

OUTCOMES MAP: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING

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MAPPING OUTCOMES FOR SOCIAL INVESTMENT

This is one of 13 outcomes maps produced by NPC in partnership with the SROI Network, Investing for Good and Big Society Capital. Each map examines a particular issue area or domain, and aims to document the relevant outcomes and indicators that are currently being measured by charities, government, academics and practitioners working in this field.

This map is not intended to be prescriptive about what you should measure; instead it aims to be a starting point for social investors, funders, charities and social enterprises thinking about measuring outcomes in this domain. Neither is it intended to be definitive or comprehensive: we plan to develop the maps further in future as we learn more about measurement practice in this area.

If you have any feedback or suggestions for how we could do this, please get in touch with Tris Lumley at NPC by emailing tris.lumley@thinkNPC.org.

Outcomes maps in this series

Housing and essential needs

Education and learning

Employment and training

Physical health

Substance use and addiction

Mental health

Personal and social well-being

Politics, influence and participation

Finance and legal matters

Arts and culture

Crime and public safety

Local area and getting around

Conservation of the natural environment and climate change

MEASUREMENT OVERVIEW: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Definition

Personal and social well-being describes a person's state of mind, relationship with the world around them, and the fulfilment they get from life. It can be understood as how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole. It is linked to a range of other outcomes, including mental health.

This overview documents different approaches to measuring and understanding personal and social well-being based on four categories:

1. Feelings about self,
2. Relationships with family and friends,
3. Perception and connectedness to the community, and
4. Overall life satisfaction.

This overview looks specifically at 'subjective well-being', or the internal feelings that people have and how they relate to the world around them. Despite the label 'subjective' these outcomes can be measured using objective methods to a high degree of validity.

Within our definition of well-being, we do not include indicators such as economic prosperity, physical activity or diet. The New Economics Foundation refers to these outcomes as 'drivers of well-being' (rather than descriptors of well-being itself), and they are considered in detail elsewhere in this framework.

Context

Well-being is everyone's issue as it offers a broad measure of progress by individuals and communities. Well-being matters to the education system, in the health service, to parks and community spaces and in macro-economic policy. It is a concept that can be used to measure and evaluate outcomes across a variety of contexts.

Well-being has been a pre-occupation of psychologists for decades but has recently come to the fore in debates around social policy in the UK and beyond. The Prime Minister has spoken of his aim to make it central to decision making in government and has talked of creating a measure of 'Gross National Well-being' to be used alongside Gross National Product (GNP) as a yardstick for economic performance.¹ The Office for National Statistics now includes questions on well-being in its household surveys and published its first findings in 2012.² It has also become a popular area of study for economists and social scientists.

For charities, well-being has always been at the heart of what they do. The sector has broadly welcomed the emphasis on well-being as it gives them a richer language to articulate what they do, as well as new methods to capture 'soft outcomes'. For example, NPC's Well-being Measure is used by around 50 charities to measure and evaluate interventions ranging from outdoor activity courses to mentoring.³ The Big Lottery Fund's Well-being Programme routinely evaluates its work using different measures, including an expanded definition that includes diet and exercise (outside the scope considered here).⁴ Well-being is also popular because it provides a positive way of measuring progress, particularly when compared with traditional measures of mental health which tend to focus the extent of 'problems'.

Well-being still suffers from its perception as a soft outcome. Although everyone agrees that how we feel is fundamental to living a happy and fulfilled life, for many commissioners it remains too abstract and something that they find difficult to use in decision making.

Vulnerable groups

Well-being is important for everyone. Among the key groups to consider are:

- **Young people:** Children that have a happy experience growing up are more likely to have higher levels of personal and social well-being in later life. If positive feelings and perceptions of self and relationships are developed early, these are more likely to be continued in adulthood. This suggests the importance of ensuring all young people get a good childhood.
- **People affected by depression and mental health issues:** It is estimated that one in four people will experience depression at some point in their lives.⁵ It can be disabling and have a significant impact on the individual and family of the sufferer. A focus on well-being can help to find a path to recovery and taking into account the needs of partners and children affected. In particular, groups affected by a sudden change or trauma such as bereavement can benefit.

¹ Speech given by David Cameron on 25 November 2010. See: <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/pm-speech-on-well-being/>

² See: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/mro/news-release/progress-in-measuring-national-well-being-outlined/measurement-of-societal-well-being.html>

³ <http://www.well-beingmeasure.com/>

⁴ See: http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/research/-/media/Files/Publication%20Documents/rl_well_being_holistic_approach.ashx

⁵ Joy, I. and Miller, I. (2006) Don't mind me: Adults with mental health problems. New Philanthropy Capital.

