SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Defining Public Needs in Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Sepang, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Defining public needs is hugely important to the concept of sustainable development and it has been at the core of the concept from the very beginning. This study was undertaken in order to explore the sustainable development needs of the public and governors, to provide greater understanding of the discrepancies within both parties' needs and to propose a mechanism to define important sustainable development needs in Sepang, Selangor,Malaysia. A qualitative investigation was conducted through the use of , in-depth interviews and group discussions were held with the public and the governors to represent their personal and that of the community views they represented. Both parties exhibited five common values, namely identity, safety, freedom, environment and development. Both parties also highlighted six fundamental needs according to the Max-Neef list, i.e. subsistence, protection, participation, creation, identity and freedom. Only the public participants highlighted the need of affection. Despite similarities in terms of needs, the findings revealed discrepancies in values and perspectives. This study implies that it is important for the governors to comprehend and acknowledge local public values because these needs conform to values and normativity. This study suggests governors should evaluate the relevancy of development plans towards present being and tailor the needs of the development to local traditions, local nature and existing structures. In conclusion, the governors should decide on needs that resemble the aspirations of the local people within the existing systems they are living in and supported by.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is a concept that addresses societal development, judging it

on its capacity to meet present individual needs and that of the future. Defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, it contains within it two key concepts: the concept of 'needs', in particular essential needs; and the concept of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The concept of limitations in sustainable development is related to the carrying capacity of the environment (Niu *et al.*, 1993). Carrying capacity is the operational dimension of the life-support system which refers to the size of population the environment can support. In sustainable development, carrying capacity refers to the quantity and quality of available natural resources, and the assimilative capacity of the environment to absorb the effects of human activities (Kates *et al.*, 2005). Many agree that the concepts of both needs and limitations refer to intergenerational equity which is the main pillar of sustainability (Kates *et al.*, 2005).

Right from the onset, , sustainable development is defined by its capacity to meet human needs. But the concept of needs remained quite unclear as the report does not give a valid definition of needs. Examples of such definitions (Chapter 2, section 1),"The essential needs of vast numbers of people in developing countries for food, clothing, shelter, jobs are not being met…"; and that in Chapter 2, section 3: "Critical objectives

for environment and development policies that follow from the concept of sustainable development include…meeting essential needs for jobs, food, energy, water and sanitation…" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) provided mere definitions of the needs. Departing from this elaboration, we will begin our investigation with local public needs as it has not been fully appraised in the local context thus far.

Gasper (1996) provides three generic meanings of the term needs, which are positive entities related to some form of want and desire (descriptive analyses); requisites for meeting a given end (instrumental analyses); and justified or priority requisites (normative analyses). Many studies, in an effort to be pragmatic, are drawn to the tangible analysis i.e. the instrumental analysis which permeates into the objective criteria of needs. Rauschmayer and his colleagues (2008) have given a compelling definition of needs as the most fundamental dimensions of human flourishing and such reasons for action that need no further reasoning. Rauschmayer *et al.* (2008) have also linked needs to well-being, which they defined as the emotional state and reflection of meaning in life, based on the subjective experience of one's fulfilment of needs. In this context, as securing the well-being of humans and their supporting subsystem is the final aim of sustainable development, the study will investigate both concepts simultaneously.

Previous studies propose that needs and well-being could be systematically

categorised into physical (biology and physiology) and psychological dimensions (Doyal & Gough 1991; Ramsay 1992; Max-Neef 1993; Narayan, Chambers *et al.*, 2000; Cummins 2000b). The component of subsistence described by Max-Neef covered most of the physical needs that were also proposed by other researchers. Max-Neef has listed food, shelter and work as the requisites of subsistence needs which is similar to Doyal and Gough's (1991) intermediate needs as well as Narayan *et al.* (1993) and Cummins' (2000b) material needs. These studies also listed psychological needs including autonomy (Doyal & Gough 1991; Max-Neef 1993), freedom (Max-Neef, 1993; Narayan *et al.*, 2000) and harmony (Narayan *et al.*, 2000; Cummins 2000b), security (Doyal & Gough 1991; Ramsay 1992; Max-Neef 1993; Narayan *et al.*, 2000) and esteem (Ramsay 1992; Max-Neef 1993; Narayan *et al.,* 2000) among many other needs. It is also evident that one need may comprise both physical and psychological needs, for example, the need of safety which is realised through the presence of protection (physical) and the sense of security (psychology). One informative approach formulated by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2000) is different from other approaches because they have excluded physiological needs from their needs concept (Andresen & Albus, 2010). This is because they believe these needs are existential givens that have to be satisfied in order to ensure survival. Their conceptual work instead focuses on three needs that are relevant for human well-being: autonomy,

competence and membership, which they consider non interchangeable and have to be satisfied to promote mental health. Deci and Ryan (2000) also pronounce that the non-satisfaction of the three needs can have social consequences, because such need deprivation may express itself in illness and social disintegration.

