Legambiente association, which over time and with growth of members, resulted CSI enterprise to be developed. CSI now operates in 9 other cities – Florence, Modena, Bologna, Rimini, Parma, Rome, Turin, Genova and Venice. In Rimini, CSI opened another company; whereas in other locations CSI operates through formation of joint ventures. Findings are based on CSI in Milan (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008).

Car-sharing started with 3 cars (Car-sharing Italia, 2008), a website and free parking. The membership strategy was based on informal communication between the association members, employees and local people around the local neighbourhood in Milan. In 2005, the association invested on publicity through local magazines and dailies highlighting the economic benefits of *the self-serving car rental services*. The *benefits* portrayed *elimination* of maintenance, insurance and fuel *costs* of the private car (17% of per capita income), *comfort* of using car-sharing saving time, and easy access to shared car whenever required. Sometimes, the members can use the scheme in need of second car. In 2005, the individual membership grew up to 500 (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008).

The incubation strategies to expand the service included investments on purchasing new cars and media publicity through company loans. At present, the Milan Company owns 65 cars with rented 25 parking spaces.

##### 4.5.2b. Values, Features, Relations

The car-sharing scheme was employed to address four problems: increasing city *traffic* from growing number of cars, lack of *parking space*, preference of *owning car* over using public transport and degrading city *air quality*. Another important social objective related to consumption pattern of the project was to eliminate the *status-seeking behaviour* associated with owning private cars.

Membership of the system is divided under 3 categories – private (individual and family), business and tourists. The standard membership fees vary according to the categories: private – 110 euro, business – 180 for one year, and tourist for 30 euro up to 3 months validity. Additional costs come from security deposit (150 euros), mileage (kilometres-hours standard rates) and fuel. In peak hours (7am-7 pm), hourly rate of 1.80 euros is applied and the cost per km is around 0.32 per km. Special discounts up to 30% are offered to members of Legambiente, same time sharing by more than one user or family and business organizations. The tariffs also vary with vehicle sizes in terms of kilometres driven per hour and distances travelled. All the cars are either hybrids or natural gas powered vehicle under a Euro 4 category and exempted from newly posed (January 2008) congestion charge and free parking outside Milan. Italy's vehicle category-based congestion charge is flawed in design as does not reduce the increasing fleet in the city and there are new SUVs or similar large ones causing congestion. Car-sharing can address has potential to reduce this problem. There is increasing focus of small cars for the next purchases seem beneficial in terms of fuel efficiency, emission and traffic space. The cars are bought from a normal dealership and not linked to manufacturers (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008; CSI, 2008).

The clients receive a 'smart card' with personal code and reservation through the call centres. They can use the same card to use car-sharing in other cities and bills are charged on a monthly basis. Clients are free to choose cars and garage for service delivery although the cars must be parked in designated private garages rented by the CSI. There is a lack of parking space since nearly 2 years of negotiation with the Milan Municipality failed. In other cities, the programme works well with provided public parking space (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008; CSI, 2008).

In 2006, the Province of Milan provided funding support to develop marketing strategies of the company. This promotional scheme involved series of multi-stakeholder workshops and dialogues highlighting the environmental and social benefits of the cars-sharing. As part of promotion, the Milan Province subscribed to 'group' users services in 2007 reaching to 1600 users (including 500 individual members) (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008; CSI, 2008).

The increasing members providing opportunity to upgrade the system but putting pressure on parking management. There is support from the Province but the company now needs to reach more people formally. The other companies invested money on formally advertising and municipality-business ventures can afford this large cost, which the relatively small company cannot afford. There are brochures, information on the advantage; 3-step booking flyers are being handed in organizations and through information on website. The promotion needs to target on people's comfort and need to change behavior. For example, cost difference of owning and using car shares (save 4000 euro per year) is highly publicized. The Legambiente study showed reduction of 30-50% carbon emission reduction by use of efficient cars and use of the service (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008).

The province is now providing financial support to maintain intelligent rental system such as computer for member entry, mileage count, car reservation, apply card system, and billing. Milan Telecom is now in consultation process with the Politecnico di Milano to start up cooperation in developing intelligent software and support to the company (Manzini personal communication, March 18 2008). The national consortium, Iniziativa Car Sharing (ICS) is responsible to set technology and maintenance standards and quality control. Car sharing Italia acts as a member of ICS like the other private or semi-private car-sharing schemes. The Ministry of Environment and ICS entered in a contract agreement to conduct CO2 emission monitoring of all the partners in the Consortium (Iniziativa Car Sharing, 2008).

In condition to availability of funding, the improvement plan of CSI in Milan with strategic planning of Legambiente include: bike-sharing, reaching 100 cars by end of 2008, CO2 offset through afforestation, and new scheme in Bergamo city and Milan hinterland. There is an increasing number of long commuters from Milan periphery and there is lack of public transport. It is necessary to start schemes in these areas where people can car-pool. It will also reduce the need of owning cars (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008; CSI, 2008).

Followed by Milan car-sharing, Milan municipality started joint venture with a private company in 2004. With fuel efficient cars and external private sponsors, this is also working in parallel with car-sharing in Milan with operational advantage to use free public parking space. This entered the two car sharing companies into unfair competition, which resulted lack of parking spaces and a lack of cooperation between the local authority and the company (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008; CSI, 2008).

There is also problem of receiving loans from financial institutions (banks) to develop more schemes as they heavily press on guarantors, such policies must change to create room for social enterprises. Large corporate investment support will be necessary for further expansion. There should be a possibility of linking with public transit network, which has been done in many countries. Without a cooperative climate and technological optimization of service, the scheme will be facing continuous challenges. *“People need to know what choices are being available to them”* (observation; Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008).

Table 4-8: The VBN-Action-Benefit Model: Car-sharing Scheme

Value	Belief	Norm	Action	Benefits
	Awareness of adverse condition	Ascribing to responsibility	Policy support Private sphere Environmental citizenship	
Society welfare	Status quo increasing Increasing cars are increasing stress	Civil society should come forward to provide new points to offer	Symbolic relations through shared time and resources	<i>Economic:</i> Reduce significant cost of maintenance, fuel, insurance Free from congestion charge
Conserve nature & urban environment	Increasing congestion Emissions arising from increased personal use and materials Global warming	Take personal responsibility to cut down emissions Help in taking collective actions & strategizing emission reduction	Increase use of alternative transport Emission standard maintained	Build wider network with car sharing scheme for continuous improvement & sharing technological knowledge Business and communities can work together through trust & cooperation Financial return
Self-management	Self-organizing skills are decreasing & reducing freedom of capabilities	Be responsible to take initiative & assist in acceptance	Intelligent design of booking system Establish cooperative partnerships with other companies, authorities	<i>Environmental:</i> Symbolic relations created by services with embedded values than the products Reduced emissions from shared use (30-50% CO <sub>2</sub> )
Effective use of time and money	Too costly to own a car Public transport is not sufficient with increasing demand Private parking losses time	Understand the need to use other means of transport	Develop <i>effective</i> scheme	<i>Social:</i> Reduce traffic Comfort and easy access Access to special places Membership card can be used in other cities & in Europe Choice of different vehicles & sizes*

## 5 Analysis of the Case Studies

### 5.1. Interpretation of the VBN-Action-Benefit Model

The analyses are presented in three sections. The first section draws on the VBN-Action-Benefit matrix to understand the types of values, interacting with beliefs and norms that initiate certain actions. Like the original theorist's model, the matrices provided above do not adequately differentiate benefits, since information on VBN is based on what has been done and what were the results of the activities.

The second section presents the eight comparative criteria, which were developed, based on theoretical background on network relationships and their domain of influence, with the specific criteria coming from literature outlined in Chapter 2. The criteria matrix also highlights the main resistances and challenges to behaviour change based on both responses and observations. It also includes a comparison of the main barriers presented in previous section. This allows an analysis of the factors that have influenced or were influencing the inclusion of creative communities into the mainstream society. It further shows some of the critical relationships among the actors (creative communities with the other stakeholders), which were illustrated in Chapter 4.

The last part of the analysis identifies the different networking relations according to the actor's engagement and potential perspectives found in the cases and responses.

#### 5.1.1. Relationships between types of values and associated actions

The VBN-Action-Benefit model confirms that value orientation, higher social and environmental concerns expressed by creative communities (social innovations) contribute to a common well-being. Before moving to the discussion on cases below, it is important to note that the VBN model is an individual's internal construction, which is a form of common entity of the creative communities, studied. In all the above cases, self-transcendent values include a combination of biospheric and altruistic values. In self-transcendence cases, respondents from VS, and Findhorn noted the value of *giving something back to nature as we are taking something out of it*.

For self-interest values, these are related to individual's interest to derive pleasures, financial gain, or to meet other desires. These have a potential to make someone else worse off as a result of increasing resource demand. In the original model *'egoist'* or self-interest values are negatively correlated. Here, in case of VS, NWEI and the Findhorn transformation at the level of individual is observed with altruistic and environmental behavior or actions, self-interest appears to have transcendence over caring for others. The main idea is to reduce the material needs and increase happiness in other environmentally benign and socially cohesive ways. This adds the equity dimension in the way that the creative community attempts to deal with a problem or issue.

However, in VS and Findhorn communities where social innovations are continuously being generated (refer to the features of the ecovillage), their beliefs and norms are distinctively non-materialism. This is one of the basic reasons for these communities' consumption 'demand' is much lower than the demand of the average consumer in their countries. In the cases of NWEI, VS, and Findhorn, the social innovators have even gone so far as to change their profession and to demonstrate their commitment to greater well-being (Interviews with respective creative communities

respondents, 2008). In these cases, respondents put into practice the belief that personal growth and sound mental health can be brought about by altruistic and nature connected intentions and practices.