- **Unemployed people and their families:** Employment provides a sense of purpose and self-worth to adults, as well as a source of income and professional satisfaction. Unemployment is identified as a key source of stress and anxiety for individuals and families and is perhaps the most important 'driver of well-being'. The impact of unemployment and poverty can also have a long term impact on children within families affected.
- **Lonely and isolated older people:** Social isolation is a growing issue among older people and refers to the separation from social contact, family or lack of a role in the community. Age UK reports that a third of older people are sometimes lonely.⁶ Older people are a growing demographic group, as the population ages and advances in medical care ensure that many of us live longer lives than ever before. Lower socio-economic groups, the widowed, the physically isolated, people who have recently stopped driving, and those with sensory impairment are disproportionately likely to be affected.

Key outcomes

- **Improved feelings of self:** How an individual feels about themselves including their self-esteem, confidence, emotional well-being and resilience.
- **Improved relationships with family and friends:** How an individual relates to the people around them, including the relationships they develop, the quality of these relationships, and sense of connectedness or isolation
- **Improved perceptions of and connectedness to the community:** A feeling that an individual is part of a meaningful community or communities, feels connected to the environment around them, feels included and can get involved
- **Improved overall life satisfaction:** General assessment of satisfaction with life as a whole, as compared to the 'best possible life'.

Examples of typical interventions

The broad applicability of the concept of well-being means it is difficult to define a 'typical' intervention. Measuring well-being can be done across different areas and age groups. Broadly speaking, interventions around improving feelings of self might include **counselling** and **one-to-one therapies, mentoring** or **challenging activities** designed to take individuals out of their comfort zone. Relationships with families and friends might be improved through **counselling** and **mediation services**, or **teamwork activities**. Activities that might influence connectedness to communities include **local community organising, volunteering**, involvement in online **social networks** or membership of **sports and social clubs**.

⁶ Age UK Loneliness and Isolation Evidence Review

Current approaches to measurement

Measuring well-being is not yet widely or consistently adopted in any areas of social policy as a means of evaluating impact. Although the Office for National Statistics has included questions on well-being in its household surveys since 2010, there remains a way to go before the benefits of measuring well-being outcomes are realised at a programme level.

Approaches to measuring well-being tend to be survey-based and depend on the responses of individuals to questions about their feelings and perceptions. These approaches are developed by psychologists to test specific aspects of character, traits or feelings and usually take the form of a series of questions that are collated to provide a score. These series of questions are also known as 'multi-item scales' and can measure anything from self-esteem to appreciation of the natural environment.

There are a range of different measures available for quantifying aspects of well-being, the best of which use rigorously tested and statistically validated scales. Many of the tools tend to be very similar and are often derived from the same research base but differ slightly in length and emphasis. Overall, there is no firm consensus on what the best tools are.

Using these measures can pose difficulties as unobservable outcomes can be viewed as 'woolly' or 'abstract' by funders and investors. One of the potential advantages of this approach to measurement is that it can be used to compare different interventions, or be used across different areas of social policy. While this is an attractive quality, it is yet to be tested at a large scale. In practice, where they are in use, well-being approaches tend to be combined with measures specific measures tailored to the intervention. As in many areas of measurement, there remains a skills gap in analysing and interpreting data. There is a clear need to create tools that are practical and can be applied by non-experts.

Key sources

- Office for National Statistics well-being website <http://www.ons.gov.uk>
 - Progress in measuring national well-being, July 2012 <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/mro/news-release/progress-in-measuring-national-well-being-outlined/measurement-of-societal-well-being.html>
 - Measuring national well-being: summary of proposed domains and measures, July 2012 <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/wellbeing/measuring-national-well-being/summary-of-proposed-domains-and-measures/summary-of-proposed-domains-and-measures-of-national-well-being.html>
- The New Economic Foundation Measuring well-being handbook for voluntary organisations and community groups http://www.neweconomics.org/sites/neweconomics.org/files/Measuring_well-being_handbook_FINAL.pdf
- The Children's Society Good Childhood Reports 2010, 2011, 2012 and Good Childhood Index <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/research/initiatives/well-being/background-programme/good-childhood-index>
- Various well-being measurement tools, including:

- Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) <http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/1467.aspx>
- Young Foundation’s Well-being and Resilience Measure (to assess communities) <http://www.youngfoundation.org/our-work/advising-public-service-innovation/warm/wellbeing-and-resilience-measure-warm>
- NPC’s Well-being Measure www.well-beingmeasure.com, and blog <http://wellbeingmeasure.wordpress.com/>
- Locus of Control Scale (Rotter 1966) <http://www.psych.uncc.edu/pagoolka/LocusofControl-intro.html>

Related outcomes

Well-being is closely linked to the other outcome areas examined:

- Housing and essential needs
- Education and learning
- Employment and training
- Physical health
- Substance use and addiction
- Mental health
- Personal and social well-being
- Finance and legal matters
- Arts and culture
- Crime and safety
- Local area and getting around
- Conservation of the natural environment and climate change