In human development, there are many different needs which Alkire (2002) discussed as part of the basic dimensions of human well-being, coming from moral philosophy, psychology, economics and development studies. She found little difference between the results. From the exhaustive list, we specifically adopt the Max-Neef fundamental human needs theory because it thoroughly defines the qualities, things, actions and settings in the pursuit of each needs fulfilment. Max-Neef (1993) identified nine fundamental needs which could be traced back to different reasons for action, which he developed into a matrix of needs (Table 1) and four categories of strategies (satisfiers, as Max-Neef calls them), to meet these needs (Rauschmayer *et al.,* 2008). The column of 'Being' registers personal or collective attributes (expressed as nouns). The column of 'Having' registers institutions, norms, mechanisms, tools, laws etc. the column of Doing registers personal or collective actions (expressed as verbs). The 'Interacting' column registers locations and milieus (as times and spaces) (Rauschmayer *et al.,* 2008).

Along with Max-Neef's fundamental needs theory, it is also worth capturing the capability perspective before analysis.

TABLE 1
Max-Neef matrix of fundamental human needs

Axiological categories/ Fundamental Human Needs	Being (qualities)	Having (things)	Doing (actions)	Interacting (settings)
Subsistence	physical and mental health	food, shelter, work	feed, clothes, rest, work	living environment, social setting
Protection	care, adaptability, autonomy	social security, health systems, work	co-operate, plan, take care, help	social environment, dwelling
Affection	respect, sense of humour, generosity, sensuality	friendships, family, relationships with nature	share, take care of, make love, express emotions	privacy, intimate spaces of togetherness
Understanding	critical capacity, curiosity, intuition	literature, teachers, policies, education	analyze, study, meditate, investigate	schools, families, universities, communities
Participation	receptiveness, dedication, sense of humour	responsibilities, duties, work, rights	cooperate, dissent, express opinion	associations, parties, churches, neighbourhoods
Leisure	imagination, tranquillity, spontaneity	games, parties, safety of mind	day-dream, remember, relax, have fun	Landscapes, intimate spaces, places to be alone
Creation	imagination, boldness, inventiveness, curiosity	abilities, skills, work, techniques	invent, build, design, work, compose, interpret	spaces for expression, workshops, audiences
Identity	sense of belonging, self-esteem, consistency	language, religions, work, customs, values, norms	get to know oneself, grow, commit oneself	places one belongs to, everyday settings
Freedom	autonomy, passion, self-esteem, open-mindedness	equal rights	dissent, choose, run, risks, develop awareness	Anywhere

Capability refers to a person's or group's freedom to promote or achieve valuable functioning (Sen, 1992), valuable beings and doings that a person or society has a real (both internal and external) possibility of enjoying (Nussbaum, 2000) and the freedom to choose which needs are to be fulfilled and how (Rauschmayer *et al.*, 2008). Sen, (1992) recognises that capability may relate to things near survival or those which are rather less central, but he refrained from developing a list of capabilities, its categories and priorities (Alkire 2002). Unlike Sen, Nussbaum has produced a list of

central human functional capabilities which she calls the 'Capabilities Approach' (Albus *et al.*, 2009).

Whether all these aspects of human lifestyle are perceived as needs by all individuals in an identical way is of only secondary importance, according to the capabilities perspective (Andresen & Albus, 2010). What is far more important is the provision of real freedom to shape one's life according to one's own conception of the good (Sen, 2001). Real freedom is more than just the distribution of resources and less than the need satisfaction that actually occurs; they refer to the possibilities that the individual can realise through the available structural resources, individual abilities and social rights should he or she wish to (Otto & Ziegler, 2006).

This study will not only identify public basic needs but also involve promoting a mechanism to define the actual needs in accordance with sustainable development in the future. Within both physical and psychological discourses, we will define local public needs to allow a meaningful mechanism to be initiated to realise needs as inspired by the sustainable development concept.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Conceptual framework

Incorporating Max-Neef's (year) fundamental needs theory into Brundtland's definition, we define sustainable development needs as "...the needs in development to be satiated to secure the well-being of a human and its supporting systems". We will identify the needs and well-being component by looking into the participants' expressions of dissatisfaction and expectations towards current development, and their aspirations for future development.