One of the main findings of the case study of the Emerging User's Demands for Sustainable Solutions (EMUDE) project was the 'positive mood' of the community members that led in the direction of a certain mentality that encouraged people to take action for greater well-being (Manzini, Meroni, personal communication, March 18 2008). In the interview with Manzinin he identified 72 cases<sup>19</sup> of creative communities that are "*prototypes showing ethical struggles by some communities*" and that are acting as show cases for others (Manzini personal communication, March 18 2008). These cases also show that social innovations provide opportunities to make people feel good by inclusion in the process of early adoption. Moreover, personal satisfaction comes from a positive action and sometimes moderation came as a result of 'doing'. In the Augustenborg case, the creation of self-interest among the long-term unemployed has been focused in order to reduce the unemployment in the area through trust, and confidence (Graham personal communication, March 29, 2008).

### **5.1.2. Linkages between sets of values, orientations and incurred benefits**

There are many benefits incurred from holding certain value orientations in the community and sometimes they are hard to measure. Sometimes benefits can result from a single initiative or action and can effectively demonstrate the power of community engagement (respondent Augustenborg, 2008; McNamara personal communication, March 25, 2008).

It is still unresolved to what extent, specific value orientations contributes to specific benefits. However, from the case studies, it is clear that AC-AR and consequent actions are related to a specific set of values (*item parcels*) with self-transcendent value dominating in being linked to specific benefits (Kasser and Ryan, 1996). This trend was identified in Stern's model. It is also easier to distinguish between self-interest and self-transcendence values within specific value sets. In the case of VS, Findhorn and NWEI's, the results of social innovations show diffused and interlinked relations between value sets and within areas of responsibility, leading to a general understanding about *what to do* and *how to do*. As the purpose of this model is to show the advantages coming from values of creative communities, the score based differences between self value orientations is less relevant. Moreover, creative communities are led by a group of various factors where the values related to the surrounding environment have an influence on innovative actions. A community like Findhorn Ecovillage and NWEI, it should not be assumed that the same values will result in the same actions. The advantage of holistic views, as seen in VS, Findhorn, NWEI, and Augustenborg are beneficial, as the combination of values have potential for enhancing the benefits. For example, VS's views on altruism and community creation can have a positive affect even if they are spending less time in specific leisure activities. Conviviality does not necessarily result art and craft making!

Another important observation from small scale social innovation in service design related to house sharing shows that there are hidden benefits such as positive academic performance of the students, the elderly's sense of feeling young, a general improvement in communication and a reduction in the

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<sup>19</sup> Findhorn ecovillage, Milan car sharing and Lodge Student at home (house sharing) were showcased in terms of solutions focused on sociality and service design as a part of the Sustainable Every Project. For more information, see: [www.sep.org](http://www.sep.org).

environmental impacts. In the case of car-sharing, the scheme is directed to environmental and city quality improvement, where comfort of the customers has been auto-produced by the intentional design of the scheme.

All the respondents believe that generating social cohesion is an important step, which can affect positively on the environment and reduce consumption. There is a huge importance of factors such as *'sense of belonging', trust and reciprocity, intimacy, knowledge sharing* and *respect on natural limit*. The threats arising from embedded values also suggest that value orientation can be influenced from before to perceive threat and can accede to behavior through transformation. Another clearly important aspect is that individual transformation and value orientation are necessary to cement relations and in taking action. Here, personal *willingness* and *commitment, driven by values, and collective responsibility* and initiating *communicative climate* can precede a beneficial outcome.

In changing people's behavior, *forgetfulness* or discursive consciousness (Jackson 2005 quoting Gidden's theory) is believed to be a barrier. This is also a cause of the attitude-behavior gap. In terms of research, no study has been conducted to show how creative communities reduce their attitude-behavior gap. From the responses and background work on VS, Findhorn, and NWEI, following conclusions can be drawn:

- high social cohesion and bridged personal relationships help reducing in forgetfulness where individual's help each other by prompting or reminding. The members of VS train themselves to be compassionate, eager learners and forgiving and this helps in creating an accommodative atmosphere to learn from mistakes. In households, there is a balance between community members which helps in filling up the gaps in the creation of beneficial relationships.
- there are regular practices to engage in conversations, narratives and dialectics between individuals and the others in a circle group and community. Repetitive prompting and practices can help shaping new habits and routines. Long-term practice itself helps shaping behavior rationally which in itself is more ecological (Princen 2005).
- dominance of ST values over SI may suggest that VS practioners are more rational. Respondents mentioned the effectiveness of slowing down or not rushing to meet ambitious targets. This helps long-term perspective and visioning (Graham personal communication, March 29 2008). The advantage of slowing down directly affects a person's behavior and actions. Relaxation, leisure, creative and reflective thinking can help choice editing and being more rational in consumption.

Princen (2005) has argued about the use of leisure and relaxation often resulting in unsustainable practices and more consumption. However, this is only the case when specific values are not integrated. For VS communities, Elgin's approach is to advocate 'deep simplicity' in what encompasses a whole set of value-behavior shifts or awakenings. This is demonstrated through the concept of 'leisure at home' and includes activities such as engaging in environmentally benign plays, art works, conversations (Andrews 2006). Princen (2005) in his book the *Logic of Sufficiency* mentioned the idea *'ecological rationality'*. This can be observed among VS and Findhorn practitioners. Although in terms of reaching "average people" the ideas may seem hard to apply (Holst personal communication, March 28 2008). Sufficiency and VS are closely knitted as they both call for reduction by moderation, choice shifts, changing perceptions whilst acknowledge the limitations of humans and nature. Such rationality comes from a collective choice, together with a group or societal effort that establishes norms, principles, rules, and procedures aimed at respecting the ecological and personal limits. Sometimes presence of such detailed community-based processes related to VBN and



consumption practice determines whether a specific social innovation can be successful, since not all social innovations of the creative communities may be sustainable or regarded as following *sufficiency strategy* (Princen, pers.comm, March 12 2008).

### 5.1.3. Emphasis on process-oriented approach

Furthermore, from the model it is also clear that there is an emphasis on a '*process*' more than a result-oriented approach. This is observed in the way communities perceive and approach problems. This can generate benefits in different spheres, or sometimes external benefits, in the form of *increasing cooperation* and *knowledge creation*. Some obvious examples would be the house sharing or VS approach that appears to result in better mental health and the NWEI's Green Team building. Another important characteristic can be observed which is the general concern on degrading social capital and positive view on developing local economies. In all the cases, except for house sharing and Augustenborg, economic well-being has a subordinate nature. On the other hand, voluntarism with strong *will to change* is the main driver in Findhorn and VS.

In the case of car sharing, there is also the influence of normative factors in the form of *perceiving ownership*, *diminuting status-seeking behavior* and *identity formation*. The change of point to offer by the business can create such changes in normative spheres (Manzini personal communication, March 18 2008). Sharing resources and services also can help build a new *symbolic interaction* (Mont 2004), both in social network and among actors. This is visible in all 4 cases where private sphere behavior is in question, except Augustenborg, where private household consumption was not considered in the study. This symbolic interaction is created through the design of the social innovation, where the point of emphasis is largely to bring sociality along with environmental well-being. In the case of shared spaces in ecovillage Findhorn, VS, house share and cohousing, personal behavior is affected by interactive process of sharing services.

In case of VS, the burning issues in the United States – work related stress and a lack of time that reduces social interactions is major driver of the national movement. It must be mentioned that the North-West coast of the US has long history of counter-culture, social movements and environmental consciousness, especially in Seattle and Portland in Oregon (US students personal communication 2008). Such a strong history of environmentalism and local social change movements may have contributed to the embedding of internal values. However, the concern of VS in general shows that the issues are global in nature. In the case of Augustenborg, historical development and the role of the local authority have contributed to inducing social cohesion and encouraging innovations. Sweden's long history of welfare, high concern for the environment and a top-down approach to assist local communities have led to the process of creating sustainable communities. Many examples in Sweden of creating citizen's awareness and involvement can be observed. The long history of welfare governance has created citizen security for and enabled needs to be fulfilled. Citizens respond to policy support, as there is a 'good level' of reliance and support (Scott-Jacobson personal communication, March 28, 2008). This can be seen in the current Swedish municipality led movement of the Fair Trade Cities where networks of citizens, NGOs, municipalities, retailer chains and shops come together to raise awareness. The long history of social security can trigger neighbours to organize themselves to respond to an actor's support in the form of voluntarism (Scott-Jacobson personal communication, March 28 2008). This can be matched with the case of Findhorn where the climate of reciprocity, trust between actors and overall welfare value orientations can contribute to beneficial actions from small to relatively larger scales. The above model also shows interventions together with the resulting benefits resulting in more complex manner.

