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## The SoPHIA model and its implementation

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## 4. THE SoPHIA MODEL AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION\*

### 4.1 *Opportunities and shortcomings from the testing phase*

Testing the draft SoPHIA model brought to light several challenges that were faced during its implementation. To ensure the holistic nature of the model, and its applicability to assess CH interventions throughout varying contexts across the urban European level, several recommendations were proposed. These recommendations acted as guidance for further development and improvement of the model and helped shape its current form<sup>1</sup>.

#### *Reducing repetition in themes and subthemes*

While testing the draft model's applicability, some repetition across the themes and their subthemes was observed, especially among the indicators. The data collected provided similar information, and often led to confusion amongst the stakeholders regarding their relevance and importance, as well as in the analysis. This was a cause for concern, as it had the potential to discourage the model's use in the long run. It highlighted the difficulty of developing a holistic model for assessment that captures the variety and interconnectedness of social, economic, ecological and cultural impact, while at the same time ensuring a structure of assessment that is not characterized by repetition. Therefore, a conclusion from testing the draft model was to differentiate themes and subthemes more clearly by reducing redundancy. Repetitions occurred more frequently in the sub-themes *prosperity and attractiveness*, and *social capital and well-being*. This resulted in some changes that are reflected in the final model, including moving indicators from the above themes into others, and reducing their overall number. A clearer description of the themes and subthemes across the model was envisaged. Defining the themes and subthemes could prove to be helpful in achieving clarity of what is meant to be grasped through the evaluation in

\* While the research is the outcome of the joint effort of SoPHIA Consortium, par. 4.1 should be attributed to Rida Arif, Aron Weigl, Angela Wieser, par. 4.2 should be attributed to Mauro Baioni, Paola Demartini, Michela Marchiori, par. 4.3 should be attributed to Rida Arif, Aron Weigl, Angela Wieser, par. 4.4 should be attributed to Mauro Baioni.

that particular theme/sub-theme. This was also considered a necessity because the existing descriptions were considered too generic; descriptions would act as a source of guidance for users during data collection, as well as in decision-making regarding which indicators are to be explored as per each individual intervention's context.

#### *Include missing issues*

The analysis of research conducted also highlighted gaps of issues that remained under-represented in the draft model. The impact of CH interventions on local or regional policies needed further exploration within the model. As an example, in the case of Jamtli museum, the establishment of a museum of such a large scale had initially been considered as unnecessary, but over time, its presence in the area as well as its success has undoubtedly had an affect not only on the local and regional, but also national level of policies.

The crucial role of culture in climate change mitigation and adaptation has been discussed at a global level in recent years, with international organizations such as UNESCO pressing for urgent integration of culture into global climate action. The analysis of data collected through the course of the research highlighted the need to elaborate upon this role further, incorporating climate adaptation and sustainability through a move towards a circular economy. This was achieved by introducing indicators that explored the environmental impact of an intervention, mechanisms to reduce and recycle waste and share resources, and green energy initiatives.

The role of leadership and governance was seen by stakeholders to be playing a key role in the impact of CH interventions, and so needed further exploration in the model's final version. Attributes such as working as part of collaborations, effective management of staff and project management form an essential component of good governance, which were subsequently added to the reformulated 'Social Capital and Governance' theme.

Heritage interpretation also emerged as a key issue. A gap in the programming related to interpretation was identified, where institutions such as museums often focus their programming on innovation in heritage interpretation. It was noted, however, that similar attention is also needed in other contexts, such as sites highlighting features of natural heritage.

#### *Capturing cross-cutting issues and countereffects*

One of the key findings throughout the course of research was discovering the immense interconnections between the various areas of impact being assessed through the draft SoPHIA model. These interconnections formed the basis of the model's holistic quality and needed ample representation. A challenge emerged; how can these overlaps be

translated into the final version of the SoPHIA model? In order to further strengthen the model, cross-cutting issues and countereffects were introduced as part of each subtheme, to capture the overlap between the social, economic, ecological and cultural spheres of impact.

The (previously known) Well-being/Quality of Life theme was a good example for exploring the countereffects of an intervention. While an intervention would have the potential to bring about economic prosperity for the area, it could affect the security and peace of the area.

*Contextual Factors related both to the Intervention and the Assessment process*

Finally, testing the draft SoPHIA model also proved findings that were already highlighted throughout the development of the model, namely the importance of contextual factors referring both to the intervention and the assessment process.

Contextual factors related to the intervention are issues that characterize the nature of the intervention and the inherent power-relations (i.e., who is responsible for the intervention, who finances it, etc).

On the other hand, contextual factors related to the assessment process are, for example, issues that characterize the objectives and resources of assessment. Therefore, a suitable measurement was a key point of deliberation throughout the SoPHIA project, especially while testing the draft SoPHIA model.

An issue related to the availability, access, and interpretation of data for assessment purposes had emerged consistently, especially when considering qualitative data.

As the model is based on a participatory approach, it is important that all relevant voices and information are captured as part of the assessment process. Depending on the nature of the intervention, these voices can vary immensely, from cartographic sources to analysis of feedback regarding an intervention on social media. Due to the case study analysis, the contextual factors were more clearly included into the SoPHIA model.