Research area

Sepang, Malaysia was selected as the research area due to the rapid development process which has transformed it from an agricultural-based, rural area into a semi-urban and urban area as a result of the development of Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) and Wilayah Persekutuan, Putrajaya. The population of Sepang has increased from 121,100 in 2002 to 138,100 in 2006. The manufacturing sector has the largest manpower, which is 32.0% in comparison to other sectors (Table 2). Sepang was previously an agriculture-based area where rubber and palm plantations were the major commodities. In 2005, approximately 470.76 hectares of land were designated for agriculture activities in comparison to 1, 3677.1 hectares in 2002. The reduction in agriculture area is partly a result of the increment of mega projects in Sepang (Table 3). As the number of mega projects increases, the number of foreigners who work in the projects increases as well. In the year 2008 alone, 640 illegal foreign workers were arrested in this area for multiple crimes.

Sampling method and approach

A qualitative methodology was used to collect the data through a series of in-depth interviews and discussion groups

TABLE 2
Distribution of labour in Sepang, Malaysia

Manpower	Percentage
Farming, agriculture, fishery and forestry	0.4
Mines and quarry	0.2
Construction	6.2
Manufacturing	32.9
Utility (electricity, gas and water)	0.6
Retails, sundry, hotels and restaurants	14.1
Transportation, reservation and communication	4.6
Finance, insurance, property and business services	8.5
Government service	23.3
Others	9.2

TABLE 3
Mega projects in Sepang, Malaysia

Projects	Area (hectare)
Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) Low Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT) Sepang Circuit	10,000
Cyberjaya	2885.21
Sepang Gold Coast	617.75
IOI	217.01
Kota Warisan	241.89
Biovalley	193.26
Taman Sains 2	304.78
Sepang International Commercial Centre	87.81
Sepang Putra	1641.65
Agriculture Research And Development Institute (MARDI)	126.55

with selected participants to represent the views of governors and rural and urban communities (Table 4) to obtain an in-depth understanding of the meanings and definitions provided by participants (O'Neill 2001; Bernard 2000; Williams & May 1996; Tesch 1990). The governors were selected as participants because of their role as planners and decision makers in development which shape the development process in this area.

The participants who were governors were government officers who were directly involved in developing this area. Apart from the officers of Sepang District and Land Office (SDLO) and Sepang City Council (SCC), the Village Development Officer (*Pegawai Kemajuan Kampung*) and the Village Chiefs (*Penghulu*) also represented the government for they are also government officers under Sepang District and Land

TABLE 4
Research participants

Modes of participation	Participants	Representing
Semi-structured in-depth interviews	District and Land officer	Governors
	Municipal Council officer	
	Villages Development officer	
	Villages Chiefs	
	Council Members (present and former	Urban communities
In-depth group discussions	Villages Heads (present and former)	Rural communities

Offices administration. To represent the public, the researcher selected the Village Heads (*Ketua Kampung*) to represent the rural public, and the Council Members (*Ahli Majlis*) to represent the urban public. Both the Village Heads (VH) and Council Members (CM) are not government officers. The Village Heads were appointed by the District and Land Office to represent the villagers upon the consent of villagers. Similarly with the Council Members, they were appointed by the City Council to represent municipal zones upon the consent of the residents of each zone. In this study, both the Village Heads and Council Members are eligible to represent members of the public from rural and urban areas based on the field observations made by the researcher that their interaction with the public was very consistent. Their selection as participants in this study to represent public views therefore is very relevant due to their continuous interaction with the public.

Data analysis

We analysed the interviews and group discussions using thematic analysis to explore the main perspectives of the topic studied. Thematic analysis involves methodically reading through the verbatim transcripts and segmenting and coding the text into categories that highlight what the group discussed (Creswell, 2003; Boyatzis, 1998; Aronson, 1994). They were then assessed, compared and interpreted and similarities and differences between them were noted. The categories were combined and assigned to major themes that provide a framework to explain how the participants value development in their area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Five themes emerged from the thematic analysis conducted on the data, namely identity, safety, freedom, environment and development. It is evident that both the public and governors behold similar themes but display different priorities, motives and contexts (Mahadi *et al.,* 2011).

The public participants' concerns regarding identity are related to social deviance, social segregation, reconstruction of tradition and governors' integrity. Public participants believed that social deviance and segregation resultedfrom foreign and outside influences. Increasing social deviance among local people is believed

to be influenced by foreigners' indecent behaviour, suggesting increasing social segregation is partly due to outsiders' (Malaysian citizens who were not born in the area or had not previously resided in it) refusal to mingle with local communities.