#### 5.1.4. Connectedness providing meaning to lead towards a certain change

In all the cases except, car-sharing, the *sense of place* is highly influences future actions, behaviours and outcomes. The natural (Findhorn), bioregional (NWEI, VS), or cultural (house share Milan) connectedness provides ‘meaning’ that leads towards certain changes. In Augustenborg, it is building cohesion of a multi-cultural group that has been a priori in building connection to the place they live in. NWEI, VS and Findhorn all take a spiritual approach to form an understanding about the impacts and systems around individuals. This has been reported as crucial in shaping behavior and creative community actions. In the educational support provided by the ecovillages, and transformative organizations like NWEI, a sense of place is part of the learning experience which can stimulate social innovation in the form of changing lifestyles, group and community formation. In some schools, children were shown interconnectedness through visual and practical experiences of how a consumption chain is formed<sup>20</sup> (Swedish students personal communication 2008). Similar examples can be found in Findhorn and NWEI. In examples of cohousing and Slow Food, the sense of place has been a process to respond to problems. Since social innovation is local problem-solution, this probably is an inherent characteristic of the values in creative communities. The benefit of this is high since it helps in making more integrative and systemic perspectives.

## 5.2. Comparative Analysis of cases

The following comparison has been drawn to describe the factors influencing in creative communities. The following section shows the various networks being formed for the functioning of creative communities.

The analytical description is provided at the end of the matrices (Section 5.2.1)

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<sup>20</sup> For example, children receive visuals through field activities in permaculture plots and explained the cycles. There are small farm raising sheep, children feeds, raises the sheep to make connection and let them know where the meat is coming from. St.Hans Garden in Lund Sweden. (visit, March 2008).

Table 5-1: Comparative Criteria Matrix

Comparative criteria	VS	NWEI	Findhorn	Car Sharing House Sharing	Augustenborg
<p>Thematic areas of influence</p> <p>(history, culture, demography, ethnicity, social norms and values, religion, political process, past experiences)</p>	<p>Historical, cultural, political, social norm influences are present.</p> <p>Past experience in collectivism ties with external factors.</p> <p>Secular in nature.</p>	<p>Historical, cultural, economic, specific philosophy (deep ecology, VS) influences are present.</p> <p>Both religious and secular in terms of transforming approach.</p> <p>Past experience or awareness affects transformative actions. (e.g. education, training on social innovation, community creation)</p>	<p>Mainly religious &amp; spiritual. Multi-cultural, local governance influences.</p> <p>High personal, social &amp; environmental norms are followed guided by agreement under Common Ground.</p>	<p>No common values in environmental concern present.</p> <p>Social well-being in general observed.</p> <p>Past personal experience is not relevant for the service users.</p>	<p>Multi-cultural, fully secular, political, economic, demographic, influences are present.</p> <p>Guided by social welfares governance.</p> <p>Top-down approach</p>
<p>Sources of external or internal support for social innovation</p> <p>(funds, human capital, technology, infrastructure)</p>	<p><i>Community-based or citizen's groups organize</i></p> <p><i>Campaign &amp; project funds from local authority, neighbours, philanthropists.</i></p> <p>Small infrastructure is DIY based with groups. No large infrastructure.</p> <p><i>Business cooperation is missing.</i></p>	<p><i>Membership based, transformative organization.</i></p> <p>Philanthropic funds &amp; volunteer activities support</p> <p>Need to increase external funding &amp; business partnerships to mobilize resources.</p> <p>External support hopeful</p>	<p><i>Finance highly depends on charity.</i></p> <p><i>Internal community activities (share work, resources), social enterprises.</i></p> <p>External support from nearby community enterprises, members.</p> <p>Some technology transfer (living machine) comes from outside the community through</p>	<p>Projects supported by external civil society NGOs &amp; the Province of Milan.</p> <p>Car-sharing promotional supported by informal communication &amp; strong ties between early adopters.</p>	<p><i>Mixed co-finance from various public-private partnerships, national &amp; local government.</i></p> <p>Technology provided by MKB company, local innovator, local government.</p> <p>Human capital in the project involved external experts, local</p>

		from outside national government.	membership of innovators – ‘friends’.	No need for infrastructural changes.	government field facilitator, residents.
<p>Perceptions in reducing consumption</p> <p>(localization principle, regionalization of best practices, ethical investments, possibility of merging between initiatives, spiritual well-being)</p>	<p>Believe in localization.</p> <p>Regionalization to globalization of local best practices according to applicability.</p> <p>Interested in ethical community-based investments</p> <p>In case of neighbourhood campaigns changes in one consumption cluster changes are present.</p> <p>Spiritual well-being is continuously practiced to displace materialism (not always religious)</p>	<p>Localization belief &amp; educational campaign is present. But supportive to regional development (Europe, Americas).</p> <p>Believe in dematerialization of economy through green business.</p> <p>Participants tend to associate professional &amp; private sphere consumption changes.</p> <p>Spiritual well-being &amp; faith centre awareness campaign are present, but choices are available.</p>	<p>Highly believe &amp; fully act on localization.</p> <p>Regionalization &amp; globalization of value-based activities &amp; social innovations are advocated (green area design, energy conservation etc.)</p> <p>All investments are tied to ethical agreements on which the ecovillage is created.</p> <p>Religious &amp; spiritual practices are two major practices in the community. But respect diversity in religious beliefs.</p>	<p>Localization of services are predicted.</p> <p>Car sharing is building on best practices.</p> <p>Social innovation on house sharing is expanded to include other society members.</p> <p>No relevance to spiritual or religious well-being.</p>	<p>Localization of small business to increase employment.</p> <p>Private consumption is not addressed.</p> <p>Project built on environmental &amp; social welfare. So, ethical investment is inherent.</p> <p>Local or national best practices are considered based on policies.</p> <p>Highly secular to main multi-cultural cohesion &amp; integrity. Secularism is practiced &amp; thus, it is not possible to bring religious domain.</p>
Comparative criteria	VS	NWEI	Findhorn	Car Sharing	Augustenborg

				House Sharing	
<p>Continuous evolution and adaptive management (self-management organization, decision-making process, politicization, experiential knowledge, information or knowledge-based, local government intervention satisfactory)</p>	<p>Self-management of organization is perceived – education circle, campaign, advocacy</p> <p>Decision-making is highly democratic</p> <p>Politicizing initiative is present. (through media, boycotts, networks)</p> <p>Local government contribution is generally highly unsatisfactory</p> <p>High dependency on information or knowledge sharing</p> <p>Network of social relations based</p>	<p>Organization itself is based on self-management principle. Groups organize themselves &amp; responsible to create own won campaigns. Advices on self-management &amp; self-organization are provided.</p> <p>Groups decision making is participatory</p> <p>No particular politicizing role.</p> <p>Educational &amp; informational nature than vocational practices.</p> <p>Network of organizations based</p>	<p>By nature self-organize.</p> <p>Decision making is inclusive democracy although ‘old members’ have higher influence on decisions.</p> <p>Not interest in conventional politics.</p> <p>Networks of social relations, communities, knowledge &amp; organization present.</p> <p>Adaptive changes through bringing new practices &amp; social innovations observed.</p> <p>No dependency on government support.</p>	<p>Self-management of organization is highly relevant for sustenance of services since decision-making &amp; resource support must be secured by service providers &amp; users.</p> <p>Influence of local politics is present. (car sharing)</p> <p>Highly information dependence.</p> <p>House-sharing – social network based.</p> <p>Car share – survival based upon wider networks of organization, actors &amp; members based.</p> <p>Local government support is unsatisfactory.</p>	<p>Participatory management</p> <p>Decision-making is top-down &amp; community based. Participatory planning &amp; visioning were sought.</p> <p>Local government intervention generally satisfactory (government perspective).</p>

Comparative criteria	VS	NWEI	Findhorn	Car Sharing House Sharing	Augustenborg
<p>Relation to market-based strategies – Initiatives under business goals</p> <p>Economic Growth based model: decoupling, economic incentives, subsidized policy support</p> <p>Belief in market based instruments or system</p>	<p>Against conventional business goals (competition &amp; profit)</p> <p>Non-supportive to growth. ‘Decoupling is a myth’</p> <p>Market-based policy instrument like green tax is supported.</p>	<p>Reliance on usual business is unidentified. Nature of courses is not supportive, but collaboration by large corporation are present. (lead the change of business mindset)</p> <p>Growth is required.</p> <p>Market-based policy instrument like green tax is supported.</p>	<p>Localization of economy is beneficial.</p> <p>Decoupling cannot happen.</p> <p>Belief in market-based regulatory instruments (for taxing <i>bads</i>, not subsidy).</p>	<p>Economic concern is high.</p> <p>Growth perspective is positive.</p> <p>Less belief in taxation policies.</p>	<p>Partially defined under business goals.</p> <p>Growth is necessary.</p> <p>Country is based on various regulatory policies over long history, reliance is there.</p>
<p>Capacity building methods education, awareness, training, national policy or strategy based solution)</p>	<p>Study circles, personal advising, media campaigns, consultancy.</p>	<p>Awareness education, training on activities &amp; value association, advising on specific practices &amp; group dynamics.</p>	<p>Major work on education for sustainability. Other include enterprise skill, spiritual enhancement. Global network &amp; outreach is increasing.</p>	<p>Formal awareness is absent. Main information channel is media &amp; few supportive big clients.</p>	<p>Business &amp; vocational training.</p> <p>Formal &amp; informal awareness raising.</p> <p>National policy &amp; local strategy based solutions.</p>