Key outcomes	Specific outcomes	Indicators	Existing measures	Source and use	Stakeholders (tagging)	Notes
Improved feelings of self.	People have improved feelings of self-worth	Number of people with improved feelings of self-worth	Validated psychological scales (multiple-item measures containing statements that individuals' respond to) such as:	Change can be measured by observing test scores at different times. Self-reported scores can also be compared to other indicators of well-being, reported by family, friends or professionals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Young people 	
	People have increased confidence in their own capabilities	Number of people with increased confidence in their own capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale (10-item); • Marsh's Self-concept scale (10-items). 			
	People have improved resilience, grit and determination.	Number of people with an increased capacity to cope with difficulties, and the persistence to succeed.	Validated psychological scales, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wagnild and Young's Resilience Scale (14-item); • Duckworth et al's The Grit scale (8-item). Examples of success in work or exams following a setback.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Young people 	
	People have improved emotional well-being.	The number of people who experience a reduction in mental health problems.	Validated psychological scales, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASEBA is designed for children, adults and older adults. • Goodman's SDQ must be used in full and cannot be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Children aged 3-16 years old (SDQ) • Children aged 8 and above (well-being index) 	

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		<p>The number of people with experience a reduction of stress and anxiety.</p>	<p>(ASEBA);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ): a (25-item behavioural screening tool, including 5-items on emotional symptoms. • The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (7 or 14-item) • Children's Society's Well-being Index 	<p>modified.</p>		<p>negative aspects of emotional well-being.</p>
	<p>People have increased motivation and activity.</p>	<p>The number of people with increased drive and enthusiasm.</p>	<p>Motivation can be measured by looking at a variety of attributes, including attitude to work or education. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes Towards Working Scale (Alfano 1973); • California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) includes 6-item meaningful participation in school scale. <p>Absence rates at work or school can be indirect indicators of motivation.</p>	<p>Other work attitude scales available from human resource consultancies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Young people. 	<p>This outcome is linked to others included in this document, eg, grit and determination or aspiration.</p>

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	People have increased aspirations and feelings about the future.	Number of people with life goals.	<p>Validated psychological scales, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Positivity Scale (PS) (15 or 5 item) • (Narvaez 2006) 3-item aspiration scale • 3-item goals and aspirations scale used in California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) 	<p>PS measures optimistic attitude toward the future, including sense of security and self-efficacy in being able to succeed in life.</p> <p>Narvaez aspiration scale is used in Longitudinal Study of Young People in England.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Young people 	
		Number of people why report being positive about the future.				
		Number of people with increased ambition.				
	More people have increased autonomy and control.	Number of people with a sense of control over their destiny.	<p>Validated psychological scales, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duttweiler (1984) Internal Control Index (28-item). • Alternative locus of control scale (13-item) (Rotter 1966) • Locus of Control scale for children and adolescents (21-item) (Nowicki and Strickland 1971). 	<p>These scales measure the concept of 'locus of control', or where the individual sees control over their life. Locus of control scales have also been developed for different health-related behaviours, eg, drinking and obesity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Young people 	
		Number of people confident in their ability to make decisions.				

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	People find contentment and fulfilment from spirituality.	Score on scales measuring spirituality.	Validated psychological scales, such as Aspires Spiritual Transcendence Scale (Piedmont 2004) <u>The Search Institute</u> has documented other scales measuring spirituality.	Measuring spirituality is controversial and contested concept. Almost no two definitions of spirituality are the same.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals 	
Improved relationships with family and friends.	People have increased satisfaction with their family relationships.	Number of people satisfied with family life.	Validated psychological scales, such as: Huebner's Multi-dimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale 7-item family module (adapted to 5-item in NPC's Well-being Measure).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Families and children • Children and young people aged 5-18 (Huebner) 	
		Number of people satisfied with the quality of their family relationships	The Office for National Statistics' Annual Population Survey contains a question on satisfaction with family life.			

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	<p>People have increased satisfaction with their friendships.</p>	<p>Number, quality and frequency of relationships with friends.</p>	<p>Validated psychological scales, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Friendship Scale (6-item) (Hawthorne 2006); • Huebner's Multi-dimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale 9-item friendship module. 	<p>The Friendship Scale is developed for adults.</p> <p>Huebner used with children and young people 5-18.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Children and young people 	<p>Friendship measures can also be used to indicate isolation (see below).</p>
	<p>People have improved social networks and involvement.</p>	<p>Number of people that are satisfied with their social life.</p>	<p>Validated psychological scales, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lubben Social Network Scale Revised (LSNS-R); • Social integration subscale of the Social Provisions Scale (SPS). <p>The ONS' Annual Population Survey also contains a relevant satisfaction question.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Community and society 	<p>See below for measures of 'Participation', eg, membership of clubs</p>
		<p>Number of people with access to key communications – telephone and email</p>	<p>Statistics on access to mobile phones and internet from ONS, and data on social media activity.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Community and society 	
		<p>Number of contacts on social network sites (Facebook, Twitter)</p>				