> *"...regarding the major influx of foreigners, most of them display improper behaviour...we witness that local people are adapting these behaviours..."* [VH]

> *"...there is now segregation between the villagers and the owners of the bungalows recently developed in this area...these people do not mix with local villagers..."* [VH]

The other concern is the re-construction of traditional villages which they believed should be safeguarded along with its history and identity.

> *"...the traditional villages should be protected...they are the heritages left by our ancestors...if these villages need to be developed, it should be done without damaging the original structures..."* [VH]

The final concern is the integrity of the governors with regardto their inappropriate actions when dealing with corruption and malpractice. To them, the integrity of governors is vital in safeguarding development as well as ones' identity.

> *"...a leader should be trustworthy... to the followers, to the environment, to the culture, to the nation and top of all, to oneself...or else this nation will be in trouble..."* [CM]

The governors' participants agreed with conserving the identity of traditional villages during development but their statement is inconsistent with practices.

Under the theme of safety, the main concern of both parties is safety. Both parties highlighted the issues of violence related to foreign students while only the public participants highlighted the issue of criminality related to foreign workers. Both parties were equally worried for their safety due to the above scenarios.

> *"...these foreign students, they are involved with drugs, alcohol, reckless driving...fights with local people...they are very dangerous..."* [VH]

> *"...now that the foreign workers are many in this area, crimes like robbery frequently occur, unlike before..."* [CM]

Two issues related to the development freedoms highlighted by both parties were right and privilege and participation. The public participants also highlighted another component of freedom, i.e. politics, whereby the governors highlighted governance. The public participants claimed that present development denies their rights and

privileges (Mahadi *et al*., 2011) as their land is inappropriately reclaimed, rewarded and substituted (right). The land that was previously the privilege of the natives can now be occupied by the non-native, outsiders and foreigners (privilege).

> *"…even though this area needs to be developed, local people's land should not be taken without consent…underpaid…"* [VH]

> *"…the land here should benefit bumiputera, local people…not non-bumiputera, not foreigners…"* [VH]

The area has also been commercially developed into more sophisticated and costly facilities to accommodate the surrounding developments. The public participants claimed that local people can't afford to get involved in the costly operations and survive the rising cost of living.

> *"…this time around, expensive shops are built…the old shops are torn down…we can afford to do business any longer due to high rental…"* [VH]

The governors' issues of rights and privileges are related to the privileges of land provision for aborigines in this area which they believed should be developed rather being wasted inadvertently.

> *"…the provision of zon rayau should be revised…rather than the*

> *land being wasted, it should be developed for common good…"* [SCC]

Regarding the issue of participation, both parties were seen to hold opposite views. The public participants claimed that they are not welcome to voice their views and opinions towards the development while the governors claimed that the public refuses to participate due to their ignorance, even though they are given platforms and opportunities to do so.

> *"…we have a lot to suggest but then the government never seeks our opinion…"* [VH]

> *"…the public only react after the project has begun…nobody came forward when we announced the development plan in mass media… nobody came when we call for meeting…"* [SCC]

The public participants also had great concerns regarding another branch of freedom - politics. They claimed that major political transition during the recent general election was not embraced by the people in charge by practicing discrimination due to political disparity. These people should hence be more ethical in fulfilling their responsibilities towards serving the public, regardless of their different political stands.

> *"…the government servants should not treat us badly just because*

of different political views…they should treat everyone equally regardless of our political background…" [VH]

As for the governors, the concern was the governance of individual lots. At the moment, the development of individual lots is not bound by any development act, and therefore the district development plan has become complicated in such a way that it has become unsystematic and imbalanced. They proposed that individual lot development regulation should be legislated and enforced in order to be governed properly.

"…we need to enforce individual lot development regulation or else major problems will occur…" [SCC]

Under the theme of environment, issues highlighted by the public participants in this study were water and atmospheric pollution and environmental disaster. Water pollution in this area is a result of construction activities and pig farming. The participants claimed that the waste is not properly managed, with most of it being dumped into surrounding waters.

"…the seaside development posed many environmental problems… the waste was dumped into the water…the water is now terribly polluted…" [VH]

"…the most troubling project in this area is pig farming…it pollutes the water…produces bad smell…very disturbing…" [VH]

This irresponsible action not only will pollute the water but it could also be life threatening to living organisms as well. Indirectly, this condition affected communities who depend on this ecosystem for living such as the fishing communities.

Atmospheric pollution, on the other hand, is a result of intensified quarry operations due to rising demand from the construction sectors. Together with the increasing amount of suspended particulate matter from growing construction areas, the atmospheric pollution in this area is getting worse.

