

# Wood it be possible: constructing timber houses in the Netherlands

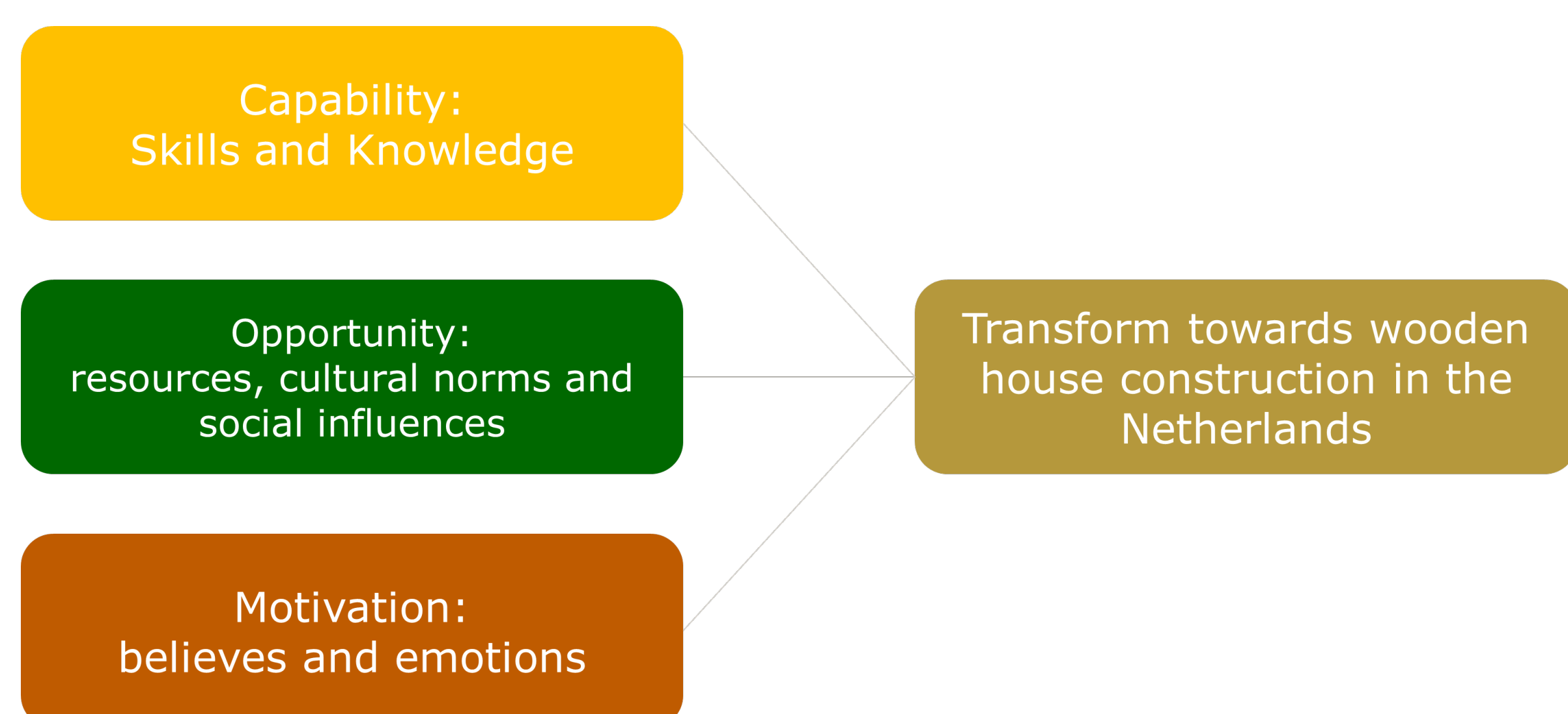


Team involved: Angelina Horsting (WEcR), Jop Woltjer (WEcR), Ute Sass-Klaassen (FEM), Andries Eckeveld (HvHL)

## Objective

What are the **underlying structural barriers and enablers in wooden house construction in the Netherlands** that stand in the way or facilitate the realization of the Dutch government's sustainable housing expansion goal?

## Main Result



**Figure 1.** COM-B framework used to understand the barriers and enablers for behaviour change towards wooden house construction

From a *literature review* and *stakeholder interviews* we identified the following barriers and enablers for constructing with wood. Below some highlights:

**Table 1.** Barriers for construction with wood using COM-B framework.

Capability	Opportunity	Motivation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited knowledge on construction with wood</li> <li>Lack of knowledge transfer and collaboration between stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical challenges with timber construction</li> <li>Regulatory hurdles</li> <li>Lack of a unified standard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevailing negative stereotypes and common misconceptions around wood</li> <li>Origin of wood</li> </ul>

**Table 2.** Enablers for construction with wood using COM-B framework.

Capability	Opportunity	Motivation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge about wooden house building in other EU countries</li> <li>Observed increase in investment timber construction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wood's advantages: e.g. CO<sub>2</sub> capture, prefabrication</li> <li>Economies of scale</li> <li>Current environmental sentiment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheaper once standardized</li> <li>Healthy living environment</li> <li>Recognition of wood's advantages</li> </ul>

## Lessons learned

### Driving Change Towards Bio-based Construction

To facilitate the shift to renewable and bio-based construction materials, overcoming existing obstacles is essential. A comprehensive approach is needed for the successful integration of wood construction, involving the entire supply chain from raw materials to house delivery. This requires multi-level governmental support through appropriate policies and regulations.

## Readiness

In the Netherlands, the construction sector is increasingly adopting sustainable practices, notably timber construction. This trend reflects a careful shift toward wood as a primary building material.

### Short term

Maintaining momentum in the expansion of wood construction in the Dutch market requires strategic actions to address immediate challenges and capitalize on current trends:

- **Close knowledge gap**
- **Shift mindset from design to construction: "thinking in timber"**

### Long term

The experts interviewed also identified several key long-term action points that could catalyse the shift towards timber constructions in the Netherlands

- **Embrace a timber-centric approach: build on wood's strengths**
- **Standardization is pivotal**



## Next steps

### Sustainable Forestry for Timber Construction

- Responsible forest management
- From monocultures towards resilient mixed forests
- Sustainability throughout the whole value chain