#### 4.2 *The SoPHIA model*

In chapter 2 we illustrated the conceptual approach of SoPHIA (see Fig. 1). We focused on the usefulness of a three-axis approach that emphasizes:

- the multifaceted aspects of the impacts related to CH interventions (multi-domain);
- the complex interactions among stakeholders that can have different and sometimes conflicting interests on CH (people);
- the balance between current needs and the legacy towards the next generations (time).

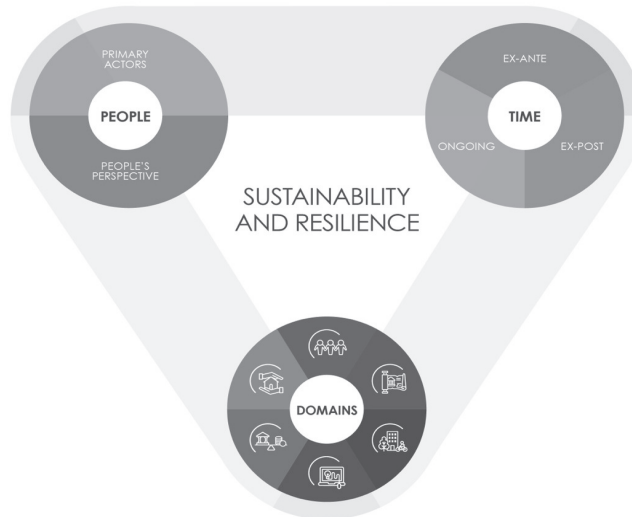


FIG. 1 – SoPHIA concept based on three-axis.

In this chapter we detail the contents of the model, refined on the basis of the comparison work on the case studies<sup>2</sup>.

#### 4.2.1 The multi-domain axis

The first axis is the multi-domain axis. As previously explained in chapter 2, domains encompass six themes of potential impact that need to be considered when assessing a CH intervention: social capital and governance; identity of place; quality of life; education, creativity and innovation; work and prosperity; protection.

Each theme is further divided into subthemes, as indicated in the following scheme, for a total of 28. Their detailed description is given in par. 4.3.

The model provides the following information on each theme and sub-theme:

- Description
- Quantitative Indicators
- People’s Perspective on the quality of intervention
- Cross-cutting Issues
- Countereffects



FIG. 2 – SoPHIA model – Themes and subthemes.

The description highlights the aim of the assessment, and the related specific issues.

The quantitative indicators and the people’s perspective show the information to be collected.

Cross-cutting issues and countereffects show the relevant interconnections between themes and subthemes, and the potential countereffects.

*Quantitative indicators.* With respect to each sub-theme, the model indicates one or more quantitative data. They have been selected by the partners on the basis of their knowledge and competence in the different sectors. Within the SoPHIA project, it was not possible to propose a set of indicators to be considered as a shared basis on a European scale. The selection, validation and description of indicators would have required a dedicated commitment, in terms of research and collective discussion among the stakeholders, not envisaged by the project. Above all, we asked ourselves about the role of indicators within the holistic model (Bodo, 2020). The SoPHIA model is a tool for «measuring and communicating complex, changing and elusive phenomena, linked to concepts that are difficult to define» (Cicerchia and Bologna, 2017). For this reason, data from quantitative indicators form only a part of the information needed to grasp the different facets of impact of initiatives in the field of CH. Therefore, *Quantitative indicators* reported in SoPHIA’s multi-domain framework, should be considered as possible measures of the impacts to be assessed.

*People's perspective.* The SoPHIA model considers the point of view of people as a key element of the assessment for the same reason. *People's perspective on the quality of intervention* allows a more detailed understanding of the subtheme analyzed, according to a subjective angle that aims to catch the different opinions on the impacts. «People» here refers to both the direct beneficiaries of the initiatives (audience, visitors, participants of the initiatives), and the people involved in the delivery of the activities (workers, artists). The choice of the people to be interviewed and the information to be collected, with respect to specific topics, is a crucial part of the operationalization of the model.

*Cross-cutting issues and countereffects.* The main innovation of SoPHIA model lies in detecting interconnections and countereffects among themes and sub-themes. Themes and sub-themes are not to be considered as separate entities. In fact, many of them interrelate in more than one way, positive or negative. Looking at the whole picture and at the cross-cutting interconnections between the sectors consent to identify relevant issues to be tackled. When assessing a CH intervention, it is important to include the analysis of countereffects to be aware of (possible) undesired or harmful impacts to people and the environment, such as gentrification vs economic development (Museum Quarter, see § 3.2), over-tourism vs identity of a place and wellbeing (Temple Bar and Galway, § 3.6), excessive focus on profitable activities vs cultural production (Museum Quarter, see § 3.2), gratuitousness vs economic sustainability, safety and protection vs accessibility (Jewish Cemetery, § 3.3) and so on.