"…the dust produced by the quarries is very disturbing…it pollutes the air terribly…" [VH]

Apart from pollution, the participants have also highlighted two forms of environmental disasters, namely flash flood and landslides. They believed that flash floods were a result of the area becoming increasing built up and the river becoming shallower while the land-slides resulted from the development of individual lots which disturbed sediment stability.

"…an increasingly built up environment resulted in less natural environment…the rainwater cannot be absorbed, [which]…resulted in the flash flood…" [VH]

"…when the hilly area is being developed, it becomes unstable… heavy rain could wash up the lands easily…resulting in the landslides…" [CM]

Overall, the public participants regard environment as an important part of their well-being.

The participants representing the governors did not mention environmental pollution in particular but they did bring up the issue of environmental degradation as a result of individual lot development. They claimed that this kind of development degraded the environment more than large projects due to improper methods and management.

"…this kind of project creates more problems than mega projects because they are not bound by development regulations…" [SCC]

Apart from that, the participants were optimistic that present development has taken adequate measures to safeguard the environment. They also believed that the natural resources in this area are abundant and will be able to cater to the needs of development in years to come.

"…our natural resources are abundant in quantity…we are optimistic that they are sufficient to cater for development in years to come…" [SDLO]

Under the theme of development, the majority of the public participants perceived that present development disregarded the human development of local people. In reference to the moved communities, the participants claimed that the moved communities were ignored and unable to survive in the new environment. They expected the government to help the communities to embrace new ways of generating income.

"…some people have to move from their land because the government wants to develop the land…this practice made them lose their house, their job…the government should do something about it…" [CM]

One of the participants suggested small medium industries (SMIs) as one effective approach to tackle this problem since they required only minimal skills and knowledge to operate.

"…SMI is a very practical way to overcome unemployment…it needs minimal skill and knowledge…" [CM]

They said that the major flaws of development were a result of the development of mega projects which benefited a few but degraded many. They are worried about increases in development and the subsequent loss of public areas. The participants argue that the large scale development left too little public area to

accommodate public facilities like schools, playgrounds, a building of worship and a cemetery.

> *"…from what I see, development degrades public welfare…the schools are crowded…recreation areas are reduced…the worship facilities and cemetery remain small despite the increment of population…"* [CM]

The governors' participants' view on development was limited towards only economic development. Although they mentioned human development sparingly, their major focus obviously is the economy, which they believed to vital to promote public well-being.

> *"…economic development is of prime importance to realise every other development plan…"* [VH]

They also regard the extraction and exploitation of natural resources as efficient means by which to facilitate economic development. At present, the main sources of income for this area are annual housing and building tax, land status conversion premiums (especially the conversion of agricultural to industrial land), quarries and agricultural products. Therefore the government encourages the expansion of these sectors to reinforce the continuity of contribution.

> *"…our main income is building tax…therefore we support physical*

> *development because it is our source of income…"* [SCC]

> *"…the premiums from land title conversion contribute a large income to our office…"* [SDLO]

To conclude all themes, the public participants in general felt that present development focussed only on the material benefits and disregards human and environmental well-being. They urged that a thorough impact assessment is conducted prior to any development, and at all times and during all circumstances, the physical, moral and ethical aspects of development should be observed.

> *"…although we understand the importance of economic development, we believe that human development should be given priority…the government should also take the environment into consideration…"* [VH]

> *"…it is very important for every project to be evaluated…to reduce negative consequences…"* [VH]

As for governors' participants, they believed that the present development wason the right track. They believed that the government has taken adequate measures to curb possible environmental and social problems which may or have occurred due to the development. They also believed that the area in Sepang, Malaysia has a lot

more potential in development due to the availability of resources and supporting infrastructures.

> *"...although we are developing rapidly, we do take measures to protect the environment..."* [SCC]

Even though the themes appear to be separate from each other, they are also interrelated by the issues featured under each theme. For public participants, the theme of identity can be linked to every other theme which suggests identity as their core theme (Fig.1). It is linked to the theme of safety by the issue of foreigners (both themes portray foreigners or foreign influences as threat to well-being); to freedom and

environment by the issue of outsiders (the process of developing and upgrading the present environment to attract the outsiders as prospective investors degraded the rights and privileges of local people and degraded the environment as well); and to the theme of development by the issue of negligence towards moved communities (negligence towards their jobless situation) (Mahadi *et al.*, 2011).