Comparative criteria	VS	NWEI	Findhorn	Car Sharing House Sharing	Augustenborg
Trust placement	<p><i>Lack of trust on governments, business.</i></p> <p>Positive view on public-private partnership if consumption reduction &amp; fairness are common goal.</p>	<p>No trust on national government policies. Some regulatory laws have driven the community based changes.</p> <p>High advocacy of public-private partnerships.</p>	<p>Trusting mostly communities. International organization (UN) trust placement in educational works can be observed.</p> <p>UK government has moved towards learning practices for climate change. But the community is self-sufficient (until now).</p>	<p>Lack of trust on the local government.</p> <p>Regional &amp; civil society trust is high.</p>	<p>Trust based public-private-community relationship was established.</p>
Resistance/ challenges	<p>Against mainstream, resistance from other actors are present as VS is about changing personal behaviour/attitude.</p> <p>Lack of campaigning funds.</p> <p>Lack of communication strategies.</p> <p>Existing land zoning laws inhibiting potentials for fully community-based social innovations.</p>	<p>Lack of formal resource mobilization support.</p> <p>Opening dialogue between business-citizens</p>	<p>Resistance from community members on privatization is perceived.</p> <p>Challenges relate to increasing economic pressure, land prices limiting extension, for small communities.</p>	<p>Car-sharing – lack of parking space, member based, efficacy of the car-sharing operation (booking system, standard maintenance delivering, etc.)</p> <p>House sharing – psychological match making , continuation of outside financial support</p> <p>Lack of communication strategies.</p>	<p>Challenge is now to address the private household behaviour for lifestyle changes (energy consumption, internal building design etc.)</p>





## 5.2.1. Comparison of the cases

### a) Thematic areas of influence

There are *cultural and historical influences* present in all the case. In The Findhorn, NWEI & VS cultural consumption pattern is what led to the development. *Frugality* or other forms of self-sufficiency strategies can be observed in these cases. For expansion of the creative communities & their environmental practices, these communities are relying on *organizing groups and connecting with other intentional communities* around the world. The value based practices in these cases becomes *social norms for mobilization* of the groups. Moreover, *past experiences* among the communities either arising from perceived crisis situation leading to social innovation have been observed in terms of new comers, as mentioned by NWEI respondent. *Practical visibility of the crisis* as well as *best practices* can create new values or turn values into commitment. This resonates the Augustenborg respondent's view. However, in general, local government and civil society organizations perspective on *building infrastructure* to reduce consumption is highly recognized. This further means *cooperation from the government agencies* with the communities, particularly the local authorities similar to the Malmö Municipality in Augustenborg case. This was confirmed from the cohousing volunteer based in Florence. The present expansion or incorporation of the promising practices like cohousing, fused cohousing in ecovillages etc. require government's *policy changes*, and support to change *zoning regulations* as well as use of *public spaces* (Lietart, personal communication, April 18 2008). Another important feature is that religion may help for wider acceptance among the believers, but these communities can connect with *religious institution* for handing in experiential knowledge among the religious people. For the Findhorn, it is of course different.

In terms of *politicizing* the agenda of the creative communities, some communities are *indirectly campaigning* which is common to general social movement. According VS respondents, simple living has been associated with left-wing politics by the non-supportive actors (e.g. mainstream politicians). When the responses on values and practices are analyzed the diversity and adaptive nature for sustainable practices (here, social innovations) are more *pluralist* in nature with a *communitarian* foundation. In general, diversity of less-impact choices fused with social entity (i.e. creative community) leads to pluralist nature of the social organizations in the studied cases. This pluralist nature of governance is seen to be achieved through *participatory decision-making* and *inclusive decision-making* in case of the Findhorn. The networking growth among the creative communities, as seen in The Findhorn, VS and NWEI, is supportive to positive activism in terms of *bringing cooperation than establishing competing belief*. However, beliefs like car sharing to *diminate private ownership perspective* and *self-sufficient local economy* creation by the Findhorn are against the existing belief which make the 'outlook' of the communities more towards 'activism' orientation.

Ridley-Duff (2007) in his discussion on social enterprise mentioned that our approach to social *enterprise governance* is rooted in our beliefs about people, purpose and nature of social organization and attitude to *create legitimacy of various interventions for a social change*. In case of civil society led house sharing example, inclusion of marginal groups is done through institutionalizing the inclusion process in a governance frame. This can be further seen in the support gathered by the organization from the regional province where more local authority intervention is not visible. Another feature in governance of the creative communities can be observed where decision-making has moved beyond the 'objective' logical thinking process as advocated by the mainstream policy decision-makers. In all the cases, the process of multi-stakeholder support from civil society or citizen's groups (small one into larger coalition) is attached to Etzioni's *moral conversation* (Etzioni 1988). This is brought by making decisions based on *emotional and social thinking* and as a part of building a cohesive process (i.e. cooperation as an outcome).

## **b) Sources of external or internal support for social innovation**

It is interesting to see that in service design cases, people opted for changes with support from external sources, although it involves civil society organizations. This can be seen as acceptance of *civil society representation of local governance*. This is also supported by the communities in order to achieve equitable empowerment (trust formation). However, these people (users) are the early adopters helping in diffusion of the car sharing and house sharing schemes. In case of Augustenborg, certain innovations came up when human capital was mobilized and infrastructural support was provided by the government. This can be seen as having a ‘push’ affect or a motivational incentive. This is different in The Findhorn, NWEI and VS where groups are responsible for taking initiative with or without external support. The generic principle of stimulating or motivating individuals has been strengthened through forming social relationships. It was pointed out that creative communities act naturally to respond to change (Manzini and Meroni, personal communication, March 18 2008) where values can be different. This is true that like-minded people join together to make changes in different spheres and enjoy conceiving solutions. However, if wide spread support has to be received from the society and actors, their tasks on the communities will multiply.

There are *informal networks* of social relations is observed in terms of *distributed works, which do not depend on monetary return*. The motivational factors come from the altruistic, cohesive nature of these people. In the process of innovation and use of products or resources, this also contributes to the economy. This point may be seen critical in terms economic growth based development where works are tied to wages and not social informal relations. An example of responding against this system is clearly observed in ‘time-banking’ or bartering which are sometimes operating within creative communities like cohousing (Lietart, 2008), and ecovillage or VS that has such operation as part of built community relations and strong ties. In case of house sharing this is not an issue since social welfare was the main goal. However, there is a significant debate raised on expectation of elderly in using students for their home services. This relation is internal and in macro-context may not be applicable.

## **c) Perceptions in reducing consumption**

The general perception in reducing consumption in all clusters is *strengthening local practices*. This has been supported by all respondents. However, the extent and scale of *localization* may vary. In service design cases, services are based upon locality sharing services that may be seen as inducing factor to further develop innovation. Interest of Milan Telecom to come forward to help car sharing service is an example that there are provisions created to work with business and communities in a mutually supportive cluster. This can make the future of growing social enterprises with *definite tasks set for the providers*.

It was also found out that operation of car sharing on weekend reduces peak traffic and demand for cars (Interview with Colombo, 2008; Mont). Such impact is still very low in Milan because of the small size of the car sharing enterprises (Colombo personal communication, March 19 2008). Moreover, it also signals another important factor of localized service provision creation for sharing resources. In ecovillages and VS practioners, shared cars, washing, food, common meals, entertainment house etc. are examples of sharing consumption. *Social innovation is occurring at all levels* from value shift to ideas to practice and in creating supportive climate.

All respondents highly emphasized the need for localizing the food systems. In house sharing, provision of local food supply from stores or by lodger can be created. At present, student helps with grocery shopping. But this is still idea. Food system is one of the most difficult consumption clusters to address, as was mentioned by respondents. However, consumer’s demand on local food and community awareness can drive the change much faster. An obvious and easier way is to create networking potential accompanied by messages attractive to consumers. (Merroni, personal communication, March 18; Scott-Jacobsson, March 28 2008).

The communities responded growing concern among themselves to create local economy and shared service provisions are philanthropic ethical investments. Although lacking large funds is a barrier to grow, yet their willingness is expressed through volunteer services. In case of MeglioMilano's free legal advices are provided to the house sharing community. It seems that creation of socially cohesive groups can create opportunities for many other willing people to come forward, given that people know what is exiting and in front of them.

#### **d) Continuous evolution and adaptive management**

Self-management of the organization is inherent in developing the communities and a nature of enterprise formation. In Augustenborg case where local government approached, emphasize was on building self-management capacity to create social enterprises to reduce impacts on the environment and unemployment. However, it is also visible from the same case that the process of such capacity building and community formation (like VS) is slow. This is associated with changes that require more integrative and holistic change of behavior, perceptions and internal transformation. Respondents from VS, the Findhorn and car sharing mentioned about having high level of energy (spirit) and time are vital more than seeking funds. There is time for personal reflection, for understanding group behavior, knowing and trusting others in the 'game'. Long term projects implementation is necessary for holistic changes.

Reducing the infrastructural needs such as car sharing or re-using products among members can work early and this means those changes that can be resolved faster can be taken up by the society at large easily.

#### **e) Relation to market-based strategies**

There is a strong belief among VS that governments should be more responsible in green policy changes. Examples drawing from Sweden, VS and Service design respondents supported for stricter regulatory instruments. This must be mentioned that this is supported with an assumption that poor are not further marginalized and affluent are taxed.

In case of the Findhorn, there is rising concern on privatization of the enterprises, which communally managed. This has been noted as a result of growing operations in the village. This indicates, growth of such communities (also seen in EVI) can contribute to mainstreaming process. Whether such changes are anticipated for sustainability is a critical question. Respondents also mentioned about use of visioning to overcome some of these challenges to help perceive who stands where, what is expected in future (Merroni, Graham, Elgin, Holst, Andrews, personal communication,2008). Perhaps communities and supportive actors should focus on visioning exercises in addition to dialogues with the average consumers.