Subtheme	Inclusive Access
<b>Description</b>	The aim is to assess the accessibility of cultural heritage resources to all groups of society. Specific issues: - Reducing the financial, physical, architectural and other barriers of access - Efforts to provide access to societal groups with little access to intervention - Efforts to increase access via digital means
<b>Quantitative Indicators</b>	<b>Number of Visitors</b> (before and after the intervention in 5, 10, 20 years) in terms of age, gender, educational level, income, citizenship and mother tongues, visible and non-visible disabilities
<b>People's Perspective on the quality of intervention</b>	What are the experiences of different visitors' groups accessing cultural heritage? Who are the target groups and how are they reached? Is there a specific ticketing policy (tickets with subventions or discounts/free events/online events)? How is barrier-free access for people with visible and non-visible disabilities ensured? How are information activities customized to ensure access for different groups of society? Which languages are used for information material on and off site? How and where is information & outreach material about the site/practice distributed? How is digital access ensured? To what degree does information material reflect the languages spoken in the city/region?
<b>Cross-Cutting Issues</b>	<b>Education, Creativity and Innovation:</b> Inclusive access also needs to be ensured in terms of the educational offer and learning of opportunities of the intervention. <b>Identity of Place,</b> i.e. inclusive access also needs to be ensured in terms of the inclusive meaning and narratives of the intervention. <b>Quality of Life:</b> Inclusive access also needs to be ensured in terms of access to social life and recreation. <b>Work and Prosperity:</b> Inclusive access also needs to be ensured in terms of the economic potential cultural heritage offers (i.e. jobs).
<b>Counter Effects</b>	<b>Protection:</b> Access for everybody may be in conflict with the site's capacity and safeguarding cultural heritage against human related risks. <b>Quality of Life:</b> Access for everybody can be in conflict with peace and safety ensured at cultural heritage. <b>Work and Prosperity:</b> Ensuring accessibility to everybody may be less profitable.

FIG. 3 – SoPHIA model – Example of the information related to a sub-theme.

#### 4.2.2 Time: give importance to the main purpose in each key moment

The second axis is the time axis. It is mainly concerned with the moment in time at which the assessment of the intervention is taking place and, consequently, the objectives and the actors to be engaged. The SoPHIA model selects three key moments of the lifecycle of interventions. Each of them presents specific objectives for the assessment (for which purpose should we evaluate?) and different stakeholders to be involved in the process.

The key moments of assessment are:

- Ex-ante – Design and allocation of funds
- Ongoing – Implementation and governance
- Ex-post – Reviewing of policies, norms, and projects

*Ex-ante* assessment mainly referred to tender and funding of cultural interventions. As it is well known, when tenders are defined, the choice of criteria of evaluation directly influences the proposals that are applying for funding. At this moment of assessment, the adoption of the SoPHIA model can be useful to define a *broader spectrum of criteria that have to be considered*. By these means, it can be useful for avoiding imbalances between domains in the design of tenders and the allocation of funds and for stimulating a better design of interventions accordingly.

*On-going assessment* is a means to monitor the implementation of the intervention. Applied at this stage, SoPHIA model *ensures a proper overview not only of the degree of achievement of expected results, but also of unexpected side-effects and countereffects*. The latter are particularly important in order to adapt the intervention's implementation accordingly.

*Ex-post assessment* plays a crucial role in detecting the medium/long term impacts. If applied at this moment, SoPHIA model can support the monitoring of trends and cumulative impacts of a plurality of interventions (such as the ones included in the ECoC programs, or the multiple initiatives conducted by an institution over a long period of time, or – again – the cumulative effects of a city's cultural offer/program). At this stage, a periodic reporting based on the SoPHIA model can provide the basis for updating, adapting, re-proposing or introducing policies, norms and projects. As mentioned in the *Ivana's House of Fairy Tales case study report* (see § 3.7), «*such an ex-post evaluation [can be considered] as an opportunity for reviewing project results that would allow identifying some deviations from the initially planned actions, reinforcing the progress achieved ... and advocating new initiatives concerning the further development ...*».

#### 4.2.3 People: giving voice to all relevant stakeholders

The inclusiveness of CH interventions has great relevance. People-axis is based on the fact that as many perspectives as possible need to be



considered when aiming to assess impact in view of sustainability and resilience. «Ensuring that all stakeholders get a chance to voice their concerns is seen as a requirement of a successful holistic assessment»<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore, the network of stakeholders needs to be identified in order to give evidence of if and how their voice is considered in the assessment. Stakeholders may include funders, managers, beneficiaries, artists, business and creative firms, educators, visitors/beneficiaries of the interventions, people who live in the surroundings or engage with the area, NGOs and institutions<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, the roles and (power-) positions of the stakeholders a) in the intervention and b) in the assessment need to be distinguished and explicitly stated.

Each intervention builds its own stakeholder network over time. However, the case studies have shown some recurrences that can be taken as a reference to expand the possibilities of engaging stakeholders in the evaluation processes. Considering this, the SoPHIA model proposes:

- To define the stakeholder map as a mandatory part of a holistic impact assessment process.
- To involve the stakeholders in the weighing of the criteria and in the choice of the measures to be collected, with reference to the multi-domain framework.
- To pay specific attention on communication and engagement methods, avoiding intimidation from non-experts (cultural gaps can be significant excluding factors).
- To collect «people's perspective», as mentioned above, including both the direct beneficiaries (users), and the people involved in providing the activities (workers, artists).
- To submit to the stakeholders the interpretation of the results, in order to obtain their review and to make explicit the main areas of disagreement.