The theme of development could also be linked to the theme of environment and freedom. The issue that linked development to environment is again the pollution which resulted from heightened construction activities due to the area becoming increasingly built up. As for the link between development and freedom, the issue is
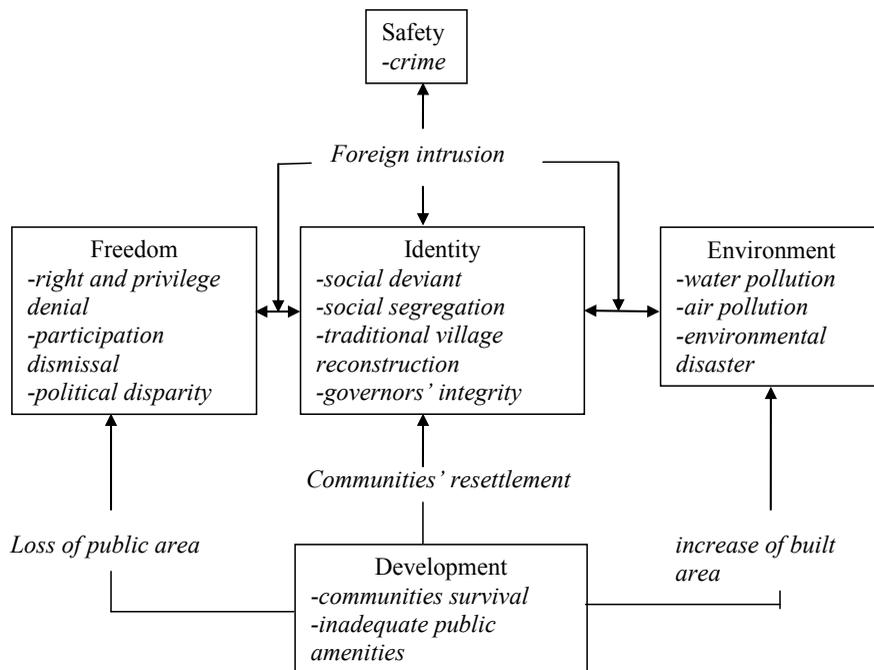

Fig.1: Public development values themes.

directly related to the rights and privileges of local people regarding the inadequacy of public amenities.

For the governors' participants, only four themes are seen to be interrelated to each other: identity, freedom, environment and development (Fig.2). The theme of safety appears to not have any significance in relation to the other themes. Unlike the public participants, the core theme of the governors' participants is development, which could be linked to other themes. It is related to the theme of identity via the issue of the reconstruction of traditional villages (the intention to safeguard the identity of traditional villages), and to freedom via the issue of right and privilege (such as land provision for aborigines); participation (lack of public participation) and governance (of individual lot development); and to environment through the issue of the extraction and exploitation of resources.

Further analysis on the data revealed that both parties acquired six needs components, namely subsistence, protection, participation, creation, identity and freedom. In addition, the public participants also acquired the need for affection. Two other components listed by Max-Neef - understanding and leisure (idleness) - were not evident in this study. The need of understanding is described by Max-Neef as the ability to develop critical capacity, curiosity and intuition to empower individuals to analyse, study, meditate or investigate their surroundings. Throughout the analysis, we did not find any remark purporting to this need component, which implies that the participants do not consider understanding as a need.

Another missing component of need in this study was leisure. The need of leisure is comprised of imagination, tranquillity and spontaneity which allow individuals to acquire safety of mind and have fun.
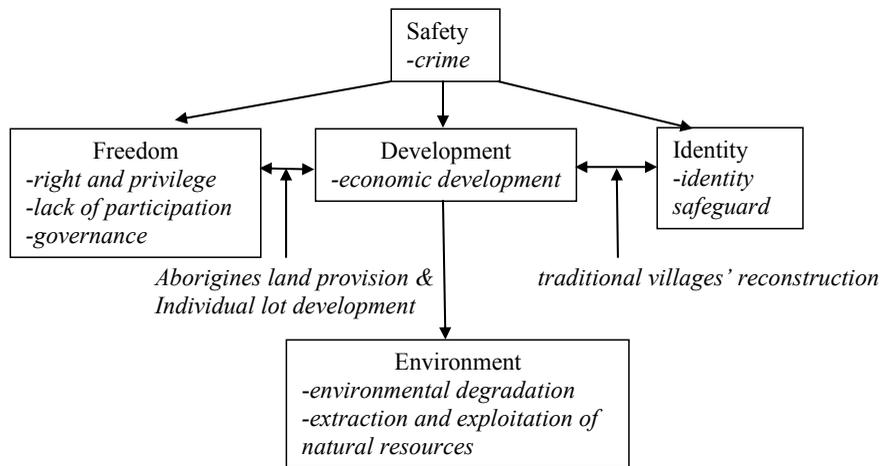

Fig.2: Governors' development values theme.

