

# Proposal for impact categories from a philosophical perspective

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## Overview

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1. A capabilities perspective on well being – Subcategories
2. Dimensions of human flourishing – Impact Categories
3. Combining the framework with the Methodological Sheets

## A capabilities perspective on well being

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- Why care about the impacts of our production/consumption processes? **What is valuable/worth protecting?**
- AoP in SLCA: human well being
  
- How can we value a human life? What information do we need for such an evaluation? Preferences, Need satisfaction (Resources), GDP?...**capabilities & functionings**
- Briefly mentioned in the Guidelines

## Capabilities & functionings

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### Functionings

#### Achieved functionings

- basic elements, which constitute a human live  
(Does a person eat healthy, have a fulfilling family life, participate in elections, is she literate, healthy?)
- Beings and Doings
- Achieved functionings (being adequately nourished):  
Commodities (bread) + personal and social factors (metabolic rates, age, gender, activities, climatic conditions...)
- Described with a functioning vector

## Capabilities and functionings

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### Attainable Functionings/ Capabilities

- Freedom of choice (Is a person starving or fasting? Does a person don't want to go on vacations or does she have no vacations?...)
- Freedom to promote/achieve valuable functionings
- Reflect a persons real opportunities
- Formally defined as the set of vectors of functionings a person may choose from

## Capabilities and functionings

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- Complete operationalisation of the CA: focus on freedoms
- Focus often on achieved functionings → often called capabilities
- Subcategories: Capability to live healthy, to participate in a community life, to read and write, to recreate, to work under safe conditions, to make informed responsible decisions, to practice and revitalize cultural traditions...

## Capabilities and functionings

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- Sen refrained from giving a list of Capabilities
- Procedure for identifying capabilities: Public debate
- Given in SLCA through use of international conventions & agreements
- Human Rights Declaration, Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work,...

## Dimensions of human flourishing – Impact Categories

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Well being (abstract level) – Capabilities (basic level)

- Is there a level in between?
- How can we structure capabilities?
- How can the concept of well being be spelled out?
- What are the impact categories?

Impact Categories as Dimensions of human flourishing  
(components of well-being) (Alkire 2002)

## Dimensions of human flourishing – Impact Categories

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Alkire 2002:

- Reviews over 30 ways of spelling out dimensions of well being
- Proposal of Finnis covers most of the others
  - Human actions are always aimed at some ultimate good; basic motivations for action
  - Finnis distinguishes 7 ultimate ends/dimensions of well being
  - Reflect the range of human capabilities

## Dimensions of human flourishing – Impact Categories

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*Life itself* – its maintenance and transmission – health, and safety.

*Knowledge and aesthetic experience.* 'Human persons can know reality and appreciate beauty and whatever intensely engages their capacities to know and to feel.'

Some degree of excellence in *work and play*: 'human persons can transform the natural world by using realities, beginning with their own bodily selves, to express meanings and serve purposes. Such meaning-giving and value-creation can be realized in diverse degrees.'

*Friendship*: 'various forms of harmony between and among individuals and groups of persons – living at peace with others, neighbourliness, friendship'.

## Dimensions of human flourishing – Impact Categories

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*Self-integration*: within individuals and their personal lives, similar goods can be realized. For feelings can conflict among themselves and be at odds with one's judgements and choices. The harmony opposed to such inner disturbance is inner peace.

*Self-expression, or practical reasonableness*: one's choices can conflict with one's judgements and one's behaviour can fail to express one's inner self. The corresponding good is harmony among one's judgements, choices, and performances – peace of conscience and consistency between one's self and its expression.

*Transcendence*: most persons experience tension with the wider reaches of reality. Thus, another category ... is peace with God, or the gods, or some non-theistic but more-than-human source of meaning and value.