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	People have reduced levels of isolation.	Number of people separated from social contact.	Validated psychological scales, such as the Social Disconnectedness Scale (8-items) (Cornwell and Waite 2009). Data on frequency of social contact, eg number of people spoken to within a day/week/month.	Tends to be most relevant for vulnerable groups, eg older people, people who are physically isolated, people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Older people • People with disabilities 	Measures of relationships with friends and family could also be used to indicate isolation
	People have reduced levels of loneliness.	Number of people who feel alone.	Validated psychological scales, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCLA loneliness scale (20 or 10-item); • Shortened 3-item scale (Hughes et al 2004). 	Tends to be most relevant for vulnerable groups, eg older people, people who are physically isolated, people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Older people • People with disabilities 	
		Number of people who say there are one or more people they can count on in a crisis.	ONS Annual Population Survey.			

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Improved perceptions of and connectedness to the community.	People have improved perceptions of community and neighbourhood.	Number of people who are satisfied with where they live, and quality of the environment and opportunities.	<p>The Citizenship Survey and the British Household Panel Survey contain questions on neighbours and neighbourhoods.</p> <p>nef's recommended well-being indicators includes one on level of trust towards others in the community.</p> <p>Validated psychological scales, including Huebner's Multi-dimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale 9-item living environment/community module.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Community and society • Students (Huenbner) 	
	People have improved attitudes to differences.	Number of people with a positive attitude to those from different backgrounds, and with different views and experiences.	Validated psychological scales, such as Helms & Parham 50-item Racial Identity Attitudes Scale.	Scales in this area tend to be widely applicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Community and society 	
	People have increased levels of participation.	Number and percentage of people who volunteer.	ONS' Annual Population Survey.	ONS survey covers a period of last 12 months and breaks the findings down by various age groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Community • Society 	See politics and influence overview for more on volunteering and participation.

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			National Citizen Service's measure of participation and helping others includes a 13-item scale, focusing on community participation and volunteering.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people aged 16-17 	
People have improved access to community infrastructure and resources.	Number of people with access to community facilities.	Local authority measures of satisfaction with community assets and usage data The Young Foundation's Community Well-being and Resilience Measure (WARM) for local areas includes a domain on 'systems and structures', including indicators such as average travel time to employment centre.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Community and society 	Measure should incorporate a measure of what assets are available in the community and how they are used.
	Number of people using community facilities.					
	Number of community services accessed.					

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<p>Improved overall life satisfaction.</p>	<p>People have increased life satisfaction.</p>	<p>Number of people satisfied with life as a whole, as compared to the 'best possible life'.</p>	<p>Validated psychological scales and single survey questions measure life satisfaction through asking individuals' to rate their lives, usually on a scale up to 10.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cantril's ladder. • The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (7 or 14-item). • The Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al 1985). • Diener et al 1985) and The Children's Society's Good Childhood Index. • NPC's Well-being Measure. <p>The Office for National Statistics uses four questions on life satisfaction in the Annual Population Survey (see notes).</p>	<p>Cantril's ladder: individuals rate their life satisfaction from 0-10, is a single-item measure used in</p> <p>The Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al 1985) and The Children's Society's Good Childhood Index both include a 5-item overall life satisfaction measure.</p> <p>The Children's Society's Well-being Index is designed for age 8+.</p> <p>ONS questions appropriate for adults age 18+. Data published annually can be used for comparison.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Young people • Community and society 	<p>Questions on ONS survey are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? • Overall, to what extent do you feel the things in your life are worthwhile? • Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? • Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?
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TRANSFORMING THE CHARITY SECTOR



NPC occupies a unique position at the nexus between charities and funders, helping them achieve the greatest impact. We are driven by the values and mission of the charity sector, to which we bring the rigour, clarity and analysis needed to better achieve the outcomes we all seek. We also share the motivations and passion of funders, to which we bring our expertise, experience and track record of success.

Increasing the impact of charities: NPC exists to make charities and social enterprises more successful in achieving their missions. Through rigorous analysis, practical advice and innovative thinking, we make charities' money and energy go further, and help them to achieve the greatest impact.

Increasing the impact of funders: We share the passion funders have for helping charities and changing people's lives. We understand their motivations and their objectives, and we know that giving is more rewarding if it achieves the greatest impact it can.

Strengthening the partnership between charities and funders: Our mission is also to bring the two sides of the funding equation together, improving understanding and enhancing their combined impact

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