Similar to the need of understanding, the need of leisure did not occur throughout the discussions. None of the participants indicated that leisure is valued in development process. We assume this is due to the abundance of green area in this district. Apparently, even though Sepang is developing rapidly, the green area of this district is still abundant because most of the mega projects develop beautiful landscapes. This could be the reason why leisure was not perceived as being under threat by the participants and not considered a need.

Six needs components present in this study can either be explicitly connected to the development theme, i.e. the need of identity to the identity theme values, the need of protection to the safety theme values, and the need of subsistence to the development theme values, or implicitly under a specific theme, i.e. the needs of affection and creativity to the development theme values, and the need of participation to the freedom theme values.

For the public participants, the need of protection was evident under each theme. This indicates the public feels insecure about the present development process. According to the Max-Neef matrix of needs, protection is associated with care, adaptability and autonomy towards social components such as safety, health and work. In this study, public participants have shown that care, adaptability and autonomy are required to achieve well-being, specifically care towards identity, safety and environment; being able to adapt to development and having the autonomy to exercise their

freedom. Therefore, it can be concluded that the need of protection is the most important need to be satisfied to achieve well-being.

The governors' participants also indicated the need of protection under each key value except the key value of development. None of the issues highlighted by them indicated their need for protection with regards to the development. As for the other themes, the need for protection was particularly evident with regards to autonomy. Under the themes of freedom and environment, protection relates to regulations and authority, while for the theme of safety, protection is defined by security.

The needs of subsistence and creation were evident under the key value of development. According to Max-Neef, subsistence is the prerequisite of mental and physical health. Food, shelter and work are among the basic necessities covered by subsistence. The definition of subsistence given by Max-Neef is similar to the basic needs definition by Maslow (1970). Many researchers agree that both compromise the needs proposed by Brundtland (Rauschmayer *et al.*, 2008). The need of subsistence in this study was specifically related to the issue of the sources of income.

The public in Sepang felt that the current development process jeopardised their sources of income in several ways and this had a negative effect on their well-being. This perception has led the public to see subsistence as one of the vital needs in development. As for the governors'

participants, the need of subsistence was related to the means to generate income. They believed that the exploitation and extraction of natural resources is the best way to secure the governors' expenses in development. Apparently, the public's concerns about subsistence were not addressed by the governors. This leads us to the question of capabilities which will be discussed later in this paper.

The need of creation in this study was also linked to the key values within development. Among the elements listed by Max-Neef under this need are imagination, boldness, inventiveness and curiosity. As these elements are the pre-requisites to invent, build, design, work and compose, creativity is clearly related to career and job development. In this study, the element of creation that was mentioned by both parties was related to job creation and career enhancement. Both parties seek the need of creation to promote human development. Along with the need of subsistence, creation is seen by both the public and governors as a vital need for survival and well-being.

The need of identity in this study is depicted by the issues of culture and norms, and integrity. This need is linked to the theme values of identity. The harmful intrusion of foreigners and outsiders evident by the public encouraged the public participants to consider identity as one of the needs in development. Apart from outside intervention, the issue of integrity and the need to be protected from malpractice and abuses of power by the developers is also seen as a flaw to identity. The public

blamed the practices of corrupt developers in their knowledge for most of the negative consequences of the current development and they believed that a reinforcement of identity is needed to steer the development back on the right track. For the participants representing the governors, their need of identity was reflected in their support of the motion to recognise the value of traditional villages.

The need of participation was also evident in both parties' statements. Participation is referred to as the act of cooperation, dissention or opinion expression in response to the receptiveness and dedication of the individual. In this study, the public recognised the importance of enduring participation in order to promote effective development. This was evident through their frustration at not being able to participate. The governors' participants also highlighted the importance of public participation in form of response and feedback over development plans. The frustration over the public's lack of participation indicated their belief that participation is one of the needs in development.

The need of freedom is defined by Max-Neef as the ability to realise autonomy, passion, self-esteem and open-mindedness. Public participants perceived that their freedom to express their rights, views and consent have been denied by the developers. They claimed that their rights were denied, their views dismissed and their consent waived. These perceptions have directed the public to see freedom as a development need. The need of freedom is reflected

in the governors through their pursuit of autonomy in regards to the management of the development process.

As mentioned earlier, one needs component that is required only by the public participants is affection. The need of affection, as elaborated by Max-Neef, is related to respect, sense of humour, generosity and sensuality demonstrated in the relationship among family, friends and neighbours. In this study, the need of affection was seen as very significant to public participants in order to overcome the problems related to development of individual lots. Public participants believed that if these individuals were more affectionate to the wellbeing of their neighbours, problems that may arise due to the inadvertent development of individual lots could be avoided.