#### 4.3 The multi-domain framework resulting from the testing and discussion

One of the main results of the case study analysis was the restructuring of the multi-domain framework to a total of 6 themes, and 33 subthemes, taking into consideration all the feedback shared by stakeholders. In this paragraph, themes and sub-themes are presented in detail (see also SoPHIA, 2021c).

##### 1. *Social Capital and Governance*

The Social Capital and Governance theme is grounded in theories of social power that emphasizes structural constraints and unequal access to institutional resources based on barriers deriving from class, gender, and race. Social capital is thereby defined as social advantage of individuals that derive from one's social network and background (Bour-

dieu, 2018). In a societal context, social capital is the density and quality of social links and networks that support the feeling of connectiveness and trust between members of a community. CH interventions may support, or even undermine building of societal trust. They can do so by contributing to a common and inclusive understanding of CH, bridging the differences between different members of society and by being transparent and responsive to the needs of the citizens. Against this background following subthemes characterize this area of impact: *Inclusive Access*: Whether CH is able to contribute to building social capital inherently depends on how accessible it is and who is able to access it. The subtheme Inclusive Access therefore emphasises the need to assess the accessibility of CH interventions in terms of the reduction of barriers of access, putting an emphasis on the diversity of audiences.

*Participation and Engagement*: Whereas the subtheme Inclusive Access may be limited to visiting or consuming CH, the subtheme Participation and Engagement goes a step further. It emphasises the need to reflect on a level of participation in CH that goes beyond the mere visit and that empowers people to contribute and influence CH as their own. In public policy and scientific debate on CH, a participatory turn has been witnessed for quite some time now, focussing on encouraging civil participation in, and engagement with, the preservation and valorisation of heritage (Lähdesmäki and Mäkinen, 2019). Based on this understanding, the subtheme Participation and Engagement specifically assesses how participation is ensured via outreach activities, educational programming, and volunteering opportunities.

*Social Cohesion*: The subtheme Social Cohesion is specifically dedicated to assessing the potential of a CH interventions in bridging the gap between people and diverse groups of society. It therefore looks at the diversity of participants and the possibilities the interventions offer them in terms of exchange and collaboration with others. Furthermore, it highlights the need to assess the quality of an interventions in terms of the experience of visitors, participants, and volunteers with regards to acquaintance and perspective on other people and societal groups.

*Partnerships and Cultural Cooperation*: Networks and cooperation are a crucial part of ensuring exchange and communication between groups. Therefore, this subtheme specifically investigates how alliances and collaborations are taking place, across disciplines and policy areas. As the SoPHIA case studies have shown, alliances and collaborations are relevant specifically in terms of knowledge sharing, support to each other for advocacy and broadening one's own perspectives. Therefore, not only the cooperation across sectors and policy areas are relevant here but also the benefits that this cooperation provides for the different stakeholders.

*Good Governance:* Finally, the subtheme Good Governance broaches the issues of transparency, responsiveness and accountability of CH planning and management while also looking at the effectiveness and efficiency of an intervention. This is done due to the relevance of good and participatory governance in terms of sustainability of CH. Only by being responsive and accountable to local communities and relevant stakeholders it may be ensured that the intervention will not be negatively perceived and will not have negative effects in terms of the meaning and reputation of the intervention, the social life associated with it or social innovation and entrepreneurship processes that it may foster.

## 2. Identity of Place

As a theme of the SoPHIA model, Identity of Place emphasises the importance of CH in defining and constructing identity and belonging. In a cultural anthropological tradition, it refers to the role of CH in the construction of imagined communities (Anderson, 2006) and as part of invented national tradition (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012). From this perspective, the narratives built around CH are central in order to understand which aspects of CH are emphasized, and by whom, and which aspects are potentially overseen. Thereby the theme highlights the need for being cognisant of conflicting interpretations of history and the effects of interventions on the identity and memory of diverse communities. However, cultural landscape and aesthetics can also be an important factor of identity (building). By these means identity of place is a concept closely related to the environment of CH and the relation that people and communities have to this environment.

*Identity and Memory:* The subtheme Identity and Memory departs from the necessity to acknowledge and appreciate contemporary, historic, symbolic, and cultural meanings of CH for different people and communities. It hereby builds on the understanding that narratives of the same heritage may be dissonant and conflictual. In order to assess the impact of meanings of CH this diversity has to be acknowledged.

*Visibility and Reputation:* This subtheme specifically aims to assess how the image of the intervention is balanced against contemporary urban discourses. Local communities in urban contexts are very diverse, and in order for their adequate representation and participation in the CH intervention, it is necessary for the intervention to have a good reputation and transparency regarding its management practices. This subtheme thus explores various aspects of communication and the discourse regarding the intervention amongst people and varying types of media.