#### **f) Capacity building methods**

All the communities highly rely of workshops, dialogues and hands on training for building capacity of the enthusiasts and others. This is to empower the social institutions as anticipated by the communities (Hawe 1994; Perkins & Zimmerman 1995). Furthermore, this seems to create physical and social spaces in building relational platforms. Followed by capacity building, the decision making power is influenced which can be observed in their strength of awareness to act upon environmental behavior. This is also a source of income of the communities and a strong reliance factor in educating to change behavior. The unique features are that the education and capacity building are based on various positive results, and positive messages. Such messages are definitely a useful tool when majority of the people and external actors perceive creative communities as depriving from 'life'.

There is also internal transfer of knowledge occurring within the boundary of activities and without capacity building. For example, in house sharing, there is knowledge transfer about living, increasing tolerance, compassion, traditional and technological knowledge and so on. In case of car-sharing it is the internal process of individuals when they do not prefer to have a car (Colombo, personal communication, March 19 2008) and discuss with other family and friends. In case of communities-The Findhorn and VS (eco-parties, chat), knowledge sharing and capacity building is a continuous process and such that it embeds in the lifestyle and their routines, but not resulting stress.

### **g) Trust placement**

The general trust placement of the community on the local government (except Augustenborg) is low or non-existent. However, supportive environment from the local authorities can dramatically change this perception and create meaningful cooperation (e.g. car sharing, VS-Seattle, NWEI). Building trust is vital to create cooperative social relations as seen in early sections and the findings. There is a deliberative and long time process through use of various communication media for building trust. Essentially, for gaining support and adoption of the social innovation, creative communities devote sufficient time in building trust-based network. Reciprocal behavior is seen strengthening the trusts and relations among the community member. In terms of expansion and cooperation from the citizens and actors, trust-based network must be extended. Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) and with its initial UN collaboration is an example of increasing reliance to best available practices by the creative communities.<sup>21</sup>

### **h) Resistance/challenges**

There are many challenges as highlighted and these challenges are great in terms of reducing the scope of actions. Dedication to volunteer work is one of the factors where creative communities are moving forward and experiences are being exchanged. However, this highlights the dependence on *philanthropic* and *volunteer* services, which results uncertainty in achieving the outcomes. There is typical challenge of *budgetary and manpower limitations* which hinders the activities from progressing. Unfortunately, some good efforts of independent community-based projects are lacking funds that are much lower compared to the costs-expenditure if built by large contractors. The Findhorn's renewable energy project (wind turbine) cost much less when built by the community compared to those built under contractual service given to large companies. This brings to additional challenge where *contractual service* must be employed (for lack of expertise, materials) there can be an increase of anticipation to offer attractive services to community by the contractors. Sometimes this is hard to resist (respondent, the Findhorn, 2008). This is similar to the problems of privatization and outsourcing public services.<sup>22</sup> The result is positive where community empowerment is a concern (Augustenborg), and in cases where clearly delineated role of each actors has been established. Actually, creative communities' self-organizing principles and social innovation potentials (here, group work, common fund, service take over) create assurance to material provisioning and thus, protection of local natural resources. Nevertheless, the increasing social innovation to reduce impacts (i.e. zero emission principle) is demanding large actors' engagement. This in turn creates a pressure of creating

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<sup>21</sup> GEN is a member of Conference of NGOs (CONGO) and founding member of the group which provides active consultation service at the UN HQ in NYC on Earth Values Caucus, Spiritual Caucus, CONGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns. GEN participates in United Nation's Economic and Social Council with special consultative status (GEN 2007)

<sup>22</sup> An example would be local water resource privatization. In case of community based water supply and management, emergence of private companies affected the community's right to use local resource. Moreover, the supply services with basics, over the years, became unknown to community members as knowledge of new technology was not transferred by contractors. This ended up creating severe clashes and rivalries in small communities in many countries (e.g. Philippines, Bolivia, South Africa). Many of these countries have now moved towards developing public-private partnership where the system is only built by the contractor and services by the communities. (Khan et al., 2007)

a 'common workable solution' where a 'certain level of compromise' may be required to come into a common term (Meroni, personal communication, March 18; VS respondents, personal communication March 2008).

For small step private sphere changes like car sharing, it may *partially solve* one problem within the cities. The perception of commercializing the service to hinterland (Car sharing Italia) where cars have to be used anyways may not reduce carbon emissions in the long run (without the option of alternative fuel). Such service system needs to be combined with other infrastructural changes such as combining with alternative public transport system. Examples of such combined system can be found in Swiss Mobility service and some other Western European countries (Mont 2004). Neighbourhood car-sharing service through informal organization of the residents in ecovillage is being debated in The Findhorn. The idea is to *reduce overall use of cars* in general, fuel requirement (with emerged debate on alternative fuel use) and use of alternative transport modes.

There is generally a problem of *non-cooperation* from the other actors. This is critical because it limits the scope of work. There is a challenge from *increasing prices of land, products and spaces for social innovation to grow*. The simplest example is the lack of parking space in car-sharing case. The VS respondents talked about the *change of land zoning* as a way to free-flow *expression of creativity and innovations*. This is crucial for stability of a community working for sustainability. Their endeavours are hard-pressed and capacity is forcibly reduced with *lack of physical space* to make design for change. It was pointed by VS respondents and seen in some cases of sustainable communities that quality of life (low impact) increase and built by communities over the years also increases the prices of land in the neighbourhood. This is a natural response to price signals. Similar situation was observed in Davis-California neighbourhood where many residents moved out for high monetary gain and houses were bought by affluent after years of sustainable design and planning with fully built community (Corbett and Corbett 2000). The Findhorn respondent also mentioned about rising of land prices and quality of life making residents to move out. However, the respondents from Augustenborg are positive about change in moving population after some years of stability. If the neighbourhood or community is built with reduced consumption features, shared services and less space, the *newcomers will adapt*. This is perhaps the 'growth' perspective since more movement among growing cities also can increase economic growth (more people, more economic activities which may also result in increased consumption). Reversely, it is the perspective of the government that is devoted to provide solutions to the people with high regulatory standard maintenance and supportive local policy implementation. However, carefully worked out design with consideration to social cohesion and inviting climates for the new comers to adopt can attain positive results. Creative communities acknowledge that resistance is natural and this creates atmosphere of cooperation rather than isolation.

The issue of misunderstanding lies with the approach of creative communities to present themselves in front of the society. It was mentioned by the VS respondent about the need for articulation and showcasing the values. The language of *slow, small and sufficiency* may not bring the ultimate value shift if it is unable to show the personal pleasures also coming out from changing self-transcendence value orientations and practices. Additionally, it was pointed out that creation of sense of urgency' by presenting doom and gloom picture may not necessarily result value shift unless consumers see their benefits arising from particular value shift. This requires presenting a balanced picture of positivism and negative features with increasing visibility. *Sense of community* associated with practical experience can result positive changes which brings emotion-focused coping along with crisis or problem-focused coping mechanisms (McKenzie-Mohr and Smith 1999). As seen in above cases this can bring positive result in individual's transformation of value changes. The partnership and research contribution in neuroscience and mental health is a positive direction where consumers are given scientific basis to be more 'human' and respond to emotional needs than materialistic pursuits.

The above illustrates values, issues, and social innovation of creative communities with existing and emerging relationships with other actors. Within communities, we see there are many relationships that are intrinsic by nature of their value orientations. This is particularly intangible and embedded in the exchange relations. On the other side, there is visibility of actor's interactions in the form of networking platforms. This brings to the next section on networking relationships to find opportunities for integration of the creative communities.

### 5.2.2. Relational Networks in Creative communities

In section 5.1. and 5.2.1, the influence of values, actions and external factors were discussed. In the case of social bonding and emotional relationships such as sense of belonging, intimacy, group bonding and even common beliefs are seen to be based upon exchange rules, here emotions, reciprocity and mutual trust. At the same time, community, actors and civil society organizations in creating social cohesion are bounded in a form for an actor's network. The Augustenborg case is an example of trust and reciprocity building process for collective decision-making, which may or may not form a cemented *social organization* (CBO's partial success in eco-business cycle training for long-term inertia and lack of confidence among unemployed residents). In service design cases, the social organization is based upon symbolic interaction with the service (both car and house sharing system).

The actor's network theory in the form of symbolic interaction can be featured in other relationships where VBN is of vital importance. For example, VS and The Findhorn have developed relationships at various levels – within the community by exchanging service, sharing resources, community work, volunteering, and knowledge building process. These variations in relationships not only created adaptive mindset of the creative communities in terms managing their social organizations. The benefits generated out of the social innovations (by both adoption and innovative values/ practices) are also creating opportunity to new build new partnerships with the other actors as part of the innovation diffusion process. This is visible in case of the Findhorn, continuous evolution of new community enterprises for ecovillage and institutional partnership focused on education. For VS, the health perspective provided new direction to promote simple living and gaining popularity, and for Phinney Ridge, strong neighbourhood cohesion generated citizens' actions to climate change campaign. For house sharing the response generated new opportunities of expanding the practice targeting other relatively low-income groups with increasing support form media and provincial government. For Augustenborg, the social innovators empowered to be as a fully established professional engaged in community-based service. All these points out to one common feature – creative communities are innovating the path of making new solutions and creating *windows of opportunity* through integrating with the wider society and actors.

In the case of *structure formation*, a pattern of relationships can be observed. In VS cases, each of the respondents is contributing to their community as well as connected to larger national and global networks. Moreover, in the same case, the activities under same values are different. There are relationships being built with ecovillages, local government and interested citizens. In another case, the simplifiers are attached to study groups, health professional and media advocacy. In the Findhorn, the variations of relationships can be observed with inside actors, community and peripheral organizations (regional association organizations), foreign trainees, experts, business enterprise and so on.