Overall, the majority of the statements made by public participants highlighted the problems with development. They perceived that the development decreased their well-being as its goals and mechanisms destroyed their identity, safety, freedom and environment, and defeated the presupposed purpose of development. These perceptions encouraged the public participants to convey the needs of subsistence, protection, affection, participation, freedom, creation and identity as being necessary to overcome the threat and enable them to achieve well-being throughout the development process. The governors' participants, on the other hand, embraced similar needs but differed in their perspective. These opposite points of view will be discussed below.

The discrepancies within development needs in this study may result from different values in development. To the public, any development initiatives that release destructive forces on their already stable and comfortable lives are unacceptable. In this study, it is noted that the public values identity highly but the practices in current development seem to eradicate their precious identity. The transformation of Sepang from a traditional, agricultural setting into a modern, commercial area is perceived by the public to deprive their actual needs more than improving them. Apparently, the transformation is not fully embraced by the majority of the public who preferred the previous social setting. This would likely create tension between the new values imposed by the governors and the values that the public wanted to keep. Such conflicts have been described by Schwartz (1992) through an integrated structure of values. According to Schwartz, the integrated structure of values can be summarised into two orthogonal dimensions: the openness to change dimension opposing the conservative dimension and the self-transcendence dimension opposing the self-enhancement dimension. In this study, public values can be categorised into the conservation dimension which prioritised values like identity. In contrast, the governors promote values that support advancement and improvisation which fit the criteria of the openness to change dimension. This will likely result in conflict between the needs and values of the public and that purported by the governors.

The inconsistency within values between both parties also may be due to their different perspectives. Two examples of this idea are the themes of environment and development. Under the theme of environment, the governors perceived individual lot development as the major contributor to environmental degradation while the public viewed mega development as the main culprit in environmental problems. Throughout the discussion, the governors also exhibited profound anthropogenic attitudes in their interest in the exploitation of natural resources. However, the public never mentioned exploitation at all. These scenarios showed that even though both parties regard environment as important in development, their concerns were underpinned by different views. The same scenario is evident in the theme of development. Both parties recognise the significance of development but in different ways. The governors prioritised the economic aspect of development over any other whereas the public believed that human development should be entertained most. The governors also viewed economic development as development goals while the public addressed economic development only as a mechanism to develop and not as a goal itself.

The purpose of this study is to define public needs in development. It is important to define public needs because needs are the core element of sustainable development. Only after needs are defined can an appropriate development framework be created to determine the needs and how to address them. In this study, needs are identified by applying the Max-Neef matrix of needs towards the themes found in this study. The Max-Neef matrix was adopted in this study because it addresses social needs and not individual needs. The findings indicated that public needs in development are constructed in response to the changes in environment which are induced by development process. These constructions are underlined by values. The mechanism to define needs, therefore, should take these into account. Our proposed mechanism will be now be discussed further.

Our proposed mechanism with which to define needs is divided into three stages. First, we propose the governors should comprehend and acknowledge public values because needs are value-laden. Values are usually related to the predominant culture and rarely change. By defining needs as the most basic dimensions of human flourishing, it is clear that needs are valuable per se (Rauschmayer *et al.*, 2008). As values are normative, needs conform to normativity as well. The governors should acknowledge the needs that are valuable to public and recognise them as vital needs in development.

However, discrepancies in development values may occur between the public and the governors. As this study indicated, the discrepancies most likely resulted from the different perspectives and priorities of each party. Therefore, upon acknowledgement of public values, we propose the governors evaluate the compatibility of the needs they decided in their development plan with the

values of the public. If any of the aspired needs could jeopardise public values then the needs should not be recognised as sustainable development needs. In terms of capabilities, the governors should eliminate needs that could reduce the public's ability to pursue their well-being. Sustainable development needs should be able to increase the public's capabilities and not the other way round.

However, there are circumstances where some needs are critical in development despite them contradicting the values of the public. Under such circumstances, we propose the governors promote the importance of the needs to the public in order to increase understanding and agreement towards the needs. Consensus among stakeholders, including the public, over development needs is vitally important in order to recognise those needs as sustainable needs.

CONCLUSION

In order to establish the needs that conform to the concept of sustainable development, the governors should comprehend and acknowledge public values. Presently, the public believes that development deprives their needs and suppresses their well-being, which causes feelings of insecurity. The governors do not seem to realise this and present development plans are driven in such a way that they ignore or damage the essential needs of the public, and these needs are crucial in sustainable development. The findings suggest that if the governors

can tap back into local values and existing structures, they may recognise the needs of the public which need to be satisfied in their journey towards sustainable development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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