*Cultural Landscape and Aesthetics:* The preamble of the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe 2000) highlights the holistic character and relevance of landscape for CH interventions, emphasizing the contribution of landscape in the formation of local cultures. Similarly, the Bucharest Declaration recognized the interdependence of CH and built form and space in the urban context. How CH contributes to local identity formation is therefore also linked with its surrounding landscape and urban design, and this is what this subtheme aims to explore. It looks at the issue of identity through the lens of the space created and offered through the intervention under assessment, including its planning and management.

*Heritage-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use:* Many urban places and spaces are characterized through a certain historic value, which, through introducing an intervention, is re-interpreted in a contemporary form. This process contributes to changing and co-shaping the CH associated with that space, which should respond to the needs of the local community as well. This theme therefore assesses contemporary usage of CH and whether the revitalization and creation of new social, cultural or economic activities are in accordance with the needs of local communities, while also following the principles of ecological sustainability.

### 3. *Quality of Life*

CH plays an important role in the quality of life of groups as well as individuals living in the urban environment. On a basic level an intervention can improve quality of life through providing employment either directly or indirectly. More significantly, heritage can provide opportunities for social connections. It gives meaning to the natural and built environment, providing connections to our past and our ancestors. High quality interventions in heritage are recognized as contributing positively to local communities' quality of life through improved attractiveness of the area, improved connections between people and the built environment, as well as an increased sense of belonging. All of these factors are assessed within this theme, through the guiding principles of sustainability and resilience of the built environment and communities, which is at the forefront of both EU and international policy and is also reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals.

*Living Conditions:* The first subtheme within this theme explores the different ways in which a CH intervention could impact the living conditions of those connected with the space. Management of, and activity surrounding the intervention may result in economic and social effects, including people's income levels, the availability of, and access to services such as transport, waste collection, and shops, as well as recreational facilities including parks and public spaces. Interconnections within the

model are highlighted here while assessing the economic impact of an intervention; stakeholders may benefit financially as a result of the intervention; however, a balance is needed between its economic benefits and the potential harmful ecological, social or cultural impacts.

*Peace and Safety:* CH interventions are intertwined in the social life of the local community and all those who engage with it and have the potential to impact their peace and security. Culture's potential to play an important role in peacebuilding (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2017) is recognized by UNESCO<sup>5</sup> due to its strong connection with *people's* identity, which can be achieved through inter- and cross-cultural exchange and programming. This subtheme analyses how and whether the intervention plays this role for the surrounding community, as well as the possible impacts of the intervention on the local safety conditions.

*Social Life:* The engagement of the community with CH interventions is considered to be one of the key factors for assessment when measuring its success. The Social Life subtheme broaches this important impact and examines whether the participation of community groups and civic engagement is encouraged through the intervention under assessment. It addresses key factors required for social interactions over a range of time periods, such as actions taken through planned outreach activities, and availability of spaces for civic engagement opportunities, ranging from parks and cinemas to facilities for sports and educational activities, all of which are proven to have an impact on the quality of life on surrounding communities.

*Environment:* In an effort to maintain the balance between reaping the economic benefits of culture while also sustaining the quality of life of the surroundings, it is essential to analyse the relationship of a CH intervention with the surrounding environment. The Environment subtheme is formulated to address this and explores how the intervention serves its surroundings by providing outdoor and green spaces for recreation, while also maintaining the integrity of the intervention. The issues explored include assessing the availability of outdoor and leisure opportunities, as well as efforts to protect and/or restore the green spaces and fauna surrounding the intervention, if any.

*Regional and local development:* This subtheme explores the role of a CH intervention in the regional and local development within its surroundings. Reducing inequalities through territorial imbalances and gentrification, enabling urban regeneration, and contributing to the improvement of urban services such as water, electricity and heat, transport, and waste management are some of the issues explored through the assessment within the subtheme.

#### 4. *Education, Creativity, and Innovation*

The overall question of what people learn from and within the context of CH – material and immaterial – is a manifold question which needs to be divided into several sub-issues. The common starting point is defining the group or the individual who is learning and understanding the prior knowledge, skills, and attitudes which the learner brings into the learning situation. At the other end of the learning experience through CH is the expectations of the learner and the learning provider of what the intended outcome will be. In a lifelong and life wide learning perspective the participation in formal, nonformal and informal education meets specific needs of the learner and community (Ekholm & Hård, 2000). Engagement with CH can be a learning experience which is organised as all three forms of education. It may be directed towards a variety of learner backgrounds, gender, and age. Subthemes within this larger theme assess this educational role of culture through interventions.

*Education:* The Education subtheme is developed with recognition of the potential of CH to play a role in the education of audiences and provide learning opportunities through both formal and informal means. Indicators within this subtheme explore whether the educational role of the intervention is being explored to its full potential. It explores the diversity not only in terms of the educational offer, outreach activities and learning opportunities, but also in terms of the target groups and narratives explored through the planned activities.

*Awareness Raising:* CH interventions can play an important role in knowledge sharing and awareness raising. Together with an educational role, they can also contribute to peace-building and identity formation. This subtheme was formulated as a response to this aspect of the potential role of an intervention, assessing whether it supports awareness-raising on issues of sustainable development through its programming and outreach activities.