In terms of structure there is significant growth emerging. The smaller exchange rules are guided by the choice of transaction and common values in the community. In case where outside actors are accessing the communities either for support or to learn lessons (e.g. UK government's approach to climate change, or eco-municipality), the relationships are oriented towards achieving a common goal. The lack of common value sets and diversity in activities has been followed in conventional discourse so as to eliminate any subjectivism from the exchange rule and for fairness.

However, in the case of sustainable consumption, we see the need of *moral conversations* to achieve better and standard of excellence. The growing creative communities are organizing themselves to build a *knowledge platform* that is *global* in nature and mostly, in terms of the common values they share. If this can be considered a social movement, then the social structure within their locality and in the global knowledge platforms can be considered as significant trend of emerging consciousness as also mentioned by (Michaelis 2003). The importance of media advocacy can have a huge potential where creative community's efforts has opportunity to become visible and make their cases more accepting (Elgin personal communication, April 3 2008). The smaller, traceable and localized structures of the social innovation can be connected to transfer knowledge in a way that is adopted to other localized condition. This makes it more promising where 'best practices' are the 'bests' in its own localized or national condition. The NGOs and creative communities have emerged to act in the middle to bridge between government, investors and communities. As seen in the service design cases, car sharing and intergenerational housing have bridge part of the relationship with the government actors, which were not present.

However, according to all of the respondents, there is an anticipation of collaboration with the local government that is not only to support infrastructure but also to provide learning experiences to large part of the community. The *role of academia* is also seen rising in support to the creative communities for scientific and action research. This means creation of social, physical and innovation spaces.

In creative communities, the relation that is missing is with the business organizations. For social enterprise development this is vital. As mentioned earlier, the history of social innovation has largely depended on philanthropy or charity. The conflict between economic actors and creative communities has to be resolved if sustainable consumption is promoted for changing individual's behavior and community best practices has to be transferred. Communities such as the Findhorn, VS, service design and other intentional communities do not support competition. In Milan car-sharing case, emergence of other service provider in the same scheme is an example of a *non-conflicting cooperation*.

For *networking structure*, corporate culture power relations determine the decision-making process as also seen in hierarchical structure. The value of creative communities to achieve equitable sharing is what makes the power relations to be excluded. Although in small community's rules, norms, and boundary of management can create highly hierarchical structure, for those who might argue, this is not the case as seen in creative communities or in their perceptions to take actions. This also brings the advantage of bringing a large cooperative network combining at local and regional level.

There is evidence of social innovation supporting *local economy*, especially seen in many intentional communities. The creative communities such as NWEI, VS, and the Findhorn support local food association by creating awareness and villages directly purchasing from the local food producers. In NWEI, the volunteers are personally taking actions. If this personal level behavior can be associated at collective level, e.g. neighbourhood, then there is a larger incentive for the local producers to grow. This is just one consumption cluster and there are so many that needs attention through our value-based engagement.

## 6 Discussion

This section addresses some of the critical issues in sustainable consumption in the Global South. Since the majority of this study is devoted to various practices relating consumption with the society and the environment, certain factors of community values in Bangladesh are drawn. This is to highlight the similarities and differences in value-based actions between the North and South. The following discussion also shows how the research would vary in developing country context. However, this section does not draw any concrete solution based on the findings in the previous sections and only helps in identifying future research needs.

### 6.1.1. Sustainable consumption in the Global South

There are very few cases that directly draw connection to sustainable consumption in the Global South. With around 175 million people living under the dire stress of poverty (Worldwatch Institute 2008), meeting the basic needs including providing security, access to local resources and building risk-free lives are the central concerns. Thus, sustainable consumption revolves around some of the basic issues of poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods. In such cases, sustainable consumption becomes a more interchangeable terms with sustainable development<sup>23</sup>. Over the past decades, sustainable consumption has also started to focus on the emerging producer-consumer giants, i.e. China and India. One of the key factors driving the consumerism is the epitomized globalization in the form of communications, media, investments, trade and marketing (Myers and Kent 2004). By the single large market, and the unprecedented scope of world trade, these two countries have built manufacturing units of electronics. This helps in generating employment opportunities and country revenues, but simultaneously it is creating enormous resource demand and environmental impacts by the industrial juggernaut (Myers and Kent, 2004). In addition, there is also pollution shifts taking place. Industries in the Western countries unable to operate for high environmental regulatory standards are moving to poor countries for a low or no regulations advantage and cheap labor. Large investments drawn by numerous sweatshops made some handful of people extremely affluent while majority of the poor are still unable to access the basic resources.

Between 1990 and 2004, the share of national consumption by the poorest fifth of population fell from 4.6% to 3.9% (MDG report 2007). In Eastern Asia, the share of consumption declined dramatically. Inequality remains one of the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean where the share of their poorest people is only 1% (MDG report 2007). At present, approximately half of the world population is now living in urban areas where nearly 1 billion people live in urban slums (MDG report 2007). The urban migration is a result of a motivation to increase quality of life. Unfortunately, population pressure and low wages are unable to provide the affluence to millions. The question of social and environmental justice for the unprivileged is not only limited to equity demands from the industrialised nations but also coming within the countries.

While the Millennium Development Goals have targeted to cut down half of the world's poverty by 2015, the increase of natural resource demand is focusing on Biodiversity Countdown 2010<sup>24</sup>. Thus, the problem of consumption in the Global South is not only limited to increasing ecological footprint or materialism or individualization of life, it is embedded in the poverty's downward spiral. The concerns of growing inequality drew large-scale interventions through aid, NGOs and public-private

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<sup>23</sup> National consumption data in Global South is largely missing. Thus, income data is used sometimes in place of consumption figures and related human and poverty development indices. It is because of consumption in these countries are still equated with per capita purchasing power (PPP) rather than desires or wants (MDG report 2007).

<sup>24</sup> Countdown 2010 is a network of partners working towards reaching the 2010 biodiversity target set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002. See more: <http://www.countdown2010.net/?c=About&s=article>.



partnerships for the past few decades. The solutions are not directed towards changing consumer's behaviour. The process of sustainable consumption is interwoven with other goals such as increasing production efficiency, providing employment opportunities, reducing point-source pollution, institutionalizing changes and making policies more practical. Here, sustainable consumption relates to sustainability of livelihoods and focus on the weak features of whole socio-economic system. In case of sustainability transition, the failure of many national institutions to provide basic means has led many non-government sectors to aid support to the people. The idea is not to create a social movement through citizenry similar to the West but at first to empower local communities through building capacity by skill development, education about the basics, such as health and sanitation, immunization, and vocational training to enable them to make changes in their distressed living conditions. This has brought social innovations focusing on poverty, education, health care services, urban planning, sanitation, and cottage industry development. In recent years, there is significant emergence of NGOs working directly with the communities and facilitating social innovations in the area of community-based natural resource management. This has also led to social innovations by formation or revival of creative communities. However, the issues may differ from the industrialized countries as the priority problems vary. These innovations by the communities fall into the category of the general definition of social innovation followed by formation of social enterprise with economic goal. In the following the specific country experience will highlight the issues and aspects related to sustainable consumption.

### 6.1.2. Social innovation in Bangladesh

From personal experience, let me take the opportunity to discuss Bangladesh. The media portrays the country as one of most poverty-stricken (per capita income less than \$2/ day), regularly flooded with one of the highest population density in the world (153,546,901 population in 144,000 sq km.; The World Factbook-Bangladesh 2008). In recent news item, it is most likely to be largest victim of climate change; whereas, the carbon footprint is 35million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emission with 0.3 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per person in the country (Worldwatch Institute 2008). However, this is the gloomy side of the country, which must be addressed and resolved.

On the brighter side, it has world's largest development NGO of social innovations (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee-BRAC) and another founded the micro-credit programme (i.e. Grameen Bank). Bangladesh has developed one of the best flood forecasting model that combines fishermen's' traditional knowledge and precautionary actions with scientific forecasting system. These are large-scale enterprises from which communities around the world is benefited from. When looking at these success cases the origin of these social innovations can be found tied to typically in value-based engagement. Some these are mentioned below:

1. *Historical context of 'simple living'*: Simplicity defines the rural lifestyles of the people<sup>25</sup>. Despite the poverty situation of the farmers, there is strong social cohesion in the villages built by daily informal conversations between the villagers where problems are viewed collectively and personal sphere problems are most often resolved through advices and mediation by others. Moderation is an inherent principle which has cultural and religious influences where wasting or discarding something '*useful*' is considered a social sin. Traditionally, materials are reused or circle around the interested neighbours. Houses are built in clusters, which use common space for meeting, eating, washing and entertainment. Shared services are practiced among neighbours such as sharing tools, bikes, winter cloths, and kitchen. The family structure is still based on what is called 'joint family' where three generations live together

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<sup>25</sup> The Bengali word that typically depicts rural people is '*shord*' which means 'simple people'. For generations, this perception is continuing until today.

with a social and moral responsibility of respecting and taking care of elderly. Source of pleasures mostly derives from plays, music, rural, crafts and so on. Therefore, the concern of social exclusion and individualization, which is highly focused on creative communities cases, are not a matter of concern. It is interesting to see that in terms of values of compassion, conviviality, sharing and caring are common which has certain impact on the environment. In some recent studies of flood coping strategies, it was found out that the victims are highly resilient one result of which is dealing with the crisis together and collective mechanism of disaster preparedness (e.g. stocking of food in common areas for all members of the community, farmers cooperative) (Khan, 2002a).

