UK government approach to wellbeing


UNCLASSIFIED
Contents

• Background
• Policy uses of wellbeing and examples
  • Macro
  • Micro
• Our work
Commitment to measure National Wellbeing

• Recognition of need for complementary measures of social progress
• Aim to better reflect ‘What Matters’ to people in our decision making

...economic growth is a means to an end. If your goal in politics is to help make a better life for people – which mine is – and if you know, both in your gut and from a huge body of evidence that prosperity alone can’t deliver a better life, then you’ve got to take practical steps to make sure government is properly focused on our quality of life as well as economic growth, and that is what we are trying to do.

25th November 2010
National Wellbeing Wheel of Indicators

- Informed by a national debate
- 41 measures/10 domains
- Mix of Objective and subjective
- “Personal wellbeing” Domain
  - How satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
  - To what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile
  - How happy did you feel yesterday?
  - How anxious did you feel yesterday?
- Subjective wellbeing questions are particularly interesting
Subjective wellbeing (SWB)

- **Longevity**: high levels of SWB can increase life by 4 to 10 yrs. For older people, survival of >9 yrs associated with greater enjoyment of life.
- **Immunity**: positive SWB associated with increased immunity.
- **Physiology**: evidence of physiological impacts of negative SWB.
- SWB **predictive of lower general health**, disability, and heart disease.
- **Employment**: SWB associated with interview confidence among job seekers.
- **Job Effectiveness**: SWB among nurses associated with patient experience.
- **Productivity**: wellbeing associated with reduced absenteeism/presenteeism.

Improving wellbeing is a worthy goal in itself for governments. Also instrumental to delivering other outcomes we value.
Our policies and services impact SWB

- **Inflation/ Unemployment**: unemployment effect on SWB 3.5 times inflation
- **Decision Making**: SWB is influenced by involvement in local decisions
- **Greenspace**: living near is associated with 5% increase in SWB
- **Pollution**: air quality and noise pollution have significant impacts on SWB
- **Housing Quality**: low quality associated with lower SWB and higher stress
- **Public Services**: satisfaction ratings with local services
- **Community Learning**: clear SWB outcomes from community learning
- **National Events**: Royal Wedding & Olympics impacted wellbeing

Whether we value SWB or not – our decisions will impact it

Strong case for proactive consideration
Policy Uses and a few Examples
At a National / Macro Level

- Framework continues important debate about ‘What Matters’
- Draws attention to important factors not always considered e.g.
  - Volunteering
  - Unpaid Care
  - Underemployment
- Direction of travel and changes can inform decisions of:
  - Government, individuals, businesses and civil society
- Complementary to sustainable development policy

Steer priorities and support larger national decisions
Comprehensive National Wealth

A complementary measure to GDP Promotes long term sustainable activities and wellbeing

- Produced Capital: e.g. buildings, roads or machinery
- Human Capital: e.g. Knowledge & skills
- Social Capital: e.g. trust, behavioural norms and institutions
- Natural Capital: e.g. forests, rivers, land, minerals and sea

STOCKS

(+/-) Investment

(-) Depreciation

Production & other activity

Goods and Services
- Market
- Private Non-Market
- Social
- Environmental

FLOWS

Consumption

WELLBEING
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Improve wellbeing of groups</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measure:</strong></td>
<td><em>MoJ</em>: added wellbeing questions to Crime Survey of England and Wales to research victim wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Add questions into Policy Surveys</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analyse:</strong></td>
<td><em>DEFRA</em>: analysed the impact of Green Space on wellbeing of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Data that is already available</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compare/ Appraise:</strong></td>
<td><em>DCMS</em>: using wellbeing valuation approach in Green Book to compare the impact of participation in different sport and cultural activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Policy options</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate:</strong></td>
<td><em>DWP</em>: Evaluated the impact of post-work programme interventions on wellbeing of long term unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Add into policy/ service evaluations</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inform:</strong></td>
<td><em>Public Health England</em>: Used wellbeing data to inform messages promoting healthy behaviours to families in the recent ‘Smart Restart’ Campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Wellbeing info in hands of individuals</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislation/ Regulation:</strong></td>
<td><em>Scotland and Wales</em>: have incorporated wellbeing in legislation. Wellbeing also very much at the heart of the Care Bill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Wellbeing</strong></td>
<td><em>DECC/ HMRC/ MOD</em>: among other departments working on staff wellbeing strategies – links to engagement and productivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>‘Stretch’ Policy or Service</strong></td>
<td><em>DH</em>: Have run wellbeing ‘innovation’ workshops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Evaluate: capturing social impact consistently

### Wellbeing – Before and After National Citizen Service 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>Follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NCS</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Happiness</strong></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worthwhile</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anxiety</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bases</strong></td>
<td>1612</td>
<td>1571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Changing Perspectives: Crime and Wellbeing

Change in life satisfaction score associated with victimisation per crime and the unit costs per crime.

Do we undervalue wellbeing impact of crime in our costs?

![Graph showing change in life satisfaction and unit costs for different crimes.]

Significant predictors, * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$
Governance and Focus of Work
Approach

• Governance
  • ONS Programme Board – Measurement
  • Social Impacts Task Force – Analysis
  • Steering Group – Policy

• Workstreams
  • Measurement (Surveys, reviews…)
  • Analysis (Analysis – loneliness, volunteering, air quality…)
  • Capacity Building (Training, Tools, Seminars…)
  • Policy (x-Gov, Evaluations, Policy Workshops …)
UK government approach to wellbeing