*Research:* This subtheme explores whether the intervention provides opportunities for research activities. Specific issues that are assessed through the indicators include the breadth of areas and topics of research as well as its interdisciplinarity, and the manner in which the intervention supports it. Research activities not only provide an opportunity for knowledge creation, but also for innovation through enabling new economic perspectives, and development and exploration of greener practices related to the intervention.

*Digitization, Science and Technology:* A shift and renewed attention towards usage of ICT tools is increasingly encouraged to move towards sustainable CH management. This subtheme explores the extent to which ICT tools are utilized in the management and interpretation of

an intervention. Specific issues broached include capacity development of those engaged with the intervention, as well as broadening its reach through inclusive access to all groups of society.

*Arts and Creativity:* The importance of arts in the promotion of diversity and intercultural dialogue is engrained in UNESCO's 2005 Convention on The Protection and Promotion of The Diversity of Cultural Expressions<sup>6</sup>, which responds to the role of culture as a means of fostering peacebuilding and contributing positively to society. The Arts and Creativity subtheme explores the role of the intervention in facilitating creative and arts activities. It examines to what extent the intervention makes use of its tangible or intangible characteristics to serve as a source of creativity, thereby playing its role to foster inclusion.

### 5. *Work and Prosperity*

The value of European CH as a resource for economic growth has been recognized. Moreover, UNESCO supports the view that CH can be used to reduce economic inequalities (people-centred economy) and promotes economic diversification between tourism and non-tourism activities (UNESCO, 2015). In the last ten years, international policy documents and reports promoted by international institutions (Europa Nostra, UNESCO) have recognized the wide spectrum of economic impacts related to CH interventions. The Work and Prosperity theme was formulated to analyze this economic impact of an intervention under assessment.

At an early stage of the SoPHIA project, the theme «work and prosperity» was labelled as «competitiveness», to underline the role of CH as an economic resource and its potential to facilitate investment. As a result of the interaction with the stakeholders, it was decided to use the term «prosperity», considered by the UN Agenda 2030 as one of the five themes to measure progress (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships) (UN Agenda2030, 2015).

In the SoPHIA model, prosperity is assessed through the analysis of employment, local cultural production, tourism economy, economic attractiveness, social innovation, and entrepreneurship. The advantage of differentiating prosperity in this way is to enable aspects of a sustainable economic impact to be grasped in detail. Through this perspective, all the sub-themes can be interpreted in a more equitable way, considering the risks that come with economic development, such as low-quality employment or the process of gentrification.

*Employment:* Many CH sites and interventions into CH can provide short-term as well as mid-term and long-term perspectives concerning the created job opportunities. This already implicates a longitudinal perspective that goes beyond, for example, short-term projects and looks at job creation in

CH as a potential lever for the reduction of economic weakness in the long run. Furthermore, the quality of employment broaches the issue of fair working conditions, relating to fair contractual conditions, job security and remuneration through the CH intervention/site under consideration. The aim is to assess whether working opportunities created are fair, whether they contribute to the reduction of gender (pay) gaps, whether jobs are created and offered equally to the disadvantaged, or people with disabilities, and if all of that can reinforce the local economy.

*Local cultural production:* This subtheme explores what role the intervention is playing to facilitate or contribute to local cultural production in a sustainable manner. Much of the data collected will relate to the culture and creative entities situated locally. In order to get a clear understanding of the impact, it is important to get the perspective of local artisans and artists on opportunities as well as challenges resulting out of the intervention to the artistic scene and creative sector.

*Tourism economy:* Tourism and tourist economy are the main lens through which the relationship between CH and economic development is traditionally regarded. This is because it generates income and foreign exchange, creates jobs, stimulates regional development, and supports local communities. Therefore, this subtheme aims to assess not only the quantity of the tourism economy but also its quality, by looking into its contribution to local economy and the resident workforce, the quality of the touristic offer and the attractiveness of the place for visitors.

*Economic Attractiveness:* The subtheme Economic Attractiveness looks into the issue from the perspective of investors and funding authorities to assess whether the intervention attracts further economic flows, generating a multiplier effect and attracts investments or funding also through the cooperation between the private, the public and third sectors. Sustainability of economic attractiveness, reflected in the diversity of funding and investment and its potential for cooperation and knowledge-sharing, has many cross-cutting issues with other themes of the SoPHIA model. For instance, funding or investment can foster via the involvement of the private sector new approaches about education or research and, if positive, can facilitate the safeguarding of CH, green management and fostering financial, economic and social return of the intervention.

*Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship:* This subtheme assesses whether innovation processes that result from the intervention also benefit the local community in terms of social change and growth. Specific issues explored here include firstly, identifying the social needs of the surrounding community, and then developing means to promote projects that address those needs. Close collaboration with social entrepreneurs to encourage innovation is also a key issue here, in an attempt to achieve



broad social, cultural, and environmental goals for the development of areas with problems of poverty, unemployment, low education or crime.