2. *Community-based management of natural resources*: Despite the social cohesion, the dwindling supply of natural resources is the main concern for sustainable consumption. In most of the rural development projects, community-based resource management concerns sustainable consumption of the resource, common property rights and use of traditional knowledge (Khan, 2002b). People generally live for subsistence and rests are saved for upcoming seasons and as coping strategy. The civil society organizations have led several projects to develop understanding on natural resource depletion translating to local sustainability and self-sufficiency strategies, which utilizes high participatory visioning, problem solving and developing social enterprises by the beneficiaries. Social enterprises were developed where women make floating garden in wetland areas to grow seasonal vegetables and fruits some of which goes to local market<sup>26</sup>. Another example is where villagers came to together to protect old swamped forests and develop selective cutting mechanisms which they partly consume, portions sold to the local market to meet the local need and rests are kept for natural regeneration. Since the emergence of the micro-credit programme, two major enterprises have developed – mixed-use plantation and craftsmanship based of traditional sustainable techniques using natural cycles. The elderly are responsible to transfer knowledge about understanding the bioregion, living environment, and social relationships.

The above brief sketch depicts the social values embedded in the culture where survival is directly related to nature. This is not different in many rural or even urban areas in the southern countries. The following section, on the other hand, shows some of the challenges in sustainable consumption agenda for the Global South as well as opportunities to synergize sustainable practices globally.

### **6.1.3. Challenges to sustainable consumption**

There are numerous examples that can be drawn from many other countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam and other countries where rural life is what not much different to what the creative communities are aspiring for to make the change. The issue of consumption are much related to production practices and responsibility of the producers than the consumers. In the Global South, consumers sometimes do not have the knowledge of developing campaigns. People are not aware of product safety rights and generally respond to solvent situation at households than bothering about products. At the same time, marginalization due to poverty and social status restricts consumers to voice their concerns. The rise of the free market economy also affects the local producer-consumer chain. The effect is visible in commercializing common pool resources stimulating violent conflict between local users and commercial enterprises (Khan, 2002a). Moreover, there are a wide variety of issues that shapes the consumption debate in the Global South. The lack of distribution of benefits from high number of middlemen in the supply chain, lack of standardization of the quality of products, underutilized technical capacity and lack of consensus among the stakeholders (e.g. producers, traders, exporters) etc. show the present picture of the challenges to address sustainable production and consumption (Haque *et al.* 2004). Another issue is that little can be expected to proceed directly to sustainable consumption where basic environmental management system is not in place and awareness about the environment among urbanites is almost non-existent. There are responses from average educated consumers who believe sustainable consumption by no means

should be discussed into the sustainability agenda as it is the problem of the Western countries (Interviews, 2008). This poses challenge in terms of gaining basic acceptance of the sustainable debate.

In the above discussion, it is clear that the research issues on sustainable consumption would focus on different direction and issues evolve around making sustainable production-consumption linkage with livelihoods. However, in terms of many practices prevailing in the communities and their social innovation cases, there are lessons that can be learnt by the western countries. In terms of creative communities, their values and roles, these are no different from the aspirations as described in the section above. This gives opportunity to establish relationships between the creative communities around the world. Moreover, many of our traditional social practices have been eroded by the replication of materialistic model lifestyles. There is a pressing need to preserve these values and practices. For this, sustainable consumption and creative communities can extend their assistance to transfer the experiences from the industrial countries to the Global South in return learning about insights of the social cohesion.

## **7 Concluding remarks and further research**

### **7.1. Concluding remarks**

This research has addressed the problem of creative communities whose social innovation solutions have largely been unable to create changes in the mainstream society. The motivational drivers dependent on the internal value orientations of the individuals in these communities and external influencing factors have been reflected in their practices. The challenges for the creative communities, which are still large in terms of value-shifts and their relative isolation from the society, is a problem in making connections with the rest of the society and with various actors. Through this research the author tried to address the value-based engagement as well as the actor's relational factors, which are critical to understand the importance of the creative communities and establish a platform of exchange support. Conclusions have been drawn through answering the following research questions in the following sections (7.1.1. and 7.1.2.)

#### **7.1.1. What are the benefits of creative communities in the sustainable consumption discourse?**

In order to understand the effect the environment and society towards a sustainability endeavours, the individual members have acted as key change-makers. It was observed by the link of their values, problem perspective and in being responsible for behaviours and actions. In some cases (Findhorn, VS, NWEI), the personal growth among others through collectivism has resulted both social and environmental positive actions. Their actions are at first seen operating within their communities. While other case for example, shared services (Milan car sharing and intergenerational house share) and local government's approach to social innovation also reflects the importance of collectivism in stimulating social innovations diffusion in communities that are part of the conventional society. This proves the large potential for wider adoption of their practices.

In the case where private sphere consumption behaviour has not been addressed, i.e. Augustenborg, the need for individual value changes to act accordingly in reducing consumption has emerged as the next point of intervention.

The factors that each of the creative communities have addressed is building social relations to act upon reducing consumption. Through the illustration of the cases and extended VBN model, it was identified that individual along with community actions have more opportunity to progress towards sustainability. The social value dominance and sometimes integrated with the environmental concerns (either by community or external actors) have resulted a more adaptive management and openness to make changes. Such examples can be found in Findhorn and Augustenborg community where community actions and changes are decided through participatory process.

Willingness to change is perhaps the most important feature of the creative community individuals. Association of willingness to change or make changes with social or biospheric values combined produce high benefits.

Value-based social innovation also has potential to spread and create associated benefits in the form of hidden positive impacts (e.g. house sharing to reduce household emission by sharing). Another important observation is that the role of key drivers in influencing willingness which is either personal experience of a problem or relational association or actor's encouragement.

Moreover, the various communities that have been engaged either by themselves or through help of civil society organizations or even welfare-state oriented government (as in Sweden) have also been

based on identifying local solutions. The social innovations and initiatives are seen to be varying from single action such as from changing to sustainable lifestyles by reducing impact on a consumption cluster and its advocacy to creating a more comprehensive settlement like co-housing or ecovillages. When compared with the values divided under self-interest and self-transcendence clusters, beneficial impacts are visible and seen to coming from specific value orientation that is common to all that builds on cohesiveness and cooperation.

The variety of actions and initiatives points to another important factor that there are many models and thus, choices available to see the appropriate transfer of experiences and practices as customize solutions. The localized practices based on common social values (at least) have generated impacts in their niches to create more long-terms and anticipated changes.

In terms of creative communities' impacts of reaching the other part of the society the process is seen to be slow. However, the case of Findhorn where local government and increasing members (as same with NWEI) are increasing, it shows that others can adopt the benefits of value-based engagement. It is highly relevant to those who believe that average consumer's value shift is a non-workable solution and infrastructural solutions are the main strategy. It must be mentioned that although the actor's tasks and responsibility can vary (e.g. business to communities) understanding the self-transcendence values have been important.

### **7.1.2. How can the values and relationships of the creative communities be incorporated by larger part of the society?**

A larger incorporation and integration is essentially the various networking relations that can bridge the creative communities with the rest of the society or actors. When considering networks, this is a web of transformation itself. There is huge diversity in levels of networks that have been observed, which may not be much different in present society structure. The uniqueness occurs where the set of values builds the relations as if an emerging society.

The pattern of networks has occurred in terms of actor's exchange rules. For example, government-community for active welfare support and learning bets practices, business-community for service centred enterprise operation, within communities for sharing knowledge and media-community with the assistance of academia. These are definitely small structure and not unique. However, in all the cases, the physical structure has remained small and this is not only because of their entrepreneurial or local characteristics, but also because of the preferences by the creative communities. The small structure also helps in process of material provisioning, monitoring with close cooperation, visibility and building local economies.

The uniqueness in relations is seen in two demands of the creative communities. Creative communities are progressing to more community-oriented (operation and management by the members) are high-technology demand solutions. This can be observed from their willingness to learn and adopt new technologies in order to create lower impact lifestyles. But it must be mentioned that this demand was observed in independent communities, restricted to need-based solutions and not on conspicuous spending. There is a related demand for technological solutions, that is to assist their movement or spreading their practices with the concept of free-knowledge, experience and educational activities. There is a typical local-global structure of the network that is affecting the social movement of the creative communities where role of national or within country affect still needs actor's cooperation. This point illustrates the potential role of ICT in integrating actors' engagement.

There is also the soft network, which is a creation of the social relational space. This is the most important network on which the community is founded upon and stabilizes. Sense of belonging and

sense of living space are the two major areas of interventions if citizens are to be made more socially productive and in reducing negative impacts on the environment. Creative communities' cooperative nature of relationship as seen in Voluntary simplicity, Findhorn and NWEI are inviting and open to the society for knowledge exchange. This is where the incorporation of other actors comes in.

In terms of creative communities, the community-based outcomes make it possible to socially innovate and design something which otherwise would be left in the experts' domain. As seen in sustainable consumption, failure to understand consumer's actual need resulted in more spending and less impact on reducing consumption. One of the basic solutions is the 'treatment' of the individuals, where strategic leadership approach (horizontal group dynamics and everyone with a role and responsibility for a certain activity such as green teams) is a useful intervention point. This further generates innovation space. Furthermore, creating physical common space to flourish expression of interest for community activities can be supported through policy changes. In VS and Augustenborg this issue has come up often.