## Dimensions of human flourishing – Impact Categories

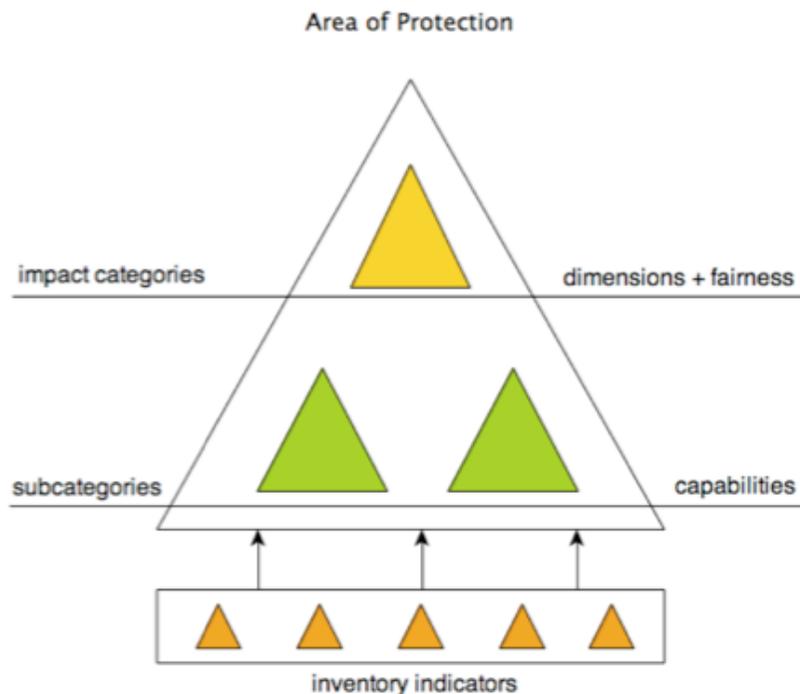
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- Dimensions only cover individual aspects
- Interpersonal aspects – process aspect of freedom? Workers rights, rights of local community....?
- **Fairness** as an additional impact category

## Dimensions of human flourishing – Impact Categories

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### Normative SLCA Framework



- Life itself, health, safety
- Knowledge/aesthetic exp.
- Work and play
- Friendship
- Self-Integration
- Self-expression/practical reasonableness
- Transcendence
- Fairness

## Combining the framework with the Methodological Sheets

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Stakeholder ,Workers‘

Subcategory ,Health and Safety‘

Capability to work under conditions that do not endanger their safety/do not negatively affect the workers health

Impact Category ,Life itself‘

Subcategory ,Hours of Work‘

Indicator for Capability to enjoy recreational activities

Impact Category ,Life itself‘

## Combining the framework with the Methodological Sheets

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Stakeholder ,Workers‘

Subcategory ,Equal opportunity‘

Impact Category ,Fairness‘

Subcategory ,forced labor‘

Undermines the Capability to choose to do meaningful work

Impact Category ,Work and Play‘

## Combining the framework with the Methodological Sheets

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Stakeholder ,local community‘

Subcategory ,delocalization and migration‘

- Importance of how migrants fit into new communities (involuntary resettlement)

Indicator for the Capability to participate in community life

Impact Category ,Friendship‘

## Combining the framework with the Methodological Sheets

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Stakeholder ,local community‘

Subcategory ,cultural heritage‘

- Reference to international conventions that protect cultural traditions and religious beliefs

Two capabilities:

- Capability to practice and revitalize cultural traditions

Impact category ,Friendship‘

- Capability to practice and revitalize religious traditions

Impact category ,Transcendence‘

## Combining the framework with the Methodological Sheets

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### Stakeholder ,consumers'

#### Subcategory ,health and safety'

- Capability to consume products, which are not dangerous to human health

#### Impact category ,Life itself'

#### Subcategory 'transparency'

- Capability to make informed responsible decisions

#### Impact category ,Self-expression'

## Conclusion

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- Clarification of how to evaluate a human life according to the capabilities approach
- Proposal for the Impact Categories:  
Fairness + 7 Dimensions of human flourishing
- Applying the framework to the Methodological sheets

## Conclusion

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- The framework is compatible with the previous work
- The framework showed that not all subcategories lie on the same level
  - i.e. hours of work → Indicator for the Capability to enjoy recreational activities
  - ‘forced labor’ → Undermines the Capability to choose to do meaningful work
- Framework can be used for structuring the proposed subcategories