## 6. Protection

The Protection theme largely refers to environmental protection, a term that is considered to be inherent to the concept of sustainable development (Okereke, 2008) and pertains to the protection of the environment from natural and human related risks. The theme recognizes the importance of strategizing against environmental disaster, as well as against slower shifts that can develop over time into irreversible damage, such as compromised biodiversity, violated cultural ecosystems, or deterioration of manmade CH sites due to exposure to the weather elements, or environmental pollution. It explores strategies to mitigate such conditions, including wider pre-emptive measures that can reduce the likelihood of such issues to occur.

In addition to environmental risks, human related factors carry the potential to burden existing imbalances and create additional ones. Being able to make rational, informed social decisions on climate change and CH related risks, requires knowledge of a large number of interrelated processes, beginning with human activities. The theme highlights the urgency of integrating culture into climate action, through analyzing key factors such as practices related to tourism, the use of resources, and the nature of management practices as part of a CH intervention. Against this background, the subthemes of Protection were developed.

*Safeguarding against environmental risks:* This theme was formulated to assess the growing concerns regarding climate change and their potential impact on the intervention, by assessing how it is planned and managed through actions, that ensure the integrity of the intervention is maintained while at the same time no negative contribution is made to aggravate the environmental risks. Some special issues to consider here include pro-environmental efforts, such as seeking to reduce the intervention's carbon footprint, disaster risk reduction, and work towards supporting biodiversity.

*Safeguarding against human-related risks:* The impact of humans on the environment is exceptionally large, and a CH intervention is bound to contribute to the impact as well. Thus, an analysis of the intervention's impact on its surroundings was deemed crucial, and this subtheme was added to assess the actions taken to prevent negative impacts caused by human activity and behaviour in relation to the intervention. These impacts may be observable over varying durations, and so indicators under this subtheme allow for a detailed assessment that could serve to guide management practices surrounding the intervention. Potential impacts include over-tourism, conflicts, homogenization, increased carbon footprint, and damage to the cultural ecosystem(s).

*Green Management and Development:* For CH interventions to contribute positively to society and fulfill their role as an enabler for environmental sustainability, it is crucial that a move towards their sustainable management is encouraged and enabled. This subtheme explores the efficiency of various levels of management related to an intervention that is responsible for its economic and environmental sustainability.

*Use of Resources:* Management of resources forms a key part of sustainable management practices. In the realm of CH, the manner in which resources for an intervention are sourced, utilized and discarded is important in assessing how to incorporate more efficient and sustainable management methodologies. This subtheme addresses these issues, by exploring issues related to re-use, sharing and partnerships, re- and upcycling of resources, as well as waste management practices and efforts for a circular bio-economy.

#### 4.4 From the SoPHIA model to the impact assessment process

The SoPHIA model foresees three main phases through which a holistic impact assessment would be performed enabling the reflection on findings concerning sustainability and resilience via cross-cutting issues and countereffects<sup>7</sup>:

- Phase 1 – Defining the context for impact assessment analysis
- Phase 2 – Implementing the three-axis framework
- Phase 3 – Narrate the results

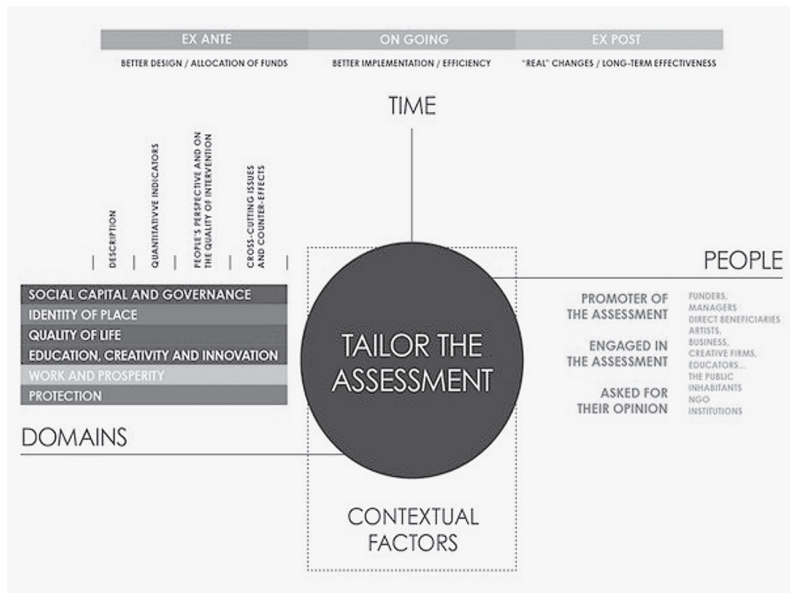


FIG. 4 – Overview of the SoPHIA model implementation process.

#### 4.4.1 Defining the context for impact assessment analysis

The SoPHIA model can be considered as a powerful «conceptual model», but not as a «ready to use» tool that can be applied everywhere at any time. In order to transform and tailor the conceptual model into an operational framework, the above-mentioned aspects of the three axes of the model should be considered as reference. But also, other potential additional factors of the implementation process need to be considered. Specifically, the process of tailoring the assessment needs to consider contextual factors related both to the intervention and the assessment process.