Although there is criticism to the function of 'loose networks' to have more structure, the size of the network and being less considerate in what exactly being exchanged, the creative communities relations seem different. These communities' exchange rule is based on social innovation and specific knowledge and *locational* application. This loose network can also be seen in creative communities' relationships with the average citizens. The educational and 'simply curious', knowledge' or 'collective action' basis form this relation. This is one of the most important areas if creative communities need to drive other citizens. The educational experience and sense of common identity (like intentional community network) can be observed has forming large network around the world, but also paying heed to the form of exchange. This is because of the interest and motivation to make change happen which drives the specificity of the conversations rather forming large structure for gaining popularity (in many counter-culture this can be observed.). Here, the network creation through symbolic services is common and can be taken up by any interested groups or actors.

The above highlights some of the major concluding remarks on the study. There are many more that has been addressed particularly in Chapter 5. It must be mentioned that understanding the values-actions-benefits are not challenging, the challenge comes from looking at set of values when linked with the relationships. It is beyond the scope of this research to go through such detail. The networking relationships are mainly 1-1 or 2-1 formation (max. three different actors), which begs attention for others join in. Through the variety of networks it is observed that there are windows of opportunity that the social innovations is creating in terms of new innovations, value changes, larger adoption of practices and expansion. Considering this in mind, the physical (generate solutions), social (for voices to be heard) and knowledge spaces (exchanging experiences) must be created as an enabling platform. This can trigger social innovation as well as wider adoption of the society by potentially integrative processes.

## 7.2. Further research

The present research findings show the need to understand the basics of various creative communities, how they work, how they interact, innovate and their openness to change. The main limitation in this research is the lack of geographic coverage among many others. However, recommendations for future research are provided below:

- 1) It is proven that self-transcendence values have contributed to make rational choices and making differences even if it is in small number. Behavioural change studies focus on attitude behaviour gaps of the average consumers. A useful way will be to look at how creative communities are reducing discursiveness and the cognitive process behind it.

- 2) The theorists who developed Norm Activation and VBN models have applied the VBN model on a scale. Unfortunately, this research was unable to draw scales of self-interest (SI) and self-transcendence (ST) values due to lack of access to some communities. Therefore, similar methodology built on VBN model can be conducted which will also develop better understanding on how their VBN is benefiting the society, how they reduce conflicts and suggestive measures with equitable sharing.
- 3) There is an emerging research tool called *Aspiration Index*-AI (Kasser and Ryan, 1996) that scores 11 domains of aspirations and divided similar to ST and SI. The values, here 'aspirations' are self-acceptance, affiliation, community feeling, and financial success, image, popularity, physical health, and spirituality. AI also assesses conformity, safety/ security and hedonism. This research has selected several factors although scoring is not conducted. The factors of AI and dynamic model of VBN, show that the two may be useful to put together. The current model of VBN in its dynamicity through norms, spheres of behavior and even application on community movement can produce better results in linking creative communities, their aspirations and relations with the mainstream institutional factors (culture, local governance etc.).
- 4) Education and network around knowledge is one of the most important activities that relate these intentional communities with the world. Impact of vocational training on students, youth and children as led by some ecovillages should be studied to see their impacts on the community they live in. This should compare general educational programme and students associated with intentional communities to improve education and knowledge building process. The role and models of informal education and training in inspiring people should be studied.
- 5) There is enormous challenge in process of *envisioning*. This should be further explored.
- 6) There is a trend of product service design and its mobilization in the creative communities. On the other hand, there is significant gap in relating to manufactures, suppliers, service providers and policies in some creative communities for their spatial isolation and other reasons. Future research can focus on these issues and how social innovators in these creative communities can improve the situation. This should further link role of social organization in actor's engagement.
- 7) There are different levels of networks – social capital, actors, knowledge and inventions observed. It may be enormous demand to explore and link all these; yet the role of ICT is an obvious recommended research. Moreover, the impact of ICT products and use by creative communities should not be overlooked.
- 8) Relating directly to social innovations, how physical space design can create thriving innovation space in creative communities is essential given that role models need to be incorporated. The zoning restrictions and national policies can be compared between countries where social innovation is driven by change in zoning policies.
- 9) Country based innovation policies that can support the creative communities can be studied comparing with their limitations to escalate citizen led activities. Analysis on gains and losses in this respect will be useful.
- 10) The impact of increasing social enterprises in these communities is also changing privatization by interested local companies. The benefits and disadvantages including pervasiveness are becoming essential in to study.
- 11) The role of Global South and country specific sustainable consumption practices, their relations to values and integrity, social innovation trajectory and most importantly, negative

consequences of Western lifestyle must be studied. In a wide scale, this requires support from international organizations, government, social innovators and research institutions. The image obviously looks different even if social values and principles of creative communities (cohousing, ecovillage, and slow food) are not much different to what is being practiced by the creative communities in industrialized countries. Through knowledge dissemination and increasing interactions between communities can benefit not only learning from each, but also changing the tide of Westernization movement being developed in urban communities in the South, such as Mumbai, Dhaka, Nairobi, Buenos Aires, Beijing – and the list can go on.



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Appendix - List of the respondents in this research

Name/Community representatives	Organization	Date of interviews
Ezio Manzini	Professor, Industrial Design  Director of Research Unit Design and Innovation for Sustainability,  Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy	March 18th, 2008
Anna Meroni	Professor, University Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy  Design and system innovation researcher including food systems	March 18th, 2008
Cecile Andrews	Founder Phinney Ridge Eco-village  Community Educator  Author  Visiting Professor, Stanford University and Seattle University	March 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Carole Holst	Founder, Simple Living America,  Los Angeles, US  Author  Educator  VS Volunteer	March 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Duane Elgin	Former Senior social scientist at Stanford Research Institute  Founder & Educator –Awakening Earth  Founder, Media Accountability, US  Goi Peace Prize winner, 2006	April 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2008
Deborah McNamara	Director, Business partnerships,  Northwest Earth Institute, Portland Oregon, US	March 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Trevor Graham	Project Manager, Augustenborg, Ekostaden,	March 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2008

	Malmo Municipality, Sweden	
Roland Zinkerangel	Malmo Municipality, Sweden	March 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Linda Scot-Jacobson	Coordinator, Lund Fair Trade Network, Lund Municipality	March 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Ellida Massone	Coordinator, Lodge Student at Home, Meglio Milano	March 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Alicia Colombo	Coordinator, Car Sharing Italia on behalf of Legambiente	March 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
James Hindson	Director, Field Studies Council of UK for environmental education, Preston Manford, UK	April 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Rory O'Connell	Resident Findhorn Ecovillage Information service, Findhorn Foundation	March 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Matties Lietart	Researcher, University of Florence Co-housing campaign and film-maker	April 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2008
Dialogues - 17 students		



**Table 1: A Garden of Simplicity (Adopted from Elgin's Cools Stuff for Hot Planet, 2006)**

**Uncluttered Simplicity**—Simplicity means taking charge of lives that are too busy, too stressed, and too fragmented. Simplicity means cutting back on clutter, complexity, and trivial distractions, both material and non-material, and focusing on the essentials—whatever those may be for each of our unique lives.

**Ecological Simplicity**—Simplicity means to choose ways of living that touch the Earth more lightly and that reduce our ecological impact on the web of life. This life-path remembers our deep roots with the Earth, air, and water. It encourages us to connect with nature, the seasons, and the cosmos. A natural simplicity feels a deep reverence for the community of life on Earth and accepts that the non-human realms of plants and animals have their dignity and rights as well the human.

**Compassionate Simplicity**—Simplicity means to feel such a strong sense of kinship with others that, as Gandhi said, we “choose to live simply so that others may simply live.” A compassionate simplicity means feeling a bond with the community of life and being drawn toward a path of reconciliation—with other species and future generations as well as, for example, between those with great differences of wealth and opportunity. A compassionate simplicity is a path of cooperation and fairness that seeks a future of mutually assured development for all.

**Soulful Simplicity**—Simplicity means to approach life as a meditation and to cultivate our experience of intimate connection with all that exists. By living simply, we can more directly awaken to the living universe that surrounds and sustains us, moment by moment. Soulful simplicity is more concerned with consciously tasting life in its unadorned richness than with a particular standard or manner of material living. In cultivating a soulful connection with life, we tend to look beyond surface appearances and bring our interior aliveness into relationships of all kinds.

**Business Simplicity**—Simplicity means a new kind of economy is growing in the world with many expressions of “right livelihood” in the rapidly growing market for healthy and sustainable products and services of all kinds—from home-building materials and energy systems to foods and transportation. When the need for a sustainable infrastructure in developing nations is combined with the need to retrofit and redesign the homes, cities, workplaces, and transportation systems of “developed” nations, it is clear that an enormous wave of green economic activity will unfold.

**Civic Simplicity**—Simplicity means a new approach to governing ourselves, recognizing that to live more lightly and sustainably on the Earth will require changes in nearly every area of public life—from transportation and education to the design of our homes, cities, and workplaces. The politics of simplicity is also a media politics as the mass media are the primary vehicle for reinforcing—or transforming—the mass consciousness of consumerism.

**Frugal Simplicity**—Simplicity means that, by cutting back on spending that is not truly serving our lives, and by practicing skillful management of our personal finances, we can achieve greater financial independence. Frugality and careful financial management bring increased financial freedom and the opportunity to more consciously choose our path through life. Living with less also decreases the impact of our consumption upon the Earth and frees resources for others.