The former refers to the political and historical context of an intervention, its nature (size, typology), and the inherent power-relations (i.e., who is responsible for the intervention, who funds it, etc.), including the positions that different stakeholders had and took towards the intervention.

The latter refers to the issues characterizing the objectives and resources of the assessment; they are related to the question of why an assessment is being implemented. In terms of the transparency and operability of a process, it is necessary to understand who commissioned the assessment and why, as well as what resources (time, funds, data...) are allocated for the specific assessment.

#### 4.4.2 Implementing the three-axis framework

The contextual factors influence the operationalization of the model. In simple terms, the multi-domain grid is not to be considered as a mandatory minimum requirement for the assessment. Rather, it can be seen as a «panel» showing the whole spectrum of issues, with their connections and relevant measures. In each assessment process, the contents of the grid need to be weighted and adapted in relation to:

- the objectives of the assessment,
- the time horizon with respect to which the evaluation is carried out,
- the degree of involvement of all the stakeholders.

The three axes of the model can be considered as a «reference spectrum» for the quality of the assessment: if few themes are considered, if people's perspective is not detected, if relevant countereffects are not considered, the assessment process is inadequate to grasp the multidimensionality of impacts. In the same way, we can assume that if stakeholders' voices, as well as the whole life cycle of interventions (from the design and funding phase to a significant period after its conclusion) are not considered, the assessment process is equally incomplete.

The tailoring phase is also crucial to address issues related to the difficulties related to the detail of information and the length of the process. As stated by Francesco Mannino (see § 3.10), we should pay attention to the versatility of the model, with respect to the «depth» of the assessment process. That said, if we consider the adoption of a

holistic assessment approach as mandatory or at least strongly recommended, specific efforts should be put in place, in implementing the model, to help small organizations and to avoid burdening institutions with too complicated and time-consuming activities.

#### 4.4.3 Narrate the results

The final stage in the assessment process is the interpretation and reporting of data and results. The innovative approach of the SoPHIA model hereby emphasizes the inter-connectedness of the various levels of impact. The interconnectedness is operationalized via cross-cutting issues and countereffects between these various levels of impact. The leading questions for the interpretation of findings via cross-cutting issues and countereffect are therefore:

- What are the cross-cutting issues and countereffects that are (strongly) recognizable between the levels of impact, i.e., themes of the SoPHIA model?
- Based on these findings, is there an imbalance between the recognizable levels of impact and how does this imbalance potentially challenge the sustainability and resilience of the intervention?

Finally, this activity also includes recommendations for the intervention in terms of its sustainability and resilience. By these means, the results of the assessment are useful evidence that serves as an input for:

- potential changes in the intervention (especially in tenders, criteria of assessment should address the contents of the proposal);
- potential improvement of the management, including on-going adaptation of the interventions;
- potential refinements/changes in strategies/policies if long-term results are not ensuring the desired impacts in terms of resilience and sustainability.

#### 4.4.4 Open questions

The implementation of SoPHIA model requires further steps, both to verify its adaptability to the specific contexts and objective of assessment, and to verify its applicability. As for the latter, SoPHIA's stakeholders and members of the Advisory Board pointed out some open questions during the discussion held in the project meetings in Vienna - Vienna Conference, April 2021- (see SoPHIA, 2021d) and in Dublin - Dublin workshop, September 2021 – (see SoPHIA, 2021e). Social unbalances – as well as different cultural identities – within a diverse society, can affect direct participation within formalized assessment processes. Since SoPHIA aims at giving relevance to the participatory approach, specific efforts to effectively engage non-specialists and low-educated people should be made.

Moreover, as mentioned in the case-study reports (see chapter 3), the assessment is time- and resource-demanding. Some alternatives are still on the table, such as implementing a simplified version of the model, or putting in place toolkits and fostering the activity of agencies that could support small organisations.

Lastly, SoPHIA proposes itself as a step in the direction of a wider application of a holistic approach in the assessment processes. In this regard, the social platform and its community of practice (for further details, please see chapter 5) should play a role in boosting the ability of cultural organizations to reach out to their stakeholders (Baioni et al., 2021). Yet, the role of Social Platforms and their capacity to capture stakeholders' opinions and, in a longitudinal perspective, to pave the way to develop public discourses in different communities of practice, are still to be properly investigated (Baioni *et al.*, 2021).

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For further details on this topic please refer to D2.2, chapter 5 (SoPHIA, 2021b).

<sup>2</sup> For further details on the features of the SoPHIA model please refer to deliverable D2.3 (SoPHIA, 2021c).

<sup>3</sup> For further details see *IADT Case study report* (SoPHIA, 2021b).

<sup>4</sup> *Jamili Case study report* offers an overview of the different Stakeholders' interests (SoPHIA, 2021b).

<sup>5</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/The-role-of-culture-for-resilience-peace-and-security> [last access: 13/09/2021].

<sup>6</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/passeport-convention2005-web2.pdf> [last access: 13/09/2021].

<sup>7</sup> The implementation process of SoPHIA is described in details in deliverable D3.1 (SoPHIA, 2021f). This document represents the toolkit for guiding practitioners in the application of the SoPHIA model.